



Bundesamt  
für Migration  
und Flüchtlinge

# Rückkehr und Reintegration

Typen und Strategien an den Beispielen  
Türkei, Georgien und Russische Föderation

Beiträge zu Migration und Integration, Band 4

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# Einführung - Rückkehr aus Deutschland

Zentrale Ergebnisse einer Befragung von  
Rückkehrern in der Türkei, Georgien und  
der Russischen Föderation



Tatjana Baraulina

# Zentrale Ergebnisse



Zentrales Motiv für **einen Rückkehrentschluss bei Personen mit dauerhafter Bleibeperspektive** ist die Sorge, in Deutschland nicht die gleichen Partizipationschancen zu haben, verbunden mit der Erwartung sozialer Aufwärtsmobilität in den Rückkehrkontexten. Die migrationspolitische Debatte in Deutschland sollte die Frage berücksichtigen, wie die Rückkehr dieser Zuwanderergruppen politisch zu bewerten ist. Anknüpfungspunkte an die Diskussion über eine nachhaltige Integrationspolitik sind augenfällig.

**Zuwanderer in schwierigen Lebenslagen** – mit einem unsicheren Aufenthaltsstatus bzw. mittellose Personen – zögern den Rückkehrentschluss trotz Rechtsunsicherheit oder Exklusion vom Arbeitsmarkt soweit wie möglich hinaus, da sie ihre Perspektiven in den Rückkehrregionen negativ einschätzen.

Es sollte erwogen werden, Angebote der Rückkehrberatung bundesweit für alle Zuwanderergruppen in schwierigen Lebenslagen – auch solche, die nicht ausreisepflichtig sind – zu öffnen. Wichtig ist **eine ergebnisoffene Rückkehrberatung**, in der die gegebenen rechtlichen Aufenthaltsbedingungen und damit verbunden die Lebensperspektiven von Betroffenen in Deutschland sowie die Vorteile bzw. Risiken einer Rückkehr Berücksichtigung finden.

Rückkehrentscheidungen sind ein familiär bzw. sozial eingebetteter Prozess. Die Rückkehr wird über mehrere Monate oder sogar Jahre vorbereitet. Allerdings kann **ausreisepflichtigen Personen** oftmals eine entsprechende Vorbereitungszeit nicht eingeräumt werden.

**Reintegrationsverläufe** hängen davon ab, wie Rückkehrer ihre erworbenen Fähigkeiten und Qualifikationen sowie angespartes Kapital und soziale Kontakte nutzen können.

In verschiedenen Phasen der Reintegration sind unterschiedliche Ressourcen bedeutsam. Ökonomische Ressourcen entlasten die Rückkehrer in der



ersten **Orientierungsphase**. Angespartes Kapital reicht jedoch nicht für die dauerhafte Sicherung des Lebensunterhaltes oder soziale Inklusion. In der **Etablierungsphase** sind die Nutzung erworbener Qualifikationen und die Unterstützung familiärer und freundschaftlicher Netzwerke wichtig. Diese bilden das Fundament einer erfolgreichen **Konsolidierungsphase**.

Insbesondere Personen in schwierigen Lebenslagen, beispielsweise Rückkehrer, die eine dauerhafte medizinische oder psychologische Betreuung benötigen, müssten nach der Ausreise über die Orientierungsphase hinaus unterstützt werden. Dies würde eine stärkere **Verknüpfung zwischen der Rückkehr- und der Reintegrationsförderung** erfordern.

**Maßnahmen der Reintegrationsförderung** sollten die Nutzung vorhandener Fähigkeiten und erworbener Qualifikationen für die Sicherung des Lebensunterhaltes erleichtern und die soziale Inklusion von Rückkehrern fördern. In den Reintegrationsprojekten, die durch das Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge gegenwärtig in Armenien, Georgien, Kosovo, Marokko, Nigeria, Pakistan, Ghana und in Nordirak durchgeführt werden, stehen soziale Betreuung, Arbeitsmarktteilhabe und ökonomische Selbstständigkeit im Mittelpunkt der Förderung. Eine Intensivierung sozialer Reintegrationsmaßnahmen wie z.B. Unterstützung eines regelmäßigen Austausches unter den Rückkehrern (über einen Rückkehrerstammtisch oder über entsprechende Internetforen) könnte hilfreich sein.

Die **Nachhaltigkeit einer Rückkehr** kann nicht am Kriterium einer dauerhaften Niederlassung im Rückkehrkontext bzw. der Immobilität von Rückkehrern gemessen werden. Eine weitere Migration kommt sowohl für zufriedene als auch für unzufriedene Rückkehrer in Frage. Erneute Mobilität wird durch das Vorhandensein ökonomischer Ressourcen und grenzüberschreitender sozialer Beziehungen begünstigt.

In der gegenwärtigen **Rückkehrpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland** wird das Ziel verfolgt, einen kohärenten Förderansatz zu erarbeiten und weiterzuentwickeln. Dies beinhaltet: 1) Vorrang der freiwilligen Rückkehr vor einer zwangsweisen Rückführung; 2) Rückkehrberatung; 3) eine nachhaltige Reintegration. Mit vielfältigen Förderprojekten im Inland sowie Kooperationsprojekten mit anderen europäischen Mitgliedsstaaten in den Rückkehrregionen sollen diese drei Säulen der Rückkehrpolitik umgesetzt werden. Darüber hinaus sind für die Konzipierung der einzelnen Projekte spezifische Bedürfnisse der Betroffenen sowie spezifische Reintegrationsbedingungen in den jeweiligen Regionen ausschlaggebend.

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# 1

## Einleitung

„Parallel zum Anstieg der Zuwanderung in Deutschland Ende der 1980er Jahre verließen – mit einer zeitlichen Verzögerung – auch vermehrt Menschen Deutschland. So zogen zwischen 1991 und 2011 zwar ca. 19,0 Millionen Menschen aus dem Ausland nach Deutschland, im gleichen Zeitraum verließen aber auch 14,4 Millionen Menschen das Bundesgebiet, davon rund 11,7 Millionen Ausländer“ (BMI/BAMF 2012: 114). Diese beachtlichen Zahlen der aus Deutschland fortgezogenen Personen mit ausländischer Staatsangehörigkeit deuten darauf hin, dass nicht ausschließlich die Einwanderung nach Deutschland, sondern auch die Rückwanderung in die Herkunftsländer ein wesentlicher Bestandteil des aktuellen Migrationsgeschehens ist. Sowohl im Rahmen der nationalen Steuerung von Wanderungsbewegungen als auch mit Blick auf die Entwicklung einer umfassenden und kohärenten Migrationspolitik in der Europäischen Union werden Rückwanderungen zunehmend beachtet (Schneider/Kreienbrink 2010).

Die gegenwärtige Rückkehrpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland richtet sich vor allem an Personen ausländischer Staatsangehörigkeit, die aus verschiedenen Gründen kein langfristiges Aufenthaltsrecht im Land erlangen können (vgl. Kreienbrink 2007: 36f.). Sie umfasst die freiwillige Rückkehr, die Rückkehrförderung, die Rückführung und die Rückübernahme. Die Förderung freiwilliger Rückkehr ist bereits seit Ende der 1970er Jahre ein politisches Thema, wobei jeweils unterschiedliche Gruppen adressiert wurden. Nach dem Ende der Anwerbung ausländischer Arbeitskräfte wurde 1983 zur Förderung ihrer Rückkehrbereitschaft das Rückkehrhilfegesetz verabschiedet, dessen Wirksamkeit in der Diskussion jedoch umstritten war (Schmidt-Fink 2007: 258f.). Seit 1979 wird zudem die Rückkehr von Flüchtlingen, Asylbewerbern und anderen ausreisepflichtigen Ausländern im Rahmen des Bund-Länder-Programms REAG (Reintegration and Emigration Program for Asylum-Seekers in Germa-

ny) gefördert, das 1989 noch um GARP (Government Assisted Return Programme) ergänzt wurde und seit 2002 als REAG/GARP firmiert.<sup>1</sup> Die REAG/GARP-Förderung folgt dem Grundsatz: Freiwillige Rückkehr hat Vorrang vor einer zwangsweisen Rückführung. Ferner werden seit den 1970er Jahren auch Rückkehrprogramme mit entwicklungspolitischen Zielsetzungen umgesetzt (Baraulina et al. 2012; Schmidt-Fink 2007: 250-258). Über diese Maßnahmen hinaus unterstützen Bundesländer, Kommunen und nichtstaatliche Organisationen verschiedene Gruppen von Rückkehrwilligen (Schneider/Kreienbrink 2010).

Gleichzeitig kooperiert die Bundesrepublik Deutschland mit anderen Mitgliedstaaten der Europäischen Union. In Partnerschaft mit den Niederlanden, Schweden, Belgien, Tschechien, Italien und Polen werden Reintegrationsprojekte in Ghana, Marokko, Nigeria, Pakistan und in Georgien durchgeführt. Zudem wurde im August 2011 eine Gemeinsame Absichtserklärung vom Bundesministerium des Innern und der Internationalen Organisation für Migration (IOM) unterzeichnet, in der weitere gemeinsame Projekte in Aussicht gestellt werden. Gegenwärtig unterstützt Deutschland gemeinsam mit der IOM Reintegration von Rückkehrern in Ghana und in der Autonomen Region Kurdistan (Nordirak). Im Januar 2013 haben die Innenminister Deutschlands und Frankreichs eine verstärkte bilaterale Zusammenarbeit in rückkehrpolitischen Fragen beschlossen. Ein erstes Kooperationsprojekt wird in Armenien durchgeführt, wobei die vorhandenen Unterstützungsstrukturen Frankreichs in Armenien nun auch Rückkehrern aus Deutschland offenstehen. Die Partnerschaft mit Frankreich soll in Zukunft weiter ausgebaut werden. Aus Sicht der beiden Länder ist sie wegweisend für die Entwicklung der europäischen Rückkehrpolitik.

Die oben beschriebenen Entwicklungen zeigen, dass die Rückkehrpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland heute vor der Herausforderung steht, vielfältige Fördermaßnahmen zu koordinieren und effektiver zu gestalten. Ziel ist ein kohärenter Ansatz durch ein integriertes Rückkehrmanagement (Beratung, Rückkehrunterstützung, Reintegrationsförderung). Vor diesem Hintergrund gewinnen aktuelle wissenschaftliche Erkenntnisse über Rückwanderung aus Deutschland in die Herkunftsländer an praktischer Relevanz. Dabei sind zwei

1 Das Programm wird von IOM im Auftrag von Bund und Ländern durchgeführt. Siehe <http://www.bamf.de/DE/Rueckkehrfoerderung/Foerderprogramme/ProgrammeREAGGARP/programme-reag-garp-node.html> (23.01.2013).

Fragen von besonderer Bedeutung. Für die Fortentwicklung der nachhaltigen Rückkehrberatungsangebote in Deutschland sind Einblicke in die subjektiven Motive einer Rückkehrentscheidung<sup>2</sup> und daran anknüpfend Analysen der zentralen Faktoren, die einen Rückkehrentschluss befördern, von Interesse. Für die Weiterentwicklung von Reintegrationsmaßnahmen sind zudem Erkenntnisse über zentrale Voraussetzungen für eine Wiedereingliederung von Rückkehrern in den Herkunftsländern wichtig.

Hier setzt das Forschungsprojekt „Rückkehr und Rückkehrförderung“ des Bundesamtes für Migration und Flüchtlinge an, dessen Ergebnisse in diesem Sammelband vorgestellt werden. In diesem Projekt wurden im Zeitraum von Juli 2008 bis zum Juli 2009 unterschiedliche Gruppen von Rückkehrern in drei Ländern – in der Türkei, in der Russischen Föderation und in Georgien<sup>3</sup> – im Hinblick auf die Umstände und Motive ihrer Rückkehrentscheidung, ihre Reintegrationsstrategien und ihre Weiterwanderungspläne befragt. Die Ergebnisse dieser Analysen können Impulse für die Weiterentwicklung der Rückkehr- und der Reintegrationsförderung geben.

Das Thema Rückkehr beschäftigte die deutschsprachige Migrationsforschung bereits nach dem Ende der Anwerbungsphase während der 1970er und 1980er Jahre. Untersucht wurde damals die Rückkehr ausländischer Arbeitnehmer in die Türkei, nach Spanien, Griechenland oder Italien, wobei vor allem Reintegrationsfragen (insbesondere soziale und schulische) im Mittelpunkt standen.<sup>4</sup> Mit der Veränderung der Migrationslage in Europa durch das Ende

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2 In der vorliegenden Studie wird der Begriff „Rückkehrentscheidung“ im sozialwissenschaftlichen Sinne verwendet. Eine Rückkehrentscheidung ist demnach eine Entscheidung der Betroffenen bezüglich einer Rückwanderung in das jeweilige Herkunftsland. Sie wird von einem Zuwanderer individuell oder im betroffenen Haushalt aufgrund von unterschiedlichen Motivlagen getroffen. Die hier verwendete Definition der Rückkehrentscheidung grenzt sich von dem juristischen Verständnis des Terminus ab. Dort wird gemäß der Richtlinie 2008/115/EG des europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 16. Dezember 2008 (über gemeinsame Normen und Verfahren in den Mitgliedstaaten zur Rückführung illegal aufhältiger Drittstaatsangehöriger) eine Rückkehrentscheidung als Entscheidung des Staates in Bezug auf die Rückkehr illegal aufhältiger Drittstaatsangehöriger aufgefasst.

3 Zur Auswahl der Befragungsregionen siehe Kap. 1.2.

4 Diese Forschungsschwerpunkte haben sich im Rahmen der Fragen zur „Ausländerpädagogik“ der 1980er und 1990er Jahre herauskristallisiert. Zur Rückkehr in die Türkei siehe von Delhaes-Guenther et al. 1984; Haberl 1990; Hauff 1989; Wolbert 1989. Zu Spanien siehe z.B. Bernitt 1981; Laue 1990; Díaz y Díaz 1991. Zu Griechenland siehe Unger 1983; Paraschou 2001; Hopf/Hatzichristou 1994. Zu Italien Haug 2000a.

des Ost-West-Konflikts und die nachfolgenden Zuwanderungen spielte Rückkehr in der Migrationsforschung der 1990er Jahre jedoch kaum noch eine Rolle. Das Augenmerk richtete sich vielmehr auf Fragen der Integration von Zuwanderern in die deutsche Gesellschaft. Lediglich einzelne Studien griffen die Frage von Rückkehrabsichten von Migranten, die in Deutschland leben, auf (z.B. Fabian et al. 1990; Pagenstecher 1996; Diehl/Preisendörfer 2007; Şenyürekli/Menjivar 2012). In den letzten Jahren sind jedoch wieder Forschungsarbeiten zu tatsächlich erfolgten Rückwanderungen entstanden. Dabei überwiegen qualitative Fallstudien, beispielsweise zur Rückkehr und Reintegration abgelehnter Asylbewerber und ausreisepflichtiger Ausländer (Sieber/Scholer 2001; von Lersner 2008), zur Abwanderung von hoch qualifizierten Personen mit Migrationshintergrund in die Türkei (Griese/Sievers 2010; Aydın 2011) oder zur Rückwanderung älterer Migranten (Krumme 2004; Razum et al. 2005).

Was in der gegenwärtigen Rückkehrforschung in Deutschland fehlt, sind Studien, deren Ergebnisse über die Teilaspekte der Rückkehr einzelner Gruppen hinaus gehen. Eine größere Generalisierbarkeit der Ergebnisse wäre wünschenswert, kann aber nicht mit quantitativen Erhebungsmethoden erreicht werden. Da die Rückkehrer weder in Deutschland noch in den Rückkehrregionen amtlich erfasst werden, ist keine Datengrundlage für repräsentative Befragungen vorhanden.<sup>5</sup> Deshalb basiert auch dieses Forschungsprojekt wie die bisherigen auf qualitativen Befragungen von Rückkehrern. Im Unterschied zu früheren Rückkehrstudien wurde in diesem Projekt jedoch nicht nur eine spezielle Rückkehrergruppe oder Rückkehrregion in den Blick genommen. Vielmehr war es das Ziel, möglichst unterschiedliche Rückkehrer in verschiedenen Rückkehrkontexten zu befragen. Analysiert wurden insgesamt 90 biographische Verläufe von Rückkehrern und deren Familienmitgliedern in der Türkei, in der Russischen Föderation und in Georgien.<sup>6</sup>

Die in diesem Band vorgestellten Länderstudien geben die ausführlichen länderspezifischen Analysen wieder. Sie thematisieren vor allem die subjektiv wahrgenommenen Rückkehrentscheidungsprozesse und Reintegrationsstrategien, welche im Rahmen der jeweiligen Länderkontexte als typisch erscheinen. Der vorliegende Beitrag ist hingegen eine kontrastierende

5 Zu Einschränkungen der amtlichen Daten bei der Messung der Rückwanderung vgl. Koser 2000; Haug 2001; BMI/BAMF 2012.

6 Zur ausführlichen Darstellung des methodischen Vorgehens und des Sampling siehe Kap. 1.3.

Vergleichsanalyse des gesamten Samples und präsentiert fallübergreifende Hypothesen zu zentralen Motiven für Rückkehrentscheidungen und zu nachhaltigen Reintegrationsverläufen.

Im Folgenden werden zunächst einige Begriffe der Rückkehrforschung definiert sowie die Rahmenbedingungen der durchgeführten Feldstudien in der Türkei, in Georgien und der Russischen Föderation dargelegt, bevor die vergleichende Analyse zu den Aspekten Rückkehrentscheidung (Kap. 2), Reintegration (Kap. 3) und Nachhaltigkeit der Rückkehrentscheidung (Kap. 4) erfolgt. Abschließend werden einige Schlussfolgerungen für die Rückkehrpolitik gezogen (Kap. 5).

### 1.1 Begriffsbestimmungen

Sowohl die Länderstudien im Rahmen dieses Forschungsprojektes als auch die Vergleichsanalyse des gesamten Samples basieren auf einer einheitlichen Definition eines Rückkehrers. Entsprechend wurde in allen Länderstudien ein gemeinsames Grundmodell zur Erklärung einer Rückkehrentscheidung genutzt und ein gleiches Vorgehen bei Messung der Reintegration und des Reintegrationserfolgs angewandt. Diese Grunddefinitionen des Forschungsprojektes werden im Folgenden erläutert.

#### Der Begriff „Rückkehr“ im Migrationskontext

Frühere Analysen von Rückwanderungsprozessen fokussierten auf Migranten, die nach einer zeitweisen Niederlassung in einem Zielland ihren Lebensmittelpunkt dauerhaft zurück ins Herkunftsland verlagern. In der aktuellen Forschungsdiskussion wird der Rückkehrbegriff allerdings in zweifacher Hinsicht erweitert.<sup>7</sup>

Erstens wird in den aktuellen Studien nicht nur eine dauerhafte Rückkehr, sondern auch eine mittelfristige Verlagerung des Lebensmittelpunktes ins Herkunftsland als ein Rückkehrereignis eingestuft. Somit wird Rückkehr als eine Phase im Migrationszyklus gesehen, der unter Umständen mehrere Hin- und Her-Wanderungen beinhalten kann (King 2000). Eine Definition der Statistischen Abteilung der Vereinten Nationen (United Nations Statistics Division) von 1998 bezeichnet beispielsweise einen Rückkehrer als Person,

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7 Zur Gesamtübersicht der Forschungsansätze zur Erklärung der Rückwanderung siehe Glorius/Matuschewski 2009.



die ins Land ihrer Staatsangehörigkeit zurückwandert, nachdem sie sich kurz- oder mittelfristig im Ausland aufhielt. Ergänzend wird hinzugefügt, dass von einer Rückkehr bereits dann die Rede sein dürfe, wenn die Person beabsichtige, mindestens ein Jahr im Land ihrer Staatsangehörigkeit zu verbringen (Dumont/Spielvogel 2008: 164).

Zweitens werden in einigen Studien Menschen mit Migrationshintergrund ohne eigene Migrationserfahrung, die in die Herkunftsländer ihrer Eltern und Großeltern gehen, als „ethnische Rückkehrer“ (diasporic return) definiert (Christou/King 2008; King et al. 2012). In der deutschsprachigen Diskussionsdiskussion wird gegenwärtig rege diskutiert, ob es sich bei der internationalen Mobilität der zweiten und dritten Migrantengeneration um Aus-, Ab- oder Rückwanderung handelt. Yaşar Aydın (2012) vertritt die Auffassung, dass sich die Wanderungsentscheidungen dieser Personengruppe kaum von jenen der Deutschen ohne Migrationshintergrund unterscheiden. Insofern sind eher die Formen der klassischen beruflichen und bildungsbezogenen Mobilität und seltener die Rückkehr aufgrund einer starken Verbundenheit mit dem Herkunftsland der Eltern/Großeltern zu erwarten. Vera Hanewinkel (2012) kommt hingegen zu dem Ergebnis, dass die von ihr befragten türkeistämmigen Frauen der zweiten und dritten Generation, die in die Türkei gegangen sind, sich weniger als international mobile Weltbürger, sondern viel mehr als Rückkehrerinnen in die Heimat sehen. Zu einem ähnlichen Ergebnis gelangt auch eine Analyse von Zukunftsplänen Jugendlicher mit Migrationshintergrund von Yasemin Soytemel (2011).

Den Befragungen der Rückkehrer im Rahmen dieses Forschungsprojektes liegt ein **erweiterter Rückkehrbegriff** zugrunde. Sowohl zurückkehrende Migrantinnen der ersten Generation als auch Nachkommen der Migrantinnen gelten als Rückkehrer, wenn sie ihren Lebensmittelpunkt dauerhaft oder temporär (mindestens für ein Jahr) in die Herkunftsländer (ihrer Eltern/Großeltern) verlagern. Diese Verlagerung des Lebensmittelpunktes ins Herkunftsland unterscheidet Rückkehr von anderen Formen internationaler Mobilität wie kurzfristigen Urlaubsaufenthalten im Herkunftsland oder Geschäftsreisen dorthin. Bei einem Umzug ins Herkunftsland wird davon ausgegangen, dass mittel- bis langfristige ökonomische und soziale Eingliederung im Rückkehrkontext angestrebt wird und somit eine potenzielle Niederlassungsabsicht besteht.

### Faktoren einer Rückkehrentscheidung

Der Migrationstheoretiker Ernest George Ravenstein (1885) wies als erster darauf hin, dass Migrationsentscheidungen von Push- und von Pull-Faktoren

beeinflusst werden. Das Push-Pull-Modell wird oft bei ökonomischen und soziologischen Erklärungsansätzen der Migrationsentscheidungen verwendet.<sup>8</sup> Als Push-Faktoren (abstoßende Faktoren) werden dabei die Umstände in den Herkunftsländern zusammengefasst, die Menschen dazu veranlassen, ihre Heimat zu verlassen. Pull-Faktoren (anziehende Faktoren) sind Bedingungen in den Einwanderungsländern, welche für die Wahl der Wanderungszielstaaten ausschlaggebend sind. Die theoretische Modellierung von Push- und Pull-Erklärungen internationaler Migration setzt häufig auf der Makroebene an. Die Modelle identifizieren normalerweise demographische, ökonomische, politische und ökologische Faktoren, welche die Abwanderung aus den Herkunftsregionen in bestimmte Zielregionen fördern (Schmid 2010; Schmid 2012; de Haas 2011). Makrotheoretische Push-Pull-Modelle werden allerdings als deterministisch kritisiert. Sie würden die individuellen Wanderungsentscheidungen als ein bloßes Resultat struktureller Einflüsse sehen und somit die Entscheider – die betroffenen Migranten – als „Marionetten“ der Makrostrukturen porträtieren (de Haas 2011: 8).

Parallel zur makrotheoretischen Diskussion wurden in den 1980er und 1990er Jahren individuelle Migrationsentscheidungen in Push-Pull-Modelle integriert. Im Rahmen der neo-klassischen Ökonomie wurde argumentiert, dass Wanderungsentscheidungen eine rationale Handlungsstrategie der Einkommens- und Nutzenmaximierung darstellen. Demnach würden potenzielle Migranten eine Kosten-Nutzen-Rechnung aufstellen und sich anhand dessen für oder gegen eine Wanderung entscheiden. Das Kosten-Nutzen-Kalkül beziehe sich dabei vor allem auf das Errechnen einer möglichen Einkommenssteigerung im Zuge der Zuwanderung (Borjas 1987). In den 1990er Jahren wurde dieses neo-klassische Migrationsentscheidungsmodell im Rahmen des Ansatzes „Neue Ökonomie der Arbeitsmigration“ (NÖA) weiterentwickelt.

Der NÖA-Ansatz sieht die Migrationsentscheidung nicht als eine individuelle Kosten-Nutzen-Rechnung, sondern als eine Entscheidung des gesamten Haushalts (einer Familie oder eines erweiterten Verwandtschaftsnetzwerks). Die Migrationsentscheidung ist demnach dann wahrscheinlich, wenn durch die Migration die Risiken des Einkommensausfalls für den gesamten Haushalt vermieden werden können. Im Rahmen des NÖA-Ansatzes wird zudem diskutiert, inwiefern sich die soziostrukturellen Charakteristika von Individuen auf die Migrationsentscheidung auswirken. So wird postuliert,

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8 Vgl. beispielsweise Haug 2000b; Constant/Massey 2002; Currie 2007.

dass nicht lediglich die objektiven Einkommensunterschiede zwischen dem Herkunfts- und Einwanderungsland, sondern die Ausstattung der Personen mit Humankapital einerseits (Bauer/Zimmermann 1999)<sup>9</sup> und die relative Unzufriedenheit mit der Situation im Herkunftsland andererseits (Stark/Taylor 1991)<sup>10</sup> die Migrationsentscheidung bestimmen.

In der aktuellen Theoriediskussion werden die Push-Pull-Theorien der Migration jedoch dafür kritisiert, dass sie ausschließlich auf die ökonomischen Entscheidungsaspekte fokussieren (de Haas 2011: 14). Dabei würden soziale Entscheidungsfaktoren aus dem Blick geraten. In diesem Zusammenhang wird auf die Rolle der Netzwerkeffekte bei Migrationsentscheidungen hingewiesen. Die sozialen Netzwerke von potenziellen Migranten, insbesondere zu bereits migrierten Personen, dienen als wichtige Informationsgrundlagen und Unterstützungsquellen und erleichtern damit eine Wanderungsentscheidung (Massey et al. 1993). Zudem wird argumentiert, dass sowohl die neo-klassische Ökonomie als auch der NÖA-Ansatz die subjektive Perspektive der Betroffenen nicht berücksichtigt. Somit werden zwei wichtige Entscheidungsfaktoren vernachlässigt: die subjektive Einschätzung der eigenen Fähigkeiten (capabilities) und die individuellen Aufstiegserwartungen (aspirations). Hein de Haas führt dazu aus, dass Menschen dann migrieren, wenn sie ihre Lebenssituation verändern möchten, sich in einem anderen Land bessere Chancen ausrechnen und zudem Fähigkeiten und Ressourcen besitzen, um ihre Migrationsentscheidung zu realisieren (de Haas 2011: 16). Theoriemodelle würden erst dann eine angemessene Erklärung von modernen Migrationsprozessen liefern, wenn sie diese subjektiven Aspekte einer Wanderungsentscheidung abbilden würden, so die Schlussfolgerung von de Haas.

Auch die Rückkehrentscheidung kann grundsätzlich im Rahmen des Push-Pull-Modells betrachtet werden. Push-Faktoren sind die Umstände, die Migranten veranlassen, ihren Aufenthalt im Einwanderungsland zu beenden. Als Pull-Faktoren gelten Anreize im Herkunftsland, die Migranten zu einer Rückkehr motivieren (Gmelch 1980). Ähnlich den klassischen Modellen einer

9 Grundsätzlich gilt die Annahme: Je höher die Bildung, desto wahrscheinlicher ist die Mobilitätsbereitschaft der Individuen, da Personen mit höheren Bildungsabschlüssen davon ausgehen, dass ihr Humankapital in den Einwanderungsländern besser entlohnt wird als in den Herkunftsländern.

10 Die relative Unzufriedenheit (relative Deprivation) entsteht aufgrund eines individuellen Vergleichs eines realen Einkommens einer Person im Herkunftsland mit einem möglichen Einkommen, das die vergleichbaren Berufsgruppen sowohl im Herkunfts- als auch im Einwanderungsland erzielen können.

Migrationsentscheidung diskutiert man in der Rückkehrforschung meist die Rolle ökonomischer Pull-Push-Faktoren, etwa das Erreichen der individuellen Sparziele im Einwanderungsland oder die ökonomischen Anreize in den Herkunftsländern (Borjas 1987; Constant/Massey 2002; Adda et al. 2006). Es wird aber auch hier auf die Bedeutung sozialer Aspekte, wie etwa auf den Einfluss der sozialen Netzwerke (Haug 2000a) oder auf die Ausstattung der Rückkehrer mit Ressourcen (Cassarino 2004), hingewiesen. Sowohl soziale Unterstützungsstrukturen im Herkunftsland als auch das Vorhandensein individueller Ressourcen – Qualifikationen, Sprachkenntnisse oder anderer Fähigkeiten – können die Rückkehrentscheidung maßgeblich beeinflussen.

Basierend auf den Erkenntnissen der aktuellen Migrations- und Rückkehrforschung wird **eine differenzierte Betrachtung der Rückkehrmotive** vorgenommen. Ein Rückkehrentschluss wird – so die Ausgangsthese – sowohl vor dem Hintergrund ökonomischer Erwägungen als auch unter Berücksichtigung der sozialen Aspekte (wie etwa familiärer Verpflichtungen im Einwanderungsland und sozialer Unterstützungsstrukturen im Rückkehrkontext) getroffen. Auch die individuelle Einschätzung der Verwertbarkeit eigener Kompetenzen und Fähigkeiten im Rückkehrkontext kann bei den Entscheidungsfindungsprozessen eine wichtige Rolle spielen und wird deshalb in dieser Studie eingehend diskutiert.

### Reintegration und Nachhaltigkeit der Rückkehr

Neben der Frage nach den Faktoren einer Rückkehrentscheidung beschäftigt sich die aktuelle Forschung mit den Auswirkungen der Rückkehr. Dabei geht es vor allem darum, inwiefern Rückwanderung die ökonomische Entwicklung der betroffenen Regionen beeinflusst (Müller 2005; Nordman/Gubert 2008; Schaland 2008; Cassarino 2008; King/Vullnetari 2009; Pinger 2010). Diese Arbeiten knüpfen an die frühere Forschung zur ökonomischen Wiedereingliederung – Reintegration – der Rückkehrer an. Sie analysierte den Zusammenhang zwischen angespartem Kapital und ökonomischer Situation der Rückkehrer in den Rückkehrregionen (Athukorala 1990; Merkle 1992).

Parallel zu Studien über die ökonomischen Auswirkungen der Rückkehr werden weitere Reintegrationsaspekte thematisiert. Die Forschungen beziehen sich einerseits auf die strukturelle Reintegration: etwa auf die Beteiligung der Rückkehrer in den Arbeitsmärkten (Pseiridis/Lianos 2009) oder in den Bildungssystemen (Hönekopp 1987; Bruer et al. 2003) der Rückkehrregionen. Ferner wird die soziale Reintegration und dabei insbesondere die Bedeutung sozialer Kontakte im Rückkehrkontext thematisiert (Stepputat 2004; Stamm 2006; Reynolds 2008). Nicht zuletzt werden die Zufriedenheit der Betroffenen

mit ihrer Lebenssituation analysiert und darauf basierend ihre subjektiven Identitätswürfe beschrieben (De Bree et al. 2010).

In den aktuellen Reintegrationsstudien wird zudem die Frage der Nachhaltigkeit aufgeworfen (Carling 2001; Black et al. 2004; Black/Gent 2006). Für eine Reihe von Forschungsarbeiten gilt Rückkehr erst dann als nachhaltig, wenn eine dauerhafte Niederlassung in der Rückkehrregion erfolgt. Dies sei nur dann möglich, wenn die Reintegration erfolgreich verlaufen sei und die Rückkehrer mit ihrer Lebenssituation zufrieden seien.

In den nachfolgenden Analysen wird **Reintegration als eine individuelle Inklusionsstrategie im Rückkehrkontext** verstanden. Untersucht werden, mit anderen Worten, die Bemühungen der Betroffenen, in ihren Rückkehrorten eine zufriedenstellende materielle und soziale Lebensgrundlage zu schaffen. Dabei wird insbesondere auf die Bedeutung des im Einwanderungsland angesparten ökonomischen Kapitals sowie der erworbenen formellen und informellen Qualifikationen<sup>11</sup> und auf die sozialen Unterstützungsleistungen seitens der Verwandten und Bekannten eingegangen. Ausschlaggebend für die Bewertung des Reintegrationserfolges ist die persönliche Zufriedenheit der Rückkehrer mit ihrer sozialen Positionierung im Rückkehrkontext. Um der Frage nach der **Nachhaltigkeit der Rückkehr** nachzugehen, werden die Weiterwanderungspläne der Rückkehrer erhoben. In diesem Zusammenhang wird diskutiert, inwiefern die Weiterwanderungspläne von der aktuellen Situation der Rückkehrer (ob zufriedenstellend oder völlig inakzeptabel) abhängen.

## 1.2 Die Untersuchungsregionen

Bei der Auswahl der Regionen für die Befragung der Rückkehrer war ausschlaggebend, dass diese eine migrationspolitische Bedeutung für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland besitzen. Zudem wurden die Regionen in Betracht gezogen, aus denen (historisch bzw. aktuell) unterschiedliche Zuwanderergruppen – ausländische Arbeitnehmer, Spätaussiedler, Heirats- und Bil-

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11 Als formelle Qualifikationen werden vor allem Kenntnisse und Fähigkeiten bezeichnet, die durch Bildungsinstitutionen (in Form von Diplomen, Ausbildungsurkunden, formellen Nachweisen der Sprachkenntnis usw.) zertifiziert sind. Zu informellen Qualifikationen gehören faktische, jedoch durch formelle Zertifikate nicht nachgewiesene Sprachkenntnisse (beispielsweise die Mehrsprachigkeit im Alltag), Berufserfahrungen (ausgeübte Tätigkeiten im Berufsleben) und soziale Kompetenzen.

dungsmigranten sowie Flüchtlinge – nach Deutschland kamen und dementsprechend auch unterschiedliche Gruppen von Zuwanderern zurückkehrten. Im Ergebnis fiel die Wahl auf die Türkei, die Russische Föderation und Georgien.

Die intensive Migrationsbeziehung Deutschlands zur Türkei fußt in starkem Maß auf dem Anwerbevertrag für ausländische Arbeitnehmer von 1961. Nach dem Anwerbestopp von 1973 hielt der Zuzug aus der Türkei durch den Nachzug von Familienangehörigen weiter an. Gegenwärtig nimmt die Zuwanderung aus der Türkei vielfältige Formen an. So kommen türkeistämmige Ehegatten zu ihren Partnern nach Deutschland, aber auch Studierende, Forscher und selbstständige Unternehmer sowie hochqualifizierte und qualifizierte Fachkräfte (BMI/BAMF 2012). Ende 2011 stellten Staatsangehörige aus der Türkei mit 1.607.161 Personen die größte ausländische Personengruppe in Deutschland. Dies entspricht einem Anteil von 23,2 % an allen ausländischen Staatsangehörigen (BMI/BAMF 2012: 164). Laut den Daten des Mikrozensus lebten 2011 2.956.000 Personen mit türkischem Migrationshintergrund in Deutschland.<sup>12</sup> Davon wiesen 49,6 % keine eigene Migrationserfahrung auf. Es handelt sich hier also um in Deutschland geborene Personen, die zur zweiten bzw. dritten Generation der türkeistämmigen Einwanderer gehören.

Die deutschen amtlichen Statistiken zum Wanderungsgeschehen zwischen Deutschland und der Türkei zeigen ein relativ hohes Niveau jährlicher Zuzüge, das sich in den letzten Jahren jedoch abgeflacht hat. Da die jährlichen Fortzüge lange deutlich darunter lagen, ergab sich eine relativ niedrige Rückkehrquote und zwischen 1974 und 2006 ein deutlicher Zuwanderungsüberschuss (positiver Wanderungssaldo) (Haug/Rühl 2008). Seit 2006 ziehen jedoch mehr Personen aus Deutschland in die Türkei fort als umgekehrt, so dass der Wanderungssaldo negativ geworden ist (vgl. Tabelle 1).<sup>13</sup>

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12 Im Mikrozensus werden seit 2005 Personen mit Migrationshintergrund erfasst. Dadurch werden zusätzlich zum Ausländerbestand auch Zahlen zu Personen erhoben, die zwar nach Deutschland migriert sind, jedoch die deutsche Staatsbürgerschaft angenommen haben und somit in den Ausländerstatistiken nicht mehr erscheinen. Zudem werden unter dem Begriff „Personen mit Migrationshintergrund“ auch diejenigen erfasst, die keine eigene Migrationserfahrung aufweisen, bei denen jedoch mindestens ein Elternteil nach Deutschland eingewandert ist (vgl. hierzu BMI/BAMF 2012: 203).

13 Die auffällig hohen Fortzugszahlen 2008/2009 können in Teilen durch Abmeldungen von Amts wegen bedingt sein, die sich durch die Einführung der persönlichen Steuer-Identifikationsnummer 2008 und in der Folge umfangreichen Bereinigungen der Melderegister ergeben haben. Das heißt, dass die tatsächliche Zahl der Fortzüge für diese Jahre unklar ist (BMI/BAMF 2012: 14).

**Tabelle 1: Wanderungsgeschehen zwischen der Türkei und Deutschland**

Jahr	Zuzüge (gesamt)	Fortzüge			Saldo
		Gesamt	Deutscher	Nicht Deutscher	
2000	50.499	40.369	1.339	39.030	+10.130
2001	56.101	37.268	1.384	35.884	+18.833
2002	58.648	36.740	1.307	35.433	+21.908
2003	49.699	35.612	1.602	34.010	+14.087
2004	42.222	37.058	2.125	34.933	+5.164
2005	36.341	34.595	2.795	31.800	+1.746
2006	31.449	33.229	3.451	29.778	-1.780
2007	28.926	32.171	3.826	28.345	-3.245
2008	28.742	38.889	4.609	34.280	-10.147
2009	29.544	39.615	4.633	34.982	-10.071
2010	30.171	36.033	4.735	31.298	-5.862
2011	31.021	32.756	5.285	27.471	-1.735

Quelle: Statistisches Bundesamt, verschiedene Jahrgänge

Der Blick auf die Fortzugszahlen allein deutscher Staatsbürger zeigt, dass die Türkei zu einem immer attraktiveren Wanderungsziel wird (vgl. Tabelle 1). Die Zahl der Fortzüge von Deutschen in die Türkei hat sich seit 1990 kontinuierlich erhöht und liegt 2011 bei 5.285 Personen (vgl. BMI/BAMF 2012: 231). Dabei kann davon ausgegangen werden, dass sich darunter in nicht unerheblichem Maß auch eingebürgerte Personen mit türkischem Migrationshintergrund der ersten und zweiten/dritten Zuwanderergeneration befinden. Die Zunahme der Ab- bzw. Rückwanderung in die Türkei spiegelt sich auch in den türkischen amtlichen Daten wider. Auch wenn es türkeistämmige Migration in andere europäische Staaten gegeben hat und gibt (z.B. Frankreich, Niederlande), stellen nach den Daten des türkischen Zensus 2000 „Rückkehrer aus Deutschland“ die zahlenmäßig größte Gruppe der Zuziehenden in die Türkei dar (Sirkeci et al. 2012).

Die Migrationsbeziehung zur Russischen Föderation ist seit der Nachkriegszeit stark durch die Zuwanderung von (Spät-)Aussiedlern und ihren Familienangehörigen geprägt. Im Zeitraum von 1990 bis 2011 wanderten etwa zweieinhalb Millionen Menschen im Rahmen des (Spät-)Aussiedlerzuzugs nach Deutschland ein (2.507.950). Seit 1990 stellen Personen aus der ehemaligen Sowjetunion die zahlenmäßig stärkste Gruppe unter allen zugewanderten (Spät-)Aussiedlern (BMI/BAMF 2012: 51). Zudem wanderten zwischen 1993

und 2011 insgesamt 205.216 jüdische Zuwanderer einschließlich ihrer Familienangehörigen aus der ehemaligen Sowjetunion nach Deutschland zu. Während die jährlichen Zuzugszahlen der Spätaussiedler und der jüdischen Zuwanderer in den letzten zehn Jahren kontinuierlich zurückgingen, etablierten sich in dieser Zeit andere Einwanderungsformen aus der Russischen Föderation nach Deutschland, etwa die Heiratsmigration und der Familiennachzug sowie die Migration von Studierenden und von Erwerbstätigen (BMI/BAMF 2012; Schmid 2012). Laut Daten des Mikrozensus lebten zum Ende 2011 1.227.000 Menschen mit russischem Migrationshintergrund in Deutschland (Statistisches Bundesamt 2012).

Die amtlichen Zu- und Fortzugsstatistiken zeigen, dass sich in den letzten Jahren sowohl die Fortzüge deutscher Staatsbürger als auch von Ausländern in die Russische Föderation auf einem stabilen Niveau eingependelt haben. Durch eine deutliche Reduktion der Zuzugszahlen hat sich jedoch der Wanderungssaldo kontinuierlich verringert, wobei nach wie vor zu beobachten ist, dass mehr Personen aus Russland nach Deutschland einwandern als umgekehrt (vgl. Tabelle 2).

**Tabelle 2: Wanderungsgeschehen zwischen der Russischen Föderation und Deutschland**

Jahr	Zuzüge (gesamt)	Fortzüge			Saldo
		Gesamt	Deutscher	Nicht Deutscher	
2000	72.152	12.670	1.286	11.384	+59.482
2001	78.979	13.468	1.440	12.028	+65.511
2002	77.403	14.923	1.710	13.213	+62.480
2003	67.289	14.849	1.854	12.995	+52.440
2004	58.594	15.234	2.314	12.920	+43.360
2005	42.980	14.341	2.423	11.918	+28.639
2006	23.241	13.867	2.634	11.233	+9.374
2007	20.487	12.922	2.695	10.227	+7.565
2008	18.611	16.399	3.299	13.100	+2.212
2009	18.615	15.455	2.780	12.675	+3.160
2010	18.671	13.466	2.530	10.936	+5.205
2011	19.696	12.272	2.404	9.868	+7.424

Quelle: Statistisches Bundesamt, verschiedene Jahrgänge



Setzt man die deutschen Daten in Bezug zu russischen Daten, fällt auf, dass die russischen Statistiken sehr viel weniger Zuzüge aus Deutschland in die Russische Föderation verzeichnen als die deutschen Statistiken angeben (vgl. Tabelle 3). Diese Differenz könnte daher rühren, dass sich russische Staatsbürger bei ihrem Wegzug aus Russland bei den Behörden nicht abmelden und entsprechend im Falle der Rückkehr nicht wieder anmelden müssen. Insofern geben die Zuzugszahlen der russischen Statistikbehörde möglicherweise lediglich den Zuzug deutscher Staatsbürger nach Russland wieder.<sup>14</sup> Dafür spricht, dass die Zahlen der in Deutschland verzeichneten Fortzüge nur von Deutschen in die Russische Föderation den russischen Zuzugszahlen durchaus entsprechen (vgl. Tabelle 3).

**Tabelle 3: Vergleich der Wanderungsstatistiken Deutschlands und der Russischen Föderation**

<b>Jahr</b>	<b>Fortzüge aus Deutschland - Gesamt (lt. deutschen Daten)</b>	<b>Fortzüge aus Deutschland von Deutschen (lt. deutschen Daten)</b>	<b>Zuzüge aus Deutschland in die Russische Föderation (lt. russischen Daten)</b>
2000	12.670	1.286	1.753
2001	13.468	1.440	-//-
2002	14.923	1.710	-//-
2003	14.849	1.854	-//-
2004	15.234	2.314	-//-
2005	14.341	2.423	3.025
2006	13.867	2.634	2.900
2007	12.922	2.695	3.164
2008	16.399	3.299	3.134
2009	15.455	2.780	2.585
2010	13.466	2.530	2.621

Quelle: Statistisches Bundesamt /Rosstat

Aktuelle Forschungen weisen darauf hin, dass sowohl russischsprachige als auch türkeistämmige Migranten rege Beziehungen zu ihren Herkunftsländern aufrechterhalten (Kaya/Kentel 2005; Schönhuth 2006; Siegart 2008;

<sup>14</sup> Weder deutsche noch russische amtliche Wanderungsdaten lassen erkennen, inwiefern es sich bei den Wanderungen deutscher Staatsbürger um eingebürgerte Russen bzw. Spät-Aussiedler handelt.

Kühn 2010; Elitok/Straubhaar 2012). Vor dem Hintergrund dieser vielfältigen Beziehungen haben sich zwischen Deutschland und der Türkei sowie zwischen Deutschland und der Russischen Föderation komplexe Migrationssysteme herausgebildet.<sup>15</sup>

Im Unterschied zur Migration aus der Türkei und aus Russland bewegt sich die Zuwanderung aus Georgien nach Deutschland in einer vergleichsweise überschaubaren Größenordnung (zwischen 2.000 und 3.000 Personen jährlich). Dennoch ist Deutschland damit nach den USA und Griechenland das dritt wichtigste Zielland für Abwanderung aus Georgien. Schätzungen zufolge leben etwa 7 % aller Auswanderer aus Georgien in Deutschland.<sup>16</sup> Die Zahl der georgischen Staatsbürger in Deutschland bleibt seit 2004 auf einem konstanten, relativ niedrigen Niveau von rund 14.000 Personen (BMI/BAMF 2012: 249-250). Laut den Daten des Ausländerzentralregisters kommen die meisten Zuwanderer aus Georgien zu Studienzwecken nach Deutschland. Auch wenn Studierende nach dem geltenden Aufenthaltsrecht die Möglichkeit haben, nach Beendigung des Studiums in Deutschland zum Zwecke der Arbeitsaufnahme zu verbleiben (vgl. Sykes/Chaoimh 2012; Mayer et al. 2012), handelt es sich bei bildungsbezogenen Migrationsformen in der Regel um temporäre Wanderungen.

Zwischen 2000 und 2011 stellten 8.334 georgische Staatsbürger einen Asylantrag in Deutschland. Somit kamen in dieser Zeit 1 % bis 2 % aller Asylbewerber in Deutschland aus Georgien (BMI/BAMF 2012: 218-219). Die Anerkennungsquote bei Asylanträgen georgischer Staatsbürger betrug in dieser Zeit zwischen 0,8 % und 1,3 %.<sup>17</sup> Vor diesem Hintergrund kann man von einer relativ hohen Rückwanderung dieser Personengruppe ausgehen.

In der Tat zeigen die amtlichen Wanderungsdaten eine hohe Rückwanderungsquote. Rund 85 % der in den Jahren 2000 bis 2011 zugewanderten Personen georgischer Staatsangehörigkeit verließen Deutschland in dieser Zeit wieder (vgl. Tabelle 4).

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15 Entsprechend den Modellen internationaler Wanderungsbewegungen gehen zahlenmäßig bedeutende Zuwanderungen mit hohen sozialen Verflechtungen zwischen Einwanderungs- und Herkunftsländern und folglich mit einer erhöhten internationalen Mobilität einschließlich Rückwanderungsbewegungen einher (Massey et al. 2002).

16 Siehe den Beitrag von Zurabishvili/Zurabishvili in diesem Band.

17 Amtliche Daten des Bundesamtes für Migration und Flüchtlinge.

**Tabelle 4: Wanderungsgeschehen zwischen Georgien und Deutschland**

Jahr	Zuzüge	Fortzüge	Saldo
2000	2.848	2.145	+703
2001	3.805	2.250	+1.555
2002	4.317	2.690	+1.627
2003	3.948	3.069	+ 879
2004	3.329	3.305	+ 24
2005	2.745	2.524	+ 221
2006	2.099	2.376	-227
2007	1.615	1.909	-294
2008	1.693	2.015	-322
2009	2.239	2.026	+213
2010	2.377	2.147	+230
2011	2.262	1.606	+656

Quelle: Statistisches Bundesamt, verschiedene Jahrgänge

Das migrationspolitische Interesse an Georgien ergibt sich weniger aus dem im Vergleich zur Türkei oder zu Russland geringeren Umfang der Migration als der im November 2009 zwischen der Europäischen Union und Georgien geschlossenen Mobilitätspartnerschaft. Im Rahmen dessen bemüht sich die Europäische Union um die Stärkung der Kapazitäten Georgiens bei der Steuerung legaler Migrationsbewegungen. Gemeinsam mit Belgien, Frankreich, Italien, Niederlande, Polen, Rumänien und Schweden engagiert sich die Bundesrepublik Deutschland insbesondere bei der Förderung der Reintegration von georgischen Rückkehrern aus den europäischen Mitgliedstaaten.<sup>18</sup>

### 1.3 Auswahl der Interviewpartner

#### Die Zusammenstellung des Samples und der Befragungsverlauf

Die hier vorgelegten Analysen basieren auf Interviews mit 90 Rückkehrern und deren Familienangehörigen, die im Zeitraum von Juli 2008 bis

<sup>18</sup> Im Rahmen der Mobilitätspartnerschaft EU-Georgien startete im Dezember 2010 das auf drei Jahre angelegte EU-geförderte Projekt „Zielgerichtete Initiative Georgien“ (Targeted Initiative Georgia). Für weitere Informationen zum Projekt siehe <http://www.bamf.de/DE/Rueckkehrfoerderung/ProjektGeorgia/rueckkehrprojekt-georgia-node.html> (12.09.2012).

Juli 2009 von externen Kooperationspartnern durchgeführt wurden.<sup>19</sup> Im ersten Auswertungsschritt wurden daraus 71 Untersuchungsfälle gebildet, zu denen entweder individuelle Rückkehrer oder zurückgekehrte Familien (ein Hauptbefragter und einzelne mitbefragte Familienmitglieder) zählen. Damit ergaben sich für die Länderanalysen 22 Fälle in der Türkei, 21 Fälle in Russland und 28 Fälle in Georgien.

Die Suche nach den möglichen Interviewpartnern verlief in den jeweiligen Untersuchungsregionen nach folgendem Verfahren: Zunächst wurden Migrationsexperten aus Forschung, Verwaltung und Politik befragt, um Informationen zu zentralen Trends der Rückwanderung aus Deutschland zu gewinnen. Anhand dieser Informationen und basierend auf bereits vorliegenden Forschungsergebnissen zur Rückkehr aus Deutschland wurden Untersuchungsorte ausgewählt, in denen sich vermutlich vermehrt Rückkehrer aus Deutschland niedergelassen hatten. Dort wurde mithilfe verschiedener Multiplikatoren (z.B. Selbstorganisationen von Rückkehrern, Hilfsorganisationen oder Rückkehrberatungsstellen), aber auch mittels der Schneeballmethode nach den geeigneten Interviewpartnern gesucht.

Mit den Rückkehrern wurden leitfadenbasierte qualitative Interviews geführt.<sup>20</sup> Alle Gespräche wurden aufgezeichnet und transkribiert. Die meisten Interviews wurden in den jeweiligen Sprachen – türkisch, russisch und georgisch – geführt. In einzelnen Fällen erklärten sich die Rückkehrer auch zu einem Gespräch in deutscher Sprache bereit. Um die länderübergreifende Analyse des Gesamtamples zu ermöglichen, wurden von den Kooperationspartnern ausführliche Zusammenfassungen der Interviews in deutscher bzw. englischer Sprache entsprechend eines vorgegebenen Leitfadens angefertigt. Die Auswertung der Interviews erfolgte nach Grundsätzen des induktiven Analyseverfahrens in der qualitativen Sozialforschung.<sup>21</sup>

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19 Die türkische Befragung wurde von Prof. Dr. Helga Rittersberger-Tiliç (Middle East Technical University Ankara) geleitet. In Georgien führte das Forschungsteam von Dr. Tinatin Zurabishvili und Dr. Tamara Zurabishvili (Caucasus Research Ressource Centre bzw. Tbilisi State University) die Befragung durch. Die russische Teilstudie wurde von Dr. Markus Kaiser (Zentrum für Deutschland- und Europastudien der Staatlichen Universität in St. Petersburg) geleitet. Vgl. die jeweiligen Länderberichte in diesem Band.

20 Zur verwendeten Interviewtechnik siehe Witzel 2000.

21 Die Befragung in Russland bediente sich der Auswertungsinstrumente einer Multi-Sited Ethnography. Die türkischen und die georgischen Interviews wurden mithilfe der thematischen Datenanalyse ausgewertet. Für genauere Informationen zum methodischen Vorgehen in den jeweiligen Untersuchungsregionen siehe die Länderanalysen in diesem Band.

### Zur Auswahl der Interviewteilnehmer nach dem Kriterium „Unterschiedliche Rückkehrmotive“

Um verschiedene Rückkehrmotive zu erfassen, wurden Personen gesucht, die sich aus unterschiedlichen Gründen in Deutschland aufgehalten hatten (vgl. Tabelle 5). Diese Samplingstrategie beruht auf der Annahme, dass Rückkehrentscheidungsprozesse von ursprünglichen Einwanderungsgründen beeinflusst sind (King 2000). Es erscheint plausibel, dass Menschen, die aus wirtschaftlichen oder aus politischen Gründen ihr Herkunftsland verlassen, zum Zwecke einer Ausbildung nach Deutschland gehen oder ihren Familienmitgliedern folgen, unterschiedliche Bleibeabsichten haben und folglich aus unterschiedlichen Gründen eine Rückkehrentscheidung treffen.

**Tabelle 5:** Charakteristika der Befragten nach Aufenthaltsgründen

	Einwanderung mit langfristiger Niederlassungsabsicht			Angeworbene Arbeitskräfte mit potenzieller Rückkehrabsicht und ihre Nachkommen		Temporäre Wanderungsformen	
	Spät-aussiedler und Ehepartner	Jüdische Zuwanderer und Ehepartner	Heiratsmigranten/-innen	1. Generation	2./3. Generation	Asylbewerber	Bildungsmigranten
<b>Türkei</b>	-//-	-//-	-//-	10	10	1	1
<b>Russland</b>	10	3	3	-//-	-//-	2	3
<b>Georgien</b>	-//-	-//-	1	-//-	-//-	7	20
<b>Gesamtzahl der Fälle</b>	17			20		10	24

Quelle: Eigene Zusammenstellung auf Basis der Interviewdaten

Die Dauer des Aufenthaltes im Einwanderungsland ist ein weiterer wichtiger Einflussfaktor für die Rückkehrentscheidung. Haug und Rühl (2008) gehen davon aus, dass die Wahrscheinlichkeit einer Rückkehr mit zunehmender Aufenthaltsdauer allgemein abnimmt. Grundsätzlich wird in der Rückkehrforschung jedoch argumentiert, dass eine Rückkehr in verschiedenen Lebensphasen mehr oder weniger wahrscheinlich ist. Zum Beispiel sind die Bildungs-, Heirats- oder Karrierepläne junger Migranten oft mit räumlicher Mobilität, einschließlich der Möglichkeit einer Rückwanderung, verbunden (Reagan/Olsen2000). Die Rückkehrwahrscheinlichkeit

steigt ferner bei älteren Migranten, da einige von ihnen ihren Lebensabend im Herkunftsland verbringen möchten (Kuhlenkaster/Steinhardt 2012).

Die im Rahmen des Forschungsprojekts gesammelten Daten erlauben eine vergleichende Betrachtung der Rückkehrmotive von Migranten, die in unterschiedlichen Lebensphasen einen Rückkehrentschluss getroffen haben. Im Gesamtsample findet sich eine ausreichende Fallzahl von Jugendlichen (fünf Fälle sind jünger als 25 Jahre) und von älteren Personen (sechs Fälle sind älter als 65 Jahre). Die meisten Befragten befinden sich allerdings im erwerbsfähigen Alter (zwischen 25 und 60 Jahre). Rund die Hälfte aller Befragten (52 %) hatte vor ihrer Rückkehr länger als drei Jahre bis maximal 24 Jahre in Deutschland gelebt. In dieser Gruppe befinden sich auch zehn Personen, die in Deutschland geboren bzw. vor ihrem sechsten Lebensjahr nach Deutschland eingereist sind und somit der zweiten bzw. dritten Zuwanderergeneration zugerechnet werden können. Die andere Hälfte der Befragten (48 %) hatte sich mindestens ein Jahr in Deutschland aufgehalten. Diese Befragten kamen im Zuge einer Heirat mit einem deutschen Staatsangehörigen, zum Zwecke einer Ausbildung oder haben in Deutschland einen Asylantrag gestellt.

### **Zur Auswahl der Interviewteilnehmer nach dem Kriterium „Freiwilligkeit der Rückkehrentscheidung“**

Analysen von Reintegrationsverläufen und der Nachhaltigkeit von Rückkehrentscheidungen liegen in der Regel Befragungen von freiwilligen Rückkehrern zugrunde. Studien zu zwangsweiser Rückkehr sind dagegen selten (Rogers 1984; Currie 2007).<sup>22</sup> Nichtsdestotrotz wird in der Forschungsdiskussion die These vertreten, dass die Reintegration von unfreiwillig zurückgekehrten Migranten problematisch verlaufe. Hingegen wiesen diejenigen, die sich für die Rückkehr freiwillig entscheiden würden, positive Integrationsverläufe auf und seien mit ihrer Lebenssituation zufriedener (Black et al. 2004; Gubert/Nordman 2008; Carling et al. 2011). Aus dieser Annahme folgt, dass sich freiwillige Rückkehrer eher dauerhaft in den Rückkehrregionen niederlassen, während unfreiwillig Zurückgekehrte eher bereit sind, erneut zu wandern. Entsprechend wäre eine Rückkehrentscheidung, die nicht freiwillig getroffen wurde, nicht als nachhaltig zu betrachten. Um auch diese Hypothese in den Analysen der Reintegrationsverläufe zu berücksichtigen, wurde bei der

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22 Ausnahmen sind beispielsweise Sieber/Scholer 2001; von Lersner 2008.

Auswahl der Interviewpartner besonderes Augenmerk auf den Grad der Freiwilligkeit der Rückkehrentscheidung gelegt.

Allerdings sind die in der Forschung verwendeten Unterscheidungen der freiwilligen/unfreiwilligen Rückkehrformen uneinheitlich. Sie beziehen sich meist auf die aufenthaltsrechtliche Situation der Migranten im Einwanderungsland vor der Ausreise (Currle 2007). Während einige Arbeiten lediglich Rückführung und Abschiebung als Formen der unfreiwilligen Rückkehr betrachten, da diese ohne Einwilligung des Rückkehrenden und ggf. unter Einsatz von Gewalt durchgeführt werden (Kreienbrink 2007), argumentieren andere Studien, dass alle Rückkehrformen, bei denen ein behördlicher Druck zur Ausreise besteht, unfreiwillig seien (Dünnwald 2008). Vor dem Hintergrund der fehlenden Trennschärfe des Begriffspaars (freiwillige/unfreiwillige Rückkehr) wurde in diesem Projekt der Grad der Freiwilligkeit der Rückkehrentscheidung genauer erfasst (vgl. Tabelle 6).

**Tabelle 6: Charakteristika der Befragten nach dem Freiwilligkeitsgrad der Rückkehrentscheidung**

		Rückkehrform	Anzahl der Fälle
<b>Grad der Freiwilligkeit</b>	<b>Unfreiwillig</b>	Zwangsweise Rückkehr durch Abschiebung/Rückführung	6
		Freiwillige Rückkehr nach der behördlichen Ausreiseaufforderung	10
		Freiwillige Rückkehr mit einem gültigen temporären Aufenthaltstitel (z.B. zu Studienzwecken)	27
		Freiwillige Rückkehr mit einem gültigen dauerhaften Aufenthaltstitel (z.B. Niederlassungserlaubnis)	19
	<b>Freiwillig</b>	Freiwillige Rückkehr mit einer deutschen Staatsangehörigkeit	9

Quelle: Eigene Darstellung auf Basis der Interviewdaten

Bei den befragten Rückkehrern, die abgeschoben bzw. zurückgeführt worden waren (8 %), handelt es sich ausschließlich um Asylbewerber, deren Asylantrag negativ beschieden worden war und die ausreisepflichtig waren. Nur in zwei Fällen hatten sie eine Duldung besessen. Eine weitere Gruppe von Befragten verließ Deutschland freiwillig, nachdem sie eine behördliche Ausreiseaufforderung bzw. eine Abschiebungsandrohung erhalten hatten

(14 %). Bei diesen Interviewpartnern handelt es sich zum einen um drei ausreisepflichtige Ausländer mit Duldung. Zum anderen gehörten in diese Gruppe mehrere Fälle von ausländischen Studierenden, deren Aufenthaltsstatus auslief und die keine Aussicht auf eine Verlängerung ihres Aufenthaltsstatus hatten. Hinzu kamen je ein Fall einer Heiratsmigrantin, deren Aufenthaltsgenehmigung aufgrund einer Scheidung erloschen war, und eines Arbeitsmigranten, der aufgrund illegaler Beschäftigung zur Ausreise aufgefordert worden war. Bei diesen Befragten wird angenommen, dass unmittelbarer behördlicher Ausreisedruck für ihre Rückkehrentscheidung ausschlaggebend gewesen ist. Deshalb wird in diesen Fällen ein niedriger Grad der Entscheidungsfreiheit unterstellt.

Ein erheblicher Teil der Befragten (38 %) hatte zum Zeitpunkt der Ausreise aus Deutschland einen temporären Aufenthaltstitel besessen. Dazu zählten Personen, die sich als Ehepartner von Spätaussiedlern, jüdischen Zuwanderern oder Deutschen in Deutschland aufhielten. Zwanzig der befragten Personen hatten zum Zeitpunkt der Ausreise einen Aufenthaltstitel zum Zweck des Studiums oder zu studienvorbereitenden Maßnahmen. Eine letzte Befragtengruppe hatte entweder eine Niederlassungserlaubnis in Deutschland (27 %) oder die deutsche Staatsangehörigkeit (13 %) erworben. Dazu gehörten sowohl türkeistämmige Arbeitsmigranten der ersten Generation, teilweise ihre Nachkommen der zweiten Generation, aber auch Ehepartner deutscher Staatsbürger sowie aus der Russischen Föderation zugewanderte Spät-Aussiedler bzw. deren Ehepartner. Alle diese Personen verließen Deutschland freiwillig aus eigener Motivation.



# 2

## Rückkehrmotive



Die Analyse der Rückkehrentscheidung nimmt ökonomische Rückkehrmotive in den Blick, wie etwa das Erreichen der individuellen Sparziele oder die ökonomischen Anreize in den Herkunftsländern sowie die Bedeutung sozialer Aspekte, wie etwa die Rolle der familiären Netzwerke. Unter Berücksichtigung dieser ökonomischen und sozialen Aspekte ergeben sich in den jeweiligen Ländern die folgenden Motivkonstellationen.

### 2.1 Rückkehr in die Türkei

In der Türkei wurden hauptsächlich zurückgekehrte Arbeitsmigranten und ihre Nachkommen befragt. Die Hälfte der Befragten kam während der Anwerbephase (1961-1973) oder später zum Zwecke der Arbeitsaufnahme. Zehn Personen gehörten der zweiten und dritten Zuwanderergeneration in Deutschland an, d. h. sie wurden entweder in Deutschland geboren oder kamen als Kinder im Zuge der Familienzusammenführung nach Deutschland.

#### **Relative Armut als Rückkehrmotiv bei älteren Migranten**

Im Unterschied zu Studien, in denen Rückkehr im Ruhestand als eine Form der Reaktivierung von Heimatbindungen verstanden wird, da berufliche und familiäre Verpflichtungen abnehmen (Krumme 2004), tritt bei den älteren Befragten in dieser Studie ökonomische Unsicherheit bzw. relative Armut in Deutschland als zentrales Rückkehrmotiv deutlich hervor. Mit einer Ausnahme waren alle älteren Befragten in Deutschland von Altersarmut bedroht. Sie hatten im rentennahen Alter ihre Arbeit verloren bzw. waren frühverrentet worden oder bezogen wegen langer Phasen der Arbeitslosigkeit im Lebenslauf nur niedrige Renten.

„Das Leben in Deutschland war sehr schön zu Zeiten der D-Mark. Als der Euro kam, ging es uns schlechter. Das Leben wurde viel teurer: die Gehälter sind dieselben geblieben und die Lebenskosten sind gestiegen... Ich ging aus gesundheitlichen Gründen in Rente und mein Einkommen sank dramatisch. Es war unmöglich, mit diesem Einkommen in Deutschland zu überleben und deshalb habe ich mich entschieden, in die Türkei zurückzukehren.“ (Männlich, erste Zuwanderergeneration, derzeit Rentner).

Im Laufe ihrer Berufstätigkeit hatten ältere Migranten meist in Immobilien in der Türkei investiert, die sie nach ihrer Rückkehr mietfrei beziehen konnten. Einige hatten zudem in Kleinunternehmen investiert, die von Verwandten geführt worden waren. Die Rückkehrer hofften, von Wechselkursvorteilen, niedrigen Wohnkosten und zusätzlichen Einkünften aus ihren Kleininvestitionen zu profitieren bzw. von ihren in der Türkei ansässigen Familienmitgliedern unterstützt zu werden. Zudem versprachen sich ältere Menschen eine leichtere soziale Einbindung „in ihrer Heimat“. Somit stellte die Rückkehrentscheidung eine Strategie dar, auch im Alter ein Leben in Würde führen zu können.

### **Bildungsaspirationen der zweiten/dritten Generation als Rückkehrmotiv**

Eine weitere Rückkehrergruppe bilden türkeistämmige Arbeitnehmer, die zum Zeitpunkt der Rückkehr zwar eine stabile Position auf dem deutschen Arbeitsmarkt hatten, sich aber dennoch für die Rückkehr in die Türkei entschieden. Der Beweggrund war hier die Sorge um die Zukunft ihrer Kinder.<sup>23</sup> Insbesondere Befürchtungen, dass den Kindern eine nur wenig erfolgreiche Schulkarriere bevorstünde, wofür die Eltern vor allem ethnische Diskriminierungen im Schulkontext verantwortlich machten, motivierten diese Befragten, ihren Lebensmittelpunkt in die Türkei zu verlagern. Hinzu kam die Hoffnung, dass sich die Kinder „in ihrer eigenen Kultur“ besser entfalten könnten.

Ein Teil der Befragten der zweiten/dritten Generation entschied sich, ihre Bildungskarriere in der Türkei fortzusetzen, statt in Deutschland einen Schul- bzw. einen anderweitigen Bildungsabschluss anzustreben. Im Gegensatz zur oben beschriebenen Gruppe der Rückkehrer der ersten

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23 Zu ähnlichen Ergebnissen kommt Christian Dustmann (2003) in einer quantitativen Auswertung der Daten des Sozioökonomischen Panels. Er stellt fest, dass Sorgen der Eltern über Bildungs- und Karriereoptionen ihrer Kinder einen Einfluss auf die Rückkehrentscheidung von Migrantenfamilien ausüben.

Generation, die wegen ihrer Kinder zurückkehrten, trafen diese jungen Menschen den Rückkehrentschluss selbst bzw. nahmen maßgeblich auf die Entscheidung der Familie Einfluss. Zu dieser Gruppe gehören beispielsweise Schüler, die ihre Aussichten auf eine Hochschulausbildung in Deutschland als gering einschätzten (Haupt- und Realschüler).

„Ich war in der fünften Klasse an einer weiterführenden Schule, als wir die Entscheidung getroffen haben... Und eigentlich, mein einziges Problem in Deutschland war die Schule. Ich habe mich angestrengt, aber der Lehrer hat trotzdem immer gesagt: „Du wirst es hier [in dieser Schule] nicht schaffen“. Und deshalb sind wir – meine gesamte Familie – zurückgegangen.“ (Männlich, geboren in Deutschland, abgeschlossenes Studium in der Türkei, derzeit Angestellter im Unternehmen des Vaters).

Diese Befragten berichten von einem subjektiven Gefühl der Benachteiligung im deutschen Schulsystem aufgrund von Sprachbarrieren in der Phase des Einstiegs ins Schulsystem (im Grundschulalter), einer fehlenden Lernunterstützung seitens der Eltern, aber auch der Unterschätzung ihrer Fähigkeiten seitens der Lehrer. Gleichzeitig wurde das türkische Bildungssystem von ihnen als relativ offen gegenüber den Rückkehrern der zweiten und dritten Generation eingeschätzt.

### **Rückkehr aus persönlichen bzw. familiären Gründen**

Schließlich lässt sich unter den türkeistämmigen Rückkehrern eine kleine Gruppe von gut qualifizierten Personen identifizieren, die in Deutschland geboren bzw. aufgewachsen sind. Diese Personen haben in Deutschland erfolgreich die Schule absolviert und eine berufliche Ausbildung abgeschlossen.<sup>24</sup> Zwei Befragte hatten zudem erste Berufserfahrungen in Deutschland gesammelt. Ihre Rückkehrentscheidung war weder von ökonomischen Motiven noch Benachteiligungserfahrungen im Bildungssystem oder auf dem Arbeitsmarkt beeinflusst. Vielmehr waren es private bzw. familiäre Gründe, die sie veranlassten, sich in der Türkei niederzulassen. Dazu gehörte vor allem

24 Im türkischen Sample wurden Rückkehrer der zweiten und dritten Generation befragt, die eine berufliche Ausbildung in Deutschland abgeschlossen haben. Rückkehrer der zweiten und dritten Generation mit einer in Deutschland abgeschlossenen Hochschulausbildung sind dagegen nicht befragt worden. Diese Verzerrung der Stichprobe zugunsten der qualifizierten, jedoch nicht hochqualifizierten Rückkehrer liegt unter anderem an der Auswahl der Befragungsregionen (Ankara und Antalya) (vgl. dazu Baraulina/Kreienbrink 2013).

die Eheschließung mit einem türkeistämmigen Partner. Enge Bindungen an Verwandte und Bekannte in der Türkei wurden als weiterer Rückkehrgrund genannt.<sup>25</sup> Zudem spielten weitere persönliche Motive eine Rolle – von der Abenteuerlust bis hin zum Wunsch nach Unabhängigkeit von den Eltern.

„Mein Mann ist ein Verwandter von uns, wir sind jedoch nicht blutsverwandt. Er ist ein Cousin der Stiefmutter meines Vaters. Zunächst wollte ich ihn nicht heiraten. Damals habe ich noch nicht an eine Heirat gedacht. Nach einiger Zeit habe ich aber seinen Antrag akzeptiert... Eigentlich wollte ich, dass er nach Deutschland kommt, aber da gab es einige Zweifel, ob er mich nur deshalb heiratet, um nach Deutschland einreisen zu dürfen. Da hat er aber gesagt, dass er nie daran gedacht hat, nach Deutschland zu gehen. Und so bin ich zurückgekehrt.“ (Weiblich, geboren in Deutschland, abgeschlossene Ausbildung in Deutschland, derzeit angestellt in einem türkischen Unternehmen).

## 2.2 Rückkehr nach Russland

In Russland gehörten ca. drei Viertel aller Befragten (16 Personen) denjenigen Zuwanderergruppen an, die mit einer dauerhaften Niederlassungsabsicht nach Deutschland eingewandert sind. Sie kamen als Spät-Aussiedler, als jüdische Zuwanderer und aufgrund von Heirat mit einem deutschen Ehepartner. Lediglich drei Befragte gingen zum Studium nach Deutschland. Zwei weitere Befragte hatten einen Asylantrag gestellt, der negativ beschieden worden war. Mit Ausnahme der Asylbewerber, die Deutschland zwangsweise verlassen mussten, war für die Mehrheit der russischsprachigen Befragten die Erfahrungen des relativen sozialen Abstiegs ausschlaggebend für ihren Rückkehrentschluss.

### Sozialer Abstieg als Rückkehrmotiv

90 % aller befragten Rückkehrer nach Russland konnten höhere Bildungsabschlüsse (von einem Gymnasialabschluss bis hin zum abgeschlossenen Studium) vorweisen. Über die Hälfte der Befragten hatte vor ihrer Zuwanderung

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25 Es ist augenfällig, dass sich unter den türkischen Befragten insbesondere Frauen entschlossen, aus persönlichen und familiären Gründen in die Türkei zu gehen. Die Daten dieses Forschungsprojektes erlauben jedoch keine systematische geschlechterdifferenzierte Betrachtung der Rückwanderungsmotive. Der Einfluss der Geschlechterrollen auf das Rückwanderungsverhalten von Migrant\*innen ist eine kaum erforschte, dennoch relevante Frage für die künftige Rückkehrforschung.

nach Deutschland langjährige berufliche Erfahrungen als Ingenieure, Ärzte, Lehrer, Journalisten usw. gesammelt. Eine Beschäftigung unter dem in Russland erlangten beruflichen Qualifikationsniveau und ein niedriges Einkommen wurden von diesen Befragten als zentraler Rückkehrgrund genannt.

„Das war hart für mich, ich fühlte mich nicht nützlich. Ich wollte nicht als Straßenkehrer arbeiten, das hätte ich nicht verkraftet... Kurz gesagt, meine Qualifikationen waren nichts Wert. Ich arbeitete zehn Jahre als Energie-Ingenieur in Russland und hatte insgesamt 24 Jahre Arbeitserfahrung... Warum sollte ich dann als Pfleger enden? Das war nicht gut für mich und nach drei Jahren [in Deutschland] war ich verzweifelt... Es war hart, keine Alternativen. Zu meinem Ingenieurabschluss haben sie mir gesagt: Du kannst dein Diplom in die Mülltonne werfen, mein [in Deutschland] anerkanntes Diplom.“ (Männlich, kam als Spätaussiedler nach Deutschland, Diplomingenieur mit einem russischen Abschluss, derzeit arbeitslos).

Die drei jungen Befragten, die zu Studienzwecken nach Deutschland gekommen waren, hatten selbst zwar keine Benachteiligung auf dem Arbeitsmarkt erlebt. Sie rechneten jedoch mit Hürden bei der Suche nach einem qualifizierten Arbeitsplatz nach dem Hochschulabschluss bzw. mit Diskriminierung im Berufsleben aufgrund ihrer „ausländischen“ Herkunft.

“Ich habe Jura studiert. In St. Petersburg habe ich bereits an der Jura-Fakultät mein Studium begonnen und machte in Deutschland weiter... Das Studium in Deutschland fand ich unsystematisch und ein wenig langweilig... Und zudem habe ich langsam begriffen, dass kein Deutscher zu einem Anwalt mit einem russischen Namen gehen wird. Deshalb habe ich gedacht, ich wäre besser dran, wenn ich mit deutschen Klienten in Russland arbeiten würde als umgekehrt. Nun arbeite ich für eine deutsche Firma in Russland und bin sehr zufrieden.“ (Männlich, abgebrochenes Jurastudium in Deutschland, derzeit angestellt in einer Kanzlei in St. Petersburg).

Die Eindimensionalität der sozialen Kontakte (Beschränkung der Kontakte auf Verwandte oder russischsprachige Personen), aber auch die ökonomisch bedingten Einschränkungen bei der Auswahl der Wohnumgebung (Leben in „Ausländervierteln“) verstärkten die Wahrnehmung einer relativen Verschlechterung der eigenen sozialen Position in Deutschland. Besonders in Familien mit heranwachsenden Kindern entwickelten sich Ängste über die Bildungs- und Beschäftigungsperspektiven der Kinder in Deutschland.

Gleichzeitig boten das Wirtschaftswachstum und die günstige Arbeitsmarktlage in Russland Anreize für eine Rückkehr. Lebhaftige Kontakte zu Verwandten, Freunden und teilweise ehemaligen Kollegen im Herkunftsland unterstützten die Entscheidung zurückzukehren. Einem Teil der Befragten fiel der Rückkehrentschluss relativ leicht, weil sie in Russland noch Immobilien besaßen und somit die Kosten einer Rückkehr relativ niedrig waren.

### 2.3 Rückkehr nach Georgien

Über zwei Drittel der befragten Rückkehrer in Georgien (20 Personen) hatten sich zu Ausbildungs- bzw. Studienzwecken in Deutschland aufgehalten. Sie brachen ihr Studium in Deutschland entweder ab oder kehrten nach erfolgreichem Abschluss bzw. nach einer geplanten Ausbildungszeit zurück. Ein weiteres Viertel der Befragten (sieben Personen) waren georgische Asylbewerber, deren Asylantrag in Deutschland abgelehnt worden war. Somit zeichnet sich das georgische Sample vor allem durch Fälle aus, in denen die Personen lediglich über temporäre Aufenthaltstitel in Deutschland verfügten. Für sie war die Frage einer Rückkehr bereits von Beginn des Aufenthaltes an ein wichtiger und kontroverser Aspekt der Lebensplanung.

#### Karriereaspirationen als Rückkehrmotiv der georgischen Hochschulabsolventen

Junge Menschen aus Georgien, die zu Bildungszwecken nach Deutschland gekommen waren und ihr Studium erfolgreich absolviert hatten, berichteten, dass vorrangig Karrieregründe ihren Rückkehrwunsch befördern hätten. Sie schätzten ihre Einstiegschancen auf dem deutschen Arbeitsmarkt als gering ein.<sup>26</sup> Als Gründe dafür führten sie an, dass deutsche Arbeitgeber von ihrem Personal Deutschkenntnisse auf muttersprachlichem Niveau erwarten würden. Somit seien ein ausländischer Akzent und Unsicherheiten in der schriftlichen Ausdrucksweise ein grundsätzliches Hindernis beim Arbeitsmarkteinstieg für Menschen mit Migrationshintergrund. Die Befragten

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26 Eine Studie des Sachverständigenrats deutscher Stiftungen für Integration und Migration zu Bleibe- und Rückkehrabsichten ausländischer Hochschulabsolventen in fünf europäischen Ländern (Sykes/Chaoimh 2012) stellt fest, dass die Studienfächer der Befragten einen signifikanten Einfluss auf die Rückkehrbereitschaft ausüben. Ingenieure und Naturwissenschaftler wollen häufiger bleiben als Sozial- und Geisteswissenschaftler. Die qualitative Stichprobe in der vorliegenden Studie erlaubt nicht, Aufschlüsse über den Einfluss des Studienfachs auf die Rückkehrentscheidung zu analysieren.

vertraten auch die Auffassung, dass deutsche Arbeitgeber generell Vorurteile gegenüber ausländischen Bewerbern hegen würden.

„Der Punkt ist, dass ich viel bessere Chancen in Georgien habe als in Deutschland. Wenn ich dort [in Deutschland] geblieben wäre... Niemand will dort einen georgischen Anwalt. Niemand würde mich einstellen. Ich müsste dann als Bedienung in einem Café oder als Gärtner arbeiten und mein ganzes Studium wäre dann eine verschwendete Zeit.“ (Männlich, abgeschlossenes Jurastudium in Deutschland, derzeit angestellt in einem georgischen Unternehmen).

Gleichzeitig erwarteten die Befragten deutlich bessere Karriereperspektiven im Heimatland. Während sie in Deutschland mit den einheimischen Fachkräften konkurrieren müssten, seien sie auf dem georgischen Arbeitsmarkt mit Qualifikationen ausgestattet, die ihnen relative Vorteile gewähren würden. Die georgischen Hochschulabsolventen erhofften sich, in Georgien durch ihre Deutschkenntnisse und ihre „europäischen Diplome“ Zugang zu attraktiven Berufspositionen und gute Aufstiegschancen zu erlangen. Dabei sollte die Unterstützung der familiären und freundschaftlichen Netzwerke in der Rückkehrregion den Zugang zu höheren Arbeitsmarktpositionen erleichtern.

### „Scheitern“ als Rückkehrmotiv

Sowohl die befragten georgischen Asylbewerber als auch die Studenten, die ihr Studium in Deutschland nicht zum Abschluss gebracht hatten, kehrten zurück, weil sie keine Möglichkeiten mehr sahen, ihre Migrationsziele zu erreichen. Alle befragten georgischen Asylbewerber hatten vorrangig ökonomische Migrationsmotive gehabt.<sup>27</sup> Ursprünglich hatten sie gehofft, in Deutschland arbeiten und genug Geld verdienen zu können, um die zurückgebliebenen Familienmitglieder zu unterstützen. Einige hatten auch

27 In der Darstellung ihrer Migration nach Deutschland unterstrichen die georgischen Interviewpartner die ausschlaggebende Bedeutung ökonomischer Wanderungsmotive. Allerdings darf daraus nicht geschlossen werden, dass dies die einzige Wanderungsmotivation der georgischen Asylbewerber war. Der Auswanderungswunsch dieser Personen entwickelte sich sowohl vor dem Hintergrund ökonomischer Instabilität Georgiens als auch angesichts der dortigen unsicheren politischen Verhältnisse während der 1990er und 2000er Jahre. Eine Vermischung von ökonomischen und sicherheitsbezogenen Erwägungen bei der Migrationsentscheidung von Flüchtlingen wird in der gegenwärtigen Diskussion eingehend diskutiert und erforscht (Stewart 2008; Zimmermann 2009).

vor, Geld anzusparen und in Georgien zu investieren. Das Asylverfahren war für sie eine Option, auf legalem Wege einen dauerhaften Aufenthalt zu begründen und Zugang zum Arbeitsmarkt zu bekommen. Bei allen Befragten wurde der Asylantrag in erster Instanz abgelehnt. Einige der Befragten beantragten eine gerichtliche Überprüfung des Ablehnungsbescheides. Ein anderer Teil versuchte, durch die Verschleierung der Identität die Vollstreckung der Abschiebung hinauszuzögern. Zum Zeitpunkt ihrer Rückkehr hatten sich alle Befragten dieser Gruppe in einer unsicheren rechtlichen Situation befunden und lediglich durch illegale Beschäftigung sporadisch Geld verdienen können.

„Meine rechtliche Aufenthaltssituation in Deutschland blieb immer dieselbe. Ich bin als Asylbewerber dort gewesen. Mein Antrag wurde in der ersten Entscheidungsinstanz abgelehnt. Ich habe mir dann einen Anwalt genommen und wir haben einen erneuten Antrag gestellt. Aber die Gerichtsentscheidung war auch negativ. Mein Anwalt riet mir an, keine Revision zu beantragen, weil ein solcher Antrag sehr schnell abgelehnt wird. Dann hätte ich innerhalb von zwei Wochen das Land verlassen müssen. Aber ich wollte meinen Aufenthalt so lang wie möglich verlängern. Mein Asylantrag wurde abgelehnt, aber ich habe eine Erlaubnis bekommen, in Deutschland eine gewisse Zeit zu bleiben [Duldung]. Ich hatte keinen georgischen Pass bei mir gehabt und hätte für die Ausreise zunächst ein Reisedokument gebraucht. Ich bin aber nicht zur georgischen Botschaft gegangen. Nun kam es, dass ich einen Freund von mir zur Ausländerbehörde begleitet habe, weil sein Visum abgelaufen ist. Ich konnte ein bisschen Deutsch und hatte ja diese Duldung. So hatte ich keine Bedenken, für ihn bei der Ausländerbehörde vorzusprechen. Ich weiß nicht, was für ein Problem sie mit mir hatten, aber der zuständige Beamte hat die Polizei angerufen und sie haben uns verhaftet. Das Gericht hat dann eine Abschiebung angeordnet. Und so endete meine abenteuerliche Reise nach Deutschland.“ (Männlich, abgeschlossenes Ingenieurstudium in Georgien, Asylantrag in Deutschland abgelehnt, derzeit angestellt in einem georgischen Unternehmen).

Anreize zur Rückkehr nach Georgien waren, aus der Sicht der abgelehnten Asylbewerber, kaum vorhanden. Sie schätzten ihre eigenen Berufschancen in Georgien als gering ein. Zudem fehlten ökonomische Ressourcen, um den Lebensunterhalt in der ersten Orientierungszeit nach der Rückkehr sichern zu können. Ihre in Georgien zurückgebliebenen Familienmitglieder waren



selbst auf Unterstützung angewiesen und konnten den Rückkehrern keine Hilfe bieten. Das subjektiv wahrgenommene hohe Risiko des ökonomischen und sozialen Abstiegs nach der Rückkehr führte dazu, dass die Rückkehrentscheidung trotz des hohen behördlichen Ausreisedrucks immer wieder hinausgezögert wurde.

„Ich war glücklich, meine Familie wiederzusehen. Aber ich habe die Rückkehr nicht gewollt. Ich wurde abgeschoben. Und ich wollte nicht gehen, weil ich meine Pläne in Deutschland nicht realisieren konnte, weil ich keine Arbeit gefunden habe und keine neue Existenz für mich und meine Familie schaffen konnte. Und so war ich verzweifelt, als ich gehen musste.“ (Männlich, abgeschlossene Berufsausbildung in Georgien, Asylantrag in Deutschland abgelehnt, derzeit arbeitslos).

Um die Risiken des sozialen Abstiegs nach der Rückkehr abzumildern, entschieden sich einige Rückkehrer, staatliche Unterstützungsangebote in Deutschland in Anspruch zu nehmen. Für diese Personengruppe bot insbesondere die finanzielle Rückkehrunterstützung die Möglichkeit, mit minimalen ökonomischen Ressourcen zurückzukehren und somit ihr Migrationsprojekt in Würde abzuschließen.

Bei den georgischen Studienabbrechern handelte es sich um junge Menschen, die ihr Studium in Deutschland selbst finanzieren mussten. Die Notwendigkeit, den eigenen Lebensunterhalt zu sichern, beeinflusste ihre Studienleistungen negativ. Die Studienzeiten verlängerten sich. Bei einigen Befragten führte diese Verzögerung zu aufenthaltsrechtlichen Problemen. Einige konnten zwar ihren Aufenthaltstitel immer wieder verlängern, gaben jedoch aufgrund der Doppelbelastung durch hohe Studienanforderungen und gleichzeitiger Notwendigkeit, das Studium zu finanzieren, ihr Ziel auf, in Deutschland einen Hochschulabschluss zu erlangen.

„Ich war an der Uni K. eingeschrieben und studierte Elektroingenieurwesen. Nach ein paar Monaten hatte ich die Gelder, die mir meine Familie gegeben hat, ausgegeben. So habe ich irgendwie Geld verdienen müssen. Und faktisch ab diesem Zeitpunkt konnte ich nicht mehr richtig studieren. Meist habe ich gearbeitet, zum Studium blieb keine Zeit. Ich habe drei Jahre so durchgehalten. Ich habe sehr oft Jobs gewechselt. Ich habe auf dem Bau als Aushilfskraft gearbeitet, in einer Fabrik auch. Und es gab noch einige andere Jobs. Und ich bin öfters in Georgien gewesen... Mehrfach habe ich über Rückkehr nachgedacht, aber ich

konnte mich nicht entscheiden. Dann hat die Uni eine neue Regelung eingeführt: Wenn du länger als acht Semester studierst, musst du höhere Studiengebühren bezahlen. Und so musste ich plötzlich 1.500 Euro im Jahr zahlen. Prinzipiell könnte ich dieses Geld aufreiben, aber ... ich habe angefangen, mir Gedanken zu machen: Dich hält nichts hier in Deutschland. Du studierst nicht. Du hast keine Familie. Du hast niemanden in Deutschland ... Also habe ich beschlossen zu gehen. Und es war keine einfache Entscheidung." (Männlich, abgebrochenes Studium in Deutschland, Diplom-Ingenieur mit georgischem Abschluss, derzeit angestellt in einem georgischen Unternehmen).

Vor diesem Hintergrund entschieden sich die Befragten für eine Rückkehr nach Georgien. Einige der Befragten stellten – ähnlich wie die vorherige Gruppe – die Rückkehrentscheidung als einen schwierigen und langwierigen Prozess dar. Auch die Studienabbrecher berichteten, dass sie zum Zeitpunkt der Rückkehrentscheidung vor allem Angst vor Arbeitslosigkeit nach der Rückkehr gehabt hatten. Dennoch hofften sie, dass ihre in Deutschland erworbenen informellen Qualifikationen, wie etwa die deutschen Sprachkenntnisse oder berufliche Erfahrungen, auf dem georgischen Arbeitsmarkt Verwendung finden könnten.

## 2.4 Einflussfaktoren bei einem Rückkehrentschluss

In der deutschsprachigen Rückkehrforschung wird weitgehend die Position vertreten, dass hauptsächlich schwierige Lebensumstände und vor allem eine nicht gelungene strukturelle und ökonomische Integration bzw. Diskriminierung Migranten zu einer Rückkehr veranlassen (z. B. Werth/Hemmersbach 1983; Erlinghagen et al. 2009; Sievers et al. 2010). Eine konträre Auffassung dazu wird insbesondere in Studien zur Rückwanderung von Migranten der zweiten und dritten Generation vertreten (Christou/King 2008; Aydın 2012; Bürgin/Erzene-Bürgin 2013). Verbundenheit mit dem Herkunftsland der Eltern und attraktive berufliche Optionen werden dort als zentrale Einflussfaktoren für die Rückkehrentscheidung gesehen. Die vergleichende Analyse der Rückkehrmotive im Rahmen dieses Forschungsprojektes erlaubt eine differenzierte Betrachtung der Rolle von verschiedenen Faktoren bei einer Rückkehrentscheidung.

Lediglich in den Fällen der abgelehnten Asylbewerber<sup>28</sup> kann eindeutig argumentiert werden, dass ihr Rückkehrentschluss hauptsächlich durch die schwierige Lebenssituation in Deutschland befördert worden ist. Ein unsicherer Aufenthaltsstatus einerseits und die Exklusion aus dem Arbeitsmarkt andererseits hinderten diese Personen, ihre Migrationsziele zu erreichen. Gleichzeitig bewerteten diese Befragten ihre Perspektiven in den Rückkehrregionen negativ, weshalb sie die Rückkehr immer wieder hinauszögerten. Letztendlich mussten sie Deutschland aber zwangsweise oder infolge einer behördlichen Ausreisepflicht verlassen.

Im Unterschied zu den befragten Asylbewerbern treten bei der Gruppe der türkeistämmigen Personen der zweiten und der dritten Generation mit abgeschlossener Berufsausbildung in Deutschland vorrangig persönliche Gründe hervor: Eheschließung, Abenteuerlust und das Streben nach individueller Weiterentwicklung. In der Forschungsliteratur wird deutlich, dass in solchen Lebensphasen wie dem Übergang von der Ausbildung zum Beruf oder in der Phase des Experimentierens im jungen Erwachsenenalter räumliche Mobilität grundsätzlich wahrscheinlicher ist als in Phasen der Familiengründung oder der beruflichen Etablierung.<sup>29</sup> Somit scheint es, dass die oben genannten Mobilitätsgründe besonders häufig in einem bestimmten Alter auftreten und somit unabhängig von Migrationshintergrund oder (Folge-)Generationszugehörigkeit sind. Herkunftsspezifische Motive wie das Gefühl der Verbundenheit mit der Türkei haben eine zusätzliche Rolle gespielt. Die Lebensumstände in Deutschland haben dagegen kaum Einfluss auf die Entscheidung ausgeübt.

Die Rückkehrentscheidung der meisten Befragten (87 %) bestimmten weder ausschließlich unbefriedigende Lebensumstände in Deutschland noch die besonders starken Heimatbindungen zum Herkunftsland. Drei Aspekte waren im Entscheidungsprozess gleich wichtig:

- 1) Subjektive Unzufriedenheit mit der Lebenssituation bzw. mit den Zukunftsperspektiven in Deutschland;
- 2) Im Herkunftsland erwartete Inklusion ins Bildungssystem bzw. berufliche und soziale Teilhabe;
- 3) Unterstützung durch die persönlichen Kontakte in der Rückkehrregion.

28 Vorrangig aus Georgien, aber auch bei einzelnen Fällen aus Russland und der Türkei.

29 Vgl. hierzu Kap. 1.3.

### **Unzufriedenheit mit der Lebenssituation in Deutschland**

Subjektive Unzufriedenheit mit der Lebenssituation in Deutschland ist ein wichtiger Grund für einen Rückkehrentschluss. Das Empfinden einer Benachteiligung auf dem Arbeitsmarkt oder im sozialen Umfeld veranlasste die meisten Befragten, über eine mögliche Rückkehr nachzudenken. Negative Erfahrungen der Kinder im Bildungssystem und Sorgen um ihre Bildungsperspektiven gehörten zu den weiteren Rückkehranreizen bei den befragten Familien in der Türkei und in Russland. Die Wahrnehmung, in Deutschland eingeschränkte Beschäftigungs- und Karrierechancen zu haben, fand sich insbesondere bei den Befragten, die sich zu Studienzwecken in Deutschland aufgehalten hatten.

### **Teilhabechancen im Herkunftsland**

Auch wenn die Unzufriedenheit mit der Lebenssituation in Deutschland ein wesentlicher Anlass zu sein scheint, sich mit dem Gedanken an eine Rückkehr auseinanderzusetzen, wird die tatsächliche Rückkehrentscheidung aufgrund einer Einschätzung der eigenen Partizipationschancen im Herkunftsland getroffen. Der Großteil der Befragten hoffte, durch die Rückkehr ihre Perspektiven der Bildungs- und Arbeitsmarkteteiligung zu verbessern und in einem „freundlichen sozialen Umfeld“ zu leben. Dabei gingen sie davon aus, dass sie ihre Ersparnisse, ihre in Deutschland erworbenen formellen und informellen Qualifikationen, ihre Sprachkenntnisse, aber auch ihre sozialen Kontakte im Herkunftsland gewinnbringend einsetzen könnten. Sorgen über sozialen Abstieg im Herkunftsland sind dagegen ein wichtiger Grund, sich gegen die Rückkehr zu entscheiden.

Die Absicht, im Herkunftsland eine bessere soziale Position zu erlangen, ist für 81 % aller Befragten der zentrale Rückkehranreiz. So kehrten die georgischen Studienabbrecher nicht allein deswegen zurück, weil sie ihre ursprünglichen Ziele – den Bildungsabschluss in Deutschland – nicht realisieren konnten. Die positive Bewertung der eigenen Arbeitsmarktchancen in Georgien war für sie eine wichtige Entscheidungsstütze. Russischsprachige Befragte waren der Überzeugung, dass sie in Russland angesichts einer guten wirtschaftlichen Lage adäquate berufliche Stellungen erhalten könnten. Jüngere Menschen, die im Schulabschlussalter (vor allem in die Türkei) zurückkehrten, und Absolventen deutscher Hochschulen (vor allem aus Georgien und Russland) wiesen höhere Bildungs- und Karriereaspirationen auf und waren der Ansicht, dass sie diese in den Rückkehrkontexten besser realisieren könnten.

Im Unterschied zu Fragen der Bildungsbeteiligung, der beruflichen und sozialen Inklusion spielen rein finanzielle Rückkehranreize – etwa ein Vergleich der Lohndifferenzen in Deutschland und im Herkunftsland – offensichtlich eine zweitrangige Rolle. Lediglich für ältere Rückkehrer in die Türkei standen ökonomische Fragen im Mittelpunkt der Entscheidung. Aber auch diese älteren Rückkehrer erhofften sich, im Rückkehrkontext einen höheren Lebensstandard und damit verbunden soziales Ansehen genießen zu können.

### Soziale Unterstützung im Rückkehrkontext

Eine Rückkehrentscheidung erfolgt selten anhand allgemeiner Informationen über die makroökonomischen, arbeitsmarkt- oder sicherheitspolitischen Rahmenbedingungen in den Herkunftsländern, die medial vermittelt oder durch staatliche Stellen bereitgestellt werden. Vielmehr stellt sich für die Betroffenen die Frage, inwiefern eigene Ressourcen und Kompetenzen in den lokalen Rückkehrkontexten verwertbar sind. Die Einschätzung der eigenen Partizipationschancen erfolgt aufgrund häufiger Aufenthalte in den Heimatorten und durch Kontakte zu Verwandten und Bekannten vor Ort. Die Bereitschaft von Freunden und Verwandten, Rückkehrer etwa bei der Versorgung der Kinder, bei der Wohnungsvermittlung oder beim Einstieg in den Arbeitsmarkt zu unterstützen, befördert einen Rückkehrentschluss.<sup>30</sup> Entsprechend wird eine Rückkehrentscheidung auch nicht von heute auf morgen getroffen, sondern ist ein familiär bzw. sozial eingebetteter Prozess, der mehrere Monate oder sogar Jahre andauern kann.

30 Unterstützungserwartungen der zurückgebliebenen Familienmitglieder können allerdings auch ein gewichtiges Hindernis für eine Rückkehrentscheidung darstellen. So zeigt Marketa Rulikova (2012) in ihrer Untersuchung über die Rückkehrbereitschaft ausländischer Arbeitsmigranten in der Tschechischen Republik, dass arbeitslos gewordene ausländische Arbeitnehmer trotz einer schwierigen wirtschaftlichen Situation sich für den Verbleib in Tschechien entscheiden, um Erwartungen der zurückgebliebenen Familienmitglieder nicht zu enttäuschen und sie, wenn auch in einem moderaten Umfang, weiterhin materiell unterstützen zu können. In den Befragungen im Rahmen des hier vorgestellten Forschungsprojektes kommt dieser Entscheidungsaspekt – als Verlierer zurückzukehren und den Familien zur Last zu fallen – lediglich bei fast allen abgelehnten Asylbewerbern und bei einigen Studienabbrechern aus Georgien deutlich zur Sprache.

### Fazit

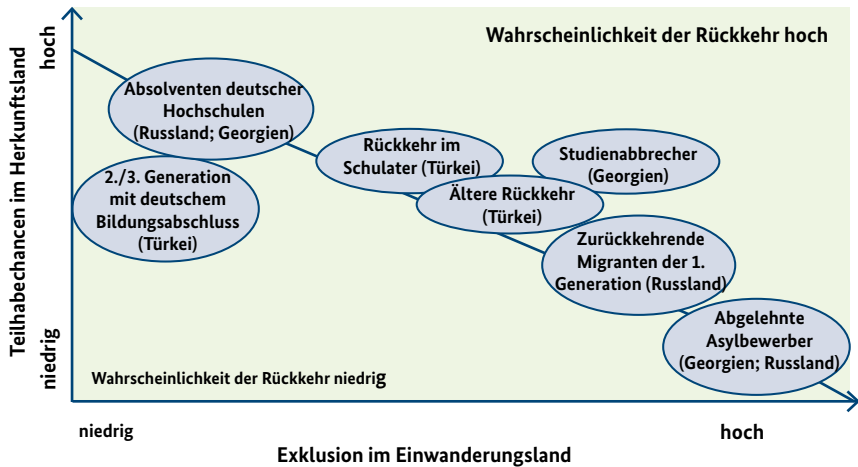
Die im Rahmen dieses Forschungsprojektes herausgearbeiteten zentralen Rückkehrmotive ergänzen die Erkenntnisse bisheriger Studien. Die Analysen weisen einerseits auf den Einfluss von Benachteiligungserfahrungen im Einwanderungsland hin. Gleichzeitig wird gezeigt, dass das Streben nach einem Bildungsaufstieg sowie nach einer beruflichen und sozialen Inklusion die Rückwanderungsentscheidung maßgeblich bestimmt.<sup>31</sup> Rein ökonomische Faktoren, wie etwa die Einkommensunterschiede zwischen den Einwanderungs- und Herkunftsländern, können dagegen die Rückwanderung der befragten Gruppen nicht erklären.

Das Ergebnis der Analyse stellt somit die unterschiedlichen Partizipationschancen im Einwanderungs- und im Herkunftsland in den Mittelpunkt der Erklärung. Die Wahrscheinlichkeit einer Rückkehrentscheidung steigt demnach mit dem Risiko der Exklusion aus relevanten Bereichen der Einwanderungsgesellschaft (Bildung, Beruf, soziale Teilhabe usw.). Sie ist aber auch bei hohen Chancen der Inklusion in die wichtigen Bereiche der Herkunftsgesellschaft höher. Die Wahrscheinlichkeit einer Rückkehrentscheidung scheint dann am höchsten zu sein, wenn zu erwarten ist, dass im Zuge der Rückkehr die Benachteiligungen im Einwanderungsland vermieden werden und gleichzeitig die Inklusionschancen im Herkunftsland wahrgenommen werden können (vgl. Abb. 1).

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31 Bildungsaufstieg und Berufsmobilität werden sowohl in der Forschung zu Binnenmigration (Arntz 2011) als auch bei Analysen internationaler Wanderungen (Papademetriou et al. 2009) als zentrale Beweggründe für räumliche Mobilitätsentscheidungen angesehen. Die Frage nach sozialer Mobilität infolge von Rückkehr wird dagegen in der gegenwärtigen Migrationsforschung weitgehend vernachlässigt. Lediglich in der Diskussion über transnationale Lebensführung von Migranten werden Aspekte der sozialen Positionierung von Menschen mit Migrationshintergrund in ihren Herkunftsländern angesprochen (Weiss 2005; Alexandru 2007; Nieswand 2011). Die Ergebnisse dieses Forschungsprojektes bilden somit eine Grundlage für weitergehende Analysen in diesem Bereich.

Abbildung 1: Determinanten einer Rückkehrentscheidung



Quelle: Eigene Darstellung

Darüber hinaus unterstreichen die Ergebnisse, dass eine Rückkehrentscheidung selten individuell, sondern unter Berücksichtigung der Erwartungen von nahen Familienangehörigen (Partner und Kinder) und von anderen abhängigen Familienmitgliedern getroffen wird. Die Unterstützung der Familie, Freunde und anderer relevanter Netzwerke beeinflusst den Rückkehrentschluss positiv.<sup>32</sup>

32 Vgl. hierzu auch Stamm 2006; Olivier 2011.

# 3

## Bedeutung von Ressourcen für die Reintegration



Die Reintegration der Rückkehrer wird im Rahmen dieses Projektes als eine individuelle Inklusionsstrategie definiert. Die Analyse geht insbesondere auf die Frage ein, wie die Rückkehrer ihre im Einwanderungsland erworbenen Fähigkeiten und Qualifikationen sowie die sozialen Kontakte und das angesparte ökonomische Kapital im Reintegrationsverlauf nutzen.

Im Folgenden werden 1) der Zusammenhang zwischen angespartem Kapital von Migranten und ihrer ökonomischen Positionierung in den Rückkehrregionen, 2) die Frage nach der Verwertbarkeit formeller und informeller Qualifikationen auf den Arbeitsmärkten der Rückkehrregionen und 3) die Bedeutung sozialer Unterstützung durch persönliche Kontakte eingehend diskutiert.

### 3.1 Ökonomische Ressourcen

Insbesondere Befragte aus der Türkei und aus Russland hatten im Laufe ihres Aufenthalts in Deutschland Geld angespart und in ihre Herkunftsländer transferiert.<sup>33</sup> Zu einem großen Teil wurden diese Mittel zum Erwerb und Erhalt von Immobilien in den Herkunftsregionen genutzt. Zudem wurden die Ersparnisse für die Vorbereitung und Durchführung der Rückreise und für die Sicherung des Lebensunterhaltes in der ersten Zeit nach der Rückkehr verwendet. Immobilienbesitz und die zur Verfügung stehenden Ersparnisse

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<sup>33</sup> Zum Zusammenhang zwischen den ökonomischen Transfers von Migranten in die Herkunftsländer und der Rückkehrentscheidung s. Carling 2008.



entlasten die Betroffenen in der ersten Zeit nach der Rückkehr, da sie sich nicht mit den unmittelbaren existenziellen Fragen beschäftigen müssen, sondern sich direkt um die Aspekte der langfristigen Einkommenssicherung kümmern können.

Im Unterschied dazu berichteten jene Rückkehrer, die Deutschland unfreiwillig verlassen mussten, dass ihre Rückkehr vor allem von ökonomischen Unsicherheiten begleitet war. Meist hatten sie während ihres Aufenthalts in Deutschland kaum Geld angespart, so dass sie weder die Rückreise noch den Lebensunterhalt in der ersten Zeit nach der Rückkehr finanzieren konnten. In dieser Situation konnten einige der Befragten jedoch materielle Unterstützung im Rahmen der deutschen Rückkehrförderung<sup>34</sup> erhalten. Nach ihrer Einschätzung war diese materielle Hilfestellung in der ersten Orientierungszeit nach der Rückkehr unverzichtbar.

Obschon angesparte ökonomische Ressourcen eine wichtige Stütze zu Beginn des Reintegrationsprozesses darstellen, sind sie für einen langfristigen Reintegrationserfolg nicht ausreichend. Betrachtet man die ökonomischen Aktivitäten von Rückkehrern über den Immobilienerwerb hinaus, werden Investitionsbarrieren in den lokalen Ökonomien sichtbar. So hatten einige der befragten Rückkehrer bereits während ihres Aufenthalts in Deutschland bzw. nach der Rückkehr in Kleinunternehmen, meist im Dienstleistungssektor, investiert. Fast alle von ihnen berichteten jedoch von Schwierigkeiten, sich in den lokalen Märkten zu etablieren. Ihr Fazit war, dass sie die Besonderheiten und die Konkurrenz in den lokalen Kontexten stark unterschätzt hätten. Vor allem die auf Vertrauen und informellen Netzwerken basierenden lokalen Geschäftsbeziehungen, zu denen nur die alteingesessenen Marktteilnehmer Zugang haben, sind eine hohe Hürde für die Zurückgekehrten. Somit hing der Erfolg von zurückkehrenden Kleininvestoren größtenteils davon ab, ob sie relevante soziale Unterstützungsnetzwerke in den lokalen Ökonomien für sich erschließen konnten.

„Wir hatten große Schwierigkeiten, als wir in die Türkei kamen. Zuerst haben wir ein Restaurant eröffnet, aber wir haben es nicht halten können. Dann hat mein Mann ein Taxi gekauft, aber auch damit hatte er Probleme. Türkische Menschen waren nicht ehrlich und verlässlich und wir konnten es nicht verstehen. Alle behandelten uns nicht fair.“

34 Dabei handelte es sich vor allem um die Förderung im Rahmen des REAG/GARP-Programms.

Wir fühlten uns als Ausländer in unserem eigenen Land ... Wie Milchkühe, die von jedem gemolken werden. Das war es, was wir in der Tat erlebt haben." (Weiblich, erste Zuwanderergeneration, derzeit im Ruhestand).

Einzelne Rückkehrer hatten allerdings in transnationale bzw. globalisierte Marktsegmente, wie etwa den Tourismus- oder Bausektor, investiert. Der Erfolg dieser Investitionen beruhte, nach Ansicht der Befragten, auf ihren in Deutschland erworbenen Qualifikationen und Sprachkenntnissen. So argumentierte ein Rückkehrer in der Türkei, dass er sich durch seine Sprach- und Kulturkenntnisse viel besser auf deutsche Kunden einstellen konnte und somit komparative Vorteile gegenüber lokalen Tourismusdienstleistern hatte. Ein Rückkehrer nach Russland berichtete, dass er in seinem Bauunternehmen ehemalige deutsche Kollegen eingestellt hätte, um mithilfe ihres professionellen Wissens hochwertigere Produkte anbieten und somit konkurrenzfähig sein zu können. Bei der Betrachtung dieser Investitionsstrategien wird deutlich, dass der ökonomische Erfolg dieser Befragten von der sinnvollen Verwertung ihrer formellen und informellen Qualifikationen und der Nutzung professioneller Kontakte nach Deutschland wesentlich beeinflusst wurde.

### 3.2 Qualifikationen

Lediglich bei einem kleinen Teil der befragten Rückkehrer (15 % des Gesamtsamples) stellten produktive Investitionen die zentrale Strategie der Einkommenssicherung dar. Die meisten befragten Rückkehrer im erwerbsfähigen Alter hingegen hatten sich auf lokalen Arbeitsmärkten eine Position als abhängig Beschäftigte gesucht.<sup>35</sup> Dabei können zwei Strategien der Arbeitssuche identifiziert werden. Einige Rückkehrer konnten ihre professionellen Kontakte in den Rückkehrregionen reaktivieren und fanden

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35 In einer quantitativen Studie zu Investitionsverhalten und Arbeitsmarktplatzierung von Rückkehrern in Bosnien, Bulgarien, Georgien, Kirgisistan, Rumänien und Tadschikistan kommen Anastasia Pseiridis und Theodore Lianos (2009) zu dem Ergebnis, dass gut ausgebildete Rückkehrer eher dazu tendieren, eine Position als abhängig Beschäftigte zu suchen. Dagegen würden jene, die nicht auf höherrangige berufliche Qualifikationen zurückgreifen könnten, eher versuchen, kleine Unternehmen zu gründen. Zu ähnlichen Ergebnissen kommt auch eine Befragung von Rückkehrern nach Albanien (Germenji/Milo 2009). Zum Zusammenhang zwischen dem Qualifikationsniveau der Rückkehrer und ihrem Investitionsverhalten können im Rahmen dieses Projektes keine Aussagen getroffen werden.

eine Anstellung in den Unternehmen, in denen sie vor der Migration nach Deutschland gearbeitet hatten. Dies traf insbesondere auf die Rückkehrer nach Russland zu, von denen einige nach einem relativ kurzen Aufenthalt in Deutschland (zwei bis fünf Jahre) zurückkehrten, so dass die Beziehungen in Russland noch reaktivierbar waren. Die Strategie anderer Rückkehrer war, bei der Arbeitsplatzsuche ihre in Deutschland erworbenen formellen und informellen Qualifikationen anzubieten. Mehr als die Hälfte aller Befragten berichtete, dass berufliche Erfahrungen in Deutschland bzw. Erfahrungen im deutschen Bildungssystem sowie die Sprachkenntnisse erhebliche Arbeitsmarktvorteile mit sich brächten.

Interessant ist die Einschätzung der Betroffenen, dass der Erfolg am Arbeitsmarkt dabei nicht vorrangig von formellen deutschen Bildungs- und Berufsabschlüssen abhing. Die Befragten waren sogar der Ansicht, dass die im Ausland erworbenen formellen Bildungszertifikate und Zeugnisse zum Nachteil für Bewerber werden können, da sie damit z. B. bei Unternehmen ohne internationale Bezüge als überqualifiziert betrachtet würden. Dagegen ließen sich informelle Qualifikationen und Kenntnisse deutlich besser bewerten. Gemeint sind hierbei im Alltag erworbene Sprachkenntnisse und diverse Berufserfahrungen.<sup>36</sup>

„Natürlich eröffneten die Erfahrungen in Deutschland und die Sprachkenntnisse Perspektiven auf einen gut bezahlten Job. Ausländische Arbeitgeber honorieren diese informellen Kompetenzen. Für russische Unternehmen, die nicht auf dem internationalen Markt agieren, sind diese Erfahrungen unwichtig. Aber für ausländische Firmen sind sie ein Vorteil. Sie haben mich als eine Person wahrgenommen, die einerseits mit den ausländischen Klienten umgehen kann, sich andererseits aber auf dem russischen Markt richtig verhalten kann und diese beiden Kompetenzen vereint.“ (Männlich, abgebrochenes Studium in Deutschland, angestellt bei einem internationalen Unternehmen in St. Petersburg).

So gaben 90 % der befragten zurückgekehrten Studierenden und Absolventen deutscher Hochschulen an, dass ihre Arbeitserfahrungen aus Nebenjobs in Deutschland sich als vorteilhaft für das berufliche Fortkommen nach der

36 Zu ähnlichen Ergebnissen kommt eine quantitative Analyse zur Verwertung des in den USA erworbenen Humankapitals von Rückkehrern nach Puerto Rico (vgl. Enchautegu 1993).

Rückkehr erwiesen hätten. Die befragten Rückkehrer der zweiten und dritten Generation in die Türkei sahen ihre Zweisprachigkeit und „interkulturelle Kompetenz“ als entscheidenden komparativen Arbeitsmarktvorteil an.

Im Unterschied zu den freiwilligen Rückkehrern berichteten die Befragten, die Deutschland zwangsweise verlassen mussten, von langwierigen Problemen bei der Suche nach einem akzeptablen Arbeitsplatz. Nach Ansicht der zwangsweise Zurückgekehrten nach Georgien rührten die Probleme jedoch daher, dass sie bereits vor der Migration arbeitslos gewesen waren und sie somit über Jahre hinweg keine professionellen Erfahrungen sammeln und Kontakte vor Ort reaktivieren konnten.

„Frage: Was machen Sie seit Ihrer Rückkehr?

Antwort: Nach der Rückkehr auch nichts, weil ich vorher keine Arbeit hatte, es gab überhaupt keine Jobs... Ich lebte von der Rente meiner Eltern, meine Frau hat gearbeitet und sie haben mich unterstützt. Wir haben aus dem Familienbesitz einiges verkauft und so uns über Wasser gehalten... Ich habe mal in einer Weinkellerei gearbeitet.

Frage: Arbeiten Sie zurzeit?

Antwort: Nein, zurzeit auch nicht. Diese Weinkellerei hat Pleite gemacht und man hat viele Arbeiter entlassen. Ich bin zurzeit arbeitslos.

Frage: Hat Ihnen die Tatsache, dass Sie in Deutschland waren, hier in Georgien geholfen?

Antwort: Gar nicht.“

(Männlich, abgelehnter Asylbewerber, Diplomingenieur mit georgischem Abschluss, derzeit arbeitslos).

Mit Ausnahme eines Georgiers, der während seines Asylverfahrens in Deutschland hin und wieder als Bauarbeiter tätig gewesen war und diese Erfahrungen später bei Anstellungen in russischen und georgischen Bauunternehmen nutzen konnte, wiesen alle zwangsweise Zurückgekehrten darauf hin, dass sie in Deutschland aufgrund ihrer Stellung als abgelehnter Asylbewerber keine Gelegenheit gehabt hätten, deutsche Sprachkenntnisse zu erwerben oder Arbeitsmarkterfahrungen zu sammeln, die sie hätten nach ihrer Rückkehr verwerten können. Sie bezeichneten ihren Aufenthalt in Deutschland daher als „verlorene Zeit“.

Bei den zurückgekehrten Asylbewerbern nach Russland kam erschwerend hinzu, dass sie nicht in ihre ursprünglichen Herkunftsorte gingen, sondern in den großen Metropolen – Moskau und Kaliningrad – ihr Glück versuch-

ten. Somit waren sie bei der Arbeitsplatzsuche ganz auf sich allein gestellt, da jegliche Unterstützung durch Verwandte und Bekannte fehlte.

### 3.3 Soziale Kontakte

Wie bereits mehrfach erwähnt, sind die sozialen Unterstützungsnetzwerke vor Ort von zentraler Bedeutung für die Rückkehrer. Die Existenz von intakten sozialen Beziehungen in den Rückkehrregionen erhöht maßgeblich die Chancen auf den ökonomischen Erfolg und auf einen attraktiven Arbeitsplatz. Dabei spielten bei den Befragten besonders in der Türkei und in Georgien familiäre Unterstützungsnetzwerke eine wichtige Rolle. Rückkehrer nach Russland verwiesen zudem oft auf die Unterstützung von Freunden und ehemaligen Kollegen.

Gleichzeitig können aber zu hohe Erwartungen der Familienmitglieder und Verwandten für die Rückkehrer auch belastend sein. Über konfliktbehaftete Familienverhältnisse berichteten beispielsweise türkeistämmige Rückkehrer der ersten Generation. Da sie meist sehr lange in Deutschland gelebt und gleichzeitig ihre Verwandten in der Türkei umfanglich und regelmäßig unterstützt hatten, hatten sich stabile Geber-Nehmerverhältnisse in den Familien entwickelt, die mit der Rückkehr grundsätzlich in Frage gestellt wurden.

„Damals habe ich zu meiner Frau gesagt: ‚Wir kehren für immer zurück und wir könnten Probleme mit unseren Verwandten bekommen‘. Sie hat es nicht geglaubt. Und ich meinte: ‚Wir können sie nicht mehr beschenken, wie wir es während unserer Urlaubsbesuche getan haben, wir müssen mit unserem Geld auskommen‘. ... Und was ist passiert? Kein Jahr ist vergangen und wir hatten Streit mit einigen Verwandten. Wir haben immer geholfen: man hilft und hilft und wenn man aufhört, gibt es Probleme... Zum Beispiel, ich habe eine ältere Schwester. Ich habe immer ihren Kindern geholfen. Wir haben gebrauchte Kleidung von den deutschen Nachbarn bekommen, sind in die Türkei gegangen und haben diese Kleidung meiner Schwester geschenkt. Ich habe ihr 10-15 Fahrräder geschenkt, mal Schokolade, mal Hygieneartikel, mal 50 oder 100 D-Mark... Und nun sagte ich ihr, dass ich sie nicht mehr beschenken kann. Aber meine Schwester erwartete weiterhin Unterstützung...“ (Männlich, erste Zuwanderergeneration, derzeit tätig als Kleinunternehmer).

Die Befragungen in Russland und in der Türkei zeigen zudem die wichtige Rolle der sozialen Beziehungen von Rückkehrern zu Verwandten in Deutschland. Mehr als die Hälfte der türkeistämmigen Rückkehrer und fast die Hälfte der Rückkehrer nach Russland hatten Verwandte und Familienmitglieder in Deutschland zurückgelassen. So waren beispielsweise ältere Migranten zurückgekehrt, während ihre Kinder in Deutschland blieben. In einigen Fällen hatten junge Befragte ihren Lebensmittelpunkt in die Türkei oder nach Russland verlagert, während die Eltern ihre Zukunft weiter in Deutschland sahen. Bei mehreren befragten Familien lebte ein Teil in der Rückkehrregion, während ein anderer Teil (etwa ein Elternteil mit einem Kind) in Deutschland verblieb. Das räumlich getrennte Familienleben wird in all diesen Fällen neu organisiert, wobei neue gegenseitige Unterstützungsstrukturen entstehen. So übernehmen ältere Rückkehrer oft die Betreuung der Enkelkinder und kommen deshalb gelegentlich nach Deutschland. Im Gegenzug erfahren sie monetäre Unterstützung durch die in Deutschland gebliebenen Kinder. Die jungen Rückkehrer erfahren Unterstützung durch die in Deutschland lebenden Eltern während der Ausbildungszeiten. Besonders kompliziert sind die Verhältnisse bei räumlich getrennten Familien, wobei der zurückgekehrte Familienteil meist eine materielle Unterstützung aus Deutschland erhält.

Grundsätzlich kann angenommen werden, dass die Unterstützungsleistungen seitens der in Deutschland gebliebenen Familienmitglieder die Reintegration der Rückkehrer erleichtern. Sowohl materielle Hilfen als auch die Bereitschaft der Familienmitglieder, den Rückkehrern in Krisensituationen zur Seite zu stehen, wurde von Befragten als eine große Entlastung insbesondere in der unsicheren Orientierungsphase kurz nach der Rückkehr empfunden.<sup>37</sup>

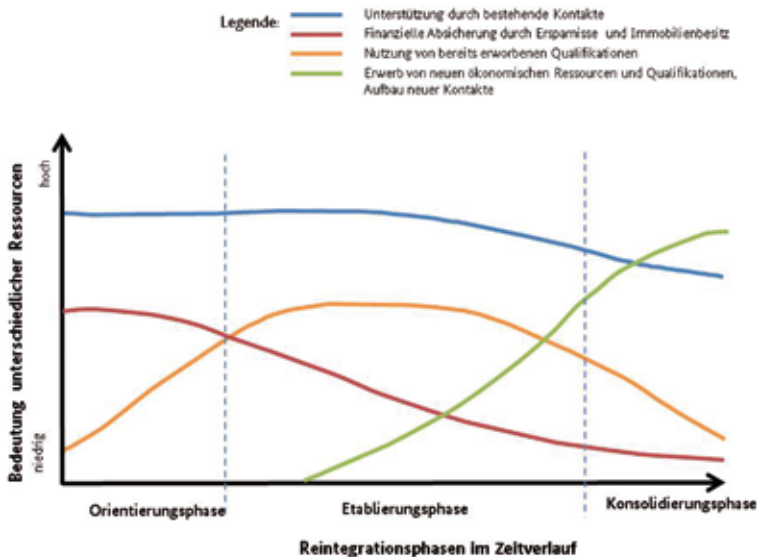
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37 Zu grenzüberschreitenden sozialen Beziehungen von Rückkehrern und ihrer Bedeutung für die Reintegration s. de Bree et al. 2010; Jeffery/Murison 2011; Pusch 2013.

### 3.4 Ressourcen in den Phasen der Reintegration

Über die Betrachtung einzelner Reintegrationsstrategien hinaus deuten die Ergebnisse der Befragungen in der Türkei, in Russland und in Georgien darauf hin, dass in den verschiedenen Phasen der Reintegration unterschiedliche Ressourcen bedeutsam sind (vgl. Abb. 2).

Abbildung 2: Reintegration im Zeitverlauf



Quelle: Eigene Darstellung

Ökonomische Ressourcen sind vor allem in der ersten Orientierungsphase nach der Rückkehr wichtig. Materielle Absicherung in dieser ersten Reintegrationsphase entlastet die Betroffenen und verschafft ihnen Zeit für die Wahl einer nachhaltigen Eingliederungsstrategie. Angespartes Kapital ist jedoch nicht ausreichend, um die dauerhafte Sicherung des Lebensunterhaltes und die soziale Inklusion zu garantieren. Ökonomischer und beruflicher Erfolg der Rückkehrer sowie ihre soziale Einbindung hängen anfangs größtenteils von der Verwertung ihrer formellen Qualifikationen und informellen Kenntnisse sowie von Unterstützungsleistungen der familiären und freundschaftlichen Netzwerke vor Ort ab. Gleichzeitig beeinflussen

Kontakte und Beziehungen zu Freunden und Verwandten in Deutschland den Reintegrationsverlauf positiv. Im Zeitverlauf spielen dann jedoch die Gewinnung neuer Ressourcen und der Aufbau neuer, lokaler Netzwerke eine zunehmend wichtigere Rolle.<sup>38</sup>

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38 Entsprechend dem induktiven Forschungsvorgehen stellt das vorgeschlagene Phasenmodell der Reintegration eines der zentralen Ergebnisse der Studie und nicht ihren Ausgangspunkt dar. Das Modell bildet eine Grundlage für weitergehende Analysen zur empirischen Messung der Reintegrationsverläufe von Rückkehrern. In der Befragung wurde die Dauer einzelner Phasen nicht systematisch gemessen. Zu vermuten ist jedoch, dass insbesondere die erste Orientierungsphase von den ökonomischen Umständen in der jeweiligen Rückkehrregion (z. B. der Arbeitsmarktlage) und von rechtlichen Inklusionsvoraussetzungen für Rückkehrer (etwa formelle und faktische Ansprüche auf soziale oder medizinische Versorgung) abhängt und deshalb ihre Dauer sich je nach Herkunftsland und Rückkehrergruppe unterscheiden könnte.



# 4

## Nachhaltigkeit von Rückkehr



Der Messung von Nachhaltigkeit liegt in den einschlägigen Forschungen das Kriterium „dauerhafte Niederlassung in den Rückkehrregionen“ zugrunde (Carling 2001; Black et al. 2004). Erfolgreiche Reintegration gilt dabei als zentrale Voraussetzung einer dauerhaften Niederlassung im Herkunftsland. Entsprechend dieser Auffassung werden für die Analyse der Nachhaltigkeit der Rückkehr im Rahmen dieser Studie der Reintegrationserfolg einerseits und mögliche Pläne für eine erneute Migration der Rückkehrer andererseits einander gegenübergestellt.

### 4.1 Erfolgreiche Reintegration

Der Reintegrationserfolg wird hier anhand der subjektiven Bewertung der eigenen Lebenssituation in den Rückkehrkontexten analysiert. Rund 80 % aller befragten freiwilligen Rückkehrer gaben an, dass sie mit ihrer aktuellen Lebenssituation zufrieden sind. Dagegen betrachteten alle befragten zwangsweise Zurückgekehrten ihre Lebenssituation als nicht zufriedenstellend. Rückkehrer, die aufgrund einer behördlichen Ausreiseaufforderung Deutschland freiwillig verlassen hatten, waren uneinheitlicher Meinung. Etwa die Hälfte von ihnen gab an, dass die aktuelle Situation für sie nicht akzeptabel sei.

Nach den Ergebnissen früherer Rückkehranalysen hängt die subjektive Zufriedenheit der Rückkehrer unmittelbar damit zusammen, inwiefern sie es schaffen, einen angemessenen sozialen Status im lokalen sozialen Umfeld zu

erringen.<sup>39</sup> Diese Hypothese lässt sich auch mittels der Ergebnisse des vorliegenden Projekts bestätigen. So bestimmen eine relativ privilegierte Wohnsituation aufgrund von Immobilienbesitz, höhere Kaufkraft und Kontakte zu Verwandten vor Ort das Wohlbefinden der älteren Rückkehrer in der Türkei. Quelle der Zufriedenheit für die jungen türkeistämmigen Rückkehrer, die im Schulalter Deutschland verlassen haben, ist die Möglichkeit zu studieren und die subjektiv empfundene Zugehörigkeit zur türkischen Bildungselite.<sup>40</sup> Die Befragten in Russland schildern ihre Erfahrungen nach der Rückkehr als einen mühseligen Prozess der Wiederherstellung ihrer früheren sozialen Position in den lokalen Rückkehrkontexten. Ausschlaggebend für sie ist dabei die Reintegration in den Arbeitsmarkt und damit verbunden das Gefühl, zur produktiven Mehrheit der Gesellschaft zu gehören. Nach Georgien und nach Russland zurückgekehrte Studierende und Hochschulabsolventen nennen einen erfolgreichen Einstieg in die Berufswelt und die Nähe zu Verwandten und Freunden als wichtige Zufriedenheitsgründe.

Im Unterschied zu diesen eher positiven Einschätzungen der eigenen Lebenssituation nach der Rückkehr berichten die unfreiwillig Zurückgekehrten häufig von negativen Erfahrungen. In der Forschungsdiskussion zur angeordneten bzw. zwangsweisen Rückkehr, insbesondere zur Rückkehr von Flüchtlingen und Asylbewerbern, wird angenommen, dass ihre Reintegration deshalb problematisch sei, weil die Rückkehrentscheidung nicht freiwillig getroffen worden sei (Ghosh 2000; Carling 2004; Ruben et al. 2009; Webber 2011). Die vorliegenden Länderanalysen zeigen jedoch, dass die Unzufriedenheit der unfreiwilligen Rückkehrer weniger mit ihren Rückkehrumständen, sondern viel mehr mit den mangelnden Chancen auf ökonomischen Erfolg bzw. auf berufliche und soziale Inklusion zusammenhängt. Zugang zu Arbeitsmärkten der Rückkehrregionen bzw. eigene Unternehmensgründungen sind für diese Betroffenen mit hohen Hürden verbunden. Während ihres Aufenthaltes in Deutschland haben sie weder Geld noch verwertbare Berufserfahrungen, Qualifikationen und zusätzliche Sprachkenntnisse erworben, die sie in den lokalen Ökonomien mit komparativen Vorteilen ausstatten würden. Zudem hatte ein großer Teil der Befragten keine Unterstützung seitens der Verwandten und Bekannten in Anspruch nehmen können: Einige Rückkehrer lebten

39 Die Frage nach dem sozialen Status im Rückkehrkontext wurde besonders in der angelsächsischen Rückkehrforschung der 1990er Jahre thematisiert (vgl. hierzu King 2000).

40 Nicht nur junge Menschen beschreiben ihre Bildungskarrieren in der Türkei als Erfolg. Bildungsbeteiligung der Kinder im Rückkehrkontext ist auch für die Eltern ein gewichtiges Erfolgskriterium (vgl. hierzu Wolbert 1989).

nicht in ihren ursprünglichen Herkunftsorten, bei den anderen waren Verwandte und Freunde nicht in der Lage zu helfen.

Dieser Befund wird durch Ergebnisse anderer Studien gestützt. So zeigt eine Befragung von zwangsweisen Rückkehrern im Rahmen eines Projektes des Zentrums für Internationale Entwicklungsfragen in Nijmegen (NL), dass die Erfahrungen von Befragten vor der Migration und während ihres Aufenthaltes im Einwanderungsland einen zentralen Einfluss auf ihre ökonomische und soziale Situation nach der Rückkehr ausüben (vgl. hierzu Davids/van Houte 2008; van Houte/de Koning 2008). Andere Analysen zu Reintegration von zurückgekehrten Flüchtlingen verweisen zudem auf strukturelle Reintegrationshürden in den Rückkehrregionen, etwa hohe Arbeitslosenquoten und unvollständige Arbeitsmarktinformationen, politische Instabilität und fehlende soziale Inklusion der Rückkehrer aufgrund der Ablehnung seitens der ansässigen Bevölkerung (vgl. hierzu Arowolo 2000; Miller 2008).

## 4.2 Pläne für erneute Migration

Sowohl unzufriedene Rückkehrer als auch Rückkehrer, die sich als erfolgreich einschätzten, schlossen eine erneute Migration nach Deutschland bzw. in ein anderes Land nicht aus. Allerdings lassen sich Unterschiede bei den Beweggründen für eine wiederholte Wanderung feststellen. Freiwillige Rückkehrer, die mit ihrer aktuellen Lebenssituation zufrieden waren, wollten ihre Verbindungen zu Deutschland nutzen, um sich dort weiterzubilden oder neue Geschäftsbeziehungen aufzubauen. Auch die Aussicht auf eine mittelfristige Beschäftigung in deutschen Unternehmen würde sie zu einer erneuten Wanderung motivieren. Es ließ sich ferner eine „Vererbung“ von Wanderungsbereitschaft beobachten: Zurückgekehrte Familien unterstützten Migrationspläne ihrer Kinder, wobei eine Migration nach Deutschland zu Bildungszwecken am häufigsten in Erwägung gezogen wurde. Im Unterschied dazu hegten unzufriedene Rückkehrer den Wunsch, die Rückkehrkontexte zu verlassen, vorrangig um in anderen Ländern nach Verdienstmöglichkeiten zu suchen.<sup>41</sup> So gaben 68 % aller unfreiwillig Zurückgekehrten an, in einem anderen Land Geld verdienen zu wollen. Deutschland stellte dabei nicht notwendigerweise das bevorzugte Wanderungsziel dar, da dort der Zugang zu legalem Aufenthalt und folglich zum Arbeitsmarkt für Drittstaatsange-

41 Unter besseren Umständen würden die Rückkehrer nicht weiterwandern. Vgl. hierzu auch entsprechende Ergebnisse einer Untersuchung im Senegal (Sinatti 2011).

hörige sehr schwierig sei. Beispielsweise erwogen abgelehnte Asylbewerber aus Georgien auch kurzfristige Arbeitsaufenthalte in Griechenland, Spanien oder in Russland.

Eine Weiterwanderung ist ferner nicht in jedem Fall realisierbar. Die meisten zurückgekehrten Asylbewerber und andere Befragte, die nach ihrer Rückkehr keinen ökonomischen Erfolg gehabt hatten, betonten, dass sie aktuell nicht die finanziellen Mittel aufbringen könnten, um ihre Wanderungspläne zu verwirklichen. Abgelehnte Asylbewerber schlossen Deutschland als Wanderungsziel auch deshalb aus, weil sie ihre Chancen auf die Erteilung eines Visums als gering einschätzten. Insofern kann man in diesen Fällen von einer „erzwungenen Immobilität“ (Carling 2001) der erfolglosen Rückkehrer sprechen.

Gleichzeitig lässt sich anhand der Befragungen in der Türkei, in Russland und in Georgien beobachten, dass soziale Kontakte in Deutschland – vor allem familiäre und freundschaftliche Netzwerke – die Chancen auf die Realisierung von erneuten Migrationsplänen erhöhen.<sup>42</sup> Rund 70 % aller befragten Rückkehrer nach Russland und in die Türkei hielten rege Kontakte zu Verwandten und Bekannten in Deutschland aufrecht und gaben an, dass sie aufgrund dieser Beziehungen die Option einer Wiedereinreise nach Deutschland erhalten wollen. Um privilegierte Mobilitätsmöglichkeiten zwischen Deutschland und den Rückkehrkontexten zu haben, haben einige dieser Befragten ihren dauerhaften Aufenthaltstitel in Deutschland bewusst nicht aufgegeben. Einige von ihnen suchten zudem nach Wegen, die deutsche Staatsbürgerschaft zu erwerben und gleichzeitig die Bürgerrechte ihres Herkunftslandes nicht zu verlieren.

### 4.3 Nachhaltigkeitskriterien

Grundsätzlich kann anhand der Ergebnisse dieser Studie angenommen werden, dass die Nachhaltigkeit der Rückkehr sowohl im Fall der freiwilligen als auch der unfreiwilligen Rückkehrformen nicht am Kriterium einer dauerhaften Niederlassung im Rückkehrkontext und folglich anhand der Immobilität von Rückkehrern gemessen werden kann. Sowohl Rückkehrer,

42 Diese Beobachtungen korrespondieren mit den Ergebnissen anderer Studien, in denen argumentiert wird, dass grenzüberschreitende soziale Beziehungen die Kosten internationaler Migration erheblich reduzieren (vgl. Massey et al. 1993; Pries 2010; Sirkeci et al. 2012).

die sich als erfolgreich betrachten, als auch unzufriedene Rückkehrer können aus unterschiedlichen Gründen Interesse an einer erneuten internationalen Wanderung entwickeln. Internationale Mobilität wird zudem unabhängig vom Rückkehrtypus durch das Vorhandensein ökonomischer Ressourcen und grenzüberschreitender sozialer Beziehungen begünstigt. Vor diesem Hintergrund lässt sich schlussfolgern, dass weniger die Dauerhaftigkeit der Niederlassung, sondern vielmehr die Möglichkeiten sozialer Mobilität in den Rückkehrregionen – Perspektiven auf einen ökonomischen und beruflichen Erfolg und soziale Anerkennung – in den Mittelpunkt der Diskussion über die Nachhaltigkeit von Rückkehrentscheidungen gestellt werden sollten.



# 5

## Schlussfolgerungen für die Rückkehrförderung

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Die hier vorgestellten Ergebnisse bieten Anhaltspunkte für die Weiterentwicklung der Rückkehrförderung in Deutschland. Diese beziehen sich auf die Rückkehrberatungsangebote in Deutschland und auf die Maßnahmen der Reintegrationsförderung.

### 5.1 Rückkehrberatung für Migranten in schwierigen Lebenslagen

Die Rückkehr von Flüchtlingen, Asylbewerbern und anderen ausreisepflichtigen Ausländern wird in Deutschland vor allem im Rahmen des gemeinsamen Bund-Länder-Programms REAG/GARP gefördert.<sup>43</sup> Aus der Sicht der im Forschungsprojekt befragten zurückgekehrten Asylbewerber erleichtern die Hilfen bei der Beschaffung von Reisedokumenten, die Organisation der Rückreise und finanzielle Unterstützungsangebote den Rückkehrentschluss, weil sie eine Rückreise grundsätzlich ermöglichen und in der ersten Orientierungszeit nach Rückkehr eine gewisse materielle Absicherung bieten.

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43 Gemäß der Richtlinie 2008/115/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 16. Dezember 2008 über gemeinsame Normen und Verfahren in den Mitgliedstaaten zur Rückführung illegal aufhältiger Drittstaatsangehöriger besteht bei Personen ohne gültigen Aufenthaltstitel eine Pflicht zur Rückkehr. Zu dieser Personengruppe zählen illegal Eingereiste, abgelehnte Asylbewerber und sogenannte Overstayer – Personen, bei denen der Gültigkeitszeitraum des Aufenthaltstitels abgelaufen ist. Diese Personen sind grundsätzlich zur Ausreise verpflichtet. Die Rückkehrunterstützung bezieht sich in diesen Fällen vorrangig auf die Vorbereitung und Durchführung der Rückreise und ggf. auf weitere Reintegrationshilfen.

Über die REAG/GARP-Förderung hinaus besteht in Deutschland ein heterogenes System der Rückkehrunterstützung. Einige Bundesländer und Kommunen ergänzen die REAG/GARP-Förderung durch zusätzliche Beratungs- und Unterstützungsmaßnahmen. Neben den staatlichen Akteuren sind zahlreiche Nichtregierungsorganisationen in diesem Bereich aktiv, sodass sich eine vielfältige Förderlandschaft gebildet hat. Trotz der Vielzahl involvierter Akteure existieren lediglich in einzelnen Bundesländern und Kommunen Angebote der Rückkehrunterstützung für nicht ausreisepflichtige Zuwanderer – mittellose ausländische Staatsbürger mit einem gültigen Aufenthaltstitel. Aus Sicht der Verfasserin sollte jedoch erwogen werden, solche Angebote bundesweit für alle Zuwanderergruppen in schwierigen Lebenslagen zu eröffnen.

Die Analysen zeigen, dass zur Gruppe von Zuwanderern in schwierigen Lebenslagen nicht nur abgelehnte Asylbewerber, sondern auch andere Gruppen, beispielsweise Studienabbrecher ausländischer Staatsangehörigkeit, gehören können. Ebenso können Personen, die im Zuge von Eheschließung mit deutschen Ehepartnern oder zum Zwecke der Erwerbstätigkeit nach Deutschland kommen, durch verschiedene Umstände – etwa Scheidung oder Arbeitslosigkeit – in solche Lebenslagen geraten. Die Analysen der Rückkehrmotive deuten darauf hin, dass sich die Rückkehrentscheidung von Zuwanderern in schwierigen Lebenslagen als widersprüchlicher Prozess gestaltet. Trotz einer unbefriedigenden persönlichen Lebenssituation, einer unsicheren Aufenthaltsperspektive oder einer schwierigen ökonomischen Lage in Deutschland wird die Entscheidung aufgrund von Befürchtungen des sozialen Abstiegs nach der Rückkehr immer wieder hinausgezögert.

Insbesondere bei den Personen, die nicht ausreisepflichtig sind, ist eine Berücksichtigung der Lebensperspektiven der Betroffenen in Deutschland sowie der Vorteile bzw. der Risiken der Rückkehr in die Herkunftsländer von zentraler Bedeutung. Einige Beratungsstellen in Deutschland bieten eine ergebnisoffene Rückkehrberatung an.<sup>44</sup> Das Ziel eines ergebnisoffenen Beratungsprozesses ist, eine für die Betroffenen befriedigende Zukunftsperspektive zu entwickeln und somit eine überlegte Entscheidung über den Verbleib in Deutschland oder die Rückwanderung herbeizuführen.

44 Siehe beispielsweise das Positionspapier der Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Freien Wohlfahrtspflege vom 04.09.2006, abrufbar unter: [http://zrb-westbayern.de/bwo/dcms/sites/bistum/extern/zrb/nachrichten.html?f\\_action=show&f\\_newsitem\\_id=13439](http://zrb-westbayern.de/bwo/dcms/sites/bistum/extern/zrb/nachrichten.html?f_action=show&f_newsitem_id=13439)

Die Ergebnisse der Rückkehrerbefragungen in der Türkei, in Russland und in Georgien zeigen auf, welche Faktoren bei einer ergebnisoffenen Rückkehrberatung berücksichtigt werden müssen:

### **Familiäre Situation der Betroffenen ist ein wichtiger Beratungsaspekt**

Die Rückkehrentscheidung ist ein familiär bzw. sozial eingebetteter Prozess. Erwartungen, Bedürfnisse und Wünsche des unmittelbaren sozialen Umfeldes spielen bei der Entscheidungsfindung eine zentrale Rolle. Im Rahmen dieses Projektes ließ sich beispielsweise beobachten, dass eine wahrgenommene Benachteiligung der Kinder im deutschen Bildungssystem und die Hoffnung auf bessere Bildungschancen für die Betroffenen einen wichtigen Rückkehranreiz darstellen kann, ebenso wie die Unterstützungsbereitschaft der im Herkunftsland lebenden Verwandten und Bekannten. Umgekehrt können aber auch hohe Unterstützungserwartungen der im Herkunftsland zurückgebliebenen Familienmitglieder einen Rückkehrentschluss erschweren. Vor diesem Hintergrund sollten in einem Beratungsprozess die Erwartungen des unmittelbaren sozialen Umfelds immer berücksichtigt werden.

### **Erwerb von Qualifikationen in Deutschland erleichtert die Rückkehrentscheidung**

Ein zentrales Ergebnis des Forschungsprojektes ist, dass der Erwerb von Qualifikationen in Deutschland den Rückkehrentschluss befördern kann. Die meisten befragten Personen erhofften, ihre sprachlichen und beruflichen Kompetenzen und ihre in Deutschland erworbenen Bildungszertifikate im Rückkehrkontext gewinnbringend einsetzen zu können. Diese Überzeugung der Betroffenen, verwertbare Kompetenzen zu besitzen, scheint für eine freiwillige Rückkehrentscheidung unabdingbar zu sein. Insofern sollte der in der Integrationspolitik bereits etablierte Potenzialansatz auch zum Prinzip der Rückkehrberatung werden. Die Kompetenzen der Betroffenen sollten also im Mittelpunkt der Beratung stehen. Maßnahmen der Kompetenzfeststellung (wie etwa die Zertifizierung bereits vorhandener Sprachkenntnisse oder die Klärung der Verwertbarkeit deutscher Abschlüsse) und Maßnahmen des Kompetenzaufbaus (wie etwa Qualifizierungs- oder Sprachfördermaßnahmen) könnten für die Betroffenen die Rückkehrentscheidung erleichtern.

### **Eine Rückkehrentscheidung nimmt Zeit in Anspruch**

Eine freiwillige Rückkehrentscheidung wird nicht von heute auf morgen getroffen, sondern benötigt eine gründliche Vorbereitung. Um eigene Kompetenzen und Ressourcen in den Herkunftsländern effektiv verwerten zu können, müssen sich potenzielle Rückkehrer beispielsweise darüber informieren



können, ob Sprach-, Bildungs- oder Berufszeugnisse aus Deutschland auf den Bildungs- oder Arbeitsmärkten der Herkunftsländer verwertbar sind oder wie sie das angesparte ökonomische Kapital in die Herkunftsländer transferieren und effektiv investieren können. Viele Informationen können z.B. bereits über die Plattform ZIRF Counselling<sup>45</sup> und die Länderinformationsblätter<sup>46</sup> des BAMF gewonnen werden. Die Ergebnisse dieses Forschungsprojektes zeigen aber darüber hinaus, dass insbesondere häufige Besuche im Herkunftsland zu einer sinnvollen Rückkehrvorbereitung beitragen.

## 5.2 Rückkehrmanagement als Bestandteil zukunftsorientierter Migrationspolitik

Im Rahmen der hier vorgelegten Rückkehranalysen wurden größtenteils Personen befragt, die sich trotz dauerhafter Bleibeperspektive in Deutschland für eine Verlagerung ihres Lebensmittelpunkts in die Herkunftsländer entschieden haben. Das Grundmotiv ihrer Rückkehrentscheidung ist die Befürchtung, in Deutschland nicht die gleichen Partizipationschancen zu haben, verbunden mit der Erwartung sozialer Aufwärtsmobilität in den Rückkehrkontexten.

Die Debatte um die Weiterentwicklung der Rückkehrförderung in Deutschland sollte die Frage mit einschließen, wie die Rückkehr dieser Zuwanderergruppen politisch zu bewerten ist. Anknüpfungspunkte an die Diskussion über eine nachhaltige Integrationspolitik sind hierbei augenfällig. Das Ziel der gegenwärtigen Integrationspolitik Deutschlands ist es, Partizipationschancen der Zuwanderer zu erhöhen. Konkret beinhaltet dies Förderung von Bildungs- und Arbeitsmarkteteiligung, Förderung von ökonomischer Selbstständigkeit, aber auch Unterstützung der sozialen und politischen Teilhabe von Menschen mit Migrationshintergrund. Somit wird einiges dafür getan, damit Zuwanderer ihre Zukunft in Deutschland sehen. Wenn man Rückkehrpolitik jedoch nicht nur vorrangig als einen Aspekt der Asyl- und Flüchtlingspolitik, sondern als integralen Bestandteil eines umfassenden Migrationsmanagements versteht, sollte auch Rückkehr als eine Zukunftsoption für einige Migranten akzeptiert und entsprechend in die Konzeption

45 Vgl. hierzu <http://www.bamf.de/DE/Rueckkehrfoerderung/Rueckkehrberatung/rueckkehrberatung-node.html> (23.01.2013).

46 Vgl. <http://www.bamf.de/DE/Rueckkehrfoerderung/Laenderinformation/Informationsblaetter/informationsblaetter-node.html> (23.01.2013).

von Migrationssteuerung aufgenommen werden. Vor diesem Hintergrund wäre zu erwägen, Konzepte einer integrierten Mobilitätsberatung für unterschiedliche Zuwanderergruppen zu erarbeiten.

Mobilitätsberatung für ausländische Staatsbürger mit einem legalen Aufenthaltsstatus in Deutschland wird derzeit von der Zentralen Auslands- und Fachvermittlung der Bundesagentur für Arbeit (ZAV) und vom Raphaels-Werk e.V. angeboten.<sup>47</sup> Die Beratung bezieht sich dabei größtenteils auf die Arbeitsplatzsituation in den Rückkehr- oder Weiterwanderungsregionen, aber auch auf verschiedene Aspekte der Übertragbarkeit von Sozialversicherungsansprüchen wie Renten-, Kranken- oder Arbeitslosenversicherung im Falle einer Rückkehr/Weiterwanderung. Ferner spielen Fragen zur Existenzgründung, zum Bildungssystem, zur Berufsanerkennung, zum Familiennachzug usw. eine Rolle. Im Rahmen der ZAV-Beratung nehmen vorrangig Personen türkischer Abstammung (90% aller Klienten) die Unterstützungsangebote in Anspruch. Dies liege daran, dass die Beratungsangebote im Rahmen der Umsetzung des Rückkehrhilfegesetzes (RückHG) von 1983 eingerichtet worden sind und sich somit traditionell an der Zielgruppe der ehemals angeworbenen ausländischen Arbeitskräfte und ihrer Familienangehörigen orientieren (Schneider/Kreienbrink 2010: 71-72).

Im Unterschied zu den oben genannten Beratungsangeboten soll die hier vorgeschlagene **integrierte Mobilitätsberatung** vorrangig die Partizipationschancen von Zuwanderern in Deutschland aufzeigen und diese fördern. Lediglich im Falle einer ausgeprägten Rückkehr- bzw. Weiterwanderungsorientierung sollte sie zu einer informierten Entscheidung beitragen.<sup>48</sup> Ein solches Beratungsangebot würde die transnationalen Lebensentwürfe der Zuwanderer anerkennen und somit zur Etablierung einer an den Bedürfnissen der Betroffenen orientierten Willkommenskultur beitragen.

47 Vgl. hierzu Angebote der Zentralen Auslands- und Fachvermittlung der Bundesagentur für Arbeit. [http://www.arbeitsagentur.de/nn\\_29928/Navigation/Dienststellen/besondere-Dst/ZAV/ZAV-Nav.html](http://www.arbeitsagentur.de/nn_29928/Navigation/Dienststellen/besondere-Dst/ZAV/ZAV-Nav.html) (23.01.2013) oder Angebote des Raphaels-Werkes e.V. <http://www.raphaels-werk.de/beratung/> (03.05.2013).

48 Das neue Finanzierungsinstrument der EU für die Bereiche „Asyl, Migration und Integration“ (AMI-Fonds) wird voraussichtlich ab dem Jahr 2014 die bisherigen EU-Programme in diesen Bereichen, so auch das SOLID-Programm („Solidarität und Steuerung der Migrationsströme“), ersetzen. Dieses neue Förderinstrument soll insbesondere solche Maßnahmen ermöglichen, die verschiedene migrationspolitische Aspekte (bspw. Integration und Rückkehr) umfassen, sowie unterschiedliche Zielgruppen adressieren. Das oben vorgeschlagene Konzept einer integrierten Mobilitätsberatung für Zuwanderer könnte somit im Rahmen dieser neu gestalteten EU-Förderung erprobt werden.

### 5.3 Reintegrationsförderung

Obschon finanzielle Hilfen im Rahmen der Rückkehrförderung von den Betroffenen durchaus als bedeutsam angesehen werden, zeigen die Ergebnisse dieses Projektes, dass finanzielle Mittel nicht ausreichen, um die dauerhafte Sicherung des Lebensunterhaltes und die soziale Inklusion in den Rückkehrregionen zu fördern. Nachhaltige Reintegration hängt größtenteils davon ab, ob es den Rückkehrern gelingt, die vorhandenen Kompetenzen in den lokalen Ökonomien der Herkunftsländer zu nutzen, sowie von der Unterstützung durch familiäre und freundschaftliche Netzwerke.

Jenseits davon zeigen die Ergebnisse dieses Forschungsprojekts, dass der Begriff der Nachhaltigkeit überdacht werden sollte. Reintegrationsförderung muss nicht notwendigerweise zum Ziel haben, eine dauerhafte Niederlassung der Rückkehrer in den Herkunftsländern zu erreichen. Mehrfachwanderungen sind nicht immer der Ausdruck einer gescheiterten Rückkehr, sondern können genauso zu den Mobilitätsmustern von erfolgreichen Rückkehrern gehören.

Ansätze für eine nachhaltige Reintegrationsförderung sind in Deutschland bereits vorhanden. So richtete das Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge im Rahmen des national finanzierten URA 2-Projekts ein Beratungszentrum in Priština (Kosovo) ein. Das Zentrum bietet den Rückkehrern Sozialberatung, Unterstützung bei der Wohnungssuche, diverse Schulungsmaßnahmen (etwa Sprachkurse oder Existenzgründungsschulungen), aber auch Vermittlung in Maßnahmen beruflicher Fortbildung.<sup>49</sup> Ferner beteiligt sich Deutschland im Rahmen der Mobilitätspartnerschaft EU-Georgien an der „Zielgerichteten Initiative Georgien“. Ähnlich dem vorherigen Beispiel wurde in Tiflis ein Mobilitätszentrum eröffnet, in dem Sozialarbeiter und Psychologen Reintegrationshilfe unter anderem durch gezielte Verweisberatung und Unterstützung bei Unternehmensgründungen leisten.<sup>50</sup> In anderen migrationspolitisch relevanten Herkunftsländern werden ähnlich konzipierte Maßnahmen aufgebaut. In Kooperation mit der Internationalen Organisation für Migration unterstützt das Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge die soziale und ökonomische Reintegration von Rückkehrern

49 Für mehr Informationen siehe [http://www.bamf.de/DE/Rueckkehrfoerderung/ProjektKosovo/projektkosovo-node.html;jsessionid=DE805105B923CC4C696B4E97C516461B.1\\_cid286](http://www.bamf.de/DE/Rueckkehrfoerderung/ProjektKosovo/projektkosovo-node.html;jsessionid=DE805105B923CC4C696B4E97C516461B.1_cid286) (23.01.2013).

50 Für mehr Informationen siehe <http://www.bamf.de/DE/Rueckkehrfoerderung/ProjektGeorgia/rueckkehrprojekt-georgia-node.html> (23.01.2013).

im Nordirak.<sup>51</sup> Zudem setzt die Bundesrepublik Deutschland mit anderen Mitgliedstaaten der EU, wie etwa mit den Niederlanden, aber auch mit Belgien, Schweden und Malta gemeinsame Reintegrationsprojekte in Ghana, Marokko, Nigeria und Pakistan um. Gegenwärtig baut die Bundesrepublik Deutschland eine Kooperation mit französischen Partnern auf. In diesem Rahmen ist eine bilateral abgestimmte Förderung von Rückkehr und Reintegration in Armenien entstanden.<sup>52</sup>

Das Ziel der gegenwärtigen Reintegrationsförderung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland ist unter anderem, die Perspektiven von Rückkehrern auf einen ökonomischen und beruflichen Erfolg zu verbessern und ihre soziale Inklusion im Rückkehrkontext zu fördern. Im Zentrum stehen Maßnahmen, welche die Transferierbarkeit der vorhandenen Qualifikationen (des Humankapitals) erleichtern. Zusätzlich werden erste Schritte unternommen, um die Vernetzung und gegenseitige Hilfestellung unter den Rückkehrern zu ermöglichen. Beispielsweise wird bei der Weiterentwicklung des URA-Projekts in Kosovo die Gewinnung von Reintegrationslotsen anvisiert. Rückkehrer, die aus eigener Erfahrung die Herausforderungen für die Betroffenen vor Ort kennen, sollen den jüngst Zurückgekehrten bei den Behördengängen, bei Fragen der Schulanmeldung, bei der Wohnungssuche und bei anderen Alltagsfragen mit Rat und Tat zur Seite stehen. Solche niederschweligen Begleitangebote sind vor allem deshalb innovativ, weil sie zur Entstehung nachhaltiger sozialer Unterstützungsstrukturen vor Ort beitragen. Insbesondere für die Betroffenen ohne soziale Einbindung im Rückkehrkontext sind sie von zentraler Bedeutung.

#### 5.4 Ausblick

Im Rahmen dieses Forschungsprojektes wurden individuelle Reintegrationsverläufe untersucht. Aufgrund einer mikrosoziologischen Perspektive der Länderstudien in Russland, Georgien und in der Türkei wird dort die Frage nach dem Einfluss von makrostrukturellen Bedingungen auf den Reintegrationsprozess in den Hintergrund gestellt. Bei der praktischen Ausrichtung der Reintegrationsförderung sind diese makrostrukturellen Gegebenheiten vor Ort jedoch zu berücksichtigen.

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51 Für mehr Informationen siehe [http://www.bamf.de/DE/Rueckkehrfoerderung/ProjektNordirak/projekt-nordirak-node.html;jsessionid=5670B3199ADDBFA5AD02E61F3240E87B.1\\_cid368](http://www.bamf.de/DE/Rueckkehrfoerderung/ProjektNordirak/projekt-nordirak-node.html;jsessionid=5670B3199ADDBFA5AD02E61F3240E87B.1_cid368) (03.05.2013).

52 Für mehr Informationen siehe [http://www.bamf.de/DE/Rueckkehrfoerderung/ProjektRACOB/projekt\\_racob-node.html](http://www.bamf.de/DE/Rueckkehrfoerderung/ProjektRACOB/projekt_racob-node.html) (03.05.2013).

Während beispielsweise in Russland und in der Türkei davon ausgegangen werden kann, dass Rückkehrer aufgrund von stark wachsenden und sich globalisierenden Ökonomien dieser Länder<sup>53</sup> auf relativ günstige ökonomische Reintegrationsvoraussetzungen treffen, bestehen in den anderen regionalen Schwerpunkten der gegenwärtigen Rückkehrförderung Deutschlands besondere Herausforderungen. Beispielsweise zeichnen sich solche Regionen wie Nordirak und Nigeria aufgrund ihrer Geschichte mit Militärdiktaturen und interreligiösen bzw. interethnischen Gewaltkonflikten durch prekäre Staatlichkeit aus. Das bedeutet, dass der Staat seine Kernaufgaben nicht mehr zureichend wahrnimmt. Neben anderen negativen Aspekten ist ein hoher Anteil an informeller Wirtschaft zu nennen, die sich jeglicher staatlichen Kontrolle entzieht. Der Staat nimmt in Folge weniger Steuern ein und stellt lediglich ein Minimum an öffentlichen Gütern für die Bürger bereit (Zürcher 2005; Weiss/Schmierer 2007). Unter diesen Umständen steht die Reintegrationsförderung vor anderen Aufgaben als es in wirtschaftlich und politisch stabileren Staaten der Fall ist. Beispielsweise zeigen die jüngsten Forschungsergebnisse zur Rückkehr nach Nigeria, dass sowohl ökonomische Partizipationschancen als auch das persönliche Sicherheitsgefühl der Betroffenen in einem großen Maße von einer gelungenen sozialen Einbindung in die lokale Zusammenhänge (etwa Dorfgemeinschaften) abhängen (Pennington/Balaram 2013). Die Fragen der sozialen Reintegration scheinen dort eine zentrale Rolle zu spielen.

Es zeichnet die meisten migrationspolitisch relevanten Rückkehrregionen aus, dass es Gesellschaften sind, die einem rasanten sozialen Wandel unterliegen. So konnten sich im Zuge der Friedens- und Staatsbildungsprozesse in Postkonfliktregionen – z.B. im Kosovo oder ansatzweise im Nordirak – die Rahmenbedingungen für die Reintegration der Rückkehrer verbessern. Aber auch ökonomische Dynamiken – z.B. die positive Wirtschaftsentwicklung in Ghana oder Georgien – bieten neue Chancen für die Rückkehrer. Ferner verändern die Kooperationsbeziehungen mit der Europäischen Union den politischen Umgang mit den Zurückgekehrten in den Rückkehrregionen wie es etwa in Marokko, Armenien oder in Kosovo beobachtet werden kann. Das Beispiel der Republik Kosovo ist dafür besonders interessant. Der Unter-

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53 Zur wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung der Türkei siehe den Überblick „Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft der Türkei“ der Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung von 12.03.2012, <http://bpb.de/izpb/77051/wirtschaft-und-gesellschaft> (03.05.2013). Zur wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung Georgiens und der Russischen Föderation siehe die Überblicksartikel des Ost-Ausschusses der Deutschen Wirtschaft von 03.2013, <http://www.ost-ausschuss.de> (03.05.2013).

zeichnung des Rückübernahmeabkommens mit der EU im Jahr 2010 folgte die Verabschiedung einer nationalen Reintegrationsstrategie des kosovarischen Staates. Rückkehrer aus den EU-Staaten sollen nun Unterstützung in der ersten Orientierungsphase nach der Ankunft erfahren – Bereitstellung einer temporären Unterkunft, Gewährung eines Mietkostenzuschusses, Hilfestellung in Rechtsfragen und bei der Wiederherstellung von Dokumenten. Dementsprechend verschieben sich gegenwärtig die Schwerpunkte der Reintegrationsförderung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland in Kosovo von Fragen der Existenzsicherung in der ersten Ankunftszeit hin zu Fragen nachhaltiger ökonomischer und sozialer Eingliederung. Ein besonderes Augenmerk wird zum Beispiel auf die Bildungsteilhabe von Kindern und Jugendlichen gelegt.

Vor dem Hintergrund dieser Überlegungen lässt sich eine über die Ergebnisse der hier vorgestellten Rückkehranalysen hinausgehende Schlussfolgerung formulieren. Die Entwicklung forschungsbasierter allgemeingültiger Reintegrationsstandards erscheint angesichts der unterschiedlichen makrostrukturellen Voraussetzungen und dem rasanten Gesellschaftswandel in den Rückkehrregionen bislang nicht sinnvoll. Reintegrationsmaßnahmen sollen sich nach wie vor auf die jeweiligen Zielländer und auf die spezifischen Bedürfnisse der Betroffenen ausrichten. Ergebnisse der Rückkehrforschung und Evaluationen der laufenden Fördermaßnahmen liefern jedoch wichtige Hinweise und Anregungen für die Qualitätssicherung in der Reintegrationsförderung.

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# I.

## Return to Turkey

Return Decisions and Reintegration Patterns.  
An analysis of the first and second generations



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# 1

## Introduction



Various approaches to return migration have been discussed by social scientists, governments and international organizations. However, the issue was not in the focus of migration research until the 1990s (King 1986; Dustmann 1996; IOM 2001; Cassarino 2004; Klinthall 2006). Only since then have scientific debates discussed numerous subcategories and classifications of return. One of the categorizations concerns the issue of voluntariness in the decision-making process. The IOM distinguishes for example between three types of return: (1) voluntarily without compulsion (return decision after any length of stay, undertaken at migrant's own volition and expense), (2) voluntarily under compulsion (return decision taken by migrants with temporary residence permit status or by rejected asylum-seekers who are not eligible to stay and who choose to return on their own volition, also within government and other programmes providing return assistance), and (3) involuntary return (decision taken by immigration authorities, usually forcing migrants to leave the host country) (IOM 2004).

This study focuses on the analysis of voluntarily return decisions and on the analysis of reintegration patterns of Turkish returnees from Germany. Like many other studies, it raises the question of why voluntary return migration takes place. Success and failure in the host country are seen in general as the predominant reasons for voluntarily return. Cassarino explores the various conceptual approaches explaining the decision-making process. According to neoclassical economics, return is seen as the out-

come of a failed migration experience. Return occurs as a consequence of migrants' failed experiences abroad or because their human capital was not rewarded as expected (Cassarino 2004: 255). On the other hand, the new economics of labour migration approach (Stark 1991) views return migration as the logical outcome of a "calculated strategy" arising from the successful achievement of goals at family or household level. Structural approaches emphasize predominantly social and institutional factors in host countries affecting return motivation as well as migrants' individual expectations (e.g. Cerase 1974; King 1986). Transnationalism highlights the importance of migrants' social and economic links to their countries of origin. Also the social network theory emphasizes the importance of social networks for the return decision. Cassarino incorporated these different aspects of the return decision into the concept of resource mobilization (Cassarino 2004: 271). He states that the return decision depends on tangible resources (financial capital) or intangible resources (contacts, relationships, skills, acquaintances) accumulated in the host country and in the country of origin. According to Cassarino's argument, our analysis considers returnees' resources (i.e. skills and education, economic resources, social networks) which played a central role in the return decision process.

Beyond the analysis of the return decision, this study examines different adaptation strategies of returnees in Turkey (reintegration process). According to Gmelch, there are two main approaches to the question of adaptation upon return (Gmelch 1980). The first approach examines returnees' economic and social conditions and compares them with their social and economic situation in the host country (i.e. job placement, housing conditions, personal relationship, etc.). Successful adaptation would be seen as onward mobility in comparison with social and economic status in the host country. Failed adaptation would therefore be identified were upward mobility to take place on return. The second approach emphasizes "the migrant's own perceptions of his or her adjustment and the extent to which he feels the homeland has filled self-defined needs and given him a sense of well-being" (Gmelch 1980: 142). This study focuses especially on the occupational and economic adaptation of returnees in Turkey. The objective economic situation of returnees and their position on the labour market, on the one hand, and the subjective satisfaction of returnees with their economic and social status on the other, will be considered.

The last aspect to be analyzed in the study is the issue of return sustainability. Sustainability will be discussed from two perspectives. Firstly, it

will be analyzed from the individual perspective. Return is sustainable in case of a long-term settlement. The probability of long-term settlement upon return depends on two conditions: returnees' satisfaction with their individual situation upon return and the objective migration opportunities. Apart from this individual dimension of sustainability, the effects of return could be structural in nature. Sustainability would then be a result not solely of individual satisfaction, but would imply some positive structural changes triggered by returnees in their societies of residence. Classical examples of those positive structural effects are successful economic investments by returnees, contributing to economic growth and increased employment, or know-how transfer through the successful transfer of skills and qualifications.

### 1.1 The Turkish-German migration system and the issue of return

Labour migration from Turkey to Germany started in the early 1960s with the bilateral labour recruitment treaty signed on 31 October 1961. In the recruitment period between 1961 and 1973, 1,357,790 Turkish citizens migrated to Germany for work purposes.<sup>1</sup> Germany recruited foreign labour according to the so called "rotation principle". "Guest workers" from Italy, Greece, Spain, Turkey and some other countries were expected to leave the country after temporary employment lasting between three and five years. The rotation of guest workers however turned out to be impracticable. On the one hand, having lived and worked in the country for a certain number of years, migrant workers abandoned their original plans of returning home and preferred to remain in the host country instead. Germany's comprehensive social security system, and failure to achieve savings targets, often due to income being lower than expected, may have forced foreign workers to stay and work in the country for much longer than initially intended. German employers were also reluctant to agree on the expiry of the employment contracts with their "guest workers", on the one hand because of the high training and skill costs invested in the immigrant personnel, and on the other hand because of permanent dependence on foreign labour (Ruhs 2003).

The Oil Crisis and the economic recession in Germany led to the formal cessation of foreign labour recruitment. The "ban on recruitment of the

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1 Official data from the German Federal Statistical Office.



foreign labour inflows” was declared in November 1973 (DPT 2001). According to official German statistics, 251,520 Turkish citizens migrated to Germany in 1973. However, only 640 people came for employment reasons (Abadan-Unat 2002: 47). Turkish citizens have migrated to Germany mostly for family reasons since the legal recruitment ban. According to Penninx, the period from 1974 to 1980 was characterized by (1) increasing migration of family members who were not active on the labour market, and (2) continual growth of the Turkish population in Germany as a result of the increasing birth rate among Turkish migrants (Penninx 1982).

Turkish migration to Germany diversified during the 1980s. The numbers of migrants with tourist visas and asylum-seekers rose. For example, 809 Turks applied for asylum in Germany in 1976. The numbers had risen to 57,913 by 1980 (Abadan-Unat 2002: 56). Political disturbances in the 1970s, followed by the military intervention in 1980, led to an increasing number of especially left-wing political activists (Avcı/Kirişçi 2006: 128-9). In addition to that, the Kurdish problem in the East and Southeast regions of Turkey led to increased asylum immigration to Germany. There was a steady rise in the numbers of refugees from Turkey to Germany after 1985.

The new legislation on asylum, which was enacted on 1 June 1993, led to a crucial decrease in the number of the asylum-seekers numbers from Turkey. The main objectives of the law were to draw a legal distinction between political refugees and economic migrants, and to speed up the decision-making process on asylum status (Yüce 2003). Turkey has been classified as a “politically safe” country, and Turks’ asylum applications no longer considered acceptable (Rethmann, 1996). While Germany had to decide on 438,000 asylum applications in 1992, this number decreased to 128,000 in 1995. The official statistics on asylum applications in Germany show a continuing decrease in application numbers from 1993 to 2007. In 2010, the numbers of the asylum applications from Turkey kept on decreasing by -6.2%. While 23,877 Turkish citizens applied for asylum in Germany in 1991, there were only 1,340 asylum applications from Turkey in 2010 (BMI/BAMF 2010).

The number of returnees from Germany to Turkey increased during the 1980s, reaching about 70,000 people per year. The peak was reached in 1984, with more than 200,000 returnees. The increased return rates have to be related to the introduction of the return promotion law. ‘The Law on Encouragement of Return Migration’ was adopted by the German Parlia-

ment on 10 November 1983. Official Turkish statistics report that return migration accelerated for approximately 11 months between 1983 and 1984. 215,000 Turkish citizens returned to Turkey from Germany during this period. (Çalışma ve Sosyal Güvenlik Bakanlığı 2002: 78). Turkish migrants' willingness to return declined after 1985. Many migrants had become permanent residents and taken on German citizenship. As Abadan-Unat states, this period could be characterized as a settling down process of a large number of workers who had acquired property and established businesses in Germany (Abadan-Unat 2002). A decrease in return migration, the continued migration of family members from Turkey to Germany, and a high birth rate kept the population of Turks in Germany high (White 1997: 754).

2.5 million people of Turkish origin live in Germany today. 60 % of them migrated to Germany, and 40 % were born in the country.<sup>2</sup> Their return aspirations are however rarely analyzed. Individual findings on the return intentions of Turkish migrants show a contradictory picture. One study conducted in the beginning of the 1990s indicated that 83 percent of Turks living in Western Germany have no plans to return (Abadan-Unat 1995). In contrast, the report by the Turkish Directorate-General of Family and Social Research stated that 75.3 percent of migrants living in Germany wanted to return (Nuruan et al. 2005: 71). An online survey among highly-skilled qualified people of Turkish origin living in Germany found out that one Turkish university graduate in three sees his or her future in Turkey, and not in Germany.<sup>3</sup>

The official Turkish return data show a relatively low number of returnees from Germany residing in Turkey. For example, data from the Population Census (2000) records returnees who resided in Turkey during the Census (2000) who had been living abroad five years previously (1995).<sup>4</sup> According to this data, 73,736 returnees from Germany lived in Turkey in 2000. The cities receiving the highest numbers of returnees were Istanbul, Izmir, Bursa, Ankara and Antalya. German official statistics cannot

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2 For more information, see <http://www.destatis.de/jetspeed/portal/cms/Sites/destatis/Internet/DE/Content/Statistiken/Bevoelkerung/ZensusMikrozensus.templateId=renderPrint.psml>, retrieved 13 December 2011.

3 For more information, see <http://tasd.futureorg.de/?id=tasd-studie>, retrieved 5 December 2011.

4 The data were obtained from the official website of the Turkish Statistical Institute, [http://www.tuik.gov.tr/VeriBilgi.do?tb\\_id=38&ust\\_id=11](http://www.tuik.gov.tr/VeriBilgi.do?tb_id=38&ust_id=11), retrieved 1 May 2008.

be compared with these data. German Migration Statistics indicate much larger numbers of out-migration on the part of Turkish citizens. Roughly 40,000 Turkish citizens left Germany each year between 1990 and 2000, falling to about 35,000 from 2000 onwards (see Table 1). On the one hand, these data overestimate the number of returnees to Turkey. The data do not record out-migrants' destination countries. The data therefore include both returnees to Turkey and people who migrated on to other countries. On the other hand, we could also assume that these statistical data underestimate the de facto return numbers because they do not include returnees of Turkish origin who have German citizenship. Also, people with manifest circular migration behaviour who do not report their mobility between Germany and Turkey to the state registration services are not accounted for in these statistics.

**Table 1: Numbers of Turkish citizens moving to Germany and those moving away from Germany (in thousands)**

Year	Moving in, numbers	Moving out, numbers	Migration balance
1990	84.346	35.635	+ 48.711
1991	82.635	36.639	+ 45.996
1992	81.303	40.727	+ 40.576
1993	68.466	46.642	+ 21.824
1994	64.725	47.378	+ 17.347
1995	74.517	44.366	+ 30.151
1996	74.144	45.030	+ 29.084
1997	56.992	46.820	+ 10.172
1998	49.178	47.154	+ 2.024
1999	48.129	42.823	+ 5.306
2000	50.026	40.263	+ 9.763
2001	54.695	36.495	+ 18.200
2002	58.128	36.750	+ 21.378
2003	49.774	36.863	+ 12.911
2004	42.644	38.005	+ 4.639

2005	36.019	34.466	+ 1.553
2006	30.720	32.424	- 1.704
2007	27.599	29.879	- 2.280
2008	26.653	34.843	- 8.190
2009	27.212	35.410	- 8.198
2010	27.564	31.754	- 4.190

Source: German Federal Statistical Office

The insufficient statistical data on return numbers correspond with limited knowledge of the socio-economic characteristics of returnees to Turkey. The general assumption is that retirement has a strong impact on the decision to return. Kırdar argues, for example, that the probability of Turkish migrants in Germany returning increases six-fold within the first year of their retirement (Kırdar 2008). There are no representative data whatever when it comes to returns by the second and third generations of Turkish migrants in Germany.

## 1.2 The academic discussion on return: the Turkish context

The Turkish academic discussion on return began in the 1980s and focused especially on the effects of return on the Turkish economy. A modernist approach dominated this debate at that time (Rittersberger-Tılıç 1998a). The discussion emphasized the balancing function of international migration related to regional and international wage differences and differing employment opportunities. It further stressed the importance of monetary remittances to Turkey. Furthermore, professional, social and cultural skills which the migrants and/or returnees acquired during their stay abroad were considered as developing/modernizing factors. Some critical studies doubted the returnees' socio-economic and cultural development potential (Paine 1974; Abadan-Unat et al. 1976; Gitmez 1984; Ebiri 1985).

The study by Gitmez interviewed 1,365 returnees in three districts of Turkey (the industrialized region of Bursa, the semi-developed region of Afyon, and the traditional region of Kırşehir) to examine how return migration affects socioeconomic and industrial development in Turkey. Most

of the interviewees (93%) were male, and the average length of their stay abroad was 5.5 years (Gitmez 1984). Although most labour migrants had worked in large industrial plants in Europe, 59% were working in agriculture after their return. About 20% of the returnees were not employed, a category that included retired migrants and migrants managing private investments in Turkey. 37% of return investments were in housing, 34% in agricultural land or shops, and 23% in the service sector. The central argument of the study was that return migrants did not seem to contribute to the development of a skilled industrial workforce. Dustmann and Kirchkamp analyzed the survey dataset of Turkish immigrants who returned from Germany in 1984, and they were re-interviewed in 1986 and 1988 (Dustmann/Kirchkamp 2001). The analysis found out that most returnees chose self-employment or non-employment after return. The results indicated that more highly-educated returnees were more likely to participate in the labour market and were more often economically active in Turkey. Non-economic aspects of return were another important point of discussion. SİAR (Sosyal ve İktisadi Araştırmalar A.S.) conducted research in 1985 on problems of reintegration of returnees in cooperation with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. The study clearly demonstrated that non-migrants perceived return migration not as an economic issue but as an issue of cultural otherness (SİAR 1985). Yasa's (1979) early study on returnees discussed for example how the concept of *almancılar/alamancılar* (Deutschler – neither German nor Turkish) came into everyday usage in Turkey. This concept refers to a conspicuous lifestyle of returnees from Germany. The authors argue that the concept was often used in the Turkish mass media as a marker of returnees as “culturally others” and stigmatized them as social climbers. The stigmatization of returnees as “partly German” and alienated from Turkish culture would make their cultural adaptation difficult.

The number of return studies has declined considerably from beginning of the 1990s until today. One of the most recent major surveys was carried out in 1991 by the Turkish Research Center (Türkiye Araştırmalar Merkezi)<sup>5</sup>, in which 600 Turkish returnees were interviewed (cited in DPT 2001: 41). According to the research, 71.5 % of returnees re-migrated to Turkey for economic reasons. Large families were common among them, and most of these returned as a family (89.7%). It was found that 54.3 % of them considered their return to have been the right decision. The rest stat-

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5 The German “Zentrum für Türkeistudien” at Essen.

ed that they regretted it, complaining especially about the lack of health-care and other social services.

Very few attempts were made to study the situation of returning second and third generations of Turkish guest workers. Rittersberger-Tılıç et al. conducted fieldwork on the situation of young returnees in the tourism sector in Antalya in 1994 (Rittersberger-Tılıç et al. 1994). One of the main goals was to analyze the labour market situation of this group of returnees. This study argues that young returnees from Germany experienced many conflicts with their Turkish employers because “they were not willing to conform to informal employment relationships”, but instead “insisted on fixed working hours and payment”. Many respondents stressed that they would actually like to re-migrate to Germany and considered their stay in Turkey as temporary.

The re-integration of guest workers' returning children was especially analyzed in terms of their integration into the Turkish educational system. The study of Kuruüzüm (2002) focuses for example on the processes of social adaptation and return difficulties of school children who returned with their parents to Antalya. The findings of this study show that children who finished primary school in Germany and other European countries and did not want to return to Turkey but had to follow their families, developed considerable adaptation problems at school and in everyday life.

Especially typologies of return and the determinants of the return decision have become central to the academic discussion in recent decades. By organizing focus group sessions with male returnees from Germany to Turkey, Razum et al. (2005) evaluated return as rarely based on purely economic or health-related motives. Value-oriented and emotional themes played an almost equally important role. Kırdar (2008) examined the relationship between labour market outcomes, savings accumulation behaviour and return migration among Turkish immigrants in Germany. According to the results of this study, return migration should be seen as a lifecycle phenomenon. Retirement therefore has a strong impact on immigrants' return decisions. The probability to return increases six-fold within the first year of retirement.

Summarizing the Turkish academic debate on return migration, we conclude that studies carried out in recent years primarily concentrate on adaptation problems encountered by young returnees of Turkish origin

and on post-retirement return. Virtually no consideration is given to variant types of return in terms of social class, gender or age. Our study will counter this by considering returnees as a heterogeneous group, and will especially compare the return decision processes and the reintegration patterns of the returning first generation (“guest workers”) and the second and third generations of Turkish migrants.

Before outlining the research methodology and describing the sample, we will illustrate some findings on the return policy pursued by the Turkish State. This analysis is mostly based on interviews with experts from the Turkish administration. It shows that Turkish return policies were focused primarily on the issues of educational adaptation of the returning second generation, and less on providing support for returnees on retirement, or for economic entrepreneurs or other groups of returnees.

### 1.3 The views of the Turkish administration on return and policies on expatriates

Turkey has no comprehensive, sustainable policy with regard to the issue of return. During the 60s, labour migration to Germany was not perceived in Turkish politics as a mass migration with rapid development and considerable economic and social consequences. In general, labour migration to Europe was considered as a temporary phenomenon. As stated by an expert in the Directorate-General of Expatriate Labour Affairs of the Turkish Ministry of Labour, this political perception resulted specifically in the absence of any return policy:

“...many of these people left their families here. They would stay there for three or at most five years. For example, an apprentice in a tailor shop went there to make enough money to buy some machines and come back. A farmer went there with the idea of making money to buy a tractor. Another went to save money for his planned investment. They would all return; there was initially no idea to stay there, so there was no need for any return policy.” (Expert, Ministry of Labour, Directorate-General of Expatriate Labour Services)

However, the Turkish State called on Germany as early as in 1964 to sign a bilateral social insurance agreement (Hunn 2005). This agreement guaranteed not only the transferability of social insurance premiums, but also

of pension claims on return. This agreement still plays an important role today for returnees of the first generation, and particularly for post-retirement returnees because they have an opportunity to draw the full amount of their German pensions in Turkey.<sup>6</sup>

It turned out that migration structures, which were initially perceived as structures of temporary labour recruitment for 3-5 years, developed into forms of migration lasting in excess of 40 years. Various factors such as German return and migration policies or migrants' efforts to stabilize their labour market positions in Germany, on the one hand, and rapid population growth and economic and political turmoil in Turkey in the period of 1970-1985, on the other, contributed to the tendency that Turkish labour migrants stayed in Germany much longer than originally planned.

Especially in the 60s and early 70s, travel to and return from Germany was rather easy. Thus, working in Germany for some time and saving money, returning to Turkey to start something with these savings and migrating to Germany again if the investments did not work out was part of the typical strategy of Turkish labour migrants. Starting from the late 70s, however, such commuting became difficult. Consequently, the decision to return could no longer be made spontaneously, but became a much more serious matter. The migration of family members to Germany, and children born and growing up in Germany, made the decision to return more difficult, and in many cases led to the permanent settlement of Turkish migrants.

“It used to be easy to go to Germany and to work there, save some money to invest in Turkey and return to Germany again if it didn't work out. Then, starting from the 70s, this going backwards and forwards wasn't so easy any more. So they started to stay there.” (Expert, Turkish Ministry of Labour, Directorate-General of Expatriate Labour Services)

The tendency to settle and to postpone the return decision led to a change in the perception of Turkish migrants in Germany. As one of our experts put it, migrants started to “find their way into the German cities”. “They became a part of the urban population with their greengrocers, butchers

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6 For more information about the bilateral German-Turkish social insurance agreement, see <http://dentalblog.info/wp-content/uploads/ak1.pdf>, retrieved 19 December 2011.



shops and kebab shops.” Turkey therefore still did not make any political attempts to encourage their citizens to return until the 90s. This issue became a matter of concern only when the number of de facto returnees increased.

“Our Ministry established an information office after 1990, having observed that the number of returnees was increasing. Personnel like me who had experience abroad were allotted responsibilities there, responding to telephone calls from France, Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark or from Arabic countries. There were also internal calls from such places as Denizli, Uşak, Kayseri and so on[...] Our Ministry was not the only one involved. The Ministry of National Education was also busy establishing standards of equivalence for school diplomas. Quotas were allocated to Anatolian High Schools for returning children, and even special high schools were established. There were quotas in universities as well. Major opportunities were therefore provided to our young citizens abroad for their return.” (Expert, Turkish Ministry of Labour, Directorate-General of Expatriate Labour Services)

According to this statement, an attempt was made to solve the education-related problems encountered by returnees’ children, which the initiatives undertaken including the following: Granting equivalence of German educational certificates, establishing instruction in German at Anatolian High Schools; recruitment of German teachers at these schools and allocation of quotas for returnees’ children in university admittance exams.

“In the 80s when definitive returns increased significantly in number, Anatolian High Schools providing instruction in German were established in Ankara, İstanbul and İzmir to keep up with demand. German teachers were recruited from Germany. In the late 80s and early 90s, we enacted special quotas in regional educational institutions for students whose families were living abroad. But those quotas were repealed and have not been in place for ten years.” (Ministry of National Education, Directorate-General of Foreign Affairs)

These programs to facilitate return and especially reintegration were unfortunately not extended because the Turkish authorities had to cope with other and more serious problems of internal migration and uncontrolled urbanization of the Turkish metropolitan regions in the 1980s and 1990s. Internal migration had started in the 50s, and rapidly-growing urban centres caused various social problems such as housing shortages, expanding

informal sectors in local economies, unemployment, and integration of new settlers from rural areas into urban culture. Against this background, the reintegration problems of returnees from Germany, who at least possessed some economic capital, were considered less urgent. No comprehensive, sustainable policies were therefore developed.

“You would wonder who the returnees are: Are they relatively poor? Or are they the ones who have been successful? The fact is that returnees are mostly those who have been successful[...] In other words, return is not something related to ethnic origin or religion. It took place almost entirely on economic grounds. Then you have factors such as the region of migration and the region of return. We can say that those of South-Eastern Anatolian origin tend to stay in Germany. The same can be said of people from Kars. They don't want to return to Kars because there are no job opportunities there.” (Expert, Ministry of Labour, Directorate-General of Expatriate Labour Services)

Apart from the limited scope of return policies, the Turkish authorities considered that the German return policies introduced in the 1980s had not had the desirable effects for Germany, but had had more positive outcomes for Turkey. In other words, the Turkish authorities considered German return policies to work in favour of Turkish state interests. For example, returning workers had an opportunity to receive the social insurance premiums which they had paid in Germany as a non-recurring lump sum two years after their return. The Turkish authorities assumed that this money would be invested by returnees in their own businesses, and would thus contribute to the economies in the rural regions of Turkey in particular. Another instrument of German return policy was financial return assistance for people who registered their return decision by 30 June 1984. Those families received “return and reintegration support” ranging from 10,000 to a maximum of 15,000 Deutschmarks (Schmidt-Fink 2007). The assumption of the Turkish authorities in respect to this instrument was that the better-educated migrants would make more frequent use of the return incentives provided by the German State:

“We told the Germans at that time: ‘If you follow your present strategy, you will get not those returnees whom you really want to go back. They will be those who adapted to local conditions.’ Many Turks in Germany thought ‘I am not wanted in this country, I am excluded, my children won't be able to do well there, so I want to return.’ Some

doctors decided to return after observing their children's exclusion in schools. Of course there were others with fewer resources who decided to stay, although they intuitively felt that they weren't wanted. They didn't want to go back to their small settlements, afraid of being labelled as 'losers'. There were quite a few well-educated people among the migrants, and you will see during your survey that these educated people constitute an important part of those who have returned. They are the ones who received professional education. And they considered that their children would find better educational opportunities in Turkey." (Expert, Turkish Ministry of Labour)

Unfortunately there is a lack of representative data or of any official statistics on the educational background of returnees from Germany and their structural position before their return. The viewpoint of the Turkish authorities has to be evaluated as a selective institutional view of the reality of return. This institutional perception of returnees from Germany as a non-problematic, resourceful social group provided a justification for the absence of any policy concerning their reintegration in Turkey. The implicit message to the Turkish community in Germany was: Responsibility for the return decision and for the success of reintegration lies primarily in the hands of individual migrants and their families.

The Turkish authorities are currently starting to think about adequate return and reintegration policies. But as the experts stated, those policies could be developed only with the assistance of the returnees themselves. A low level of self-organization on the part of the returnees, and their inability to articulate their demands, would therefore constitute a major barrier to policy development.

"We in this Ministry and Directorate-General [...] support returnees' efforts to establish their own associations here in Turkey. Just as some local residents establish "societies of interest", returnees can have their own communication networks." (Expert, Turkish Ministry of Labour, Directorate-General of Expatriate Labour Services)

"What we aim to do is to provide comprehensive counselling services for returnees. These services are however partly determined by the needs and concerns of the returnees themselves. What I mean is that returnees have not expressed their needs and concerns. They have just complained. It is our tendency as people; we complain rather than

claiming something concrete. But we have been thinking about it; academics from universities have reflected on it and some initiatives have been launched. These are presently making progress. But the point is that the returnees themselves are not so active in getting organized.” (Expert, Turkish Ministry of Labour, Directorate-General of Expatriate Labour Services)

Apart from the topic of the self-organization of Turkish returnees, the authorities do not consider that there are prospects for increasing returnee numbers in the future. From the viewpoint of the Turkish State, the tendency to return from Europe is declining. The well-known saying: “The child flies to Germany early in the morning and returns back to Turkey in the evening” seems to be valid when it comes to the situation of the first, second and even the third generations. It means that the first, second and even third generations of Turkish migrants are rooted in two cultures and live simultaneously in two worlds. The Ministry of National Education, Directorate-General of Foreign Affairs, provides various services for those generations.

“Our Directorate-General sorts out incoming requests and tries to respond to them. The most important issue raised in recent years is related to internships of foreign students with Turkish roots. Many Turkish students who obtained their education in Germany want to do their internship semester here in Turkey, and we provide them with information about various issues. The highest number of applications is for internships as a school or a nursery-school teacher.” (Ministry of National Education, Directorate-General of Foreign Affairs)

From the Turkish point of view, the fourth generation has settled in Germany and has no connections to Turkey whatever. However, this point of view is also based on some impressions of the authorities and not supported by any data.

“We have no specific information on how many people of different generations in fact returned from Germany and how many of them registered with the employment agency and are looking for jobs in Turkey. And we have no surveys on these issues.” (Expert at the Turkish Employment Agency)

To sum up, Turkey’s current policy does not focus on facilitating permanent return or on reintegration, but aims to provide better movement

opportunities between Germany and Turkey, especially for highly-educated people of Turkish origin. The idea behind this is that this freedom of movement would lead to a “natural selection” of returnees. Those who managed to be successful on their return would stay. And those who failed to realize their return plans could re-migrate to Germany. The Turkish State remains convinced that the issue of the reintegration of people returning from Germany requires little attention. However, as we will see in the analysis below, this seems to be a misconception. Both the first and second/third generations of migrants returning to Turkey face a variety of adaptation problems which they try to solve on their own.

#### 1.4 Outline of the field work

Statistical limitations and a lack of representative surveys on returns to Turkey were decisive in determining the research design of this study. A quantitative, representative analysis of this issue did not seem to be feasible. The study is therefore based on an exploratory, qualitative design. The main goal of this study is to identify different types of return and correspondingly form hypotheses of different return decision determinants and reintegration patterns.

The research was conducted in the provinces of Ankara and Antalya, basically because they belong to the provinces with the largest number of incoming returnees from Germany according to official Turkish statistics. Additionally, the following selection criteria played a role: 1) As the capital of Turkey with a well-developed infrastructure in the fields of education and healthcare institutions, Ankara constitutes an attractive centre for young and old alike. Several universities are located in Ankara. Secondary schools using German as the language of instruction are also available. At the same time, Ankara’s healthcare infrastructure (hospitals, rehabilitation centres, private hospitals, special hospitals, etc.) has to be considered as another important pull factor for elderly returnees. The presence of the German Embassy might also have an influence on decisions to settle in Ankara. 2) Antalya is ranked as one of the most highly-developed provinces according to the Development Index<sup>7</sup> (Özaslan et al. 2004), and it is an important cultural centre in Turkey (Antalya Film Festival, important

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7 The calculations were made according to the 2000 Population Census of Turkey.

historical sites, etc.). The tourism sector in particular offers employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.

The analysis is based on 14 qualitative biographical in-depth interviews in Ankara and eight interviews conducted in Antalya. The sampling strategy was based on a “snowball” technique. Both formal and informal networks of returnees were used for sampling. The length of the interviews varied with regard to the narrative capabilities of interviewees. The interviews lasted for an average of 2.5 hours. The transcriptions of all the interviews were anonymized. In general, all the interviewees were eager to talk about their migration and return experiences; they occasionally used some words in German and the interviews were conducted in a warm, sincere atmosphere. The interviews were analyzed using the “thematic analysis method”.<sup>8</sup>

The interviews were structured under three major headings. The first heading was related to the pre-migration process. This heading focused on such details as where they lived before migrating, jobs held, the socio-demographic characteristics of the family, factors and persons affecting the decision to migrate and any informal ties with Germany. The second heading related to the process of migration itself: how, on the basis of which legal status, when and with whom people migrated to Germany. Working and social conditions, cultural, educational and linguistic adaptation, changes in economic status and living standards in Germany were also addressed in the interview. This information was crucial for the analysis of resources accumulated in Germany, including those related to language, job skills and cultural knowledge. The third heading focused on the return decision processes and on interviewees’ post-return social, economic and professional situation.

We also conducted interviews with decision-makers and experts at various institutional levels (10 interviews) in order to validate the influence of Turkish return and reintegration policies on the return decision and reintegration patterns of returnees from Germany (see above). Furthermore, the interviews also covered non-governmental organizations established by the returnees themselves.

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8 For more information, see <http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=qualitative&pageid=icb.page340897>, retrieved 13 December 2011.

The sample of this analysis is selective especially in terms of returnees' regional distribution. The results presented cannot be generalized for other cities, rural areas and Turkey in general. The material collected is very rich in content, but limited to a specific group of returnees living in Antalya and Ankara.

## 1.5 Socio-demographic characteristics of the sample

### Sex, age and country of birth

Of the 14 interviews conducted in Ankara, nine were with males and five were with females. Five males and three females were interviewed in Antalya. This means that more than 60 % of the interviewed returnees are men. This overbalance of male interviewees does not however necessarily represent "the male view" on return decision and reintegration patterns. Many of the interviewed men spoke on behalf of their families, and the family members were involved in the interviewing process in many cases.

Seven of the people interviewed in this study were born in Germany. 15 interviewees belong to the first migrant generation. Almost all of them were born in rural parts of various provinces. Only four returnees of all those who were born in Turkey originate from the urban regions. This selection of interviewees points to the returnees' rural-urban mobility patterns. Some of them moved from rural regions to the big Turkish cities before they migrated to Germany. Another group of returnees settled in the urban regions after their return.

The sample consists of mainly middle-aged persons, with five interviewees being over 65. In order to capture the differing experiences of returnees with regard to their social status, interviews were conducted with persons with differing social positions such as housewives, students, presently working and retired.

### Sample according to generations

The sample was differentiated according to the migrant's generation. The first generation of migrants included interviewees who had migrated to Germany as adults. The second generation included children of migrants who came to Germany at an early age or who were born in Germany. Grandchildren of first-generation migrants are included in the category "second generation". 12 returnees of the first generation and 10 returnees

of the second and third generations of migrants were interviewed in the sample.

### **Voluntary and assisted returnees**

The sample consists mainly of voluntary returnees. Five interviewees decided to return to Turkey with the support of the return promotion schemes introduced by the German Government in 1984. We interviewed only one person who returned compulsorily to Turkey. The voluntary nature of the return decision was therefore a central factor in determining the interviewees' return decision. The interviewees however reported various motives for return: marriage, better educational opportunities in Turkey, retirement, starting up their own business and others. While the decision to return was made without any compulsion on the part of any state authorities, some returnees reported other – economic or social – circumstances that forced the decision to leave Germany. Factors such as unemployment or subjectively-perceived discrimination, especially in the German education system, were important. Another group of interviewees returned as they had planned from the beginning, after having achieved their economic goals. This first overview of the sample with regard to voluntary returnees' various return motivations shows that the complexity and multidimensional character of the decision-making process should not be ignored in the analysis below.

### **Duration of stay in Germany**

Interviewed returnees stayed in Germany from 27 months to 23 years. The duration of stay in Germany seems to be important for the return decision process and reintegration patterns. Interviewees who stayed in Germany for longer than five years reported long-term return planning. To provide "for their future life in Turkey", they not only developed various saving strategies, but invested actively in real estate or small businesses in Turkey. Those saving and investing strategies took a long time due to the relatively low labour market position of the "guest workers" interviewed and their moderate incomes. Some returnees, for instance, needed about 20 years and more to achieve their saving goals in Germany. Other interviewees relied more heavily on their professional skills and educational achievements in Germany, and returned after a shorter time of employment. The re-migration decision of those interviewees who were born in Germany depended less on their duration of stay than on the crucial lifecycle moments such as periods of entering or leaving educational institutions or starting a family.



### The educational background of the returnees

The first-generation migrants had completed their education in Turkey. Among 12 first-generation interviewees, one person was illiterate, four had completed primary school, and one had finished secondary school. Three persons had completed vocational training in Turkey, and another three had university degrees. The sample is therefore heterogeneous with regard to educational backgrounds: Half of the first-generation interviewees obtained poor or no school-leaving qualifications, and another half have a relatively high level of education. Interestingly, almost all the interviewees – both those with a poor and with a high level of education – had migrated to Germany for economic reasons and planned to save money and to return to Turkey. Among this generation, only one returnee had migrated to Germany for educational reasons.


The interviewees of the second generation were better educated than the first-generation returnees. While the first-generation migrants received their education in Turkey, the second-generation returnees either continued their education in Germany or were educated there from the outset. Among the second-generation interviewees, three are studying at university today. They started primary school in Turkey, continued in Germany and went on with their education in Turkey after their return. Two interviewees among the second generation had already graduated from a Turkish university. Among the other five second-generation interviewees, one completed 10 years of school in Germany, three finished vocational school, and the last one started vocational training in Germany and dropped out in the last year.

### Other characteristics of the sample

The duration of stay in Turkey after return varies in our sample from three to 24 years. There are two persons who went to and returned from Germany alone. Six interviewees lived in Germany with their families and returned alone while the rest of the family was still living in Germany or with some members of the family. The rest returned as a family, together with all the members. It is observed that those who still have family in Germany are mostly second-generation migrants. Those who returned for marital purposes are also second-generation migrants whose parents and/or siblings still live in Germany. Only four interviewees in our sample hold German as well as Turkish citizenship. The rest are Turkish citizens only.

# 2

## Establishing the causes for return: considerations and experiences



### 2.1 Turkey: The pre-emigration period

As mentioned in the introduction, migration of workers from Turkey to Germany started in the 1960s in response to Germany's demand for foreign workers. In the first migration period, mostly male workers moved to Germany on a temporary basis. Leaving their families back in Turkey, these people originally planned to return to their places of origin after achieving their economic goals. Instead of following their original plans, many of them postponed their return decision and started to bring their families to Germany. Legally-accepted family re-unification gained pace particularly after 1973, when Germany stopped the recruitment of foreign labour in the face of economic crisis. For a better understanding of the processes of return, and especially of return decision-making within our sample of interviewees, we need to analyze the pre-migration period, including the motives behind the migration decision, knowledge about working and living conditions in Germany (preparedness for migration) and the pre-existing return plans. The analysis is based on the experiences and family memories of the pre-migration situation of the first generation of migrants. Most migrants who came to Germany as children and belong

in our sample to the second generation did not participate in the process of decision-making. Their migration motives and expectations were not crucial for the parents' migration decision.

### 2.1.1 Economic migration motives

In our study, achieving a better standard of living in economic terms was the most important factor influencing the migration decision of migrants with a low level of education, or no education, and of unskilled migrants. Lack of job opportunities and insufficient means of subsistence in the place of origin were decisive factors. In our interviews, however, we also interviewed a group of migrants who were better educated. We observed that this group of migrants moved to Germany in the 60s and 70s when they were in their 20s and 30s. They had mostly completed vocational high schools. Their job skills included machine assembly, repair and maintenance, glass optics, manufacture of school instruments, turning, levelling or welding. But the main migration motive was economic improvement for this group of migrants too.

Not just general expectations to improve economically, but concrete economic goals, for example to “earn enough to buy a house” could be a motive for migration to Germany. For example, one returnee reported of his father's decision to migrate to Germany as follows:

“My father had a good job in Aselsan (a state electronics firm) at that time. But he lived in a *gecekondus* (squatter housing) in Ankara with his family. Then he went to Germany with his mind fixed on “buying a house”. My mother initially objected to his idea of moving to Germany, pointing to the secure job he had. But my father was determined, and he applied to the employment agency without telling my mother. After being accepted, he went to Germany telling my mother he was going to Kırşehir (a city in central Anatolia). [...] In Turkey, what he earned must have been insufficient to buy a house, so he moved to Germany to be relieved from living in a *gecekondu*.” (Second generation, female, finished secondary school in Germany, currently a housewife)

Another motive, related to economic considerations, is the desire to start a small business of one's own after accumulating some capital. But this

motive was not often observed in our sample. A returnee who moved to Germany in 1969 at the age of 34 illustrates his economic aspirations in Germany:

“When I went there my plan was to work for some time and to earn enough to get a lathe set and return to do my job in Turkey. I mean, what I had in my mind was to start a small business in Turkey.” (Male, first generation, finished vocational high school, retired and currently employed in seasonal cleaning work)

Apart from concrete economic motives, the general labour market opportunities in Germany should also be considered as an important factor. Many interviewees of the first generation stated that there was a widespread “Germany myth”, especially during the 60s. Germany was seen at that time as a country where ‘it was easy to make money’ if you were a hard worker.

“Germany was a dream at that time [...] People were saying that the German authorities welcomed you with flowers when you got off the plane and they just picked you up for a job when you were still at the airport.” (Male, first generation, university graduate, currently retired)

Family reasons were also important for migration decisions. This involves being a spouse, child or close relative of persons who had already migrated to Germany. Especially for women, marriage and family re-unification are the leading motives for migration.

“At first I didn’t go. We got married and we were together for a month. Then my husband placed me in his mother’s house. It was in 1971 and I could be admitted six months after being officially married. So I went there six months later.” (Female, first generation, primary school dropout, currently retired)

The typical migration pattern was that the husband went to Germany first and his wife and/or children applied for a residence permit afterwards. But there are other examples in which women first moved to Germany and brought their husbands in. In the following quotation, an interviewee from the third generation illustrated this pattern in the case of the migration of his grandparents.

“People migrate to Germany because of economic difficulties at home, hopes and promises about economic opportunities and things like that.[...] I am talking about the year 1964 [...] My grandmother went first and my grandfather followed her.” (Male, third generation, university graduate, currently employed in a Turkish-German enterprise)

Female interviewees of the first generation reported that while they were in Germany as young workers they frequently received marriage proposals from candidates in Turkey. For a male partner, marriage opened up a legally-accepted opportunity to migrate to Germany and to achieve economic improvement.

“My wife is a relative of mine from my mother’s side. They were on vacation in Turkey [...] I decided to marry her and get a job. [...] Of course we had our economic difficulties. Germany was indeed attractive that time. Those coming back on vacation had money, cars, etc. So I decided to go.” (Male, first generation, finished vocational school, currently retired and driving a taxi)

Apart from these migration patterns, some individuals entered Germany illegally and subsequently obtained legal residence status through marriage.

“There was no such thing as an invitation at that time. My elder sister’s husband was a truck driver going to and from Germany. He offered me to escort him to Germany. I didn’t have a visa and I was afraid at the border control. But nothing happened and I was there. Then I got married.” (Male, first generation, finished vocational school, currently retired and driving a taxi)

Due to the political climate in Turkey, claiming the right of asylum became an important migration pattern after 1973.

“Political turmoil was at its peak in 1977 and 1978, and these were quite difficult times. You had to fall into line with this or that political movement. To keep me away from these political environments, my father called my brother in Germany to take me to Germany [...] So I planned to go there as a refugee and then start working. My brother was there.

He sent me an invitation. I applied for refugee status in Germany. Meanwhile, I easily found a job thanks to my brother.” (Male, first generation, finished primary school, currently retired and driving a taxi)

It may also be worthwhile noting education as a factor for migration during the 1980s. Young undergraduates or postgraduates who had relatives in Germany who had already been living there for 15–20 years as first-generation migrants perceived German university education as an attractive alternative to studying in Turkey. The chaotic political environment and a university entrance exam that was introduced in the 1980s stimulated the decision to migrate to Germany.

“I went there for my postgraduate studies. But I had greater expectations than that: I was also thinking about trying ways of staying in Germany [...] My father was my guarantor. I mean my passport and visa were issued on the basis of student status so that all expenses related to my academic studies were to be financed by my family there.” (Male, first generation, PhD, currently running his own business)

In spite of the varieties of motives described, it can be stated that the migration decisions of the first generation were mostly economically motivated. After the first phase of the initial migration of economically-active migrants, chain migration gained importance. The chain mechanisms relied on both the legal migration channels (Turkish Employment Office, educational opportunities) and on informal networks (marriage arrangements and illegal entry strategies).

### 2.1.2 Lack of preparedness for living and working in Germany

In this chapter we will discuss how well the interviewees were prepared for life in a foreign country. We identified well-prepared migrants only among those who migrated for educational purposes.

“I went for educational reasons. Before migrating, I went to German language courses and I collected information about universities. I obtained information from the German Culture Association and the German Embassy. In those years, one villager came from Germany on vacation. There was a university in the city where he lived. I used my

preference in this way and I went to Nuremberg.” (Male, first generation, PhD, currently university lecturer)

In individual cases, those who had close relatives in Germany and those who emigrated as semi-skilled or skilled workers via the Turkish Employment Office or obtained direct contracts with German employers stated that they were prepared in terms of information on their jobs and also accommodation. However, none of them started to attend German language courses before migrating.

The dominant pattern was still that the migration decision was taken without much consideration, without any idea of where to go and what job they would obtain and without any language skills.

“We took the train from Istanbul. There were 4-5 women in the train and we were 1-2 men sharing the same compartment. When we arrived in Frankfurt, the women urged us not to leave them alone. We were sorry to leave them alone, but we didn’t know them. Then they [German employers] took us to a place where we were supposed to stay. There were some other Turks there.” (Male, first generation, finished secondary school, currently retired)

“I applied for a work permit via the Turkish Employment Office. At that time there was a firm in Germany looking for 2,000 workers from Turkey. At the Employment Office I met friends who applied for the job in Germany too. One week later, we were informed that we had been accepted. We made a quick decision. Our families didn’t know anything about this application and acceptance. We got on the train from Ankara to Istanbul. Doctors examined us in a hospital. After the examination, we went to Germany by plane. We did not have any time to prepare. We came to Munich and were met by interpreters and administrators from the company. We got on a train. Some women regretted coming and began to cry when we reached Germany. In every province, 30-40 or 50 people got off the train. It depended upon firms’ demand. It was like a concentration camp. Like human trafficking. Interpreters took us to the factory hostel, far away from the city. The next day, we started to work. Then we informed our families that we were in Germany.” (Male, first generation, university graduate, currently retired)

### 2.1.3 Initial return expectations

Most interviewees in this study planned to migrate temporarily. Some wanted to stay for half a year, others for a couple of years at most.

“For our part, we all planned return to Turkey. That was something we absolutely wanted. So we had to remain patient until that day came.”  
(Male, first generation, graduated from a German university, currently employed as a university lecturer)

“For six months I thought that I would earn enough to buy a house, return to Turkey and go back to working as a policeman.” (Male, first generation, finished secondary school, currently retired)

“I didn’t go there to live permanently. I went there to return [...] I always said: We are here temporarily and we will return some day. [...] It is not our own country and the Germans are not our people.” (Male, first generation, finished vocational school, currently retired)

### 2.1.4 Conclusions

The analysis of the pre-migration period shows that economic considerations (unemployment, anticipated increase in income, hope to make some savings) stimulated migrants of the first generation to go to Germany. Most interviewees were not prepared for migration. They were not informed of living and working conditions or about economic or professional opportunities in Germany. The lack of preparedness influenced interviewees’ labour market position, as well as their social situation. Especially a disadvantageous labour market position affected opportunities to accumulate economic resources. As a consequence, the return to Turkey was repeatedly postponed although all interviewees had markedly strong return intentions.

## 2.2 Germany: Resource accumulation strategies

This section examines the resource accumulation strategies pursued in Germany. The accumulated resources – economic, professional as well as social – might have a positive or negative impact on the duration of stay



and the return decision. Accumulated resources could also be crucial to successful re-integration upon return. This study focuses on the analysis of the following accumulation strategies:

- acquisition of professional skills and labour market positioning
- saving and investment behaviour;
- educational achievements;
- accumulation of social capital.

### 2.2.1 Acquisition of professional skills and labour market position

Those interviewees who had certain vocational qualifications usually applied for a work permit via the Turkish Employment Office, passing through the official application procedures. Having been accepted, the applicants had to take several vocational tests and were subjected to a medical examination. These tests and examinations determined workers' branch of employment and their status at work. If a person was considered qualified for the sector of industry for which he or she applied, he/she could be employed in Germany as a skilled worker. But most interviewees in our sample started working as unskilled workers on their arrival in Germany although they had been employed as skilled workers in Turkey. This de-skilling had a major impact on opportunities to accumulate economic resources or to improve skill levels.

For migrants who went to Germany with the assistance of the Turkish Employment Office, the employer, the sector of industry, employment status (skilled or unskilled worker) and the city of destination were set beforehand. Interviewees who mostly made "a spontaneous decision" to go to Germany, and therefore were not prepared for migration, were unable to influence these decisions. Arriving in Germany, they were met by the employer's representatives and were placed in the so-called "Heims" – collective accommodation facilities or hostels. They started working more or less directly upon arrival:

"We went there in 1970 by train and plane. We were picked at the airport by an interpreter, the employer and a driver who took us to the Heim... Next day we started to work and they gave each of us 60 Marks to buy the necessary cooking utensils. Our room-mates helped us. Our work was not so hard to start with. We were supposed to work in a section

with 36 workers. The majority were Turkish with some Germans too. Then they transferred the German workers elsewhere and we were all from Turkey. This was supposed to make us more productive [...] We were working hard as people of rural origin do. We didn't know much about life as urban labourers. But we worked hard to safeguard our positions." (Male, first generation, literate, currently retired)

Interviewees who migrated from the rural regions of Turkey, i.e. people with limited or no experience at all in urban labour markets, were afraid of dismissal and worked hard to adjust to the new working environments. Skilled migrants who were placed in jobs not requiring any skills often stated that they had been used to less strenuous working conditions "at home".

"They assigned me to a workbench as large as a room. I had never worked on such a bench before. While I was back in Kütahya we used to play volleyball during lunch breaks. I was a foreman in Turkey. Everybody was fond of me. I was single and living in a hostel. Waiters prepared our dinner there. In Germany I was working three shifts. In one shift I started early at 6 and left at 2. The next week it started at 2 pm and finished at 10 pm. It was difficult to get used to it. There was no lunch break of 1.5 hours like in Turkey. You had a break for 15 minutes. In fact you ate while working." (Male, first generation, graduated from a Turkish university, currently retired)

The experiences of short-term unemployment, dismissal and repeated job changes, but also early retirement, were typical of interviewees employed in unskilled and semi-skilled positions in Germany.

"I went there in 1973 and started to work in a construction firm. I left after two months and found a job in a baby milk formula factory. I was there for four years. After returning to Turkey for some time, I came back to Germany and found a job in another construction firm [...] It was road construction. I worked there for five years before the firm laid me off. After that, some time friends told me that there was a fruit harvesting job, I mean apples, pears, etc., paying 3 to 6 Marks per hour. So I worked together with my wife in the orchards for some time. There we met some people who were also from Çorum (a city in Central Anatolia). They were actually work-

ing in the automotive sector and they arranged things for me. Thanks to them, I found a new job there and worked for eight years in that balata plant. But it was really difficult there. I had to monitor pressing machines that operated at 360 [...] I had problems with my hands although I was wearing gloves while working. I had this probation period for three months, and then I was accepted in the job. I was the oldest worker in my section. I had my health problems: I suffered rheumatism and shoulder pain, for instance. Then I couldn't stand it any more and applied for early retirement at the age of 60. I was entitled to unemployment benefits for three months, and I retired in 1994." (Male, first generation, finished primary school, currently retired)

Especially in cases of extremely strenuous or low-paid jobs, people turned to informal networks such as kinship or friendship ties to find better, higher-paid jobs. High internal mobility for job reasons was also typical of our interviewees when working in unskilled positions.

While some of our interviewees migrated as "guest workers" who held official work permits, other interviewees applied for refugee status and were only granted temporary work permits. There were also those who moved to Germany in the context of family reunification and had to wait for some time (two or three years) before they were granted a work permit. Also students did not have work permits in Germany. Interviewees without work permits reported that they were employed in informal economies at very low wages. However, apart from one interviewee, all the migrants of the first generation in our sample managed to obtain official work permits after some years of informal employment in Germany. One interviewee recalls his first years in Germany as follows:

"I didn't have a work permit for three years. First I started working in crop fields, illegally of course. It was a nursery for seedlings. They paid 10 Marks for an hour's work. It was a German firm, and even the police tolerated it since the firm could not find regular German workers. I was working 10 hours a day. That means I was earning 100 Marks a day. It was good money, but very strenuous [...] I worked there for a year until my wife got pregnant [...] Then somebody told me that my wife could transfer her work permit to me. It was a week or so before delivery; we went to the Arbeitsamt (job centre) and explained the situation. I was allowed to find a job so they could transfer the work permit from my wife to me. Other people who also came from Nevşehir (a city and a

province in Central Anatolia) arranged a job for me. My wife gave birth to my daughter on the day I started working there.” (Male, first generation, finished vocational school, currently retired and driving a taxi)

Some interviewees who went to Germany with occupational qualifications managed to obtain secure jobs and improve their professional positions in time. For example, a returnee who went to Germany at his brother's private invitation and applied for a skilled job in a factory there was employed as an unskilled worker but very soon promoted to a foreman's position. This interviewee stressed that he enjoyed steady improvements in both his occupational career and in economic wealth.

“I started working as an unskilled worker first. Then our foreman retired. The manager asked around if there was somebody skilled enough to fill his place or should they bring in a new foreman. They told him there were a few Germans, but they were all boozers who couldn't be relied on. Then they showed to the manager ‘you see that bearded Turk working there, he is highly skilled and hard working. Whatever you ask him, he gives answers that are a hundred percent correct. If you bring in a new foreman, he will ask him things anyway.’ Then the chief, we called the owner of the plant “chief”, came to me and said ‘Herr T., that is my last name, ‘Hans is going to retire and we want you to be the Meister, so what do you think about it?’ I said I would accept if they add 1,000 Marks to my salary. He asked why and I explained: ‘There are 40 machines here, aren't there? [...] ‘I am operating a few machines now, why should I be in charge of them all?’ He seemed impressed and left. Shortly after this talk the chief told me that they had decided to appoint me as the Meister, adding 1,000 Marks to my salary.” (Male, first generation, finished vocational secondary school, retired and employed in seasonal cleaning work)

### Gender differences in labour market positions

The working life of male migrants had fewer interruptions, and they rarely experienced long periods of unemployment when compared to the experiences of the female interviewees. While some men continued to work with the same employer until retirement, others changed their jobs occasionally to find new or better jobs by using informal networks. Especially in the 80s, there were some men who started their own businesses in Germany. In contrast to this relative continuity, the professional careers of the women were often interrupted by maternity.

Leaving jobs for child-bearing purposes and withdrawal from the labour market is a dominant pattern for the careers of women throughout the whole period of their stay in Germany. Another pattern was to join their husband and look for a job directly after arrival, mostly in the low-paid service sectors. The driving motive for this decision was “a double income” saving strategy on the part of the couple. The aim was to save as much money as possible and to stay for as short a period as possible. From this perspective, the long-term strategies of improving the individual labour market position through vocational training or other educational investments seemed irrational. In these cases, parents tended to leave small children with close relatives in Turkey. Our interviews show that cross-border separation of families was common, and that this separation continued for longer periods than originally planned.

There were also women who applied for a work permit via the Turkish Employment Office and moved to Germany as guest workers. However, these women had obtained no qualifications or work experience while in Turkey, and took on similar labour market positions to women who came to Germany because of their husbands. In contrast to the automotive and durable consumer goods sectors that dominated among male workers, women were mostly engaged in office cleaning and elderly care services. After the 80s, when Turkish migrants set up their own businesses, some women left their original jobs and started working in the family firms, often as unpaid family labour.

### Conclusions

Concluding the section on professional positioning in Germany, we find that the first generation of Turkish migrants had no serious problems in gaining access to the German labour market. Those interviewees who were not originally granted work permits were also employed in the informal economy and managed to obtain a legal work permit in time. However, it is obvious that male Turkish migrants mostly obtained jobs in industrial sectors as unskilled labour and had to do heavy manual work. Female migrants mostly worked in the service sectors as unskilled and semi-skilled labour. In our interviews we observed a de-skilling of single migrants who possessed professional qualifications in Turkey but were unable to make use of them on the German labour market. Against this background, the experiences of short-term unemployment, dismissal and repeated job changes, as well as also early retirement, were typical of our interviewees. Also high internal mobility for job-related reasons was typical of those

among our interviewees who worked in unskilled positions. Only few interviewees managed to improve their labour market situation in time and gain promotion to higher positions in their firms.

### 2.2.2 Saving strategies and investment behaviour

We established in the analysis of the pre-migration period that the main migration motive of the first-generation interviewees was to return after saving some money. Interviewees' saving strategies were therefore mostly determined by the strong return expectation. In this chapter we will examine different saving strategies and interviewees' investment behaviour in order to understand the nexus between economic migration goals and the de facto decision to return.

The saving capacities of the interviewees in our sample were quite heterogeneous. The variations depend on a set of factors including age, sex, level of education and skills, working sector and job position, marital status, number of family members working, legal status and dependent family members. Interestingly, almost all interviewees reported regardless of these variations that they supported family members in Turkey economically while staying in Germany. All interviewees also tried to save money to achieve their economic migration goals. The belief that their stay in Germany would be for a short period of time was a key factor.

Although the first generation of migrants left Turkey simply in order to stay just long enough to acquire sufficient capital, their experience in Germany put this initial plan into question. Being often the single breadwinner for the extended family staying behind in Turkey, they were unable to attain the desired level of savings, and hence postponed their return several times. Many migrants concluded that they would achieve their economic migration goals and reduce the financial burden of remittances better if their family members joined them in Germany. As stated earlier, children were left in Turkey in some cases or, if children were born in Germany, they were sent to Turkey. While the single male breadwinner had to provide for children, a wife and often other family members in Turkey, "double-income couples" earned more and had to provide for fewer family members at home.

But the decision to follow a spouse to Germany was not taken for purely economic reasons in all cases. The illness of a spouse could for example be a reason to migrate to Germany, as we can see in the following example. A returnee whose father and mother moved to Germany in 1970 and 1972, respectively, was cared for by her grandparents from age two to nine together with her siblings. In fact, her mother went to Germany to care for their father, who had become ill. His wife however remained after he had recovered.

“I only recall sleeping on my mother’s knee when she was back in Turkey on leave. When I started thinking about things, I asked when she would come home, and they always said ‘in two years.’” (Female, second generation, currently a university student)

The arrival of spouses, regardless of their migration motives, was instrumental in safeguarding savings. While spouses worked hard, spent little and did not participate in the social and cultural life of the host society, migrants who had no family obligations tended to be more closely involved in social life and also to learn more German. They therefore tended to spend rather than save. In other words, migrants with no family obligations adapted quickly to the German lifestyle and consumption patterns.

“I was accustomed to working and living in Germany. Out of work hours, we were constantly going to pubs and staying there until midnight. [...] I could not save money when I was single. We saved after marriage and when my wife came to Germany. It’s impossible to save any money if you want to keep pace with the standard of living in Germany.” (Male, first generation, university graduate, currently retired)

Trying to save more money transformed almost all they earned into savings. Therefore their spending in Germany was often left on a minimum level. For example:

“A family from Manisa (a city in Western Anatolia) was in one room and we were in the other. There was another room occupied by a family from Amasya (a city close to the Black Sea). So we were three families altogether; sharing a kitchen, toilet, bath, etc. It certainly saved a lot of costs [...] As three families, we put together 300 Marks, each family

giving 100 Marks, to pay the rent. At that time, in the early 70s, things were quite difficult in Germany, not like today.” (Female, first generation, primary school dropout, currently retired)

“We had a bank loan to buy a shop in Ankara. So we were sending money to Turkey to pay back the loan. We had to be very thrifty there in Germany to keep sending money to Turkey.” (Male, first generation, finished secondary school, currently retired)

Several families sharing a house and bringing a stock of foodstuffs from Turkey were typical saving strategies. Another strategy was to settle in localities where there were relatives or acquaintances. Social support from family members and friends in Germany considerably relieved the economic burdens and helped to increase savings.

As mentioned above, the number of extended family members back in Turkey and dependents among them had a considerable impact on migrants’ saving capacities. Annual visits to Turkey were usually linked to investments in gifts to be presented to relatives. This spending seriously affected the economic situation of migrants in Germany.

“Coming to Turkey, we brought along souvenirs in 7-8 suitcases and took a loan of 5,000 Marks from a bank. We spent it here in Turkey. Then we went back to Germany and repaid this loan until the next loan before we’d go to Turkey again. This is how it was in those days.” (Male, first generation, finished secondary school)

In addition to these material remittances, migrants felt obliged to co-finance the school fees or wedding costs of family members and relatives in Turkey. This once more limited their saving capacities in Germany.

“We are nine siblings. Two of my siblings were at teacher training school in Pazarören at that time (a city in Central Anatolia). One was in secondary school in Antalya. I always sent them pocket money.” (Male, first generation, finished secondary school)

Apart from providing financial support to relatives in Turkey, migrants usually invested their savings in Turkey in real estate or in small businesses. For example, an interviewee who started his first job in Germany at a quite high salary of 2,300 Marks developed some viable business plans



while working in Germany and engaged in various income-generating initiatives in Turkey.

“My father died when I was just 12. From that time on, I kept thinking what I should do and how to hold on to life and get better. I had my plans for improving myself. While working in Germany we used to visit Turkey every year. I was trading car plates. I mean I bought cars on credit and sold them on term [...] Accounting for the rate of inflation at that time, I sold cars at a 50% profit. Then I bought two apartments in Turkey.” (Male, first generation, finished vocational school, currently retired and driving a taxi)

Our interviews show that buying real estate was not only a strategy of migrants thinking about definitely returning. There was basically a strategy to invest saved money and to provide family members, especially children, with capital. Real estate investments also served as a retirement provision. Additionally, family members in Turkey supported migrants by starting small businesses.

“They mainly invested in real estate. To help my uncle in his business they bought him a bus. My uncle drove the bus for quite a while. But it seems that it was not so profitable. He quit the bus business and wanted a truck, which my father bought him. He was a truck driver for a long time, transporting goods to Iran and Iraq. I think he was in the oil transportation business. Then, by chance, my father bought a casino/restaurant near the sea in Mersin (a city in the South East). He leased it then and it remained on lease for a long time. My uncle once more failed with his truck. But the casino/restaurant business was quite good. Then my parents and my uncle bought a summer resort around the same place.” (Female, second generation, finished nursing school in Germany, currently employed as a nurse)

Starting a small business in partnership with relatives in Turkey seems to be a dominant saving pattern among our interviewees. Even though some of them failed to make the right investments, as seen in the bus/truck example above, this did not erode their tendency to invest in Turkey. While examining the issue of re-integration, we will observe later that for some returnees, family business partnerships turned into experiences of loss and victimization.

## Conclusions

It can be concluded that migrants with strong family ties continuously remitted money to Turkey, which curbed their long-term saving capacities. Regular remittances were particularly sent in cases where a spouse and/or children were left behind in Turkey. The economic status of migrant workers often only improved when their spouses joined them in Germany and started working as well. Guest worker couples regularly remitted money and material goods to parents and relatives in Turkey. They also financed relatives' wedding or schooling expenses, invested in family businesses or bought real estate. Family members generally expected steady remittances from Germany. Though these may seem at first glance to be unilateral flows, in essence there was some degree of reciprocity, primarily comprising childcare. Remittance expectations of the family members, and at the same time efforts to achieve initial economic migration goals, were crucial to postponing labour migrants' return decisions.

### 2.2.3 Educational achievements

Economic accumulation strategies of Turkish migrants in Germany have been discussed by analyzing the experiences of the first generation. We will argue later that saving strategies of the first generation of Turkish migrants were key to their return decisions and their reintegration patterns. For the second generation, however, educational achievements in Germany are of greater relevance. Most interviewees of the second and third generations in our sample started schooling in Germany or continued their school education after joining their parents. More than half of our sample attended "Realschule". Some returnees returned in the final years of their school education, whilst others finished school, underwent vocational training in Germany and gathered their first professional experience there. In our sample, we did not interview any returnees who had graduated from German universities. More than half the interviewees were attending or had already graduated from Turkish universities.

Second- and third-generation interviewees reported having considerable difficulties at school. Some of them stated that their parents did not support any higher educational aspirations. The issue of language was also important as far as adaptation to school was concerned. Also mentioned is parents' inability to support them in school matters. Furthermore, the second- and third-generation interviewees emphasised that school was the

only place where they experienced discrimination in Germany. Deliberate class repetition, unsubstantiated referral to 'Hauptschule' instead of 'Realschule' and verbal slander were the most widespread experiences.

"The Turkish pupils sat together at the back of the class. When we talked to each other, the teacher got mad at us. I don't think she disliked foreigners as such. She was more against Turks. She kept scolding us by saying things like 'you are always like that, you don't listen to your teacher, etc.' One day after I'd answered one of her questions she came and slapped me in the face. Then I went to the headmaster to complain about her. I told him she had no right to slap me. Then I told my father about it. I was in fourth grade at the time. My father was angry; he went to school and raised the issue again." (Female, second generation, dropout from a vocational school in Germany, currently a housewife)

The families' return plans influenced the children's educational careers. For example, in families which definitely expected to return and with distinctive saving behaviour, joining the labour market as soon as possible seemed to be a more attractive alternative to continuing in education. In other cases, the education of offspring constituted an important motive to make the final return decision. Some parents saw greater educational opportunities for their children in Turkey. They were very aware of possible discrimination problems for their children in the German education system and thought that their children would obtain easier access to Turkish tertiary educational institutions.<sup>9</sup>

### Conclusions

Comparing the educational status of second-generation migrants with those of the first generation, we can state that the second and third generations demonstrate higher educational attainments in general. While among the first generation returnees we also interviewed people who held no educational qualifications, all second- and third- generation migrants (apart from one case) had completed their vocational training or attended a Haupt-, Realschule or Gymnasium in Germany by the time of their return. Interestingly, the second- and third-generation interviewees chose vocational training among other reasons because of their families' return

<sup>9</sup> For return decisions motivated by immigrants' concerns about their children see Dustmann 2003.

intentions. The transferability of vocational skills to the Turkish labour market was considered higher than that of university degree.

#### 2.2.4 Accumulation of social capital

In this part we will focus on the social life of migrants in Germany and analyze the influence of social ties on the interviewees' duration of stay and return decision.

##### The first generation

For first-generation migrants, low levels of education and skills, language problems and the perception that their stay in Germany would be short were factors which very much limited their attempts to initiate social contacts with "the German environment". The social life of the migrants, some of whom shared a home with other Turkish families, was limited to contacts with their Turkish colleges and housemates or neighbours and with their family members.

"So how did we live? We were all homesick. There was a video boom at that time. So we ordered Kemal Sunal<sup>10</sup> films on video and watched them together with 3-4 families until morning [...] Just commuting, going to work and coming back home. I didn't even drop into a bar... So how could we adapt?" (Male, first generation, finished secondary school, currently retired)

"The family communicated almost exclusively with Turks. I think it was because they were in a different cultural environment. So they socialized with people coming from different parts of Turkey; Yozgat (Central Anatolia), Artvin (North-East Anatolia), Kars (North-East Anatolia) [...] And our family is quite big. So actually there was no shortage of social contact. Their daily relations are still limited to relatives and some close circles. They all live in the same neighbourhood. For example, my elder sister lives in the street next to my parents. My uncles and aunts are nearby. Of course it is not a dominated by Turks only, but there are many families from Turkey" (Female, second generation, finished vocational school in Germany, currently working as nurse)

<sup>10</sup> Popular movie actor.

Language knowledge was an important obstacle for communication with Germans. Interviewees stated that sufficient social contacts with Turks made it unnecessary to learn German.

“When they first went there they had some difficulties, of course. My father said, for example, that they had never seen canned food. He had a friend there who bought pet food for a long time thinking that it was normal canned food. He couldn’t speak German and explain what he wanted in the supermarket. They are still not so good at German. They use it in some critical cases, for example when telling doctors about their health problems.” (Female, second generation, dropout from a vocational school in Germany, currently a housewife)

Interviewees who experienced professional mobility in Germany were also socially mobile. This group of interviewees rented one-family houses and apartments in mixed neighbourhoods and usually had closer contacts with Germans. Interestingly, they said that they felt offended at what they considered to be the “peasant-like behaviour” of “other Turks”. In other words, well-off interviewees used the notion of ‘rural/urban’ to mark less successful migrants as “the others” and to position themselves in the German middle class.

“Contacts with native Germans in that are densely populated by Turkish people are extremely limited. They are a kind of closed community where people do not bother learning German. So they are actually not integrated. There was one man making yufka (flat bread) with dough at his home. When I went to market he wanted me to take him along. He used to buy sacks of dough, and I was embarrassed. German storekeepers might have thought that he was running a bakery. So there are people like that, making their food at home. They are mostly of rural origin.” (Male, first generation, finished vocational school, currently retired and driving a taxi)

“I had serious language problems during my first years. So I decided to take courses. Then I made friends with some Germans and I learned German quicker. I mean, I didn’t face the difficulties affecting to many people of rural origin. I found a job easily. I had my brother and a few Turkish friends, the rest were all Germans. We spent our free time together. We picnicked or went to swimming

pools on Saturdays and Sundays.” (Male, first generation, finished primary school, currently retired)

### The second generation

The second-generation interviewees include those who were born in Germany, but also those who were born in Turkey and were initially left in Turkey with grandparents or other relatives and then followed their parents to Germany in pre-school or school age. Interviewees born in Germany had reported of various social contacts with Germans and people of other origin. Talking about their life in Germany, they stressed that they had felt at home there:

“Unlike my parents, I had German friends. I had good relationships with them. In fact, I can say that almost all my friends were German. There was only one Turkish friend. We learned together at school. We helped each other when we did not understand lessons. Out of school, we went to lunch. My family did not let me go out [...] However, my family stopped intervening after I had started my vocational training. Almost all of the people I went to parties with were Germans. In fact, we were together all the time.” (Female, second generation, finished vocational school, currently employed as a nurse)

“I want to say that I never felt like a foreigner in Germany. I wasn’t exposed to any insult or any unfriendly behaviour, either at work, or in shopping centres or in other public places. There was no discrimination or hostility towards me. We worked together with Greeks, Yugoslavs, Italians, Hungarians, and Germans. We had a good relationship.” (Female, second generation, finished secondary school, currently a housewife)

Another group of interviewees lived in Turkey for a longer period and joined their parents in Germany, initially having more problems to adapt to “the German social environment”. An additional difficulty was that they had to “adjust” to living with their parents. These interviewees did not necessarily see their parents as central attachment figures, but as distant relatives who had visited them during holidays. The following story has been found in similar ways in a lot of interviews:

“I remember that I never wanted to go to Germany. When I had to, I burst into tears. I used to cover my head in Turkey because my grandfather was a religious man. When we first got into the car to start our

journey to Germany, my mother said ‘take off your head covers’. I did, but my elder sister didn’t and kept her head covered until we arrived in Germany. We were in a kind of dilemma: We didn’t want to go, but they are your parents and want to take you there. They used to come and visit for a month, but what is a month? So we went there. I didn’t want to; I felt like I’d been uprooted from my native environment. As a matter of fact, I was sick in bed for three months after arriving in Germany.” (Female, second generation, currently studying at university)

Children who joined their families in Germany when they were older therefore faced problems when it came to adapting to their family environments and to a foreign culture and lifestyle. Yet we were able to observe virtually no differences with regard to their social contacts and language acquisition in Germany. These interviewees also socialized with German friends and people of other origin living in their neighbourhoods and had virtually no language problems.

### Conclusions

The social life of the second- and third-generation interviewees differs considerably from the experiences of their parents. As discussed above, the first generation comprises mainly less well-educated migrants with poor German language skills and a tendency to live in segregated ethnic communities. The second/third generations usually had fewer or no language difficulties. They have more German friends and other friends of non-Turkish origin.

We were able to distinguish between two groups of interviewees when it came to the first generation. On the one hand, a small group of migrants attained a stable social and professional position in Germany. This group became involved in a diversified social life and kept its distance from the Turkish communities. Those interviewees worked together with Germans and were able to communicate without any problems. They have more positive experiences regarding Germans and felt at home in Germany. On the other hand, more than half the interviewees in our sample were people whose German language skills were quite limited. Their social lives were limited to closed ethnic and family networks. They were quite critical of public life in Germany and felt like “foreigners”.

In general, the analyzed sample does not indicate that social ties in Germany exerted a strong influence on the duration of stay or on the return decision. Despite the satisfactory social life of the second generation of

migrants and of some migrants in the first generation, they decided to return to Turkey. At the same time, the group of migrants who felt excluded from “German life” postponed their return decision for many years.

### 2.2.5 Resource accumulation in Germany: cross-dimensional analysis

Integration into the labour market and educational achievements determined in a very strong way the accumulation of resources in Germany. But, whilst migrants cultivated family networks and developed new social ties while staying in Germany, they also acquired such cultural resources as language skills and cultural norms. Analyzing different compositions of acquired resources, we were able to identify four types of migrant biographies.

#### **Low-skilled migrants with strong social connections with Turkey and a distinctive saving behaviour**

The first type is made up of first-generation migrants who gained access to the labour market in Germany as low-skilled or unskilled workers, and who planned a short-term stay just to save some money. The following patterns of behaviour could be considered typical of this type of migrant. The mostly male pioneer migration with strong economic motives was followed by spouses joining their partners. The aim of the couples was to accumulate as many economic resources as possible in a short period of time. Therefore, the spouses participated in the German labour market soon after their arrival. Small children stayed in Turkey or were sent there to allow the women to work. Those “labour migrant couples” limited their spending to a minimum. They had very modest standards of living during their stay in Germany. Reducing the costs of social integration was one of the saving strategies of those migrants in Germany. Migrants of this type preferred to live in Turkish communities: Several families lived in one dwelling in some cases. They were also not eager to improve their German language skills. They relied heavily on family and kinship ties in their everyday lives and maintained strong connections with their families in Turkey, providing for their offspring and parents who remained in Turkey, sending remittances to relatives or investing in real estate. This group did not feel included in German social and public life. However, due to the strong return intention they had no expectation of being accepted as full members of German society. Despite a strong return intention, this group of interviewees postponed their return decision because of difficulties



encountered in achieving economic migration goals: Low wages and insecure jobs on the one hand, and obligations to provide for their families in Turkey on the other, made it difficult to make savings which could be used to provide a livelihood on their return.

To this type of migrants we can also add those who were eventually able to accumulate some economic capital in Germany. In our sample, small-scale entrepreneurs who provided services for the Turkish community represented this type of economically-successful migrant. In fact, ethnic ties guaranteed their economic success and formed a basis for their identity construction of being Turkish, not German. For this group of migrants, the plan to return remained stable over the years, although their economic success in Germany contributed to their steadily postponing their return decision.

#### **Better-educated migrants mostly with vocational skills and a stable social position on the German labour market**

Migrants of this type were better educated, and joined the German labour market in more stable positions. Some of them experienced upward professional mobility. They had higher incomes, and the mostly male pioneer migrants often were followed by their spouses and children. So they usually lived as nuclear families in one-family houses or apartments and not in 'Heims'. Those families often moved into "German" neighbourhoods and were concerned about their children's success in the education system. Professional success and social inclusion led to the postponing of the return decision. However, they still had intentions to return, and thus they saved and invested in businesses and real estate in Turkey. This type of migrant distinguished themselves from "the rest" of the Turkish community in Germany. Typical stories were "There were no Turks in the building we lived in" or "We never lived in a Turkish area". This type of migrant was much more sensitive about how German people saw them, and felt at home in Germany.

#### **Children of unskilled migrant workers who grew up partly in Turkey and partly in Germany**

The children of migrants with distinctive saving behaviour and limited social resources joined their families in Germany after living in Turkey for several years, mostly with their grandparents. If they were born in Germany, they were sent to Turkey to stay with relatives. This was justified by the arguments that their parents wanted to save enough money in a short

period of time and return. For a variety of reasons, parents postponed their return decision and at a certain point in time they decided that their children should join them in Germany. Strong return expectations of the parents and a social environment that was restricted to the ethnic community can be considered as factors influencing the adaptation process of this type of migrant. The interviewees of this type initially had difficulties at school. Their social life was often split into two separate worlds - 'the street was Germany, the home was Turkey'. However, unlike their parents, they gained access to a wider social environment, including classmates, teachers, friends, etc. So they interacted not only with Turkish people, but had diversified and more intensive social networks. This type of interviewee often accused the German educational system and teachers of ethnic labelling and explained the difficulties which they encountered in achieving higher educational and professional positions in Germany by pointing to ethnic discrimination.

#### **Well-integrated second and third generations with considerable educational and social resources**

The offspring of the economically and socially well integrated first generation of Turkish migrants were often born in Germany or moved to Germany at an early age. They only visited Turkey on their annual holiday trips. They lived in mixed or purely German neighbourhoods. Their German language proficiency was very high and they showed greater success at school, which was strongly supported by their parents. These interviewees mostly attended Realschule in Germany and enrolled at university upon return to Turkey. They considered themselves as a part of German society. In the interviews they used more differentiated evaluations when talking about German society and Turks living in Germany. They reflected on positive as well as on negative experiences. At the same time, they had a tendency to criticize less well-integrated Turkish migrants and to put themselves into a superior position.

# 3

## Return decisions



There are many factors influencing, motivating or “triggering” the decision to return. Our analysis shows that economic factors play a distinct role when it comes to decisions to migrate, but that economic motivation is not predominant in the decisions to return. Various motives play a role: Reaching/failing to reach the initial objectives of migration, parents’ wishes to have their children educated in Turkey and/or to see them grow up in their authentic cultural environment, seeing no future for their children in Germany in terms of access to higher education, as well as marriage, homesickness, strenuous working conditions, health problems and retirement. Among the voluntary returnees there were those who were well adapted to working and social life and who had attained educational success in Germany, and others who remained in closed Turkish communities and did not manage to adapt to life in Germany. In other words, voluntary returnees constitute a heterogeneous group. When analyzing return decisions, we considered on the one hand the specific experiences of the families during their lives in Germany, and on the other hand their ties with Turkey.

As stated in the introductory part of the report, it was mainly voluntary returnees from Germany who were interviewed in this study. Within this group, we interviewed five returnees whose return decision was supported by state assistance. Our sample contained returnees who benefited from various incentives offered by the German Government. Finally, we had one forced migrant who had to leave Germany because his application as

an asylum-seeker was not accepted. In this chapter we will start by elaborating on some specificities of assisted return. The analysis of the data suggests that the level of resource accumulation in Germany exerts a major influence on the return decision. Therefore, in a second step, we will focus on the return motivation of voluntary migrants with different resource constellations.

### 3.1 Assisted return

It was possible to distinguish between two types in the group of returnees who benefited from assistance schemes of the German State.<sup>11</sup> Three persons belonged to a type of migrant with distinctive saving behaviour and strong return expectations. This group developed one-dimensional social contacts with Turkish neighbours, and was not socially integrated in Germany in this regard. The interviewees stated that they felt alien to German society and hoped to realize their return plans as soon as possible. This type of returnee especially includes migrants who are employed in peripheral jobs such as cleaning and construction, with a low level of wages and scant opportunities to save money. They often prolonged their return decision because of opportunities to save money. They only returned to Turkey after losing their jobs on the German labour market because of age, health problems or redundancy. Return assistance was crucial to their return decision because this material support helped them to attain a degree of economic stability after their return, and therefore made a return decision possible.

Two interviewees made sufficient economic savings in Germany and invested in Turkey. They maintained their family-kinship relationships in Turkey. The family members in Turkey took care of these investments while the migrants stayed in Germany. The return of these interviewees had been planned in advance with the support of family members in Turkey. Therefore, return assistance was not crucial to the return decision. The interviewees used the material return support as additional economic capital which was to be invested in their businesses.

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11 It is worth mentioning that we interviewed only those returnees who returned to Turkey with the assistance of the guest workers assistance programs (see Chapter 1). Unfortunately we did not manage to find returnees who had benefited from the return assistance programs for rejected asylum-seekers or impecunious migrants (REAG/GARP).

There is only one forced returnee among the interviewees. It is impossible to make any hypothesis based on an analysis of only one case. In this case, the individual entered Germany illegally and applied for asylum. His application was unsuccessful. He was thus forced to return. His motivation to move to Germany was actually economic, and he in fact anticipated the need to return after his status had been rejected.

“At that time, the German authorities required the following to award refugee status: You had to be of Kurdish origin, you had to have your political ideas, speaking generally, you had to be a leftist or communist or you say that you were affiliated with the PKK. These would be checked with Turkish authorities and if confirmed they’d grant you a refugee status. But I was none of these. The court decided after 4.5 years and my appeal was rejected. They told me that I could stay and work in Germany until a specific date and then leave. They also notified the firm I was working for that my contract should be terminated accordingly. After a week, I was out.” (Male, first generation, finished primary school, currently retired and working as a taxi driver)

These very cursory insights into the role played by state return assistance in the return decision of Turkish migrants do not allow any conclusions to be drawn. However, we were able to assume that return assistance programs were crucial for migrants with very limited economic resources and an insecure labour market position in Germany. In contrast, the return support provided by the German State was not decisive for migrants who had accumulated sufficient economic capital in Germany. Return assistance was merely an additional material incentive in the context of a return decision which had already been made.

## 3.2 The return decision of first-generation migrants

### 3.2.1 Post-retirement return

Most first-generation interviewees returned to Turkey on retirement or had to retire earlier for health reasons and decided to return after that. Return on retirement was not the individual decision of the interviewees, but was made by the whole extended family, including children remaining in Germany and their family members and relatives living in Turkey. Especially the place of residence of the relatives and the life strategies of the children

played a role in the retiring migrants' return decision. Additionally, the amount of economic investments made in Turkey and the low pensions after retirement were important decision-making factors.

For migrants who worked as unskilled labour in Germany and received pensions that only provided for a moderate standard of living there, but who had managed to save enough for a house in Turkey, return guaranteed higher standards of living in comparison to Germany. We can observe in general terms that the drop in earnings on retirement is a strong factor encouraging people to return. However, pensioners' return is not necessarily permanent. In some cases within our sample, we were able to identify somewhat frequent circulation of retired returnees between Germany and Turkey because children and often other relatives were still living in Germany. Caring for grandchildren is one of the reasons to commute between Germany and Turkey.

"My parents are 63 and 64 years old, respectively. They stay here [in Germany] for 3-4 months. Both of my parents are retired. My mother retired due to her age. She gets the same as when she was working, which is not much, about 110 Euros. My father gets 650 Euros a month. They don't stay in Germany all year. They have no social benefits. They bought two houses and a plot of land in Turkey, and they commute and help me with the children." (Female, second generation, finished secondary school, currently a housewife)

### 3.2.2 Homesickness as a return motive

Another return motive put forward in the interviews was homesickness, especially missing family members back in Turkey. Since there were many factors and motives, it is quite difficult to single out one of them as the major factor triggering return. Although homesickness was never a single return motivation, "the longing for home" is deeply rooted in many migrant workers' narratives. The story of the returnee outlined below is actually rather long and complicated. He went to Germany alone, without his family. The death of one of his relatives seemed to be the major reason for his return to Turkey. However, by analyzing his life story we were able to see that his decision was also determined by other factors including strenuous working conditions, failure to save enough money and therefore failure to achieve migration targets.

“Being far away from your homeland is something quite different. Its pain is unique. You are away from your family, your children. You think ‘why am I here?’, and you say ‘to make money, so I have to work’. I mean, you have to work and save to build a better future for your family. I originally went there to stay and work for two years, but I worked for four years. I hardly found money to return after four years because I’d sent my earnings back home. What I could earn was not much. [His wife intervenes: there were four children and me.] It was hard to work there, there is competition, and your workmate is in competition with you. So leaving other things aside, you have to get along well with your workmates too. You share a kitchen, share the refrigerator. Life was not easy there. It looked like a prison in some respects.” (Male, first generation, finished primary school, currently retired)

### 3.2.3 Return for the future of the children

In our sample, migrants who managed to accumulate considerable economic resources decided to return “for the future of the children”. They held on to the idea that they could provide their children with better future prospects in Turkey. The belief that children of Turkish migrants could not achieve any distinctive social and professional positions in Germany was very strong in this group.

“My son told me that we had enough money and we should go back to Turkey. The children would then live in their own country and speak their own language. But I was rather worried and said: ‘Excuse me... but there are such bad people in Turkey, even worse than their counterparts here in Germany. They will cheat us. Let me stay and work here!’ At that time I was a foreman in my firm and earned 3000 Marks a month. But my son insisted: ‘Your grandchildren are growing up, let us return; why are you so obsessed with money?’ So we returned.” (Male, first generation, finished vocational school, currently retired and employed in seasonal cleaning work)

Better-educated parents also wanted to raise their children in their native cultural environment because they had concerns about undesirable cultural transformation or what some interviewees called the “Germanization” of their children. Parents’ concerns mostly focused on the danger of drug addiction and other youth-related problems. They hoped to avoid boys experiencing violence and to provide safe social environments for

girls. All these concerns were additional factors reinforcing the wish to return.

“Young people in Germany use drugs. By this I don’t directly mean heroin, I mean hashish. It is not considered illegal there. I think this is wrong. For example on Friday nights families want their sons and daughters go out and have fun in discos or other places. It doesn’t matter whether they are sons or daughters. So my family, witnessing all this, didn’t want the same thing happening with us and decided to return.” (Male, second generation, university graduate, currently working in his father’s company)

Apart from parents’ anxieties about “losing their children”, better educational prospects for children were a major return motive for parents with a better educational background. Their return decision was based on the assumption that Turkish children would have few chances to achieve higher educational goals in Germany, and would obtain better access to the Turkish tertiary education system. Return especially became an option when children had difficulties at school, which was often perceived as discrimination:

“I was in first grade in secondary school when we returned to Turkey... In fact my problem with Germany was related to schooling only. You perform well at school, but your teacher keeps saying ‘you can’t make it’. Because of that we returned together as a family.” (Male, second generation, university graduate, currently working in his father’s company)

We had the opportunity to interview the mother of this returnee. She reported that while her son was in last year of primary school, his teacher adopted a discriminatory attitude with regard to which type of secondary school should be chosen. While her son’s marks were good, and from her point of view he could make it in a Gymnasium (high school) he was referred to Hauptschule (a secondary school of lower prestige) without any reason.

### 3.2.4 Return because of better business opportunities

Well-integrated, economically-successful migrants often invested in small businesses in Turkey. Their family members or relatives managed these



investments in most cases. The maintenance of close personal but also business relations with family members in Turkey, and the belief that their possibilities of saving in Germany were less attractive compared to business opportunities opening up in Turkey, were important return factors.

“We had put 100,000 Marks into the İş Bankasi. We bought this house [in Turkey] at that time. And we had a plot close to C. And we had 100,000 Marks. We gave it to İş Bank, we invested here. Money was not earning well in Germany. Everybody went to Turkey to invest [...] My husband came here [to Turkey]. [...] He had taken the 100,000 Marks and given the legal right to my brother-in-law to invest the money. This brother bought two buses, one in his name and another one for his brother-in-law. And my husband had given him official permission for that.” (Female, first generation, primary school dropout, currently unemployed)

### 3.2.5 Conclusions

According to the analysis of the return decision of the first generation of migrants, return on retirement appears to be the most typical pattern. Return on retirement was an option to improve standards of living, especially for less skilled migrants with small pensions. Motives such as homesickness were an additional return motivation for this type of interviewee because many of them felt socially isolated in Germany. Other return motives were key for better-skilled and integrated migrants. The most important among them were the future prospects of their children and investment opportunities in Turkey.

## 3.3 Return motives of the second and third generations

### 3.3.1 The myth of home as a return motive

Second-generation migrants who were born in Turkey and moved to Germany in later childhood often clung to the idea that their original home was in Turkey. Some interviewees stressed that they were unable to adjust to “cold, distanced” human relations in Germany. A meaningful example is the case of a female interviewee. First her mother moved to Germany as a worker and then her father joined her there. The parents did well in terms of economic and social adaptation to the new conditions. The interviewee

was raised in Germany, but she said that warmer human relations in Turkey were important in shaping her decision to return.

“In fact my intention was to complete my university studies [in Germany] and then go to Spain. It didn’t turn out that way. I don’t like Germany. Of course I miss certain things there, but I don’t regret returning. Each year we had six weeks of vacation and we spent it in Samsun (a city on the Black Sea coast). The environment in Samsun was good for me and I had fun. You couldn’t find that kind of atmosphere and relations in Germany. Relatives didn’t matter too much to me. But I missed my friends in Turkey so much. OK, many things may be better in Germany, but still it was a kind of ‘cold’ there...” (Female, second generation, graduated from a Turkish university, currently employed)

### 3.3.2 Return for educational purposes

In our sample we mostly interviewed second- and third-generation returnees who decided to complete their educational careers in Turkey. In all these cases, most interviewees attended Realschule in Germany and reported various discrimination experiences there, leading to them realizing that they would have better chances to gain access to higher education institutions in Turkey. The life story of a 27-year-old interviewee whose parents still live in Germany though they are retired serves as a typical example:

“She was attending the last year of Realschule when she decided to go to Turkey. She wanted to get a university degree. Because the Realschulabschluss is not a university-entrance qualification in Germany, she decided against wasting years trying to get such a qualification there. She opted to continue her education in Turkey. Upon her return, she attended the final year of the Anatolian High School in Samsun and moved to Ankara for her university education. After graduating from the University’s department of German Language and Literature, she got a well-paid job in a German firm. She was supported as a student economically by parents, who were living in Germany. She currently sends money to her parents.” (Interview summary, female, second generation, graduated from a Turkish university, currently employed)

### 3.3.3 Marriage as a reason to return

Getting married can be considered as another reason for returning to Turkey.

“My husband is one of my relatives, but we are not blood relations. He is a cousin of my father’s step-mother. I’d never met him, but my mother-in-law knew me. I didn’t want to get married when I first met him. It was because I was not thinking about getting married at that time. Then I accepted and we got married. Actually I wanted to take him with me to Germany, but there were some question marks as to whether he only married me in order to be admitted to Germany. But he said he’d never thought about going to Germany, and eventually I returned.” (Woman, second generation, completed vocational education in Germany, currently employed)

“There were many there [in Germany] who asked me to marry them, but my family didn’t let me and I obeyed them. They told me I could get married when I returned to Turkey. My children would then stay in Turkey. I met my husband first at a wedding in Ankara. We are not related, but he is from the village of my mother. Then we got married and I stayed there.” (Female, second generation, finished secondary school, currently a housewife)

There were two women in our sample who returned to marry. These young women returned to Turkey while their parents remained in Germany. Interestingly, the return decision was not made by the women alone, but jointly with their parents and other relatives. Encouraging their daughters to marry back in Turkey can be interpreted as a kind of social investment in Turkey. The daughters’ return guarantees that parents will be provided for if they decide to go back in later life.<sup>12</sup>

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12 The migration of Turkish partners to Germany is a much better known phenomenon than migration in the opposite direction. Nevertheless, we assume that it is worth analyzing return on marriage in further studies, especially focusing on aspects of gender inequality and the transformation of gender relations induced by the return.

### 3.4 Conclusions

In this section we discussed typical return motives for different types of migrant. Return on retirement and homesickness, a better future for the children and small business investments in Turkey were typical motives of first-generation interviewees. The motives homesickness, better educational opportunities and marriage were important in the second and third generations.

It can be argued that the level of resource accumulation in Germany has an impact on the return decision. We assume that the main push factor for well-integrated, skilled migrants to leave Germany was the discrimination experienced by their children in the German education system. They expected better educational opportunities and a more appropriate cultural environment for their children in Turkey. Thus, the return was usually planned to take place when children were of pre-school age or when they made the transition from primary to secondary school. Low-skilled and less socially-integrated first-generation migrants followed a different path. They tended to return on retirement or after being excluded from the German labour market. In other words, the main push factor was inability to generate income in Germany. The advantageous living conditions in Turkey contributed considerably to the return decision. Interestingly, parents belonging to this group seemed to appreciate the return of their daughters. They hoped that the daughters' families could provide for them when they subsequently returned to Turkey. Such strong family ties to Turkey were an important return incentive for first-generation migrants who had limited resources.


As discussed in the section on savings and economic accumulation of resources, it was the first generation in particular which invested in Turkey. Investments in small businesses and in real estate were major return incentives. However, we will see later that economic success in Turkey depended very much on the support of extended family members and dramatically altered returnees' family relationships.

Almost all interviewees of the second and third migrant generations decided to go to Turkey because of better access to the higher education system. The school-leaving qualifications of these persons did not allow them to attend universities in Germany. Interestingly, the German

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educational experience appeared as a useable resource in Turkey. All these interviewees managed to gain access to high schools and later to universities on their return. The return of this group of interviewees could be interpreted as a social mobility strategy: Returnees saw a chance to attain higher social status via educational achievements in Turkey than in Germany. The return decision of another group of returnees was connected to their marriage to a Turkish partner, or was very much initiated by motives such as “homesickness” or “close social ties with friends and relatives in Turkey”.

We will examine returnees’ reintegration patterns in the following chapter. We will see that the realization of the return decision was often accompanied with disappointments and failures, but also with experiences of success and social mobility.



# 4

## Reintegration patterns



When interviewing returnees, we focused not only on questions related to the return motives, but also touched upon the following topics:

- What difficulties did returnees encounter on their return?
- What and who plays a role in overcoming such difficulties?
- Were returnees able to transfer the social, educational and economic resources which they acquired in Germany?
- Did they regret returning or, on the contrary, were they satisfied?

We interviewed people who had returned to Turkey between three and 24 years previously. This relatively long period, and the wide range of questions on their experiences after return, allow us to make some hypotheses on long-term reintegration patterns. In this chapter, we will look firstly at the settlement choices made by the returnees, followed by an analysis of the structural and social reintegration of the first and of the second/third generations. When analyzing structural reintegration, we will especially focus on the first-generation interviewees' economic activities on the labour market, and on the educational position of interviewees of the second and third generations. When it comes to social reintegration, we will consider such aspects as family relationships and participation in public and associational life.

## 4.1 Settlement choices

In this chapter we will examine returnees' settlement patterns and argue that their settlement choices depend very much on the initial return motives. Why did returnees choose Ankara or Antalya as places to which to return?

Most first-generation interviewees started to prepare for their return while still living in Germany. The common pattern was to buy a flat or a house in a neighbourhood of their choice. Some had furnished their homes and started to live there when on vacation. Some of the interviewees selected Ankara and others selected Antalya as the place for their real estate investment.

Several aspects play a role in selecting Ankara as the place to settle after return. Some of the interviewees had already lived in Ankara before emigrating; they wanted to live in an environment that they knew and were familiar with. However, it is interesting that they bought real estate or settled in better-situated neighbourhoods of Ankara. Having lived in neighbourhoods that appealed more to lower-income groups before migration, they preferred to live mostly in middle or upper middle class neighbourhoods upon their return. This shows that returnees' residential status in fact improved upon their return.

Another group of returnees first went to their home towns, but later chose Ankara for educational reasons. Ankara is a city with two universities and other educational institutions that provide instruction in German. This was the reason why families with young children and some returnees of the second/third generations came directly to Ankara or moved to Ankara after being accepted at university.

“When we were living in Germany, we wanted to return when our children got to school age. If we had not returned, they wouldn't have gained access to university. I saw that Turkish children and their families in Germany weren't integrated. They didn't have opportunities at school. So they became workers.... Although we had some difficulties after returning, we were and are happy. In Germany, you do not decide on the occupation of your children. They can't become a doctor or a teacher. The system determines it. If we had not returned, our oldest child would have been able to finish vocational school, but she could

not have entered university. We were concerned about the future of our children.” (Male, first generation, university graduate, currently employed)

For those who returned to Antalya, the reasons were similar. Some interviewees initially coming from villages close to Antalya decided to return to the city of Antalya, particularly taking educational opportunities for their children into consideration and hoping that their children would accept the return decision better and adapt more rapidly in a large city than in a village.

“We considered that Burdur (a city in South-West Anatolia) is really a small city. I grew up in Burdur, and I know that its amenities are very limited. We discussed this issue in the family and decided to live in a big, modern, beautiful city which our children would like. Therefore we decided to settle in Antalya. Our close relatives were also living there.” (Male, first generation, university graduate from Germany, currently running a small business)

One difference was that Antalya has a warm climate and therefore attracted retired migrants with some economic resources. For those who returned on retirement, the selection was also made for reasons such as a lower cost of living.

“Life in Germany was very good before the currency changed. After the Euro came in, it became worse. Life became very expensive: two Marks were equal to one Euro. But the salaries remained the same and the cost of living was high. People’s purchasing power has fallen dramatically in Germany in recent years. Rents have gone up too. I retired for health reasons and my income dropped dramatically. I was unable to live in Germany on this income, and I decided to return to Turkey. I decided to live in Antalya because of the low cost of living.” (Male, first generation, finished primary school, currently retired)

What is more, Antalya is known for its booming tourism business, and attracted those who planned to start a business with their accumulated capital. For example, one first-generation returnee selected Antalya because he could establish a business in the tourism sector there. He considered that his language skills and his cultural socialization in Germany would be an advantage for such an investment. Returning parents also hoped that their children would more easily find jobs in the tourism sector there.



Our sample only has three cases of returnees who settled in the district in which they used to live before migration or went back to their villages. One of these cases is a returnee who went to Germany for training, but returned due to economic troubles, and the other is a returnee who went to Germany without his family but was unable to save any money. Additionally, one person who was a forced returnee initially returned to his village despite having lived in Ankara prior to emigration.

### Conclusions

By analyzing the returnees' settlement choices, we can observe that they follow the strategy of upward social mobility upon their return. Migrants used the economic resources acquired in Germany to improve their residential status by moving from the periphery to the developed centres of Antalya and Ankara. These decisions had a positive effect on their socio-spatial position (living in better-situated neighbourhoods), on their children's educational opportunities (tertiary educational institutions were situated in both cities) and on the labour market/economic inclusion of their families (investing in businesses with the job prospects for the children). Interestingly, the cities were not only chosen because migrants and their families could invest their economic resources effectively, but also because they could effectively use the cultural experiences and language skills which they had acquired in Germany by attending educational institutions focusing on German or by investing in tourism business focusing on German-speaking clients. It is important to note that the residential choices were made in accordance with the places of residence of close relatives. We can assume that the returnees expected considerable support from their families upon their return, and therefore chose to live near to them.

## 4.2 Reintegration of the first generation

Reintegration patterns of the first generation differ according to their specific resource constellations.

### 4.2.1 Economic reintegration

Especially for the group of returnees who decided to retire in Turkey, the question of retirement allowances was a crucial point defining their economic situation on their return. Interviewees returning post-retirement

had mostly been employed in unskilled positions in Germany, and were therefore eligible for only moderate retirement allowances. They had often invested in real estate in Turkey while living in Germany. By returning to places close to their relatives, to their own houses and by spending their “Euro pensions” in Turkey’s relatively low-price economy, they were able to afford an acceptable economic standard of living on their return.

Taking the retirement premiums accumulated in Germany as a lump-sum is a common pattern to provide economic resources for the period immediately following an individual’s return. In these cases, migrants did not wait until reaching retirement age in order to be able to receive a regular retirement allowance, and chose to take their premiums in a lump-sum. Those who returned with the help of state assistance very often received their premiums in bulk. This pattern of accumulating money before return was more typical of migrants who had not managed to save a considerable amount of money in Germany but were still planning to invest in a business of their own. The retirement allowance paid in bulk was intended to act as share investment capital. Also, migrants who were aiming to actively participate in working life upon return tended to take their retirement premiums in bulk in order to tide them over for the initial period after their return and to guarantee the appropriate economic status of the family while they were looking for work.

### **Productive investments: experiences of success and failure**

Most first-generation interviewees invested in real estate before returning to Turkey. Additionally, some interviewees regularly invested in small businesses and left their investments under the control of their relatives. More than half of the interviewees reported that they had had negative experiences with their economic investments. The stories of failure were mostly connected with a lack of entrepreneurial skills, inadequate knowledge of the local business culture and experiences of being excluded from very close-knit local business networks.

“We had considerable difficulties when we came to Turkey. At first, we opened a restaurant but we could not manage it. Then my husband bought a taxi and he tried, but he could not manage it either. Turkish people were not honest and reliable, and I and my husband could not understand these people. Everyone treated us badly. We felt like foreigners in our own country [...] Like a milking cow, everyone milked us dry. So that’s what we got really.” (Female, left primary school, assisted)

Interviewees were also disappointed with the relatives involved in their business activities. As pointed out earlier, interviewees often sent remittances to Turkey while they were in Germany, and the relatives managed the remitted money. The tacit expectation of the migrant families was that they would share the businesses after their return. At the same time, the tacit expectation of the relatives was that the remitting migrants would in fact never realize their return intentions. The de facto return shook those mutual unsaid expectations and produced family conflicts.

“We put everything we had in the back of the car and came to Turkey [...] We had a restaurant, a bus, a taxi and a dolmuş. His brother was operating the investments in Turkey. We were continuously sending money from Germany. We worked and saved. My husband took them in as partners because they were operating, working and managing. However, everything was in their names. There was nothing registered in our name. Then they kicked my husband out. Two years have passed since then. Because everything, all the property, was in their names, they did not want us. The problems started when we came, and naturally started to take money from them. My husband would go very early to the restaurant together with the cook. He would go and he would work. When he started to take money, this started to irritate them. They did not want us to even get a part of the profit from there. From the bus, from the dolmuş, from the restaurant, from any of it. I mean, there was not one place; there were 3-4 places. It remained in their title. We lost everything: I mean everything we had saved. Then we opened an Internet café with the money we had left.” (Female, first generation, finished primary school, currently a housewife)

Another group of interviewees were able to invest successfully precisely because they were able to rely on their family networks.

“When I went to Germany, parts of my family were living in Kayseri (a city in Central Anatolia). But after a while, they went to live in Ankara, where my sister’s husband started up a business in the textile sector. At that time, I was sending my savings to them. We frequently wrote letters to each other, and they said that if I returned to Ankara I would be able to make more money than I did in Germany. In the meantime, they bought a shop for me with my savings. At that time, there was a special offer in Germany for guest workers who wanted to return to Turkey. I decided to return on the spur of the moment [...] Our business

was running well.” (Male, first generation, finished secondary school, currently running a small business)

Returnees with a better educational background seemed to have more success in their investments than migrants with fewer skills but some savings. This group relied on their skills and abilities in establishing entrepreneurial activities. For example, a returnee who has completed his university education in Germany and worked there for some time as an engineer but has returned in order to provide his children with educational prospects. He started a construction business on his return. In his opinion, he has made much more money in Antalya in a short time than he ever could have in Germany.

“When I returned to Turkey, I knew that it would be really difficult to find a job matching my education and work experience because there was no industry in Antalya, and as I said my job was in industry. At that time, I would have had to choose another city, like Denizli (a city in South Western Turkey) to find a job fitting my occupation, but it was really difficult because our close relatives were living in Antalya and if we were to live in Denizli we would feel lonely. I knew that I had to work because if I didn’t work, our savings would be eaten up very quickly. And then I started up a business in the construction sector.” (Male, first generation, graduate from a German university, currently retired)

### Conclusions

Analyzing the economic activities of interviewees in Turkey, we can argue that the accumulation of considerable financial capital is insufficient to ensure successful economic reintegration on return. Returnees had to rely on social support from their families when trying to cash in on their economic transfers, and often faced the problem of “false expectations”. Family members were unable to accept that the returned migrants could be in a position where they themselves would need any support or would claim shares from the remitted money. Therefore, relationships with the relatives often changed for the worse on their return. Family conflicts made the reintegration process more difficult.

Other obstacles for successful business investments were insufficient knowledge of the local business culture and difficulties in gaining access to exclusive local business networks. Additionally, we can assume that

returnees with limited professional skills had fewer chances on the Turkish labour market and were more or less forced to invest the money that they had saved in small businesses such as small-scale taxi services, bus or other transportation services, or restaurants. The risk of failure in these very competitive and highly unstable economic spheres of small-scale services was very high. At the other end of the spectrum, migrants who had attained higher qualifications in Germany were more successful in their productive investments. They relied more heavily on their specific qualifications and less on social support from relatives, and invested in branches with relatively high growth rates, such as construction or tourism.

To sum up, the better-qualified interviewees and interviewees drawing German retirement payments were in general satisfied with their economic position on their return. The situation of returnees with limited skills and some savings was more ambivalent and more difficult. Some managed to invest their money productively and were satisfied with their situations, but others still regret returning, and in fact argue that they would have been better off economically in Germany.

#### 4.2.2 Patterns of social reintegration

Most interviewees' relationships with their relatives changed on their return.

Disappointments on the part of relatives about remittances ceasing was one of the main reasons for the reorganization of family relationships upon return. Interviewees who were in close contact with their relatives while living in Germany developed more distanced contacts after settling in Turkey.

"I said to my wife: "Look, now we are going to Turkey for good" I said, "Think about the fact that we may fall out with some of our relatives." "No," said my wife, "they all love you". I said, "We're returning for good. It's not as if we were coming back for a vacation any more. We have to stick to our budget. We really will be fighting with them before a year goes by." That's just what happened: We came here and some relatives got cross with us before the year was out. We used to give so much; when you give and give and then you stop, problems come out. They said: "Why it was cut?" For example, there is this older sister I have. I

raised her children almost. The Germans brought us clothes, really the very clean second hand pieces from their kids [...] There was my brother-in-law. He would travel to Turkey all the time. We gave the clothes to him and he would bring them here and hand them out [...]

I sent her 10-15 bicycles for the children [...] Chocolates, shampoo, this and that, 50, 100 Marks for shopping. Yeah look, I said all this comes to an end now. My sister still expected the same after we returned. But I can't do that now that I'm back. Now it's all over." (Male, first generation, finished primary school, currently employed)

Those returnees whose families did not have any expectations of economic or other material support had not experienced any family related re-adaptation problems. Additionally, family networks provided returnees with considerable social support on their retirement. Especially elder persons who needed special care in everyday life relied heavily on the help of family members living in their neighbourhoods. On the other hand, elder returnees were not satisfied with their social situation in Turkey because of being separated from their family members living in Germany.

Social reintegration could be fostered by involvement in public and associational life. However, memberships of associations or political parties do not actually play a significant role for the interviewees of the first generation.<sup>13</sup> We were unable to observe any attempts to join associations dealing with civic or political issues or issues related to problems of migration or return. Only a few interviewees participated in associational activities in Turkey. One interviewee was a member of a professional association. In another case, the interviewee actively supported a small local welfare association.

### Conclusions

The social contacts of the first-generation interviewees are mostly based on family networks and private friendship ties. It is worth noting that the returnees' family relations became unstable and in many cases conflict-ridden on their return. Participation in public and associational life was only observed in individual cases. It is therefore unsurprising that returnees in many interviews were dissatisfied with their everyday social contacts in Turkey, considering them as not authentic. On the other hand,

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13 However, it should be kept in mind that participation in associational life is very limited in general in Turkey.

private social contacts and family relations were often the only source of support upon return.

### 4.3 Reintegration of the second/third generations

The second and third generations of returnees stated in the interviews that they had experienced problems in becoming adapted to the Turkish education system, and in becoming adapted to the language, culture, life-style and work culture. Those who mostly grew up in Germany had major difficulties in Turkey, especially in the first years.

#### 4.3.1 Economic reintegration

Our sample included second- and third-generations returnees who were studying in Turkey at the time of the interview and those who already completed their education either in Germany or in Turkey and joined the labour market there. The economic position of these two groups will be analyzed separately.

#### **Economic reintegration of those returnees who had gained their educational certificates in Germany**

Concerning the group of second- and third-generation returnees who have been educated in Germany, we are in a position to state that all of them (apart from two cases of housewives) were employed in well-paid jobs. These returnees stressed the importance of their German educational certificates, which helped them to have good chances on the Turkish labour market. Others stressed that their knowledge of German made it easier to gain access to the labour market in Turkey. Interestingly, the second- and third-generation returnees worked in jobs where they had social security provisions. This is an important indicator supporting the hypothesis that they had relatively privileged access to the labour market because a large part of the working population in Turkey still works in the informal economy.

Returnees with German educational qualifications however had to adapt to a new work culture, work ethos, work arrangements, vocational regulations and especially to the work flows and management techniques. They pointed out that especially these “soft differences” in the working envi-

ronment made the transfer of professional skills gained in Germany very difficult. For example, a returnee who had trained and worked as a nurse in Germany, and who worked in different medical and health clinics in Turkey reported:

“When I was working as a nurse here, I started telling everyone at work about the education I’d received in Europe and about the techniques we had there. In Turkey the person accompanying the patient would measure blood pressure by herself. But it was my job. I was running to almost everyone and I was so tired in those four months and the older nurses warned me. They said, ‘You cannot work here like this, you cannot measure everyone’s blood pressure, if they are unwell they should go to the emergency ward... This kind of patient accompaniment is widespread in Turkey. There is no such thing in Germany. The nurse does everything. Here the accompanying person does that sort of thing, special care for the patient [...] For example, we never entered a patient’s room in Germany without knocking. But here, one enters the patient’s room without any warning; there’s no privacy. Apart from that, there is no such thing as the patient’s buzzer. In my first years here I regarded the personnel as being stranger than the patients. The janitor is allowed to deal with serum [...] But the janitor has not received any training [...] I truly love my profession. However, they can even make me fed up with the profession I love so much [...] The system is different in every single clinic. Each department is different because each department has a head of its own. I mean, no general system has yet been established. I said this many times. I also reported many of the problems to the administration and said that I didn’t want to work under such conditions. I also attempted to write an official report about the problems, but then all those people who also weren’t satisfied just disappeared. In conversation, people would tease me by saying ‘you are right’. But when I said ‘then let’s do something’, I was left quite alone... I changed to ophthalmology...The nurses there were severely oppressed. There were colleagues that I liked a lot, but do you know how they look at nurses in Turkey? – Like slaves. They had studied medicine, and we were just nurses. But in my view, nobody can be disrespected for the money he has or for the profession he has. Doctors have to have respect for my profession. They can’t order tea or breakfast, tell me to do this or that... Nurses and doctors were more like friends in Germany but here, when you are friends, you can’t tell the person that he/she do something wrong. When you say ‘you are doing this wrong, there is



nobody as bad as you' [...] Or, when I was doing the bed there, and asked the doctor if he/she would give me a hand in shaking it off he would say "yes of course" and would come and we'd do it together. When I said "would you hold this patient here, I want to turn him over, the doctor would immediately come to help." Such a question wouldn't be an offense. But, would that ever be possible in Turkey?" (Female, second generation, vocational education in Germany, currently employed)

Returnees who started their own businesses trying to build upon their skills acquired in Germany had difficulties to cope with the low quality standards of goods and services provided by subcontractors and with customers' lower quality expectations. For example, a returnee who had received three years of vocational training as a tailor and started a curtain making business with his sister reported:

"When I first came, I lived with my older sister for three years. In this time, we started a business: curtain making, curtains with mechanisms. Our work was very hard. The mechanisms used in Germany are a bit different and the rings at the back are very small and not available in Turkey. We brought them in from abroad. And we also cannot find the quality here [...] I taught my sister tailoring, but I also learned the curtain business very easily because, in the end, a tailor's work is very fine. The business didn't work out in Turkey. We were the most expensive curtain makers in Samsun and couldn't make any money." (Female, second generation, school education in Germany, currently a university student)

Analyzing the labour market situation and economic involvement of the second generation of migrants, the motives for return appear important. In contrast to those interviewees who expected better access to the education system in Turkey and better career opportunities, women who came for marriage reasons became housewives even though they had qualifications and work experience in Germany. So they did not try and were unable to transfer their professional skills and qualifications successfully. Their economic and social situation was very much dependent on the situation of their husband and his family.

### **Returnees who continued their educational careers in Turkey**

Besides re-integration into the labour market and professional experiences, experiences in the Turkish educational systems were most frequently

mentioned by second- and third-generation migrants. The problems that are encountered in educational adaptation are: language, school conditions (crowded classes), the quality and the quantity of the education, information load, lecturer-student relations, and the special social status of the returnees in the educational system (labelling as “Almancı”<sup>14</sup>). The interviewees mentioned difficulties in coping with the different teaching style and teaching techniques. They often complained that they were overloaded with information which had no practical relevance.

“I attended the senior class in Samsun in the Anatolia High School. Then I applied to university in Ankara: Hacettepe University, Department of German Language and Literature. I had many difficulties in high school. I cried a lot. I was very frustrated because of the matter of smoking, the matter of skirt length and so on. I couldn’t get used to high school. I mean, the religion teacher ridiculed me a lot because I came from Germany. My Mom, thanks to her, had at least taught me the prayers. I mean he would call me kaffir (non-believer) or something like that. I simply hated the school [...] Apart from the fact that neither the English nor the German teachers knew the languages. I could barely keep a straight face in either English or German classes. They were really bad at languages.” (Female, third generation, graduated from a Turkish university, currently employed)

Another problem that interviewees faced was being labelled as Almancı. As already mentioned in the chapter on Turkish return policy, some privileges were established in the Turkish educational system for young returnees from Germany. For example, while the other students could attend the Anatolia High School only after passing a central exam, second- and third-generation returnees could enter high school education without sitting an entrance examination. Those privileges generated tensions between the returnees and the local students.

“For example, I came from Germany. People who were from Turkey and had entered the Anatolian High School immediately looked at you from a different perspective. They said, for example, ‘we worked and all that, but you got in for free’. (Male, second generation, university graduate, currently employed in a family business)

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14 Synthetic word composed of “alman” (German) and “yabancı” (foreigner).

Turkish high-school graduates have to pass a central state examination to be accepted at universities. A separate examination has been developed for young people returning from Germany, a specific quota being reserved for these students. Interviewees who obtained such direct access to universities face the problem of being labelled as privileged.

### Conclusions

Despite various adaptation problems, those second- and third-generation interviewees who started or continued their educational careers in Turkey managed to successfully graduate from high schools. And all of them were enrolled at university. Moreover, in some cases the return was the only opportunity to escape less promising educational careers in Germany and obtain access to the tertiary education system. Returnees who obtained their educational qualifications in Germany got well-paid, secure labour market positions on their return. But analogously to the experiences of the students, who often were dissatisfied with the quality of the education which they received, they complained about the working conditions and professional standards in their workplaces.

Interestingly, most second- and third-generation interviewees chose a profession connected to the German language, for example, at the faculties of German language and literature or at the translation departments, or were employed in positions where they had frequent contacts with German-speaking clients. Because of the selectivity of our sample, we were unable to state to what extent German language proficiency and biographical connection to Germany determine the professional choices of this type of returnee. But we can argue that returning second- and third-generation migrants who made the German language an important part of their professional qualification were unwilling to break all links with Germany after their return. On the contrary, their connections with Germany, and especially the language resource, were considered as very useful on the Turkish labour market. These interviewees continued to identify their future with Germany, and were more oriented towards “transnational” German-Turkish professional careers.

#### 4.3.2 Social reintegration

The second and third generations of returnees experienced social and cultural adaptation as more problematic than the first generation. Issues

mentioned in this context were related to clothing habits, relationships between the genders, spare time and lifestyle. The young generations often mentioned the lack of recreation and sports facilities. They stressed the importance attaching to such activities in Germany, and stated how happy they had been to make use of them. The lack of services and activities for young people in Turkey limited their social contacts to the family and close circles of friends.

The interviewees reported initial difficulties when it came to being accepted in their social environment after their return. When reflecting on their identities, the second- and third-generation interviewees have a tendency to place themselves in a position of “being neither a foreigner nor a native”. This status finds its cultural reflection in the labelling of those returnees as “Almanci”. This term has a number of different connotations, often negative. ‘Almanci’ are often seen as economically well off, but also as upstarts - migrants who left Turkey, uneducated with a village origin, made money and pretend to possess a better social status without having sufficient cultural capital to pull it off. Our second- and third-generation interviewees however seem to re-interpret the notion of ‘Almanci’ in a more positive way. To be a Turk from Germany (German-Turk) meant for them to also be bilingual, more disciplined, career oriented and open minded. The dual identity of the returnees belonging to the second and third generations did not prevent them evaluating their return decision in positive terms. They appreciated the experience of living in the country of their ethnic origin or “in one’s own culture”. They especially valued warm and sincere relationships with family, friends and neighbors.

“Here it was important for me in terms of friendship. Relationships were warm here. In Germany, well it was OK, but ... there still was that indifference, they kept their distance. Of course, it also happens that I say, hey what the hell, what am I doing here? It happens from time to time, but I don’t regret it.” (Female, voluntary, university graduate, employed)

“My Turkish improved. I adapted to daily life now: you go to the grocer, you go to the market, you get into the dolmuş, and then you play football with the children...I had a real difficulty not in Istanbul but in Ankara. I needed a year. At the beginning I was naïve, believing everything people said, believing the jokes. Then I wasn’t familiar

with boy and girl relationships in Turkey and with other things. After high school I didn't have any more problems. I like living in Turkey. I also like Turks actually, but I also feel the same level of dislike for all this... Here, yes, traffic is fun here, but when I'm in traffic it also makes me very uneasy... On the one hand, I am happy, and once in a while I lose my temper and say I will go. But I think this is not something that is greatly related to having come from Germany. Everyone in Turkey experiences this. Our country causes us to feel frustration. And still, it is good that I came, yes! What have I learned in Turkey? To be flexible. The discipline from there [in Germany] plus the joy of life here [in Turkey] have come into harmony. I believe that friendships are more lasting here..." (Male, second generation, graduated from a Turkish university, currently employed)

#### 4.4 Conclusions

Concluding the chapter on returnees' reintegration patterns, we were able to formulate some hypotheses concerning the major factors of successful reintegration.

Hypothesis 1: Economic resources are not a sufficient precondition for successful reintegration. Social support networks and opportunities to transfer skills influence returnees' reintegration strategies, and therefore determine their economic success to a considerable extent:

The less well-educated returnees had fewer chances to gain access to the Turkish labour market on their return, and mostly relied on their investments. When taking their investment decisions, they depended very heavily on family support. Family members often managed their remittances long before they returned to Turkey and made the investment decisions for them. The returnees were able to run their businesses only with support of their relatives. Skilled returnees were more oriented towards working or investing in the sectors of their professional specialization, where they could benefit from the know-how which they had gained in Germany, and in tourism, where they and their children could put their German language skills to good use. For returnees with fewer skills, social ties in Turkey were therefore crucial for their successful reintegration. For skilled returnees their professional and language skills played a major role.

Hypothesis 2: According to the returnees' subjective accounts, their success in reintegration is not necessarily determined only by their economic situation. Returnees evaluated their situation upon return both in terms of their economic success, and of their social inclusion:

- The better-educated returnees of the first generation were definitely able to improve their social status on their return. They noted that their social position in Turkey was better than it would have been in Germany.
- The less skilled returnees evaluated their social position as more problematic. Their social status in Germany was instable. They were often employed as unskilled workers, and in many cases had had to leave the labour market for health reasons, had to retire early because of hard working conditions, or were fired. Their social status in Turkey on their return remained instable. Conflict-ridden relationships with family members because of mutually unfulfilled demands of financial support and insecure income from small business investments were the main causes of dissatisfaction.
- The returnees' social position on retirement was ambivalent. On the one hand, they had a better economic position in Turkey than in Germany. They lived in more privileged neighbourhoods, they owned real estate and their purchasing power was higher than in Germany. On the other hand, they were very much dependent on the support of family members living in Turkey and felt separated from family members who remained in Germany.
- The second and third generations showed patterns of upward social mobility which they would not necessarily have experienced in Germany. Especially concerning their educational prospects, they argued that institutional barriers complicated their educational success in Germany, whereas they were able to benefit from certain advantages provided in Turkey for the children of migrants (special high schools, privileged access to the universities) and from their proficiency in German.

# 5

## The sustainability of return



This study will discuss the sustainability of return from two perspectives. Firstly, sustainability will be analyzed from an individual perspective. Return is sustainable in case of a long-term settlement in the country of origin. The probability of repeated migration depends on two conditions: the satisfaction of the returnees with their individual situation on their return, and the objective migration opportunities. Apart from this individual dimension, the effects of return could be of a structural nature. Sustainability would then be a result not just of individual satisfaction, but it would imply some positive structural changes which returnees would trigger in their societies of residence. Classical examples of those positive structural effects are successful economic investments undertaken by the returnees, contributing to economic growth and to increased employment or know-how transfer through the successful transfer of skills and qualifications.

### 5.1 Individual satisfaction and migration intentions

The academic discussion of the sustainability of return is based to a large extent on an analysis of the objective differences in economic standards between the context of migration and the context of return (Dustmann 1996). As we stated above, the economic position encountered by the first generation was very much dependent on the professional resources which migrants had before migration, and which they attained in Germany, and on the patterns of sending remittances and of making investments in Tur-

key. We also found that returnees' economic position on retirement, and that of the better-educated returnees, was relatively sound, and that the position of less well-educated returnees who had some savings depended upon their social support networks. Interestingly, returnees' economic position was not necessarily congruent with their subjective satisfaction with their lives in Turkey. During the initial period following their return, almost all returnees were less satisfied with their situation in Turkey and were thinking of possible re-migration to Germany. Satisfaction did not increase until after at least two years of living in Turkey. This observation has major implications for research into the sustainability of return: The appropriate evaluation of the factors influencing decisions to migrate could repeatedly be made only by carrying out a comparative analysis of returnees' living conditions and their subjective evaluation of them in different time-spans on their return. The returnees interviewed in this study stayed in Turkey for at least three years. So all of them had overcome the initial phase of general dissatisfaction with their situation and were able to adapt to everyday life in Turkey. We therefore assume that those returnees who were still dissatisfied with their situation in Turkey experience not only initial orientation problems. Their dissatisfaction had deeper social or economic origins, and also affected their life strategies in a more crucial way.

We were able to identify three types of returnee who were less satisfied with their social or economic situation on their return. On retirement, returnees suffered from separation from their relatives, and especially children, who remained in Germany. Those returnees who had fewer qualifications and some savings were less satisfied with their return situation, especially when they experienced conflicts with their families and when their small business investments were unsuccessful. They were the only group among the interview partners who explicitly expressed an intention to eventually re-migrate to Germany for a long time. Interestingly, these interviewees' children seem to inherit this general dissatisfaction with the situation in Turkey, independently of their objective living conditions, and intend to re-migrate to Germany. Among the dissatisfied returnees were women of the second and third generations who came for marriage reasons. Their situation in Turkey was very much dependent on the social and economic situation of their husbands' families. These women reported profound dissatisfaction, especially because of the limited possibilities to develop independent social contacts or to maintain contacts with their family members who remained in Germany and to realize their professional expectations.



“I felt absolutely alone in Antalya... It was really difficult because my mother and my brother are living in Germany and I grew up in Germany. I often cried at night. As time passed, I got used to it. My husband is a teacher and he allows me to visit Germany and I managed to live here. Actually, when I was living in Germany, I did not like living there, but I miss my mother and brother so much.” (Female, second generation, finished vocational school, currently a housewife)

It is unsurprising that the better-educated returnees of the first generation with a stable economic and social position in Turkey were satisfied with their situation on their return. The interviewees in the second and third generations, most of whom were able to fulfil their professional and educational expectations in Turkey, were also satisfied with their living situation. Re-migration to Germany was not a top-priority option for these two groups of returnees, although their social and professional environments were very often closely linked to Germany and the German language. Rather, those returnees describe themselves as “cosmopolitans”, mentioning for example that they would not only consider migration to Germany but also to another country in Europe or North America.

Summarizing the interview accounts on subjective satisfaction with personal situations in Turkey, we can argue that it is not only objective economic living conditions which play a role in people’s personal sense of well-being. The presence of supportive social networks and the social status that the returnees achieved after their return also influence their subjective evaluation of the return decision. It seems that especially those who return on retirement, less well-educated returnees in unstable economic positions and women who returned for marriage purposes and became housewives tend to regret their return decision. Interestingly, dissatisfaction seems to be inherited by the children of “unsuccessful” returnees. We will see in the further analysis that it is particularly those returnees who were most dissatisfied with their return decision who in fact possessed fewer resources to re-migrate. Therefore, their objective possibilities of re-migration were very limited, especially in comparison to the migration options of the satisfied returnees.

## 5.2 Objective migration opportunities

Money and ethnic networks are considered in the literature to be resources that are vital for the realization of individual migration plans. In this section we will discuss which groups of returnees had sufficient financial and social resources, and therefore had concrete opportunities to realize long-term re-migration to Germany.

Returnees on their retirement and less well-educated returnees in particular had limited economic resources. In addition to the German pensions, returnees on their retirement often received financial support from their family members – especially children who remained in Germany. Long-term re-migration to Germany was therefore barely feasible for economic reasons. Returnees with limited educational resources but some savings invested in small businesses, which turned out to be a very unstable source of income. This group of returnees rarely managed to make additional savings in Turkey, and therefore could not afford to re-migrate to Germany.

Returnees with better educational resources who were successful in their professional and business lives in fact had sufficient economic resources to migrate to Germany. The second and third generations had often received money from their family members who remained in Germany in the initial period following their arrival, but became economically independent after graduation. In some cases, they even supported their family members in Germany – especially parents who were struggling to make a living on their pensions there. Second- and third-generation returnees have therefore obtained sufficient economic resources to migrate to Germany, but have not developed any long-term migration plans.

It is not only economic resources which might foster migration decisions. The availability of ethnic networks also makes migration easier. All the interviewees in our sample had family members or other relatives and friends in Germany. Eight second-generation returnees returned for marriage, education or because of homesickness while their parents or siblings remained in Germany. Two returnees are now in Turkey with their parents while their grandparents and older relatives still live in Germany. And finally, there are first-generation migrants whose children, grandchildren or other relatives are living in Germany.

### 5.3 De facto migration behaviour: considerable potential for circular migration

By observing returnees' de facto migration behaviour, we found that there is a considerable potential for circular migration among some groups of returnees. Other groups seem unwilling or unable to migrate.

Less well-educated returnees who did not manage to invest effectively in Turkey and had moderate living standards there were willing to migrate again. It is interesting to note that the dissatisfied returnees decided against re-migration to Germany although some of them had legal migration opportunities for doing so (being German citizens or still possessing a permanent residence permit in Germany) or their relatives would support them in the initial period on their arrival. These interviewees argued that a lack of economic and professional resources would prevent them from succeeding in Germany.

Although those returning on their retirement did not possess sufficient economic resources, they were in fact the only group which practiced circular migration in their everyday lives by maintaining strong links with their families in Germany. In the interviews, they referred to bifocal, simultaneous family relationships and ties in both Germany and Turkey. Moreover, they performed important family functions that were typical of traditional extended families such as child caring and housekeeping. They received corresponding economic support from the family members living in Germany. This kind of migration could be described as "circular migration related to transnational family life".

The second- and third-generation returnees were in some cases German citizens or held a residence permit in Germany. However, they used their legal status only for sporadic, private visits to Germany. Most returnees retained their legal status in Germany as a kind of insurance for the worst case. For example, one interviewee put it like this:

"We thought that we could not return now, but in time if we were not comfortable in Turkey, then we could go back to Germany. For this reason, I didn't give up my residence permit. I thought that if Germany's door remains open, then I would feel better." (Male, second generation, university graduate)

Better-educated returnees as well as the second and third generations had economic resources permitting re-migration to Germany. However, they had no intention to migrate. The second- and third-generation returnees in particular maintained social contacts with friends and had close relatives in Germany. Some of them worked with German enterprises or German-Turkish joint ventures. Another group of returnees had jobs in the service sector oriented towards German-speaking clients. Although this group of interviewees had no definitive plans to migrate to Germany, we can assume that they will still maintain strong connections to Germany in the coming years whilst simultaneously establishing roots in Turkey. We therefore argue that the potential for “career-related circular migration” between the two countries is very high.

In the analysis above, we touched on a phenomenon that children of less successful, dissatisfied returnees seem to inherit from their parents the general dissatisfaction with the situation in Turkey and intend to re-migrate to Germany. Although they do not possess sufficient economic resources for migration, they were able to activate their parents’ social contacts with the Turkish community in Germany by looking for a bride (groom) in the community. If their migration strategies come to fruition, the transnational family structures will reproduce themselves in the next generation. Returned parents will become receivers of remittances, and children who have migrated will expect informal family-related services from the parents in Turkey. Circular migration related to the transnational family life will be likely to occur in such cases.

#### **5.4 The structural effects of return**

In this chapter we would like to make some observations on the structural effects of return. Considering the small-scale qualitative design of this study, we were unable to make an analysis of the macroeconomic effects or macro labour market effects of the return processes. We were however able to analyze the influence of return on the local level. The central question of this analysis will be: Could returnees be seen as agents of social change in the local return contexts? We will focus on two aspects of the relevant social changes: the potential of the returnees to change the professional working standards and the working culture in their working environments, and the potential for civic mobilization and action.

As already discussed in the chapter on socio-economic reintegration, better-educated returnees of the first generation, and second- and third-generation returnees who obtained their educational qualifications in Germany, were able to find stable positions on the Turkish labour market. They reported, though, that they found it difficult to transfer the knowledge and skills that they had obtained in Germany to their professional contexts. The major difficulty was that of adapting to a new work culture, work ethos, work arrangements, vocational regulations and especially to the workflows and management techniques. They pointed out that especially these “soft differences” in the working environment made it very difficult to transfer professional skills. Their firms were unwilling to adapt to new techniques or new models of work organization which they had learned in Germany. Returnees who started their own businesses by trying to build upon the skills that they had acquired in Germany found it difficult to cope with the low quality standards of the parts supplied and with customers’ lower quality expectations, and had to find high-quality production niches in order to succeed.

Summarizing the returnees’ accounts, we can assume that the structural effects of know-how transfer on the professional cultures and norms were minimal. The second- and third-generation returnees in particular seemed to internalize this collective experience of being unable to use their knowledge in the professional contexts, and deliberately sought jobs in enterprises that were orientated towards international markets or European clients or towards clients with high quality expectations that were able to pay high prices. We can therefore assume that there is an asymmetric distribution of the know-how transfer upon return. The international, high-price markets benefitted from the returnees’ input, whereas the local lower-price economies and services did not undergo any changes.

Another important aspect that all returnees of the first, second and third generations recounted in the interviews was their deep dissatisfaction with the quality of public services in Turkey. The first-generation returnees often complained about the ineffective healthcare system, unnecessary bureaucracy, uncontrollable traffic or under-development of the public infrastructure. The second and third generations often mentioned the lack of recreation and sports facilities. Another frequently-mentioned issue related to quality of life was the problem of traffic and pollution. We assume that this dissatisfaction with public services stems from the steady comparisons with the experiences that migrants had of the German pub-

lic system. We argue that the tacit knowledge attained of German public culture, for example, with its strong focus on environmental issues, also raised an awareness of such problems as air pollution through uncontrolled traffic. Personal dissatisfaction could, in principle, cause an individual motivation for civic activism upon return.

However, we observed that returnees were seldom involved in political or associational life. This political passivity could be partly explained by the limited opportunities for political participation in Turkey in general. Additionally, returnees developed a kind of fatalism concerning their possibilities to cooperate with state authorities. Returnees' common experience was rather the ignorance of the state authorities with regard to their problems and concerns. Returnees therefore tended to solve their personal problems individually and with the help of private networks. We were thus able to conclude that returnees' positive experiences with public services in Germany made them sensitive to shortcomings in the public management of services and infrastructure, but that it was impossible to translate them into collective claims and civic action.

## 5.5 Conclusions

Based on our empirical data, we were able to evaluate the individual return decisions of Turkish migrants as being sustainable. Virtually none of them intended to re-migrate to Germany permanently. Returnees with a less satisfactory economic and social position upon return regretted their return decision, but they had insufficient resources to re-migrate. In some cases, these interviewees considered an opportunity to activate their social contacts to Turkish communities in Germany and to enable their children to migrate.

Returnees (both successful and less successful) were, on the one hand, less interested in permanent migration to Germany but, on the other hand, practiced factual circular migration related to transnational family life or were motivated to commute between Germany and Turkey for career-related reasons. The high potential of circularity between Germany and Turkey comes as no surprise. A stable migration system established itself between Germany and Turkey since the beginning of labour migration in the 1960s. Social networks and economic ties between migrants and their families in Turkey, as well as relatively large numbers of returned migrants

with extensive family, social and professional contacts with Germany, stabilize this system. The high degree of the circularity potential of Turkish returnees challenges the classical notion of sustainability understood as a long-term return to the previous destination country. There is virtually no research focusing on the effects of de facto circular migration on both Turkish and German societies. Such studies would, in our opinion, fruitfully complement the academic discussion of the sustainability of return in the case of migration between Germany and Turkey.

The structural effects of return in local contexts have to be considered to be limited. We found that returnees' know-how and professional skills were less useful for the local economies but very much in demand by internationally-oriented enterprises and in the "high quality – high price" markets. We were also able to conclude that the returnees did not develop any strategies for civic activism despite their dissatisfaction with the quality of public services and the norms of public culture. However, our evaluation of the structural effects of return on the local contexts should be considered as a very much initial, preliminary finding because the interviews did not focus on these specific issues.

# 6

## General conclusions



As discussed in the introductory sections of the report, return migration used to be a subject which was not intensively analyzed in migration literature until the 90s (King, 1986; Dustmann, 1996; IOM, 2001; Cassarino, 2004; Klinthall, 2006). It was not until the 90s that this subject attracted growing interest and started to be studied by different disciplines. Long-term return and reintegration constituted the main topics of analysis. Structural effects of return on the home countries were also considered in the academic debate. What do our findings contribute to the discussion on return decision, reintegration and the issue of sustainability of return?

### Return decision

One of the most interesting questions in recent years has been the question of why return migration is gaining importance. Academic discussion on return motives provides a set of answers to this question. Family affairs, restrictive residence law, economic failure or limited future prospects in the country of residence, psychological hardships, socio-economic opportunities in the country of origin and homesickness could become factors influencing return decisions in a variety of ways (Gmelch, 1980; King, 1986; Guzzetta, 2004). Defining return migration as a social phenomenon, the analysis cannot therefore be reduced to a single return factor. Variations are related to age, level of education, marital status, work, employment status of the potential returnees and other factors. Our study also finds that factors motivating return are highly heterogeneous. However, our analysis differentiates between motives of the interviewees belonging to the first generation of migrants and interviewees of Turkish origin who were born or grew up in Germany.



Contrary to the widespread opinion that Turkish labour migrants to Germany are mostly poorly educated and have few skills, our analysis shows a variety of professional and educational backgrounds among the first-generation interviewees. Besides those with primary school education only, there were those with middle school or secondary school-leaving qualifications, as well as university graduates. Some of them had professional experience on the Turkish labour market before migrating to Germany. Those first-generation migrants who migrated with little education mostly from the rural areas of Turkey show great similarities concerning their duration of stay and factors motivating their return. They could be described primarily with: (1) the motive to earn money in a short period of time; (2) unstable, badly-paid jobs and employment as unskilled labour; (3) strong relations with their families and kin staying behind in Turkey; (4) leaving the children behind in Turkey to reduce living costs and increase savings in Germany; (5) limited German language proficiency. This group was very much involved in family and friendship networks with people of Turkish origin in Germany, and had virtually no contacts with Germans.

This type of interviewee had difficulties in reaching their economic migration goals because of low-paid employment and high remittances to their families in Turkey. Their return decision was therefore continuously postponed. Important return motives of this type of migrant were of an economic nature:

- Inability to generate income in Germany because of exclusion from the labour market (for example for health reasons or because of dismissal).
- Those who reached retirement age in Germany received pensions that were only adequate for a moderate standard of living. In the most cases, however, they had managed to save enough to buy a house in Turkey. The drop in earnings on retirement seems to be a strong factor in favour of return. Retired returnees were able to afford higher standards of living in Turkey than in Germany.

Homesickness and the desire to live in a cultural environment with which the interviewees were more comfortable were additional return motives.

The first generation of migrants, who possessed higher skills, were usually able to obtain a more stable, better-paid labour market position in Ger-

many. Their incomes increased in time, and in most cases they reached their economic migration goals. In addition, they improved their language knowledge and their living standards increased. They had closer social contacts with Germans. These interviewees stressed the importance of the education of their children, which was a decisive factor in their return to Turkey. Their return decision was based on the assumption that Turkish children would have few chances to achieve higher educational goals in Germany and would have better access to the Turkish tertiary education system. Return especially became an option when children had difficulties at school, which was often perceived as discrimination.

For the second and third generations of migrants who were born or grew up in Germany, educational reasons were crucial when making a return decision. The experiences of these interviewees were often linked to problems which they encountered in the German school system. However, almost all interviewees in this group showed higher educational attainments than their parents. Some of them were attending Hauptschule or Realschule at the time of their return. Some interviewees had finished vocational schools in Germany and obtained initial experience on the German labour market as skilled workers. The main return motive for these interviewees was an expectation to obtain better access to university education in Turkey. Additionally, marriage to a partner living in Turkey or motives such as “homesickness” or “close social ties with friends and relatives in Turkey” influenced the return decision.

### Reintegration

Apart from differences in return motives, all interviewed returnees made their return decisions in a fairly planned manner. However, real experiences of living “at home” did not necessarily match with people’s dreams and expectations. The reintegration experiences of the interviewees in this study are highly heterogeneous. Nevertheless, some similarities and differences can be ascertained.

Analyzing the economic activities of the first-generation interviewees on their return, we can argue that the accumulation of considerable financial capital was insufficient for their successful economic reintegration. Economic success or failure depended considerably on the social support of family members. In many cases, relationships with the relatives involved in the returnees’ economic activities often changed for the worse. Conflicts about the right investment decisions and the distribution of the in-

vested profits among family members were common. Other obstacles to successful business investments were insufficient knowledge of the local business culture and difficulties encountered in gaining access to exclusive local business networks.

Returnees with limited professional skills had fewer chances on the Turkish labour market, and were more or less forced to invest the money that they had saved in small businesses such as small taxi services, bus or other transportation services, or restaurants. The risk of failure in these very competitive and highly unstable economic spheres of small-scale services was very high. In contrast, migrants who attained higher qualifications in Germany were more successful in their productive investments. They invested in branches with relatively high growth rates such as construction or tourism.

The second- and third-generation interviewees who started or continued their educational careers in Turkey managed to graduate from high school successfully. Some of them were studying at university at the time of the interview. Others had already graduated from Turkish universities. All of the interviewees who graduated in Turkey, but also those who had obtained their vocational training skills in Germany, obtained well-paid, secure labour market positions. Interestingly, most second- and third-generation interviewees chose a profession connected to the German language, for example, in the faculties of German language and literature or in the translation departments, or were employed in positions where they had frequent contacts with German-speaking clients or business partners. Knowledge of German was an important resource of these interviewees on the Turkish labour market.

Based on these findings, we were able to make a general assumption that economic resources are not a sufficient precondition for successful reintegration. Networks of social support and the possibilities to transfer skills influence returnees' reintegration strategies, and therefore are major factors determining their economic success.

The non-economic aspects of interviewees' living conditions on their return were another important issue in the interviews. Considering the experiences of the first-generation interviewees, we found that satisfaction with family contacts played a major role for the sense of well-being on return. In many cases, relationships with relatives became unstable and

conflict-ridden on return due to contradictory expectations as to family closeness and support.

The second- and third-generation interviewees reported initial difficulties when it came to being accepted in their social environments. When reflecting on their identities, these interviewees have a tendency to place themselves in a position of “being neither a foreigner nor a native”. Most of them identified themselves as Turks from Germany (German-Turk). This self-image was positively connoted as being bilingual, disciplined, career oriented and open minded. At the same time, they appreciated the experience of living in the country of their ethnic origin, or “in one’s own culture”. They especially valued warm and sincere relationships with family, friends and neighbors. The level of satisfaction with social contacts considerably influenced the evaluation of the interviewees’ return decision in our sample. We can argue that it was not just economic and professional success, but a feeling of being socially included, that made the return decision sustainable.

### Sustainability

The analysis shows that the interviewed returnees (both the successful and the less successful) were less interested in the permanent migration to Germany, but practiced factual circular migration. Short- and medium-term circular migration was related to the reproduction of family ties when family members were living in Germany or when it was connected to professional mobility within the German-Turkish economic area. The analysis of the effects of circular migration is not one of the research goals of this study. We assume, however, that for different groups of returnees this migration pattern will substitute the initial intention to settle permanently in Turkey, and should therefore be taken into consideration in further research.

We analysed the structural effects of return on the local professional and social environments. Taking into consideration the limitations of the sample, we however have to conclude that those effects were very limited. The data show that returnees’ know-how and professional skills were less useful for the local economies but very much in demand by the internationally oriented enterprises and in the “high quality – high price” markets. We were also able to observe that the returnees did not develop any strategies of civic activism despite their dissatisfaction with the quality of public services and the norms of public culture.

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# II.

## Return to Georgia

Return Motives, Reintegration Patterns,  
Sustainability



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# 1

## Introduction



By the time en masse emigration from Georgia began in the second half of the 1990s the economic situation in the country had become very difficult: Political processes of the collapse of the Soviet Union were followed by the collapse of the economic system in Georgia. In addition, two border conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia proved to be even more devastating for the struggling Georgian economy. The population of one of the richest and most prosperous Republics of the former USSR found itself rapidly becoming impoverished after 1991. Employment, unfortunately, was not (and is still not) a guarantee of well-being. Salaries, especially in the public sector, were relatively low: A private sector with relatively higher wages could not provide a sufficient number of jobs to take up the existing labour force. In these circumstances, it was not surprising that a significant proportion of the Georgian population started to emigrate abroad in order to survive economic hardships and support their families who were left behind.

As the results of the censuses conducted in the respective years show, the population of Georgia shrank by more than one million people between 1989 and 2002, mainly because of a decreased fertility rate and increased emigration (State Department for Statistics of Georgia 2003; Vadachkoria 2004). Emigration hence became an indispensable feature of everyday life for many families living in Georgia following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. However, the poor organization of demographic statistics in contemporary Georgia makes it difficult to obtain reliable information on

population movements in general, and on the rate of emigration in particular.

Given that precise numbers of Georgian citizens who emigrated in order to work, live or study abroad are not available, the analysis of the emigration processes, as well as the policy analysis on migration issues, has been based on expert estimations and rare survey data. As various studies have suggested, up to 17% of Georgian households have at least one current migrant (Badurashvili 2005; Derschem/Khoperia 2004; Saqevashvili 2005), although this number varies from one region of the country to another. The vast majority of Georgian migrants are labour migrants. Remittances<sup>1</sup> sent by labour migrants to support their families who were left behind have been an increasingly important economic factor for the sending communities in Georgia since the mid-1990s.

In the first years of Georgian independence, emigration from Georgia was mainly directed toward Russia, predominantly labour based and male. Russia offered Georgian migrants employment opportunities within a familiar cultural and linguistic context. The financial costs of emigration were low, and risks associated with emigration to Russia were minimal for the vast majority of the Georgian migrants. Georgian labour migrants in Russia mostly worked in the construction industry, and in the small trades (Zayonchkovskaya 1994). However, new factors arose, such as deteriorating relations with Russia coupled with the introduction of a visa regime between the two countries at the end of 2000, as well as the opening up of the new migration markets with higher salaries and higher revenues, albeit with higher costs and associated risks (first of all, Western European countries, Israel and the US). This led flows of Georgian labour migrants to start diverting from Russia towards new destinations – Western Europe and Northern America in the early 2000s.

The gender composition of Georgian labour migrants has also changed over time. Derschem & Khoperia (2004) based on a study conducted in Georgia, and Tsuladze (2005) and on the results of a 2002 state census, suggested that stocks of labour migrants from Georgia mainly consist of male migrants. This fits well within the classical and neo-classical models of emigration, according to which males are considered to be the 'pri-

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1 In terms of this report, remittances include both monetary and other in-kind support sent by migrants to their families.

mary' migrants with females only playing an accompanying role in the migration enterprise. However, recent studies suggest that there is clear evidence of a trend toward the feminization of emigration from Georgia (Zurabishvili/Zurabisvhili 2010; Zurabisvhili 2007). Thus, not only are more women emigrating, compared to previous years, but it is women who mainly emigrate and become 'primary' migrants, with husbands often left behind or accompanying them, and not vice versa. This development could be considered a sign of the inclusion of Georgia, and even of its remote peripheral parts, in the globalized labour market, with its specific demand for female jobs.

In spite of the lack of reliable evidence of the specific characteristics of emigration from Georgia, we are able to identify its general trends. Re-migration, however, is very much understudied, although it is generally believed that, as a result of the "Rose Revolution" which took place in 2003, Georgian migrants started to consider returning to Georgia in much higher numbers than before. Still, almost no research is available neither into the motivation to return, nor into the process of reintegration in the home society. The level of return emigration is also subject to estimation. According to the representative data collected by the Caucasus Research Resource Centers (CRRRC) in October 2007, only 7% of Georgian households had a returned migrant at the time the fieldwork was carried out (Saqevarishvili 2005). According to the same survey, 17% of households reported having a current migrant; out of these 17%, 6% had more than one current migrant. It is generally considered that the level of return migration to Georgia is lower than the level of emigration.

### 1.1 Research objectives

No study has so far focused on returned Georgian migrants from Germany, in spite of the fact that, according to existing estimations, up to 7% of all Georgian migrants live in Germany (Tsuladze 2005; Dershem/Khoperia 2004). Germany is one of the major destinations of Georgian migrants after Russia, the USA and Greece. A major share of Georgian migrants to Germany is composed of young Georgians, and many of them are not exclusively labour migrants, but also come to study. What is extremely important is that emigration from Georgia to Germany is more likely to be "legal", compared to emigration of Georgian citizens to other Western European or North American countries. At the same time, Germany was a

rather “popular” destination country among those Georgian citizens who applied for asylum between 1991 and 2007.

Present research, conducted for the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, focuses on returned Georgian migrants who had spent at least one year in Germany after 1991 and had returned no less than three months before the date of the interview. The research aims at an investigation of how returned migrants perceive and explain major factors influencing their return decisions, their awareness and assessment of the role of existing assisted return programmes, recommendations to increase the effectiveness of these programmes in order to ensure a sustainable return, and their problems and concerns connected with reintegration into Georgian society.

## 1.2 Methodology

Desk research was the starting point of the present research project. It preceded the fieldwork and included an analysis of the existing literature on return migration to Georgia. Information on the existing programmes of assisted voluntary return to Georgia, placing particular emphasis on the programmes operating with Georgian migrants to/from Germany, was gathered and analyzed as well.

The fieldwork was composed of interviewing (a) returned migrants, and (b) experts.

**(a) Interviews with returnees:** Taking into consideration the limitations of the existing statistical data on Georgian emigration and on return migration in particular, it was not feasible to conduct a quantitative study of Georgian returnees from Germany as representative sampling was not possible in this situation. Thus, the present research employs qualitative methodology.

In-depth interviewing is the major data collection method<sup>2</sup>, supplemented by self-administered questionnaires, completed by each respondent, which will allow us to undertake an analysis of the variables under investigation. Although we located and interviewed returned migrants from dif-

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<sup>2</sup> A discussion guide is presented in Annex 1.

ferent backgrounds, with differing migration experiences, currently living in different regions of the country however, the results do not allow any generalizations to be made with regard to the overall population of return migrants from Germany.

In-depth interviewing enables us to obtain a detailed picture of the phenomena, and most importantly to see it from the viewpoint of the respondents. This data collection method is somewhat flexible, so that the respondents are given a certain amount of freedom to develop the direction of the interview. We were able to adjust to each particular case and allow the respondents to focus on their unique stories, while still maintaining the overall uniformity of the research, but not substituting the research question. Hence, the methodological approach selected allowed us to collect much more detailed, in-depth information than would have been possible using a quantitative methodology.

In terms of this project, the following criteria apply to the selection of the respondents: “Returned migrant” is an adult Georgian citizen who lived in Germany for at least one year<sup>3</sup>, has returned to Georgia, and has been living in Georgia for more than three months since his/her return. Dates of departure and return are to be between 1991 and 2007.

Provided that the above criteria are met, we were interested in migrants of any age, gender, ethnic background, level of education, type of occupation either in Georgia or in Germany.

Snow-ball sampling was employed to locate respondents, which enabled us to identify respondents who qualified to participate in the research. The research focused on the following categories of returnees:

- Returned educational migrants,
  - including returned educational labour migrants;
- Rejected asylum-seekers<sup>4</sup>,
  - including returned asylum-seeker labour migrants.

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3 During the fieldwork, we allowed a few exceptions in respect to this particular criterion.

4 It should be noted that, in terms of our research, all but one asylum-seeker turned out to be using an application for asylum status as a rational strategy to obtain legal status in Germany, and not because of real persecution or problems which they had experienced in Georgia. Not all of them became involved in labour activities in Germany.



We assume that the migratory experience, as well as the return and reintegration experiences, will differ greatly based on the legal status of the returned migrants which they had during their stay in Germany. Thus, Georgian educational migrants to Germany (including au pairs) most probably will have a more positive migratory experience, and their return and reintegration into Georgian society will be easier and more successful. On the other hand, we would expect rejected asylum-seekers to have had a less favourable migratory experience, due to their limited exposure to German life and culture and constrained living conditions. Their return might have been undertaken under circumstances beyond their control, and their reintegration would be less successful.

Although it was originally planned to interview a category of labour migrants from Georgia who previously worked in Germany before returning to Georgia, we were unable to locate respondents who had been labour migrants pure and simple, i.e. who migrated to Germany with the sole goal to work and earn money there. As our experience shows, instead of labour migration from Georgia to Germany pure and simple, we have categories of mixed types of migrants who combine either educational aspirations or a desire to work, or an attempt to gain asylum protection and to gain access to the labour market in Germany. Thus, we are introducing a new sub-category of “educational labour migrants”, i.e. educational migrants who did not officially hold working visas/permits in order to work in Germany, but who nevertheless participated in the labour market while staying in Germany.<sup>5</sup> They were often not authorized to work, so that they were employed in the informal sectors of the economy. Alongside this, we are introducing another sub-category – “asylum-seeker labour migrants”, which denotes asylum-seekers who worked while their asylum applications were being processed. They too were not authorized to do so. Most of these cases relate to situations where asylum-seeker status was used instrumentally in order to obtain access to the labour market, even if this was in informal employment.

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5 In terms of this study, participants of au pair programmes are not considered to be educational labour migrants unless they obtain additional employment, but are considered as educational migrants pure and simple since the primary rationale for their emigration was to study. The remuneration that they received was rather low, and in the case of au pairs who wished to assist their families back in Georgia financially, they needed to find extra employment.

Among each of these categories, recruitment was controlled for the presence of the following types of returnees in order to obtain multifaceted information regarding the return decision and the reintegration process:

1. Voluntary returned migrants;
2. Assisted voluntary returned migrants;
3. Forced returned migrants.

We were particularly interested in those returnees who returned with the help of assisted return programs. This category of respondent was not easy to find, partly because of their smaller number compared to the overall number of the returnees, and partly because information on this programme is not widely available, and the existing databases are understandably confidential, so we were not able to find them ourselves. We contacted organizations which manage assisted voluntary return programmes in Georgia, and with their help we were able to contact migrants who returned with the support of these programs.<sup>6</sup>

As mentioned above, we were only interested in migration after the breakup of the Soviet Union, so that only people who had migrated between the 1990s and the 2000s were interviewed. Sampling was controlled for the period of return – we interviewed only those people who returned at least two months prior to the date of the interview. We assumed that respondents who had returned several years previously, and those who had returned just recently, would have different reintegration experiences. Thus, the research allowed us to obtain a better understanding of factors which respondents found to be most important and influential in the process of decision making for migration and return, as well as for the success of reintegration and of the possibility of a sustained return.

Due to the sampling technique employed, the data gathered is not representative of the whole population of returned Georgian migrants from Germany. However, it allows us to gather valuable information on the reasons to migrate to Germany, migrants' experiences, mechanisms for making return decisions, and to develop various reintegration scenarios. We

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6 We would like to thank Ms Ketevan Krause and Ms Irma Tsereteli for their valuable assistance in finding such respondents.

have collected a rich collection of the narratives of the returned migrants, describing, explaining, and analyzing their experiences from the respondents' point of view.

Returned educational migrants are overrepresented in our sample, which is understandable and explained by the fact that educational emigration from Georgia to Germany is rather widespread. Not only is it true that educational migrants form the majority of Georgian migrants to Germany, but, even more importantly for the focus of our research, they have a strong motivation to return to Georgia after completing their education. Hence, returned educational migrants can be easily found. On the other hand, namely in the case of rejected asylum-seekers, and especially of migrants who returned with the help of assisted voluntary return programmes, we were able to identify only a limited number of such respondents due to their smaller number compared with returned educational migrants, and also due to a sensitivity of their migration and return experiences.<sup>7</sup> However, even in these cases, the interviews conducted allow us to formulate certain patterns of return and reintegration.

We did not specifically control for the respondents' age and sex, although we did interview both male and female returned migrants of different ages.

28 in-depth interviews were conducted in Georgia among the above mentioned categories of returned migrants (male/female, legal/illegal, educational/educational labour, asylum-seekers/asylum-seekers labour, voluntary/forced/assisted return). The research covers the capital of Georgia, Tbilisi, a town in Eastern Georgia, Telavi, and a small mountainous community in North Eastern Georgia, Tianeti,<sup>8</sup> in order to capture and examine differences in reintegration processes based on the place of residence,

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7 This part of our sample is highly self-selective; we only interviewed the respondents who contacted us themselves after learning about this research from the representative of the respective voluntary assisted returns programme.

8 All returned migrants from Germany living in Tianeti were interviewed (a total of four people).

as well as establishing a rationale for migration and return.<sup>9</sup> All the interviews were conducted in Georgian.<sup>10</sup>

The proposed sampling therefore allowed us to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the patterns of migration, return and reintegration of Georgian returned migrants coming back from Germany.

The following topics have been covered in in-depth interviews with the respondents:

- Factors influencing a decision to migrate;
- Returnees' migratory experience;
- Factors influencing the decision to return and the role of assisted return programmes in this process;
- Reintegration in Georgia: assessments, problems, perspectives;
- Possibility of repeated emigration.

We hypothesized that, depending on age (young/middle age/older), type of migration (educational vs. asylum-seeker), type of settlement of the returnees (big city/small town/village), we were going to encounter different types of reintegration pattern. We will not be able to develop statistical models of these patterns due to the sampling method used, but the qualitative data gathered during the interviews gives us an opportunity to describe the respondents' experiences and to develop the typology of the respective behaviour.

All interviews with returned migrants were recorded and fully transcribed before the data analysis.

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9 It was originally planned to conduct interviews in Western Georgia as well. However, we had to change our plans due to the military intervention of Russian troops in Georgia in early August, 2008. We believe, though, that since we capture urban/rural and capital/regional differences in our sample, the results are still able to differentiate by type of settlement.

10 The respondents were given a fee for their participation (EUR 15 per interview).

**(b) Interviews with experts** working in assisted return, reintegration programmes and migration issues were planned with a view to obtain expert opinions on the process of the reintegration of returned migrants, an assessment of existing reintegration programmes and on the role that the Georgian Government could play in offering special programme(s) for fostering the reintegration of the returnees. Particular attention was to be given to existing programmes of assisted return from Germany.

Representatives of both governmental-sector and non-governmental organizations were contacted for the interviews. In spite of formally agreeing to participate, some of the potential experts (mostly – from the non-governmental organizations) never actually sent back their responses.<sup>11</sup>

### 1.3 Desk research and expert interviews: Major findings

Georgian state migration policy has come to be known as a “non-policy” since no clear state priorities are set in respect to emigration, immigration or re-migration. On the one hand, such an approach can be considered as an extremely liberal one, without any attempts to regulate (limit and/or control) migration flows. The Georgian Government does not directly intervene in any way – either positively or negatively – in its citizens’ activities related to international migration.<sup>12</sup> Its immigration policy is extremely liberal towards citizens of Western European and North American countries who do not even require a visa to enter the country for a short period of time (less than three months). Quite the opposite is true, however, for the Georgian citizens willing to travel to these countries.

Georgia has a visa-free regime with a number of the former USSR republics (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Central Asian countries, etc.).

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11 According to the experts’ preferences, we were either conducted face-to-face interviews or sent them the list of the questions for experts (Annex 2) by e-mail. Of those experts to whom we sent the questions by e-mail, only one had got back to us by the time the report was finalized, in spite of a number of reminders.

12 The State, of course, controls permanent emigration and immigration, as well as citizenship issues. In terms of our research, however, we were not interested in permanent emigration (changing of citizenship on the part of Georgian nationals).

Significant exceptions are the Baltic states and Russia. In general, it can be argued that Georgian migration policy is based on an imbalanced approach, with differing regulations for the local population and for different types of visitors. Moreover, in spite of a number of claims made by top officials about the country becoming more and more attractive for migrants returning voluntarily, there have been so far virtually no attempts to regulate return migration and promote the idea of returns for Georgian migrants living abroad, to secure competitive jobs for potential returnees that would enable them to apply the skills they have learned abroad, or to encourage them to start their own businesses.<sup>13</sup>

There are however a number of assisted voluntary return programmes offered by the Governments of European countries for which the Georgian migrants are often eligible. Some of these have proved to be extremely successful.<sup>14</sup> Assisted voluntary return programmes can be classified either by the country which is offering these programmes, or by the type of assistance provided to the beneficiaries. Germany's Reintegration and Emigration Program for asylum-seekers (REAG) and a government assisted repatriation programme (GARP) encourages return and reintegration of asylum-seekers and irregular migrants, as well as of victims of human trafficking and sexual slavery.<sup>15</sup> Other countries offering such programmes to Georgian nationals are the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic, Switzerland, Ireland and a number of other countries. The programmes however differ widely in respect to the type of assistance they offer, with assistance ranging from a one-way ticket home only, to long-term financial, institutional and logistical assistance upon return.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Georgia has been coordinating a number of such programmes. More than 5,000 Georgian migrants have returned to the country since 1995 with the help of various assistance programmes, in the implementation which the organization was involved. Return programmes with a strong reintegration component (which goes beyond providing returnees with monetary assistance) turned out to be the most successful, and this can hardly come as a surprise.<sup>16</sup> The

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13 For more information on Georgian migration and return policies see Schmelz (2010).

14 We would like to thank Mr Jeff Groton of DRC and Mr Marc Hulst of IOM for valuable expert information.

15 For more information on the Programme, see IOM (2011a).

16 The same view was expressed by Mr Jeff Groton of DRC in his expert interview: "Return programmes will only work if reintegration is addressed."

figures are however impressive: out of 372 assisted voluntary returnees (who returned in 2003–2009<sup>17</sup>), 95% stayed in Georgia and did not re-emigrate.

The programme for returning professionals (Programm Rückkehrende Fachkräfte) is another assisted voluntary return programme focused on a specific segment among returnees: professionals returning from Germany only. The programme offers a wide range of assistance, starting with workshops and informational seminars (CV writing, performance during a job interview) through providing additional monthly stipends, to providing eligible returnees with salaries for up to 12 months. The programme also funds free English language courses in order to increase returnees' chances of gaining access to the Georgian labour market.

### Return of Georgian citizens: Academic discussion

As noted above, available studies of migration from Georgia in general can only provide a more or less reliable estimation of the scale, composition and direction of migration flows. However, these studies are fragmentary in nature, and sometimes lead to contradicting findings. Studies of return migration are much harder to find. Moreover, due to the absence of a sampling frame for studies on migration, and in particular on return, quantitative studies provided on return migration cannot be considered to provide reliable data.

Although in some ways, return migration has been covered by several studies we have located, only a few of these focus on the returnees' return experiences. A study commissioned by the Danish Refugee Council, "Migration and Return In Georgia: Trends, Assessments, and Potential" (2007), tried to summarize all existing findings on return migration conducted in Georgia, and came up with Table 1 (Annex 3). Below we will briefly discuss the major findings of these studies, and the DRC study as well, focusing on their methodological relevance.

1. "Return and Reintegration in the South Caucasus" (IOM 2002). The research was conducted in all three countries of the South Caucasus with the aim of studying reintegration patterns of returnees who received assistance from the programmes of diverse destination countries, as well as deported migrants. The sample of the study

<sup>17</sup> Figures for 2009 include the data from 1 January to 15 March.

conducted in Georgia was comprised of 27 returned migrants in the first stage, and 12 of migrants in the second stage of the research. Regarding the issue of reintegration, the study provides interesting evidence of the poor employment opportunities open to returnees, which causes unenthusiastic perspectives of their future; poorer health conditions; difficulties in adjusting to life in the home country; and a desire to emigrate again.

2. “Determinants and Consequences of Irregular Migration in a Society under Transition. The Case of Georgia, Caucasus” (Badurashvili 2004). Badurashvili uses a combination of a representative nationwide sample and snow-ball sampling, interviewing 960 returned migrants in Georgia. However, Badurashvili’s study is mainly focused on gathering data about the destination countries, educational and gender composition of the returned migrants, issues of their adaptation to life in the foreign countries, and remittance behaviour, but disregarding the issue of the reintegration of returned migrants into Georgian society. However, since her findings suggest that “a fifth of former migrants plan to go abroad again in the next 6 months; 10% more mentioned during the interview that other family members plan to go abroad and around 3 % that the whole family intends to leave Georgia in the next six months” (p. 28), it is possible to assume that at least one-quarter of all returned migrants were unable to find ways to successfully reintegrate into their home society.
  
3. “Research of Social Status/Welfare Standards of Migrant Workers, Comparative Study Before, During and After Migration” (Saqvarishvili 2005). Saqvarishvili’s report is based on her qualitative research – in-depth interviewing of returned migrants in several Georgian cities, both in Western and Eastern Georgia. Overall, 50 returned migrants were interviewed. Like previous studies, Saqvarishvili’s study mostly focuses on migrant experiences in foreign countries, with no particular emphasis on their lives upon return. Again, as in the case of Badurashvili’s study, Saqvarishvili points out that many returnees express a desire to emigrate again, although this does not refer to those migrants who had been living in refugee camps while abroad.



4. “Migration and Return in Georgia: Trends, Assessments, and Potential” (DRC 2007, unpublished). DRC’s study is perhaps the only study so far conducted in Georgia that focuses primarily on reintegration issues of returned migrants, and on how voluntary return programmes work. In terms of the research, five focus groups primarily composed of returnees were conducted in August and September 2007 in the capital of Georgia, Tbilisi, and in three major cities: Kutaisi, Batumi and Akhalkalaki. The major findings of the study can be summed up as follows:
  - a) There is rather limited knowledge about the existing assisted return programmes among returnees. Those who are familiar with such programmes stress the importance of the employment assistance that some of these programmes provide, as well as the assistance in income-generating activities of returnees.
  - b) After return, many returnees have problems in finding employment, particularly well-paid employment. Hence, the respondents declare that they would like to emigrate again.
  - c) Returned migrants feel culturally frustrated because, due to changes in values and attitudes that they have experienced during their migration, they have difficulties in understanding fellow citizens back in Georgia – and their compatriots sometimes fail to understand them. Although the returned migrants do not point to any changes in their relationships with relatives, family members and friends, they notice such changes vis-à-vis other members of the community, e.g. those who often approach them with requests for money.
5. Caucasus Research Resource Centers – Georgia, in cooperation with the Danish Refugee Council, has shared a report on qualitative research carried out among migrants and local communities in Georgia in 2009 (Erlich et al. 2009). Focus groups with the representatives of the general population, and in-depth interviews with returned migrants have been conducted in two regions of Western Georgia, Imereti and Achara. The goal of this report is to go beyond numbers reflecting the statistics on migration, and to listen to the voices of both the general population and those of the returned migrants and explore their role in the migratory processes of Georgian society. General perceptions of migration; knowledge about the process of migration; the Government’s role in the

migration process and perceptions of immigration were the major topics covered during both focus-groups and in-depth interviews. The respondents stressed the importance of employment opportunities in Georgia as one of the factors supporting sustained return. Although assisted return programmes were not a focus of this research, one of the recommendations of the report to the Government of Georgia is to “develop, pilot and implement reintegration programmes to support returning Georgian migrants” (p. 34).

A brief analysis of the available research data presented above demonstrates that Georgian return migration is largely understudied. The studies conducted so far can provide only fragmentary evidence on the character of return migration to Georgia and, especially, on returnees’ reintegration into Georgian society.

The information on Georgian migrants to Germany provided in these reports is of special interest for us. Almost all these studies confirm earlier findings, namely:

- a) Georgian migrants to Germany are relatively younger compared with migrants heading towards other destination countries;
- b) They are mostly oriented towards obtaining an education, which is often combined with work (mainly, the *au pair* programme);
- c) Migration to Germany has a relatively legal character compared with migration to other countries;
- d) There used to be a sizable number of asylum-seekers among Georgian migrants to Germany, although this trend has been changing since the mid-2000s.

Unfortunately, desk research was unable to provide insights into our major research interest: namely, returned migrants’ return decision-making; assessment of the process of their reintegration in the home society; sustainability of return; potential beneficiaries’ awareness and assessment of the role, and the efficiency of the assisted return programmes.

The findings of the desk research confirm a lack of studies on return migration to Georgia, especially a lack of studies that focus on the issues of

returned migrants' economic, social and cultural integration into their home society. Even when the existing evidence suggests problems in the process of incorporation of returned migrants, it fails to explain the reasons behind such findings.

Provided that the overall lack of studies devoted to returned migration, it is not surprising that there has been no study so far focusing on return migration from a particular country. Present research, hence, is trying to fill the gaps both in respect to studying returned migration from one of the most popular emigration destinations of Georgian citizens, namely Germany, and in respect to focusing attention on the process of the reintegration of the returned migrants in order to evaluate, on the one hand, the role played by existing return and reintegration programmes in this process and, on the other, the sustainability of return.

#### 1.4 Germany as a host country for Georgian migrants

In the framework of worldwide migratory processes, Germany is considered to be a relatively new immigration destination, compared to classical countries of immigration, such as the USA, Canada and Australia. For a certain period of time, the paradigm "Germany is not a country of immigration" was rather influential there, so that immigration was discouraged. Germany started to work on its national immigration policy only recently, after the country faced large immigration flows. As Borkert and Bosswick (2007: 22) note, "about 50 years of German post-WWII immigration history had to pass until [Germany's] first comprehensive migration law came into force".

Table 1 below presents the dynamics of Georgian migration to Germany based on official statistics. We see stable numbers of Georgian nationals coming to Germany from 1999 up until 2010. Starting from 2003 the outmigration of Georgian citizens shows a certain onward tendency. In the period of 2006 to 2009 - the years in which the main respondents of our study returned to Georgia - the number of outward migration of Georgian citizens from Germany exceeded the number of inward migration.

**Table 1: Numbers of Georgian citizens moving to Germany and moving away from Germany (in thousands)**

Year	Moving in, numbers	Moving out, numbers	Migration balance
1990	-//-	-//-	-//-
1991	-//-	-//-	-//-
1992	419	63	+ 356
1993	1,590	413	+ 1,177
1994	1,569	832	+737
1995	3,285	995	+2,290
1996	3,762	1,788	+1,974
1997	4,436	2,335	+2,101
1998	3,620	3,093	+527
1999	2,966	2,691	+275
2000	-//-	-//-	-//-
2001	-//-	-//-	-//-
2002	4,317	2,690	+1,627
2003	3,948	3,069	+879
2004	3,329	3,305	+24
2005	2,745	2,523	+222
2006	2,099	2,376	-277
2007	1,615	1,909	-294
2008	1,693	2,015	-322
2009	2,239	2,026	-213
2010	2,377	2,147	+230


Source: German Federal Statistical Office

As noted above, Germany mostly attracts educational migrants from Georgia. The au pair programme, which enables young people from abroad to live with a German family for one year, take care of their children, and study German, plays an important role for educational migrants from Georgia. When asked about the reason for their migration, Georgian participants of the au pair programme in general state that it was “education”, and consider themselves as educational migrants. After their first

year in Germany, participants in the au pair programme quite often enrol in German Universities and stay in Germany after the programme is over, pursuing tertiary studies. The fact that, until recently, tuition at German universities was free of charge, created rather favourable conditions for prospective Georgian students there. Thus, in 2007, among all registered Georgian migrants to Germany (13,627 persons), educational migrants constituted about one-quarter of the whole immigration stock. Females comprised 65% of all registered people of Georgian citizenship in Germany (Statistisches Bundesamt 2008). This, again, could be partially explained by the existence of the au pair programme, which mainly attracts young Georgian females.

# 2

## Returnees' resources at the time of the return decision



Examining resources of the migrants at the time of the return decision is of crucial importance since, as a rule, a return decision is taken based on serious considerations of an existing situation, both in the receiving and in the home countries, and resources that the migrants have and can utilize in both countries. In the analysis of the resource accumulation by the time the return decision is taken, we will differentiate between the accumulated capital (savings), cultural capital (educational certificates and labour market experience in Germany, language and other informal professional skills) and social resources (social networks).

### 2.1 First typology: Educational migrants versus asylum-seekers

In terms of the present study, two categories of returned migrants from Germany have been interviewed: educational migrants (including au pairs), and asylum-seekers. Within each of these categories, we distinguished between educational migrants pure and simple and or asylum-seekers, and those who combined their official status with some kind of employment in Germany. Table 2 below summarizes the characteristics of the respondents in terms of their type of emigration and type of return.

**Table 2: Types of respondents: Educational migrants and asylum-seekers**

Type of emigration:	Educational migrants	Educational labour migrants	Asylum-seekers	Asylum seeker-labour migrants
<b>Type of return:</b>				
<b>Voluntary</b>	11	5	0	1
<b>Assisted voluntary</b>	1	2	0	4
<b>Forced (deportation)</b>	0	0	1	1
<b>Total:</b>	12	7	1	6

Source: own elaboration.

In addition, we had one respondent (female, 44 years old) whose emigration motive was family reunification, and one respondent (female, 36 years old) who spent one year in Germany as a guest of a German family<sup>18</sup>. These cases, we believe, help us to illustrate the multiplicity of respondents' motives to migrate to Germany. Hence, the total number of the respondents is 28.

The general characteristics of the interviewed returnees are as follows:

1. Educational migrants compose the majority of our respondents. They are generally younger, compared with all other types of migrants. Their migration goal was purely educational, most frequently associated with the study of German language and culture, although in some cases they also intended to get an education in a specific field, and/or professional qualifications. They did not always say so, but their migration was also determined by their willingness to travel abroad, experience a different culture. Some of these migrants held scholarships to study in Germany, and some were participants in au pair programmes who did not try to find additional employment, and in the case of some of them their families or relatives financed their studies in Germany. The return of this category of migrants is, in all cases, voluntary, based on an idea that their migration goal has been achieved, and their official terms of residence in Germany have ended. None of them used

<sup>18</sup> Although she claims in the interview that she used to study in Germany, this actually is not the case based on how she describes her activities. Her stay in Germany obviously contributed to the improvement of her German language skills, but she did not attend any formal educational courses.

assisted voluntary return programmes to facilitate their return, although one respondent attended workshops organized by the Centre for International Migration and Development in Tbilisi. This development cooperation programme promotes the return of highly-qualified Georgians from Germany, and is especially focused on measures facilitating reintegration of returnees into the Georgian labour market.<sup>19</sup> The majority of these migrants considered their migratory experience as successful.

2. As mentioned above, the category of educational labour migrants was created within the broader category of educational migrants. The rationale for putting these respondents into this category was that, although they used educational migration as the manifest motive to go to Germany, they also pursued economic motives hoping to obtain access to the labour market while studying in Germany and to financially support themselves and their families back in Georgia. Their return is also voluntary, but two respondents in this group actually participated in the return programme of the Centre for International Migration and Development mentioned above.
3. Asylum-seekers' motives range from seeking permanent residence status in Germany due to the unfavourable political situation in Georgia, to seeking permanent status in Germany, not because of the political pressure they experienced in Georgia, but because of other (mostly economic) motives. The latter sub-group applied for asylum because they considered this strategy as a relatively easy way to move to Germany and escape the problems they were facing in Georgia, such as unemployment and/or economic hardships. Some of them applied for asylum with false documents. Only one person can be considered as an asylum-seeker pure and simple without any economic migration motivation. His return was forced – he was deported to Georgia because his asylum application was rejected.

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19 For official information on the return of qualified personal to Georgia see the web page of the Centre for International Migration and Development (<http://www.cim-online.de/en/worldwide/345.asp>).



4. Asylum-seeker labour migrants are represented in our sample by six respondents. At the time of migration they were, in general, older than the educational migrants and applied for asylum in order to be able to work in Germany, albeit in informal sectors of the economy. While waiting for their asylum applications to be processed, they used the time to work and earn money, which would have been sent back to Georgia, to their families who were left behind. Their return in our case is either assisted voluntary (two respondents), voluntary without assistance (three respondents) and forced (one respondent). Returnees who received state return assistance in Germany were participants in the German State's Reintegration and Emigration Program for Asylum-Seekers in Germany (REAG) and Government Assisted Repatriation Program (GARP), which mostly provides counselling services prior to return and covers the necessary expenses for the first time upon return.<sup>20</sup>

In the following analysis we will analyze each returnee type separately.

## 2.2 Educational returnees' resources at the time of return

### Educational migrants

The educational migrants pure and simple in our sample come from the well-off Georgian families and, in general, do not have any economic motives when migrating to Germany. They only have limited economic resources in Germany since their remuneration (especially if they are participating in an au pair programme) or, they have no regular income during their education. The families of these respondents do not expect any financial assistance from these migrants. On the contrary, the respondents receive sporadic or continuous financial support from their families back in Georgia. The majority of respondents received national or university-granted Georgian or German scholarships to pursue their education in Germany:

***“How did you get along financially while in Germany?”***

Mainly with the scholarship, but sometimes I needed financial support, but it was not because the scholarship was not enough for me, but because I wanted to go to Italy [...]

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20 For official information on the programme see IOM (2011b).

***And were there cases when you assisted your family from Germany?***

No, never. Well, I bought some gifts for New Year and sent them, but they were presents and not monetary assistance.”<sup>21</sup>

(Tako, female, 21 years old, Tbilisi)

Ruso (female, 23 years old, Tbilisi), who had a scholarship from the University where she studied, notes that she would manage to assist her family financially “if they needed it”, but actually the opposite happened, with her family sending her monetary assistance.

Although the educational migrants have the possibility to work for 90 days per year legally in Germany, only one of our respondents who was a purely educational migrant used this opportunity. In this regard, the following statement made by one of the respondents is noteworthy:

***“So, you only studied, right? And, for example, did you not try to find some additional work?”***

Additional work, yes, we could work, at least I think I had about 90 days in the Ferienzeit to work and I tried. [...] But after some time I got so involved in my studies, and in communicating with people, and I did not have any financial problems, well, my scholarship was enough for me, so I did not take this issue seriously.”

(Ano, female, 21 years old, Tbilisi)

Such behaviour can be explained not only by the fact that the scholarship which educational migrants receive is generally enough to satisfy their needs, but also by the fact that their families back in Georgia are, as the respondents report, in quite a good financial situation. The case of Giorgi (male, 29 years old, educational migrant, Tbilisi) is quite exemplary. He was permitted to work legally for 20 hours per week, but rarely did so, since his family supported his studies in Germany for five years, providing all necessary financial assistance. As Giorgi reports in the interview:

“There was no tuition fee [at the university], no fee, but only a semester fee. At first it was 116 EUR, then it became, in the last year or the last two years, 140 EUR, which covered the University tuition fee and student card, which also served as a transportation ticket. So this fee

21 Quotations from the interviews, although translated into English, aim to preserve the style of the respondents.

was per semester, i.e. had to be paid in every six months. I had all my expenses calculated per month, how much it cost: I paid 155 EUR for accommodation, 55 EUR for insurance, and I needed around 200 EUR to cover meal expenses. [...] So, I needed approximately 600-700 EUR per month.

***And what if your family needed some assistance, would you have been able to provide some support from Germany?***

No because they themselves sent me money, and it means that in this case I would have had to stop studying and start working.”

(Giorgi, male, 29 years old, Tbilisi)

As Giorgi recalls, after it had been decided that he was going to Germany to study, his father told him: “I am not letting you go there to work, you know why you are going there – to study, but if you find something thrown on the streets, pick it up”. Thus, it happened several times that Giorgi worked (as a gardener, in a factory, as a temp during the cultural events), but only for a short period of time, when he was free and did not want to waste his time, but not because he needed money.

Hence, educational migrants pure and simple may have some working experience in Germany, but the reason for their work is not because they needed money to support themselves or their families, but because they did not want to waste time. Their jobs – if any – were always episodic; their primary activities in Germany were always related to education.<sup>22</sup>

As can be assumed based on the information provided above, educational migrants from Georgia lived under the conditions of “temporary poverty”, which is however typical of many students of middle class origin. Economic limitations in everyday life, combined with a focus on educational investment, are socially accepted in those cases. The students in this group concentrate on the accumulation of cultural capital and not on economic achievements in Germany. They learn the German language, obtain educational certificates and collect initial experience of the German labour market even as unskilled or semi-skilled workers (such as bartenders, nannies, factory workers, gardeners, etc.). For the students, their occupation during the period of their studies is not considered as something that

22 Some of the respondents falling in this category report having internships in German companies. The internships, however, are not considered as a form of occupation in terms of the present report because they constituted required components of their educational programme.

primarily defines their status. Rather, their social status and their structural position are defined by the status of their families and by their future prospects. This is why Georgian educational migrants report feeling rather comfortable with periodical jobs. However, once they graduate from university and are awarded formal credentials, it seems more important for them to find occupations which correspond to their qualifications. The aspiration to work in an appropriate labour market position after graduating is one of the important motives to return to Georgia. One of our respondents told us a story of her friend:

“Well, I have a friend who has been living in Germany for about seven years, maybe even longer, and she asked for my advice. She choose a very good profession, studied, graduated from two educational institutions, working at the same time, and she wants to return now, and she and her mother call me and ask for my advice as to whether she should return or not. Well, the thing is that it is very hard to find a job in her profession in Germany, so she has been working in a small restaurant there. And she is worried, and does not want to remain a waitress for the rest of her life – and she has lots of experience and knowledge, so, I advised her to return, so that Georgia might benefit from her intellectual capacities.”

(Irma, female, 36 years old, Tbilisi)

As for their **social relations** during migration, as a rule, Georgian educational migrants interviewed report that they did not manage to establish close relationships with the local population, except for those who started as au pairs, and developed warm and sincere relationships with their guest families. Georgian educational migrants more often establish rather close friendly contacts with other international students and with other Georgian migrants, but less so with German students. One possible explanation for such behaviour is that Georgian migrants quite often already have acquaintances and friends in Germany before they come to the country, i.e. Georgians who moved to Germany earlier, and after arriving there, new migrants immediately become members of a social group to which their friends already belong. They therefore have fewer incentives to seek and try to establish friendships among the local population. Another possible explanation could be that even in cases where Georgian migrants seek and are eager to establish close relationships with the local population, their efforts will be unsuccessful if the local population is unreceptive. Our respondents often speak about a certain “distance” that they feel from the German population.

The case of Giorgi, presented below, is especially interesting since he lived in Germany for five years, and we could assume that five years is quite a significant period of time to establish oneself in a foreign country and to build relationships with the local population:

“As for Germans, during my five years there, I unfortunately had relationships with only two Germans, meaning that I befriended them, not ‘hi – how are you’. One was a German I lived with for the first three months; then he came here [to Georgia], stayed for three weeks and left very satisfied. He treated me like a father. And the second one was a German who converted to Orthodox Christianity and I became his godfather; he married a Georgian. These are two people, Germans, with whom I had relationships. The rest, I would say, unfortunately, I was unable to make any kind of contacts, because they themselves kept at a distance, or you needed to become a part of a certain circle. [...] And with other foreigners who came to Germany, I got a lot of friends at the Students’ Hostel, and I had lots of contacts with Georgians, also because when I arrived to Germany, I learned that there was a Russian Church, and because I used to serve in a Georgian Church before, I asked the priest to let me serve in the church, [...] so I got to know lots of Georgians and we had contacts almost every day, with at least 30 Georgians.”

(Giorgi, male, 29 years old, Tbilisi)

However, some Georgian students were able to establish friendly contacts with Germans, especially when they had side jobs while studying:

***“With whom did you have contact while living in Germany?”***

Mostly with my [Georgian] friend with whom I was sharing the apartment, and some other Georgians whom I met at Church, I had contacts with several of them, and mostly with my classmates, with whom I studied.

***What about Germans?***

No, Germans did not study with me because I was studying German and mostly there were all foreigners: Italians, two Americans, Nigerian and so on, an international group.

***And did you have any relationships with Germans? What kind of relationship was it?***

Yes, with a lot of them, at my job, where I worked, most of them were Germans, my colleagues, who worked in the night bar, a lot of them –

manager of the bar, with whom eventually I became very good friends, we were friends outside the job and we had great time outside the job.”

(Vakhtang, male, 23 years old, Tbilisi)

### Conclusions

Georgian educational migrants accumulated diverse cultural capital in Germany: language skills, educational certificates, and informal professional skills while collecting first labour market experiences in addition to their studies. Their aim was not to accumulate considerable economic resources, and in fact they did not do so. Their social contacts within the German population can be considered as rather limited. But contacts with the Georgian community in Germany and with other international students were very intensive. At the time of the return decision, they faced a situation which clearly favoured their original return aspirations: First of all they expected that their accumulated cultural capital would provide them with better career opportunities in Georgia than in Germany, and many of their Georgian friends also decided to return after graduating.

### Educational labour migrants

Educational labour migrants were students who both studied and worked in Germany on a somewhat regular basis. However, the most of them did not manage to accumulate considerable amounts of **financial resources**. We have seven such cases in our sample. These cases are similar in the sense that we observe the participation of the respondents in the labour market during the whole time of their stay in Germany. The cases however provide rather diverse perspectives on how the income earned is being by the respondents. In one case, a female migrant student regularly assisted her family back home financially, plus, thanks to her savings, her family was able to start a small business – a grocery store in the village where she lives. In other cases the students did not support their families back home, but had to finance their studies in Germany by themselves. So we assume that employment and earnings become at least an equally important activity in Germany as education for this sub-group of migrants.

An exceptional case is Gvantsa who spent four years in Germany. Along with studying at the university, she worked in her local McDonalds, and managed to financially assist her family somewhat regularly, while her family never helped her during her stay in Germany:

“I did not send large sums very often, let's say once a year, when the family here needed [money].

***And these big sums – how much would these be?***

Let's say, I sent 1,000 EUR once, and when I come to visit, I once brought 4,000 EUR, another time – 3,000 EUR, and I brought this money for the benefit of the whole family.”

(Gvantsa, female, 29 years old, Tianeti)

Gvantsa was able to save these quite large sums of money since she was working illegally – existing regulations limited her from obtaining remuneration higher than 400 EUR per month. She was paying 250 EUR for accommodation and 70 EUR for insurance. She had to live with other Georgian migrants in order to minimize her expenditure through sharing an apartment and other expenses with them. Gvantsa notes during the interview that, if she had been living alone, this amount would have been hardly sufficient to cover her expenses, and if she had not worked illegally, she certainly would not have been able to save as much as she had.

Gvantsa decided not to finish her studies in Germany, and returned to Georgia without graduating. Based on the Gvantsa's story, we can assume that since she had to work almost full-time, the time she devoted to her studies was not sufficient and she was taking fewer classes, so that she needed more time to finish her education, and when she realized that, she decided to return, although the reason for the return she refers to in this quote is homesickness:

“I completed two [courses], and I could not live there for another five years, would not be able to survive there, I missed my country very much. Even if I took my family there, I could not have survived without my country.”

(Gvantsa, female, 29 years old, Tianeti)

In the case of Gvantsa, we face a situation in which financial constraints, the necessity to earn money to support oneself and the family back home become an obstacle in the process of education.

Gvantsa's is the only case in our sample when the migrant was regularly supporting her family back in Georgia and also managed to accumulate money to start a small business in Georgia. In other cases, educational labour migrants tried hard to finance their education in Germany by do-

ing additional jobs. They did not receive any financial support from their families or had had no other means of income (for example scholarships). Combining work and education appears to become a central challenge for Georgian students in Germany. Some of them give up their educational ambitions and decide to return. The case of Tamar, who had to work in order to support herself during her studies, and found this so hard that she did not graduate either, illustrates this situation:

"This was most difficult for me, too much work, and too much study, all at the same time!"

(Tamar, female, 29 years old, Tbilisi)

Tamar's situation is, however, less challenging than Gvantsa's because Tamar's family did not need any financial support from her, so she only had to provide for herself:

*"Did you manage to support your family?"*

Thank God my family does not need to be supported by me; this was the biggest assistance from their side that they did not need my [financial] support."

(Tamar, female, 29 years old, Tbilisi)

The **social contacts** of educational labour migrants are rather similar to those of educational migrants. They have contact with Georgian populations living in Germany, with other international students and with "foreign" co-workers. For example Gvantsa, quoted above, who worked in McDonald's states that she had close contacts with foreign colleges but fewer with German students: "There were co-workers from Morocco, Iraq, Russia, Yugoslavia..." At the same time, due to their longer stay in Germany, single educational labour migrants managed to establish close contact with German professors and still keep in touch with them. For example, Ketino, who studied music in Germany and returned to her home country because of the wish to work in her profession after graduation, still keeps in touch with her friends in Germany or "international friends", as she calls them, and with her professor.

### Conclusions

Educational labour migrants have studied and worked in Germany. However, only in one case could we observe a female migrant accumulating



some economic capital, which she remitted money home and invested in a small family business. In other cases, educational labour migrants had to finance their studies in Germany by doing additional jobs. They were able to cover their living expenses, but were virtually unable to save additional money while staying in Germany. Educational labour migrants viewed their position in Germany as an ambivalent one. Some of them continued to be formally enrolled at the universities, but de facto more to work than to study. On the other hand, they felt under pressure because if they didn't meet certain academic requirements set by their university, they risked losing their student residence permit. Four of the seven respondents were unable to achieve the desired level of education and had to quit their studies. This happened due to such reasons as a necessity to study longer than planned because of additional work and the inability to financially support himself/herself while studying. Thus, some of the educational labour migrants did not possess German educational certificates at the time of their return to Georgia. At the same time, while in Germany, they got actively involved in the labour market and accumulated such skills like language proficiency and learned a lot about the "German work culture". In three cases, the educational labour migrants managed to graduate from German universities and to collect different labour market experiences in Germany. Social contacts between the educational labour migrants and the German population were rather limited. However, due to the longer period of study in Germany, some of them developed professional contacts with their professors or passed through diverse internships and hoped that they could use those contacts upon their return to Georgia.

### 2.3 Asylum-seekers' resources at the time of the return

Among the asylum-seekers whom we interviewed, only one person came to Germany because of political persecution in Georgia. The other six respondents were people who could be considered as de facto labour migrants. It is interesting to note that we have only one female respondent in this category and that she applied for asylum and went to Germany together with her husband. As noted above, out of the total of seven asylum-seekers in our sample, six returnees admit that one of their goals in going to Germany was associated with finding employment in Germany or avoiding economic hardships in Georgia, but due to the existing legal regulations they could hardly succeed. All the respondents in our sample were refused asylum protection status, and had to leave Germany or were

deported. At the same time, while the procedure for granting the right of asylum was not yet completed, the asylum-seekers did not possess a legal work permit, lived in accommodation centres for asylum applicants and were materially fully dependent on the State's assistance. Therefore, their stories dealt with attempts to earn money within a situation of legal uncertainty and being excluded from the everyday life of the "normal" German population.

The economic situation of each asylum-seeker differs very much, depending on whether they were able to find some kind of employment. In times when they did not have additional income, respondents reported material hardships:

"We were on the state allowance as all asylum-seekers, and we were given, if I remember correctly, several times per week, twice per week, food packages plus pocket money, which is called Taschengeld, to buy tobacco."

(Goga, male, 36 years old, Telavi)

"Food, I do not know, food, we were given clothes once. 38 Marks were given every week and that was it."

(Giorgi, male, 32 years old, Tianeti)

Asylum-seekers who came to Germany with their families fared slightly better. Gela (male, 45 years old, asylum-seeker, Tbilisi) notes that he and his family were placed in separate apartments and that all their utilities and food expenses were also covered by the German State. Moreover, when they had a baby, the State provided them with additional financial support.

"To tell you the truth, I did not even try to find a job because, if I started a job, all allowances would have been withdrawn and if I started paying all the taxes, social tax, utilities, it would have been the same, whatever job I would have been able to find. And I had to find a job in the shadow economy if I wanted to have both the allowances and income from the job. But it was very hard to find an informal job. Well, there was one opportunity about 150 km away, but they were Turks and I wanted to start working there, but then fellows told me that they had worked there for three to four days and had not got paid..."

(Gela, male, 45 years old, Tbilisi)

Apart from one respondent, all six returnees had sought additional income while waiting for their cases to be processed. Giorgi (male, 32 years old, asylum-seeker, Tianeti) was the only interviewee who did not even try to find a job while in Germany because of the prohibition. He had only spent three months in Germany and had been deported as soon as his case had been denied:

***“And why did you not work? There were no jobs?”***

No, no, they do not give you the right, to the people who arrive there, to work if you are not there officially with a visa, if you do not have a work visa.”

(Giorgi, male, 32 years old, Tianeti)

Two types of income-generating activity could be distinguished by analyzing the other five cases:

- Informal self-employment – when asylum-seekers try to embark on some informal “entrepreneurial” activities, like Gela (male, 45 years old, asylum-seeker, Tbilisi), who was able to find quite an interesting “occupation” as he started helping Georgians who were coming to Germany with the logistics of buying cars. He met these people at the airport, provided them with accommodation, helped them to select a car and prepared all the documents for their car transfer. As he recalls, he was paid from 300 to 500 DM for each such case.
- Irregular jobs – when asylum-seekers work in the informal sectors of the economy despite the existing restrictions. As a rule, these jobs are temporary and short-term; the asylum-seekers are paid significantly lower salaries compared with legal employees, and sometimes they are not paid at all. Usually they perform so-called 3D jobs – dirty, dangerous and difficult.

In some extreme cases, not being able to work and earn money pushes asylum-seekers to criminal activities:

“We were living, I do not know, all the time looking for work, and from time to time we could do some criminal things, I could even steal something in a store for private purposes: clothes, luxury items, fragrances.

***And did you work?***

I worked in construction, but it could be for two to three days at most because it is very difficult since employers are very, very afraid [to employ workers illegally].”

(Goga, male, 36 years old, Telavi)

Only one asylum-seeker in our sample managed to work more or less regularly while waiting for his case to be processed:

***“How did you live, what were you doing in Germany?”***

I worked there: painted walls, tiled [kitchen/bathroom], but with Turks, Germans are law-abiding people and they were afraid to employ illegally. Turks were not afraid.”

(Vazha, male, 47 years old, Tianeti)

As Vazha recalls, although his employment was not permanent, he was nevertheless able to support his children back in Tianeti, and sometimes was even able to earn several thousand DM per month. Taking into consideration that both he and his wife, who also worked (in a restaurant), had all their living expenses covered by the State, the fact that he was paid much less than in the case of being employed legally, still enabled him to accumulate quite a serious amount of money:

“Although this Turk was paying me 12 DM per hour, and was paying 45 DM, 60 DM to a local who was not a better worker than I was, but he was legal, and I was illegal, and that’s why I was paid less. If I had been legal, I would have been able to earn really serious money.”

(Vazha, male, 47 years old, Tianeti)

Thus, the financial resources that asylum-seeker labour migrants are able to accumulate are scarce. Rather few of them manage to find any kind of employment. Their employment is, in any case, in the informal sectors of the economy or is a kind of informal self-employment. It is not permanent, so that the income it provides fluctuates. In spite of the restrictions that asylum-seekers face while trying to enter the labour market, as our data demonstrates, a few nonetheless manage to save money during their stay in Germany, although nobody is able to obtain legal, regular employment.

Considering the limited number of cases in this group of returnees, we cannot make any hypothesis about the averages of the educational backgrounds of asylum-seekers from Georgia. However, it is remarkable that all asylum-seeking labour migrants possessed tertiary educational certificates obtained in Georgia. In one case, a asylum-seeking labour migrant possessed a vocational training certificate. What happened to their qualifications during their migration experience? Because of legal limitations restricting access to the German labour market and the use of their qualifications in an adequate labour market position, Georgian asylum-seekers reported a certain “de-skilling” during their stay in Germany. However, some asylum-seekers were able to collect some work experience in Germany and to obtain informal qualifications. For example, one asylum-seeker interviewed who was informally employed in the construction industry in Germany reported:

“I learnt a lot there [in Germany]. I learnt things I couldn't learn in Georgia because the technologies and techniques which they used in the construction industry there weren't established in Georgia. So I learnt these up to date techniques there.”

(Vazha, male, 47 years old, Tianeti)

The **personal and family contacts** of the asylum-seeker labour migrants are limited as well, since they mostly are able to communicate only with other asylum-seekers with whom they are placed in the accommodation centres. Again, the dominant pattern here is communication with fellow Georgians, as well as with asylum-seekers from the other former Soviet republics.

“Mostly with the people like me, people who had similar status, because we lived together, and they were the same asylum-seekers and we had relatively close relationships with those coming from the Soviet Union republics because we did not have a language barrier. Everyone could communicate in Russian and we managed to communicate in Russian.”

(Goga, male, 36 years old, Telavi)

Understandably, communication between the asylum-seekers and the local population is limited to communication with the personnel of asylum centres only, and, due to limited knowledge of the German language, the communication is rather formal. Only one asylum-seeker in our sample,

Ermalo (male, 61 years old, asylum-seeker, Tbilisi) managed to establish contacts with the German population since he was a sportsman and used to attend a local sports club for training and coaching, and even participated in club tournaments.

### Conclusions

Financial resources of the interviewed asylum-seekers at the time of their decision to return were very poor. There was only one case in which a male respondent had some savings in Germany. Interviewees in this group could not use their professional qualifications in the German labour market, and had rather limited language skills in German. In some cases, however, informal skills gained due to the informal employment in service and construction sectors could be acquired. The social contacts of the asylum-seekers in Germany were limited to their own ethnic group and other asylum-seekers. The return decision was therefore made against the background of very limited future perspectives in Germany despite an initial wish to gain access to the German labour market and society.

## 2.4 Resource accumulation in Germany: A concluding overview

Table 3 below summarizes the resources of the migrants interviewed at the time of the return decision. Comparing three types of migrants whom we interviewed upon their return, we can state that all of them had limited financial resources and few social contacts with the German population. Financial instability and the feeling of being excluded from German society were important factors promoting the return decision of all interviewees in our sample. However, the sample differs considerably in accordance with the cultural capital which migrants gained in Germany. Educational migrants could achieve formal qualifications, learn the German language, and gain informal professional skills during their stay in Germany. In contrast to them, due to the legal, material and spatial limitations of their everyday lives, asylum-seekers were unable to accumulate cultural capital in Germany. Only in individual cases could they gain some informal professional skills in the German labour market. Their formal qualifications devaluated while they awaited a legal decision on their asylum status, and they had no opportunities to learn German.

**Table 3: Resource accumulation of Georgian migrants at the time of return**

<b>Resource accumulation</b>	<b>Educational migrants pure and simple</b>	<b>Educational labour migrants</b>	<b>Asylum-seeking labour migrants</b>
<b>Financial</b>	All cases - Low	Six cases - Low One case - Some savings	Five cases - Low One case - Some savings
<b>Formal educational certificates</b>	All cases - High	Four cases - Low (no educational certificate obtained) Three cases - High	All cases - Low
<b>Informal professional skills</b>	All cases - Middle (sporadic labour market experiences)	All cases - High (long term experiences in the German labour market)	Four cases - Low Two cases - Some useful skills were gained by participating in the informal labour market
<b>Language proficiency</b>	All cases - High	All cases - High	All cases - Low
<b>Social contacts</b>	All cases - Low	Four cases - Low Three cases - Relevant contacts to the university institutions in Germany	All cases - Low

Source: own elaboration

We assume that the cultural capital that migrants were able to accumulate during their stay in Germany influenced the reintegration possibilities of all three types of returnees. We understand cultural capital as formal and informal qualifications that migrants gained in Germany: educational certificates, informal professional skills or language proficiency. Asylum-seekers obtained virtually no qualifications and skills in Germany. We therefore assume that their reintegration into Georgia – especially their professional placement and their economic position after their return – will be a much more difficult process compared with the reintegration of educational migrants.

Apart from some individual cases, all respondents possessed no relevant social contacts in Germany. That might explain their strong return motivation. At the same time, we were able to assume that the reintegration strategies of all three types of returnees could not rely on their professional contacts with Germany, but will very much depend on their social resources in Georgia.

A lack of savings could also be a problem for a sustainable return. Especially for returnees who did not migrate purely for educational purposes, the responsibility to provide for their (extended) families could become central on their return and lead to a strong motivation to migrate again.



# 3

## Return decision-making

In this chapter we will analyze factors influencing the respondents' return decision. We will differentiate between returning asylum-seekers and re-turning educational migrants.

### 3.1 Decision-making of asylum-seeking labour migrants

In our sample, we had two cases of forced return. In both cases, the respondents who were deported from Germany were asylum-seekers (see Table 4). Both respondents are males.

**Table 4: Cases of forced returnees**

Name	Gender	Age	Education	Period of stay	Place
Goga	male	36 years old	higher education	1998-2000	Telavi
Giorgi	male	32 years old	vocational	1998-1998	Tianeti

Source: own elaboration

Social profiles of forcedly-returned respondents are hard to define due to the limited number of respondents in this category. Giorgi spent only three months in Germany, and was deported as soon as his asylum application had been rejected. He did not make any effort to find a job while in Germany, and therefore represents the only “pure” case of an asylum-seeker. Goga, who spent one year in Germany, managed to somehow adapt

to the system of life in the asylum centre and even had episodic employment, and therefore represents a case of an asylum-seeker labour migrant.

There were six respondents<sup>23</sup> in our sample who benefited from return assistance. Three of them are males and three are females. All three men returned in the framework of programmes promoting the voluntary return of the failed asylum-seekers. The women returned with the assistance of the Centre for International Migration for highly qualified (educational) migrants (see Table 5). Both women completed their education in Germany. Their decision-making process and the role of return assistance in these cases will be analyzed separately from the cases of asylum-seekers in the chapter on the return decision processes of educational migrants.

**Table 5: Cases of assisted returnees.**

Name	Gender	Age	Type of migration	Period of stay	Place of residence
<b>Gela</b>	male	45	asylum-seeker labour	1995-1998	Tbilisi
<b>Tamar</b>	female	29	educational labour	2003-2008	Tbilisi
<b>Vahza</b>	male	47	asylum-seeker labour	1998-1999	Tianeti
<b>Nani</b>	female	36	educational labour	1995-2008	Tbilisi
<b>Ana</b>	female	24	educational labour	2005-2008	Tbilisi
<b>Ermalo</b>	male	61	asylum-seeker	1995-1996	Tbilisi
<b>Achiko</b>	male	40	asylum-seeker	1995-1996	Telavi

Source: own elaboration

## Factors influencing the return decision of asylum-seeking labour migrants

### a) Economic and legal factors

Asylum-seeking labour migrants come to Germany for work, and many of them hope to find earning opportunities here. Especially during the 1990s there was an idea that Germany was a country with good job opportunities, and especially with good salaries. Interviewed migrants had some in-

23 One of the respondents claims in her interview that she returned with her children without receiving help from any assistance programme. Her husband, however, also interviewed in terms of our project (and who himself returned with the help of an assistance programme – assisted voluntary return) claims that his wife is also a beneficiary of an assisted voluntary return programme. While classifying this respondent's case, we have decided to rely on what the respondent herself is reporting, so that she is considered to be a "voluntarily returned" migrant.

formation about different possible destination regions, but this knowledge was vague.

Two respondents wanted to migrate to other European countries, not to Germany, but were stranded in Germany because of their different circumstances. For example, in one case the person was going to Belgium. He landed in Cologne and waited for an acquaintance there to give him a letter from Georgia. This Georgian friend of his friends convinced him to try to obtain asylum status in Germany by arguing that it was easier to find jobs in Germany than in Belgium. In two cases relatives already lived in Germany and reported in sporadic calls that life was good there and that there were a lot of jobs available for foreigners. In one case, the person went to “a private travel agency” and asked where in Europe he could earn money and received an offer to provide him with a German tourist visa. The travel agency assured him that after his visa expired he would have an opportunity to file an asylum application and to work legally while waiting for an official decision. None of the respondents knew much about legal opportunities to access the German labour market as a foreigner or about the legal asylum regulations in Germany or elsewhere in Europe. So all asylum-seeking labour migrants arrived in Germany without any information about possibilities to stay in the country legally or to earn money, without any idea where to stay or which job they would look for. In Germany asylum-seeking labour migrants realized very quickly that their opportunities for labour market access were very limited. They also understood that it would be difficult to obtain refugee status because they could not demonstrate a plausible story of political persecution in Georgia. So the negative decision of their asylum status does not appear unexpected and in the first instance it was not an incentive to make their return decision. Only in combination with the difficult labour market access, and after some time trying to extend and to improve their legal status in Germany, came the awareness of the fact that their migration goals could not be achieved. The combination of two factors - limited access to the labour market and limited legal opportunities to stay - presupposed the return decision of asylum-seeking labour migrants. The factor ‘legal limitations’ in itself or the factor ‘limited labour market access’ in itself would be too weak to cause a return decision without this combination.

#### b) Family status

Interestingly, the asylum-seekers who returned voluntarily and with state assistance had migrated to Germany with their spouses or had families in

Georgia for whom they provided. It can be assumed that the return motivation of asylum-seekers with families is much higher than that of asylum-seekers without a family. Limited legal and labour market perspectives in Germany affected migrants who felt themselves obliged to provide for their families much more than single migrants without strong social obligations. In the sample, we had one case in which the whole family migrated to Germany. In this situation, an insecure future for family members and especially for the children was a strong return incentive. In other cases, when dependent family members stayed in Georgia, the limited possibilities of the asylum-seekers to remit money home were an important disincentive to stay in Germany.

On the other hand, the return risks and costs for asylum-seekers with family obligations are much higher than for asylum-seekers without families. The only asylum-seeker in our sample, who had come to Germany with spouse and children had to finance the return of the whole family. His children were integrated into the German context (via the institutions – school, kindergarten). Asylum-seekers with family obligations in Georgia risk confronting not only themselves, but the whole family, with economic problems after return (lack of money and jobs). So returning asylum-seekers with family obligations make the return decision more easily when they have the opportunity to minimize the economic and social costs of return. That is why they tend to avail themselves of return assistance. Especially monetary assistance and the covering of travel costs are important factors supporting the return decision of this group of respondents.

Gela decided to return to Georgia after spending about three years in Germany. The assistance which he obtained was provided by the German State, and consisted of a monetary allowance:

“When I was coming, coming back, I told the head of this Sozial that I was going to accompany my cousin, who was going back to Georgia, and that I needed travel money. He called immediately and told me that he could give me a maximum of 500 DM.”

(Gela, male, 45 years old, Tbilisi)

Vazha (male, 47 years old, Tianeti) decided to return to Tianeti after his and his wife’s asylum applications were rejected. “We contacted [the Ger-

man authorities] directly, where we lived, and they did everything, all the documents. [...] They covered all the expenses”.

Asylum-seekers without families try, on the contrary, to “use” their legal status in Germany as long as possible. Living under protection of asylum-seeker status means that at least the basic needs will be provided for. The migrants were therefore able to escape the economic hardship at home and were not motivated to return. Their return decision is often made under urgent threat of deportation and which in some cases leads to a forced return.

“My residence status hadn’t changed over time in Germany. I was considered all the time as an asylum-seeker. On the first level of the jurisdiction, my application for asylum was rejected. Then I got a lawyer and we applied for the second time. But the court decision was also negative. My lawyer recommended not applying for the third time because my application would be rejected very quickly and I would have to leave the country within two weeks. But I wanted to prolong the status as long as possible. So my asylum application was rejected but I got an exceptional allowance to remain in Germany for a certain time (Duldung). I didn’t possess a Georgian passport and had to get the travel documents first. But I didn’t go to the Georgian Embassy. A couple of weeks later I accompanied a friend of mine to the immigration service because his visa had expired. I can a little bit of German and I had my Duldung. So I hadn’t any concerns about appearing before the authorities. I didn’t understand the problem, but the civil servant called the police and they arrested us. The court decided to deport us. And so my travel adventure to Germany ended.”

(Goga, male, 36 years old, Telavi)

### c) Cultural capital and return decision

In the previous chapter we found out that asylum-seeking migrants did not manage to obtain any formal skills during their stay in Germany. Their German language proficiency was poor, and they were unable to use their formal qualifications (diplomas, etc.) on the German labour market. Because of their limited access to the German labour market, only some of them were able to collect some work experience in Germany and gain some informal qualifications. An analysis of the material shows that especially in comparison to educational migrants, asylum-seekers considered their stay in Germany as a waste of time for their professional develop-

ment and did not hope to profit from their migration experience upon their return. This was an important disincentive for making a return decision.

The asylum-seekers did not manage to accumulate financial capital during their stay in Germany. This too was considered as a failure (especially because their migration motives were to earn money and escape economic hardship). Lack of savings was also an important return disincentive.

"I was happy to come back to my family. But I didn't decide to return by myself. I was deported. And I didn't want to go because I was unable to realize my plans in Germany, because I couldn't find a job and I didn't manage to open a new life perspective for me and my family. So I was desolate that I had to go."

(Giorgi, male, 32 years old, Tianeti)

#### d) The role of the return assistance programmes

It could be assumed that awareness of the availability of the state return assistance is very high in the group of the asylum-seekers from Georgia. All asylum-seekers in our sample knew about the possibility to obtain assistance in the organization of the journey to Georgia and to receive one-off monetary support:

"I lived one month in Zirndorf, distribution camp, and there you could say 'stop' at any point when you seek asylum and you go and say that I do not want asylum anymore and consequently there are organizations which help you, will plan how you would return from Germany, let's say, by plane, and they will provide money for the plane ticket or will reimburse the ticket, or will assist in some other form, let's say, you are coming back by car – they will help you with this as well, money, documents, so that your departure is accounted there, that your departure is legal. [...] There was such a case in the asylum centre, one Georgian returned and s/he was collaborated with this organization called "Caritas", which took care of his/her departure logistics."

(Goga, male, 36 years old, Telavi)

"My brother-in-law returned a year before me. All other friends who were in Germany also returned. I felt lonely at that point in time. So I also got into my head that I got to go. I went to the local authorities of the city where I lived, and told them that I wanted to return. They were

taken aback at somebody returning without any compulsion. I said that my mother was sick and I had to go. They organized everything for me and gave additional money for the first time on return. One of the civil servants brought us to the airport and helped with luggage.”

(Gela, male, 45 years old, Tbilisi)

On the other hand, nobody knew anything about any reintegration measures. All asylum-seekers in our sample stated that they needed reintegration support upon return but were left alone with their problems by both the German and Georgian Governments.

“I know about programmes which support people from Armenia, Pakistan, Iraq or Kurdish people after their return. But I don’t know anything about support programmes for Georgians.”

(Gela, male, 45 years old, Tbilisi)

All assisted voluntarily returned asylum-seekers in our sample claim that they did not violate German law and returned by their own decision, although a deeper analysis of their interviews suggests that some of them applied for return programmes because they would have been deported otherwise. Escaping the risk of deportation, they strongly stress that they were not deported, but made their own decision to return. The possibility to return voluntarily has been considered by the migrants themselves as an important option to return with dignity and without legal persecution from the German side.

### Conclusions

A combination of factors such as ‘limited access to the labour market’ and ‘limited legal opportunities to stay’ presuppose a return decision on the part of asylum-seeking labour migrants. Additionally, the family status of the respondents plays an important role in the return decision. It is to be assumed that asylum-seekers without family obligations tend to prolong their stay in Germany regardless of their economic and legal situation and their living conditions there. Migrants with family obligations are more likely to return when the economic and social risks of the return decision are partly absorbed by return assistance.

Based on these findings, we assume that assistance programmes play an important role in the decision-making process when they considerably minimize the risks of return. Additionally, return assistance was an impor-

tant factor in making the return decision in the situation of legal and economic insecurity because it provided an option to return with dignity, but from the subjective viewpoint of the respondents did not have any impact on their reintegration chances in Georgia.

Apart from one case, all asylum-seekers in our sample reported that their main migration motive was temporary employment in Germany with the goal to accumulate some financial capital. All of them expressed deep disappointment about the lack of opportunities for temporary legal labour migration to Germany. During the time in which they tried to establish themselves in Germany via the asylum migration channel, they did not manage to use their relatively high professional qualifications, they did not manage to accumulate any financial capital, and most of them did not acquire considerable informal skills that could be useful upon their return. So we assume that their migration experience will negatively influence their reintegration into the Georgian labour market.

### 3.2 Decision-making of educational migrants

The returned educational migrants make up the “youngest” age group among our respondents, with the youngest respondents being 21 years old and the oldest 36 years old. All educational migrants have higher or incomplete higher education. There are more females than males among the educational migrants in our sample. None of the educational migrants, including educational labour migrants, decided to return because of the threat of deportation. Some of them, however, did return because their visa had expired and they did not want to violate their status requirements. This mostly refers to the participants of the au pair programme.

All returned educational migrants interviewed in terms of this research project stress that they have never wanted and never intended to remain in Germany permanently. However, in a number of cases, they planned to stay in Germany for only several months, or only for a year, but eventually stayed for several years. Respondents who went to Germany under the au pair programme or with scholarships also often state that they knew from the very beginning that they were going to return to Georgia after a year of studies, that it “has been decided” and conditioned by the terms of their programmes from the very beginning, and thus the decision-making process of their return has been conditioned by pre-emigration decisions.



This is a “target” and “time-specific” type of migration when the migrants know what they are going to do from the very beginning, how they are going to do it, and what they are going to achieve during a rather specific period of time. Even in cases when the migrants have spent several years in Germany, they still make a similar claim – that, from the very beginning, they knew that they were going to return to Georgia anyway, and it was just a matter of time. David describes below his decision to return to Georgia after staying in Germany for about five years:

***“And, in a couple of words, could you please tell me what was the reason you made a decision to return?”***

There was no reason as such; it was a planned process from the very first day I left. My plan was only that I finish my studies and return. And everything went according to this plan – I studied, graduated, received my diploma and returned.”

(David, male, 30 years old, Tbilisi)

However, all our respondents were confronted with opportunities and obstacles in Germany and repeatedly dealt with the question: “How long do I want to stay and when should I go?”. We were able to differentiate between two types of respondents: those who returned without finishing their studies in Germany, and those who graduated from German universities. For these two types of returnees different considerations played a role in making the return decision.

#### a) The ambivalent working-student status and untimely return

Four out of seven educational labour migrants were unable to cope with the difficult living situation in Germany, where they had to work and provide for themselves and study simultaneously. So they decided to return before they had achieved their initial goal to gain an educational certificate in Germany. The return decision was a difficult process for this type of returnee, and took several years in some cases.

“I enrolled at the university in Kassel and started to study electrical engineering. After a couple of months I had used up all the money my family had given me when I went to Germany. So I had to earn money by myself, and in fact from that time on I couldn’t study properly. Mostly I worked and didn’t have time to study. I managed three years like this. I had to change jobs very often. I worked in the construction industry as temporary personnel and in a factory where we produced

plastic windows. And there were a lot of similar jobs I did. And I visited Georgia very often. Sometimes I decided spontaneously to visit my family in Georgia. Once I bought a car and drove to Georgia for vacations. I thought a lot about returning but couldn't decide definitely. Then a new rule was introduced at German universities: when you study longer than 8 semesters, you tuition fees increase. So I suddenly had to pay 1500 Euros per year. And I could pay such an amount of money, but to that time I went to Georgia so often that I started to think: Nothing holds me here in Germany. I don't study. I don't have a family. I don't have anybody in Germany... So I decided to return. It wasn't an easy decision..."

(Gia, 27 years old, Tbilisi)

Some returnees felt that it would be difficult for them to continue studying in Germany, but at the same time they were unable to decide to return permanently. Their strategy was to go to Georgia first to explore the situation, and if worse came to worst, they would have the opportunity to re-migrate to Germany based on their valid student resident permit. For example, in one case, a returned educational labour migrant decided to go to Georgia only for a year, to see if she could manage to find a job and settle successfully. According to her plan, in case she did not manage to do so, she would go to Germany to continue her studies. Since so far, as Tamar notes (female, 29 years old, educational migrant, Tbilisi), everything is going well for her in Georgia, she does not think of migrating to Germany again:

"No, I did not finish my studies; I just decided to return for about a year to Georgia, to try to find a job. It happened just before the war,<sup>24</sup> when I made this decision. My friends in Tbilisi, almost all of them, and my best friend, work, and they were telling me that you, with your education, knowledge of languages would find a job in any case... let's see, because when you come to visit for two weeks, you don't have time for this. And if everything goes wrong and I will not be able to find a job and nothing will work out, I will return to Germany and continue studying. But so far everything is going well in Georgia. Of course there are problems, but so far I am not thinking about going back to Germany."

(Tamar, female, 29 years old, Tbilisi)

<sup>24</sup> The respondent refers to the 2008 August war between Russia and Georgia.

### b) Graduates from German universities: return because of career aspirations

Educational migrants interviewed in terms of this study rarely speak about difficulties in obtaining or prolonging visas. Moreover, some of them report they had the possibility to stay in Germany for longer after finishing their studies and receiving a degree – now as professional labour migrants. This possibility, however, did not turn out to be important enough for them to stay in Germany longer.

“When I came back [to Georgia], by the way, I still had one year visa. When I graduated from the university there, I was given a visa with a permit to start working, i.e. a visa to start working professionally, but I did not use it... I did not see any point for me to stay in Germany because I had done my best there and used up all the opportunities and I wanted to leave.”

(Giorgi, male, 29 years old, Tbilisi)

Georgian graduates of German universities return less because of economic motives. They stressed many times in the interviews that they would have been able to earn more in Germany in less highly-qualified positions than they do in Georgia in their actual occupations. Rather, the respondents stressed the possibility to be employed according to their educational qualifications, which brings a lot of satisfaction, while in Germany they most probably would have been performing low-skilled jobs.

“The point is that I have much better professional prospects in Georgia than in Germany. Had I stayed there [in Germany], nobody needs a Georgian lawyer there. Nobody would have employed me. I would have to work as a waiter or as a gardener, and all my studies there would have been a waste of time. Nobody wants to employ a foreign lawyer in Germany. I didn't have any illusions on that point.”

(Giorgi, male, 26 years old, Tbilisi)

### c) Influence of the social environment on the decision-making process

Returning educational migrants seem to make a return decision individually, and in most cases in spite of the opinions of their friends and/or family members. For example, in the case of Gvatnsa (female, 29 years old, educational migrant, Tianeti), her friends in Germany were advising her not to return to Georgia: “They were telling me that I might not have a second chance to come to Germany”. And Gvansta is not the only person in our sample who made a decision to return despite the opinions of her

friends and/or family members. Similar reactions of friends and family are reported by Ketino:

***“When you returned from Germany, did you share your ideas with your friends?”***

Yes, and, by the way, when I went to Germany from Georgia, nobody opposed it, but when I was returned to Georgia, everyone was against it.

***And what did they say, for example?”***

Where are you going, where will you work, because we all know what kind of situation there is nowadays, especially for a musician, but I did not listen to anyone. The family [said], where are you coming, where are you going to work, and things like that. In principle, everyone was against me returning, except me, and when I made my mind, nobody could have persuaded me to change it.”

(Ketino, female, 31 years old, Tbilisi)

Another factor influencing return decisions concerns the returnees’ limited social contacts in Germany. The fact that most educational migrants did not socialize with Germans, and in their opinion did not find their place in German society, was an important disincentive to stay:

“My family, especially my father, was very against the idea of me coming back. [...] I could have stayed, continued working in the bank. Then, on the 1st of September, I sent a letter saying that I was going [to Georgia] and that I had decided not to stay [in Germany], that it was very hard in a foreign environment. In spite of the fact that my German was fluent, I could not understand their jokes, for example, you have to know their [...] you have to live there for a very long time, have to grow up there, then you are able to understand such nuances, jokes and stuff. So relationships with people were not like I’d expected.”

(Anna, female, 24 years old, Tbilisi)

#### d) Influence of return assistance on the decision-making process

In the sample we have three educational labour migrants – Nani (female, 36 years old, Tbilisi), Tamar (female, 29 years old, Tbilisi) and Anna (female, 24 years old, Tbilisi) – who used the assistance of return programmes for highly qualified migrants. The three young women studied and worked in Germany, but didn’t support their families back in Georgia. Nani successfully finished her education in Germany, while Tamar quit her studies because, as she claims, it became too difficult for her to combine study and

work. Anna studied three years in Germany working as an apprentice and worked part-time in the local bank branch as a bank clerk.

Nani was a full scale beneficiary of the programme promoting the return of professionals financed by the German State (the programme helped her to find a job, provided a monthly allowance in addition to her regular salary, provided informational support and networking opportunities, as well as covered her expenses for English language courses). Tamar benefited from the networking opportunities and English language courses provided by the careers service established in Tbilisi in the framework of this programme. Anna benefited from job application training and labour market information. She also received modest monetary support (traveling costs were covered).

A crucial difference between these three cases is the information about such a programme being available for respondents, and the stage at which such information became available. Nani was very well informed about the programme during her last few years in Germany, and made a highly-informed decision in the entire process of applying to this programme, while Anna and Tamar learned about this programme only after arriving in Georgia.

Apart from three respondents who benefited from the German programme promoting the return of highly qualified Georgians, four other educational migrants knew about the existence of such a programme. All these respondents learnt about the programme while vacationing in Georgia or not until after their return:

“While I was on vacation in Georgia, I met the person who coordinates the return programme for highly qualified Georgians in Tbilisi. She told me about the possibilities of material return assistance and about support to access the labour market after return. But I didn’t participate in the programme because I didn’t need any assistance.”

(Giorgi, male, 26 years old, Tbilisi)

***“Did you learn about the programme in Germany or when you had already come to Georgia?”***

I found out about return assistance after my return to Georgia... My brother told me that a friend of his had found an interesting job via the support of the programme coordinator in Georgia. I went to the

careers centre funded by the programme in Tbilisi and handed my CV and a copy of my diploma in. And they were going to try to find a job for me. However I found my current job by myself.”

(Sali, female, 29 ears old, Tbilisi)

“To be honest, I didn’t know anything about the return assistance programme for highly qualified Georgians while studying in Germany. Unfortunately I leant about the programme after I returned to Georgia.”

(Leo, male 30 years old, Tbilisi)

Considering the fact that only one respondent in our sample made the return decision by taking into consideration the return incentives provided by the return assistance programme for highly qualified Georgians, we can not make any empirical conclusions as to the influence of the programme on the return decision. Based on the account by the returnees that they mostly learnt about the programme after their return to Georgia, we can assume that the programme has a potential to provide opportunities for labour market reintegration for educational returnees in Georgia.

### Conclusions

The major return motive of the educational labour migrants whom we interviewed in this study is their inability to attain tertiary educational certificates in Germany because of the necessity to finance their education and to cover the cost of living. The educational labour migrants tried hard to combine studies and work in Germany and prolonged their education duration. The decision to give up their educational aspirations in Germany and to return to Georgia without a university degree was the result of a long and painful process by which considerations such as the opinions of a close social environment, the impressions gathered from visits to Georgia, and the individual feelings of being socially excluded in Germany, played a major role.

The return of the purely educational migrants was a less contentious decision. Major return motives were in these cases career aspirations in Georgia. Georgian returnees with a university diploma hoped to reach a more responsible and prestigious labour market position in Georgia compared with the opportunities open to them in Germany. Interestingly, friends and relatives of the respondents discouraged them to return to Georgia,

while limited social contacts to the German population were important incentives to return.

### 3.3 Return decision: The cross-typical analysis

The comparison of the return motives of the asylum-seekers and educational migrants in our sample allows the assumption that the decision to return often stems from migration motives, however, the latter cannot be considered as the only and decisive explanatory factor that can predict the probability of return. Our data shows that it seems more productive to think about decisions to return which were conditioned not only by migration motives, but also by their experiences while staying in Germany.

We identify the following return patterns:

- return after success, when migrants decide to return to Georgia after achieving their migration goal(s),
- semi-successful return, when migrants do not manage to fully achieve their migration goal(s), but they do achieve part of the goal(s), and
- return in failure, when migrants return, or are returned, without being able to achieve any of their goal(s).

The first two patterns are typical of educational migrants, while the latter is a dominant pattern among asylum-seekers.

Educational migrants who completed their university education in Germany seem to belong to the classical type of successful returnee. They decide to return as soon as they have achieved their educational migration goals. However, by analyzing the decision-making processes in detail, we can see that their return decisions were determined not only by the idea of goal achievement, but also by the subjective assessment of their future chances in Germany. The experiences of successful educational migrants in Germany, especially their limited social contacts with the German population and the feeling of being a less attractive employer because of being a foreigner, played an important role in their return decisions.

Educational labour migrants who dropped out of their studies in Germany belong to a type of semi-successful returnee. Although their educational migration goals have not been achieved, they assessed their experiences and resources gained in Germany, such as language proficiency, experiences on the German labour market, and even their experiences in the German educational system, as potential resources in Georgia. The return decision was also based on the assessment of gains and losses of a further stay in Germany versus potential gains of a return to Georgia. Especially the social gains of return, such as supportive social networks (private and professional), were considered.

Return in failure is typical for returning asylum-seeking labour migrants. The respondents' experiences show that current asylum regulations in Germany as a matter of principle do not make it possible to achieve labour-oriented migration goals. The necessity to deal with the issue of return comes up from the very beginning of migrants' experiences in Germany. The combination of the uncertain legal status in Germany and difficult access to the labour market is a central return incentive. However, for our respondents it was difficult to make a return decision because of high economic and social risks of return and the feeling of failure to achieve migration goals. Unemployment in Germany, followed by de-skilling, the inability to have savings and to obtain other resources, such as German language skills, give the respondents the feeling that their migration to Germany was "a waste of life time". The return assistance of the German State plays an important role in the decision-making process, when the assistance in some way helps to avoid the feeling of failure and to minimize the risks of return.



# 4

## Reintegration



Georgia is a small country (69,700 square km), located between Europe and Asia, bordering Russia (North), Turkey (Southwest), Azerbaijan (East) and Armenia (South) with a population of 4.3 million (Population Reference Bureau 2011). It is considered a developing country based on its underdeveloped economy and low-income population. The 2007 GDP estimate (PPP) was \$21,516 billion, placing Georgia 115<sup>th</sup> among the world's countries, and only \$10,227 billion nominal. As for annual per capita income, it constitutes \$4,966 (PPP) and \$2,539 (nominal). Thus, if we follow the economic theories of migration, the potential of labour migration from Georgia is very high since the income gap between Georgia and the developed countries is quite significant. Moreover, if we take into consideration the quite high unemployment rates, labour exports can be seen as a strategy to stimulate the economy and alleviate problems caused by unemployment.

Recent reforms in the education and healthcare sectors are intended to improve the quality of life in Georgia, but so far their effect is hard to evaluate. The UNDP National Human Development Report (2008) argues that, in spite of the economic growth reported at the macro-economic level, this has not been reflected in improvements in the quality of life of the population. Prospects of economic growth in the future, highly publicized by the Georgian Government are rather dim since the world economic crisis has made its impact on the Georgian economy as well. The

share of Foreign Direct Investments has declined, and many investment projects have been halted.

The current political situation in the country remains rather tense due to the military conflict with Russia in 2008, and earlier fraud during the national elections. Thus, as a region of return, we could assume that Georgia is not an attractive place currently.

As reported above, returnees living in three Georgian settlements were interviewed – the capital city of Tbilisi (21 respondents), a small town in Eastern Georgia, Telavi (three respondents), and a small mountainous community Tianeti in the northeast of Georgia (four respondents). Below, we briefly characterize the social and economic situation of the returnees living in these three locations:

- Respondents living in Tbilisi are generally better off than returnees in the other locations. Educational migrants dominate among migrants who returned to Tbilisi, with only three asylum-seekers.
- Telavi respondents include one educational migrant and two asylum-seekers. While the asylum-seekers clearly went to Germany in order to improve their economic conditions, the only educational migrant was a participant of the au pair programme.
- Tianeti is the poorest location in terms of the economic conditions. It was the place where we had the greatest difficulty in finding returned migrants for our study, despite the fact that we had data from the household census of the whole settlement, with detailed information about household members who had been abroad, who were still abroad and/or had already returned. Despite the fact that there are a significant number of current Tianeti migrants in Germany, very few of them return to Tianeti. The pattern that we encountered is that when they return, they do not return to Tianeti, but settle in Tbilisi. We interviewed four returnees from Germany in Tianeti, two educational migrants and two asylum-seekers (one of them had been deported and one had decided to return voluntarily). But even within those very few cases, we had the only cases in our sample where migrants to Germany managed to work and accumulate a certain amount of capital in order

to support their families back in Tianeti. This obviously happened because the families back in Tianeti were most in need of the migrants' financial assistance.

Interviewed returned migrants demonstrate various patterns and different levels of reintegration. First of all, it is necessary to note that reintegration is a process that takes time and thus can be best studied longitudinally in order to be able to have a better understanding of the phenomena. In terms of our project, however, we were only able to measure the level of reintegration of the returned migrants by asking them questions about their economic, social and political participation, as well as about their subjective assessments on how they have adapted to life in their home society.

We distinguish between objective and subjective dimensions of reintegration. In the first case, we analyze such variables as participation of the returned migrants within the Georgian labour market, their social status after their return, and their participation in the political and social life of society. Subjective dimensions of reintegration are based on the self-assessment of the returnees – on how they view their return, how they evaluate their life in Georgia after their return, and, most importantly, whether they feel they have found their place in their home society.

#### 4.1 Subjective assessment of the situation in Georgia

Despite the fact that most respondents maintained very close contact with their families back in Georgia during their stay in Germany, and were very well informed about the situation they were going to return to, and, what is not less important, most of them were eager to return, the return, as they report, caused a certain amount of emotional distress for some respondents, and they still note that the first days and/or weeks after their return were difficult for them from the point of view of adjusting to Georgian realities, although all of them returned to their families and speak of positive emotional encounters with relatives and family members. Ketii (female, 23 years old, educational migrant, Tbilisi) describes it as the fourth stage of “cultural shock”, when a person feels estrangement after coming back to their homeland:

“[In Germany, people are] open-minded, and when you come here, in your country, it’s like life has stopped. When you went there, the time that passed let you grow up but you return, and you return to a frozen time here. You encounter the same people here, i.e. with the same [old] mentality; what was considered as a free opinion there [Germany], here you have to be constrained [to live your life freely, without looking up to what other people will say about you]. For the first two weeks, it was very difficult...”

(Keti, female, 23 years old, Tbilisi)

Returnees often mention the comparatively low level of service (e.g., in shops), low quality of life and differences in attitudes to various things, like attitudes towards jobs or waste management. This is especially true in cases of recently returned migrants, like Tamar, who had been in Georgia for about five months before the interview was recorded:

“It was very difficult that running water is supplied according to a schedule, I get nervous that my water heater does not start working when I need it because the water needs to come under a certain pressure for it to work, I get nervous. But I try to get used to it. On the street the vendor does not look at me, looks at someone else and I am standing there for half an hour waiting – I myself used to work in a supermarket [in Germany] and it did not matter whether I wanted or not, but I had to smile and look the customer in eyes – Georgia is so far from this culture, and it is very difficult for me.

***And how did you get used to it?***

I try to get used to it, I try not to get nervous because of everything, but it is very difficult ... A person who has never lived abroad is not concerned with the fact that when s/he goes to the store s/he stands for half an hour waiting for the sales person to finish gossiping with a friend, and assisting you only after s/he’s done with gossiping – I get very nervous.”

(Tamar, female, 29 years old, Tbilisi)

The case of David (male, 30 years old, educational migrant, Tbilisi) demonstrates from the very beginning that he acknowledged that he was going to encounter problems related to getting used to life in Georgia.

***“What were your feelings when you returned, how did you feel in the first days of your return?”***

In the first days there was a process of acclimatisation – I could already see that the system was not working properly in the country. Life – I mean, social life – and the attitude of people towards various things.

***And how did you get used to it?***

It wasn't easy, in the first days I got very irritated; I tried to be very careful regarding various relationships, affairs, and of course this time passed. But still, I still cannot accept the attitude 'it did not work out – not a big deal', I find this difficult.”

(David, male, 30 years old, Tbilisi)

The solution that David found was to withdraw somewhat and distance himself from the existing situation, combined with the understanding that he alone was not going to be able to change anything:

“The first year was more difficult for me, then the second year [after my return] was better. I adjusted and accepted that things are the way they are in this country and that as an individual I was not going to be able to change things, so I wouldn't break either heart or nerves and not get irritated.”

(David, male, 30 years old, Tbilisi)

Even in cases when returnees find it difficult to accept some values or issues in their home society, and think that the values and ways of thinking they got used to in Germany have a potential benefit to Georgia, it seems that rather than trying to impose and generate change in the existing norms and values on Georgian society they simply “retreat” and try to react to what “the Georgian way of life” is offering them. This could be seen as a sign of certain frustration caused by the realisation, and as David puts it, that as individuals, they are powerless against the norms and practices that are widespread in Georgia.

## **4.2 Labour market reintegration**

The question of employment carries an important weight in fostering the successful reintegration of returned migrants into Georgian society in general, as well as for their emotional well-being. There is some evidence that in cases when respondents have difficulties in finding employment,

they are much more prone to question their return and have more negative assessments of their current situation. As our respondents put it:

“I adapted quickly because I had a good job and I did not have any economic problems. If I didn’t have a job, if I had economic problems, I would have started finding opportunities to migrate again...”

(Gela, male, 45 years old, Tbilisi)

“Well, now I no longer regret [returning to Georgia] because my job and my career are developing very successfully; I have friends. I regretted it [before] because it’s not a person’s individual characteristics that are valued in Georgia, not his/her professionalism, talent, experience and possibilities, but everything rather depends on how influential and broad a [social] circle one has.”

(Eka, female, 38 years old, Tbilisi)

Although the following quote seemingly suggests that Vakhtang did not have any problems in adjusting to life in Georgia after his return, the fact that he was unable to find employment was rather important for him:

“I got used [to life in Georgia] rather normally, well, never I regretted, why did I come back and why I needed to come back. I never said things like that. I only had one moment: For six or seven months, I don’t remember exactly, I was unable to find a job. And that was difficult, but, then, I found employment.”

(Vakhtang, male, 23 years old, Tbilisi)

Although we can not generalize the findings, according to our research, the majority of the respondents were able to find employment after their return (and some did not intend to work – one is a housewife, and one has continued to study at her university). The situation with employment is better in the cases of the educational migrants than among the asylum-seekers. Not only are educational migrants able to find employment easier and in a shorter period of time, they are able to find employment according to their education and professional qualifications more often than asylum-seekers, and, no less importantly, they are more often satisfied with their jobs.

However, for some of the educational returnees the search for a job took several years. The reason why it is hard to find a job in Georgia after receiv-

ing an education in Germany could be that, in Germany, one becomes accustomed to the idea that his/her job is valued and is paid for accordingly. While in Georgia salaries often do not correspond to the requirements of the job to be filled. On the other hand, it can also happen that the environment is not always welcoming for highly-educated returnees, as they are often considered as “overqualified” and arrogant and could be rejected for a job for that reason. Nepotism also plays a role in the process of employment, although not in all types of organizations, and the respondents refer to this problem repeatedly. On the subjective side, it may be the case that the returnees who received an education in Germany have overestimated their expectations about their employment opportunities upon their return to Georgia, and then become overly frustrated when these expectations do not materialize in a short period of time.

The role of education acquired in Germany in many cases is latent, since Georgian employers do not always pay attention to the fact that the returnee received an education in Germany. German language proficiency and some labour market experiences in Germany – informal skills – are considered by returnees as much more valuable resources on the Georgian labour market. Therefore, educational labour migrants often had similar labour market opportunities as returnees who received a diploma from a German university. Moreover, compared to graduates from German universities they were more satisfied with their labour market situation because they did not expect immediate access to highly-prestigious labour market positions in Georgia.

Several respondents secured positions connected to the German language (for example, German language teachers), in German enterprises operating in Georgia or in Georgian firms working with German clients and partners. However, a new trend that emerged in several interviews was that knowledge of the German language alone – without English – limits returnees’ employment opportunities. As one of the respondents put it:

“When I returned to Georgia the first thing was that nobody needs your German. In German companies the working language is English. You can forget your German without much worrying about it because it is English that is important...”

(Tamar, female, 29 years old, Tbilisi)

Apart from formal and informal qualifications, useful social contacts in Georgia were central to finding a job after returning. Take the example of Eka (female, 38 years old, educational migrant, Tbilisi), who first attended language courses, and then completed an internship in the Ministry of Justice in Germany and was astonished to have had difficulties on the Georgian labour market:

“I could not imagine having difficulties in finding a job when I return to Georgia. I simply could not imagine this, otherwise I would not have returned. If my friends had not helped me, I would not have been able to find employment. Because when I returned, I called an acquaintance at the Georgian Ministry of Justice. I knew this person from the Supreme Court, this person also studied in Germany. I told him/her that my name is this and that, that I’ve returned from Germany, I completed an internship, etc., and s/he told me – why are you calling me, I cannot help you with anything. And all doors closed in my face – I applied for every job in the ministries, international organizations where there were vacancies, I would get shortlisted, and then I would learn that the job had been given to someone about whom I was very surprised – to somebody’s niece/nephew, somebody’s cousin and so on and so on, as it usually happens in Georgia.”

(Eka, female, 38 years old, Tbilisi)

The central role of social contacts in gaining access to the Georgian labour market becomes tangible by analyzing the interviews with the respondents who had stayed in Germany for a longer period. Those respondents started their higher education in Germany, and therefore their social contacts in the professional sphere in Georgia were very limited. These educational returnees, despite their educational experiences in Germany, were unable to find jobs in accordance with their qualifications in Georgia. They had to use family contacts, and found jobs in very different spheres than their qualifications would have suggested. For this group the fact that they had received an education in Germany played absolutely no role in securing employment in Georgia:

“I found my current job not by myself. A friend of mine helped me. The firm was looking for an electrician. I didn’t have any experience in this field, but I was thankful for any job and I tried hard to get this job. When I started there, they paid not well, only 200 Lari per month. But I was eager to work and not just hang around..”



***Was it easy to find the job?***

No, it was not easy. I am still working there, although I would like to change. I would like to quit, but I can't find an appropriate position."

(Gia, male, 27 years old, Tbilisi)

Unlike educational migrants, educational opportunities are not accessible to asylum-seekers in Germany. Most of them are not even able to acquire any German language proficiency. After returning to Georgia, they are mostly left out of the formal labour market, and even when employed, they perform jobs that do not correspond to their qualifications. Labour market asylum-seekers mostly rely on social networks in order to access the labour market.

***"Are you employed right now?"***

No, I can't work...

***So you didn't find a job after your return?"***

No, for people like us who are older than 35, there are no jobs...

***And did you try to find something?"***

Yes of course, I went to the job agency and... They only promise to do something and nothing more happens.

***And the fact that you lived in Germany..."***

I told you that I was an asylum-seeker in Germany. And nobody cares for us after our return. My situation is worse today than it was before."

(Ermalo, 61 years old, Tbilisi)

***"What are you doing right now?"***

Nothing, I am unemployed.

***You didn't work after return?"***

No

***And why?"***

I don't know, there are no jobs."

(Giorgi, male, 32 years old, Tianeti)

***"What are you doing right now?"***

Since I returned I haven't done anything. I couldn't find a job, there were no jobs. In 1996, when I returned, there were no jobs. The situation became better later. But unemployment... My parents got their pension. My wife worked. And we sold some family property and so we kept afloat. I worked a bit, but... I worked in a winery. But then it went bankrupt. And I was dismissed. I am currently unemployed."

(Atschiko, male, 40 years old, Telavi)

### 4.3 Social and political participation of returnees in Georgia

The returnees' social and political participation is limited to their everyday lives. None of the respondents in our sample is involved in any kind of social or political activity in Georgia, or even report their participation in NGO activities. The experience of living in Germany, as they report, has not resulted in an increase in their participation in civil life. There is no difference in the returnees' level of social and political participation based on the status that they had in Germany. Both educational migrants and asylum-seekers are reluctant to become involved actively in the social and political life of Georgian society. However, one respondent mentioned that she tries to establish a positive climate in her office, where the rights of employees are protected, and considers this as her participation in the social life of society.

### 4.4 Returnees' links to the Federal Republic of Germany

Returnees, as a rule, maintain contacts with the Federal Republic of Germany, but these contacts are of a personal nature in most cases. They do not involve any economic or political alliances. Moreover, in many cases returnees maintain contacts with their Georgian friends and/or relatives who stayed in Germany after they returned, rather than with their German acquaintances. In only one case had a returnee (Nani, 36 years old, educational migrant, Tbilisi) maintained professional contacts which could be considered as a continuation of the previous contacts established in Germany.

Compared with the frequency of contacts with their relatives and friends in Georgia during the period of their migration (most respondents who were educational migrants to Germany report having daily contact, by phone or through the Internet), the frequency of their contacts with those with whom they keep in touch in Germany is lower, and happens on a weekly basis or less frequently.

To what extent links to Germany promote returnees' reintegration into Georgian society becomes a rather difficult question to answer. Ideally, friends and relatives in Germany might be helpful to returnees by providing them with financial resources in case they are not able to find jobs, but in none of our interviews has this aspect of contacts been captured. What was captured, however, was that friends and/or relatives in Germany of-

ferred help in cases when respondents decide for repeat migration to Germany.

#### 4.5 Conclusions: patterns of reintegration

Based on the returnees' participation in the labour market after their return to Georgia, we can distinguish between three patterns of reintegration:

- successful reintegration, when returnees are employed and are mostly satisfied with their jobs and career perspectives;
- semi-successful reintegration – employed returnees who are not fully satisfied with their employment;
- unsuccessful reintegration – when returnees were not able to find stable, decent employment, or are completely unsatisfied with their jobs [students are not included in this category].

The first two patterns are typical of educational migrants who returned to Georgia. The third pattern can be observed among returned asylum-seekers.

Finding employment is positively associated with success after return. Cultural capital acquired during the stay in Germany contributes to the positive reintegration of returnees since they have skills and qualifications that, we could assume, are above average on the Georgian labour market. Asylum-seekers gained virtually no qualifications or skills in Germany. Therefore their reintegration in Georgia – especially their professional placement and their economic position after their return – is a much more difficult process compared with the reintegration of the educational migrants.

Apart from individual cases, all respondents possess no relevant social contacts in Germany. Against this background, the reintegration strategies of all three types of returnees do not rely on the professional contacts to Germany, but very much depend on their social resources in Georgia. Personal ties in Georgia play a role not only in the subjective feeling of being socially included, but especially in the process of finding employment.

# 5

## The sustainability of return



The sustainability of return is often understood as the absence of repeat migration after return has taken place. Although this definition might seem to be narrow, in fact it presupposes that the returnees are able to re-integrate into the home community, and have access to employment and social and political rights back home. Our analysis shows, however, that it is hard to establish an unambiguous link between successful reintegration and the duration of stay in the country of origin, and vice versa. Our sample includes migrants who could be considered very well integrated into their home society after their return, but who demonstrate a willingness to re-migrate. At the same time, we have returned migrants with no job and no future prospects who express a willingness to migrate again. Although reasons for re-migration are different, poorly-integrated returned migrants are more inclined to think about repeated migration than well-integrated migrants.

### 5.1 Returnees' onward migration plans

In general, the majority of the returnees interviewed in terms of our study report quite a high level of satisfaction with their return, although they may simultaneously report problems of adjusting to the Georgian way of life. There are, however, quite striking differences in the perceptions of return based on the status that the returnees had in Germany. Most educational returnees are satisfied and do not regret their return, while most

asylum-seekers are negative about their return and regret coming back. Even in cases when asylum-seekers were not deported, but decided to return voluntarily, they still question their decision and consider it as a mistake.

When asked about their long-term perspectives within a ten-year span, the overwhelming majority of the returnees report that they see themselves in Georgia, in their home towns, living with their families, being employed and living a successful life. They hence do not express any desire to migrate from Georgia permanently. Only in one case – and this is the case of an asylum-seeker Ermalo (male, 61 years old, Tbilisi) – was the opposite stated. A few respondents found it difficult to answer this question.

There are, however, several returnees who are very serious about their plans to go abroad again in order to pursue MA studies (some plan to go back to Germany, some to other European countries), but they plan to return to Georgia after they get their MAs. Another returnee came to Georgia aiming to spend one year here in order to see whether she would be able to settle, find employment and if not, planned to return to Germany to continue her studies (Tamar, female, 29 years old, Tbilisi). As she states in her interview, she has settled in Georgia, and doubts she will re-migrate to Germany again.

Being settled in Georgia, however, does not mean that the respondents do not consider the possibility of repeated temporary, often short-term migration – and this, again, is more often seen among educational returnees who would like to continue their education and acquire new skills abroad in the future. The country where they would like to go to in the future is not necessarily Germany, although Germany is still the most widely preferred country due to knowledge of the language and familiarity with the way of life and culture.

Returned asylum-seekers demonstrate the strongest desire to migrate again. However, several respondents returned to Georgia quite a significant time ago, but did not undertake any steps towards repeat migration, which does not mean that everyone's integration was successful. Thus, an assisted voluntary returnee reporting having distinct problems in the process of his reintegration (Ermalo) wishes to re-migrate, but does not have enough resources to do so. Yet another assisted voluntary returnee (Vazha), after returning from Germany, undertook several temporary mi-

gratory trips to Russia, where he worked in construction, but after the relationship between Georgia and Russia became too tense, he was deported from Russia and has stayed in Georgia since then. He also would like to re-migrate, but again does not have the necessary resources. So, although in both of these cases, the returnees' decision to return may not be sustainable, due to the lack of resources, the chances that these individuals will be able to undertake re-migration do not seem to be very high.

***“Do you think of going to Germany again?”***

No.

***Why?***

Because I am banned from going there.

***And if you were not banned?***

With great pleasure! I would go legally, with legal status, I would never go as an asylum-seeker again.

***Why?***

Because the prospects are minimal, so to say, to achieve anything there, to live with this status in Germany because, as I told you, you have minimal rights, you do not have a job.”

(Goga, male, 36 years old, Telavi)

“I am happy to be here, but I am also sad because I want to go to Germany again but I can't. I mean, I would like to go there, work and come back, to earn enough to finance my children's education.”

(Vahza, male, 47 years old, Tianeti)

An important issue that has to be taken into account is the returnees' access to resources needed to undertake re-migration. Based on our research, we can claim that returned education migrants do have more resources (both monetary and non-monetary) to migrate again, compared with returned asylum-seekers. First of all, they have a positive migration record, which increases the chances of getting a visa. Secondly, many of their families, and they themselves, belong to the middle class, and have access to financial resources that are often sufficient to cover migration expenses. The majority of interviewed returned asylum-seekers are currently unemployed, or underpaid; their access to financial capital is limited. This means that they would not be able to finance repeat migration across European borders. All of them are more or less frustrated with the labour market and economic situation in Georgia, and stress that they

would not migrate illegally, but would prefer some legal opportunities for short-term, temporary labour migration.

## 5.2 Returnees as advisors on opportunities to migrate to Germany

Returned migrants are often approached as a source of information by their friends, family members and acquaintances when the latter want to migrate from Georgia or want to return to Georgia. This certainly means that they are considered to be knowledgeable persons whose opinion is valued and important.

***“Did you help somebody who planned to go abroad from Georgia? Did you support somebody?”***

Of course people asked me, for example, ‘How did you find it in Germany?’ And I always answered honestly. My opinion is that my information was objective because I told them, what I found good. And I also told them what is problematic in Germany.”

(Salome, male, 26 years old, Tbilisi)

When asked what would be their advice in the case of someone wanting to migrate to Germany, an overwhelming majority of our respondents think that prospective migrants should go to Germany, but only provided that they meet the following considerations: They should go only if they would like to study there, since Germany is considered to be a great place for acquiring an education. Also, if their stay in Germany is going to be legal. The latter suggestion comes mostly from the former asylum-seekers. The respondents would also advise migration to Germany to those acquaintances who have a chance to be professionally employed in Germany.

In general, the opinions of educational migrants and asylum-seekers do not differ significantly in this respect. If a person wants to go to Germany in order to study, and wants to be there on a legal basis, the general view of such migratory plans is very favourable. Respondents think that these plans can only be welcomed and should be fulfilled. The respondents have less favourable opinions about someone going to Germany in order to work, especially performing unskilled jobs. Existing difficulties in gaining access to employment make respondents think that Germany is not the best country for migration in this case:

***“If someone asked your opinion whether to go to Germany or not, what would be your advice?”***

To go to study, and as for the rest, I don't know, I would not advise anyone to go there to work.

***Why?***

I do not know. If it is a young person, where is s/he going? If s/he cannot find a job here, s/he will not be able to find a job there either, if we are talking about a decent job. S/he would go to work in a family as a caretaker, and for a young person to work in a family as a caretaker is very difficult, but if her/his family is not literally starving here, I would not advise to anyone to go there [to work] – but to study – yes.”

(Tamar, female, 29 years old, Tbilisi)

Returnees are instrumental in providing information to their acquaintances, friends, and relatives on the character of life in Germany, about the possible problems or issues that could be raised there, and about the general behavioural standards there. Moreover, as the returned migrants report, they have helped new-comers from Georgia while in Germany quite often, and this included financial, informational, instrumental and psychological assistance, which they provided free of charge and out of purely altruistic motives reasons as a rule.

***“And after you settled in Germany – being there for so many years means that you settled, there, right? Did you assist any newly-arrived Georgians?”***

[...] She came to me, I did not know her, she is a musician herself, and she asked me to ask my professor – I studied for one year with professor N.N., and only after that switched to a German professor and worked with him for three years. And my professor N.N. was a member and musical advisor of the Rotary Club, which provides scholarships to students participating in the exchange programmes. And this girl brought me – she is X.X., a student at Tbilisi Conservatory, she brought me a recording and asked me if he [the professor] could listen to it. I took it with me and my professor listened to it and liked it very much, and told me that he would give her one-year scholarship, and she came with a scholarship.”

(Ketino, female, 30 years old, Tbilisi)



Returnees are also often contacted by current Georgian migrants in Germany who ask for their advice as to whether they should return to Georgia. If most respondents are positive with regard to going to Germany, opinions diverge when speaking about the return to Georgia. Moreover, respondents believe that this is a rather difficult and important issue and it is extremely hard to take responsibility for someone else on such a matter and provide definitive advice. However, what respondents usually advise is to return rather than to stay in Germany because they believe that it is always better to live in one's own country.

### 5.3 The influence of returnees on local return contexts

In the terms of our research, we were planning to analyze the influence of returnees on the local social contexts, but were only able to detect very few cases when returnees had influenced the narrow context limited to their families. These changes were mostly linked with economic changes in the returnees' families. Since the majority of our sample was not working in Germany, and in a number of cases the respondents were supported by their families from Georgia, we have only two cases (both these cases are in Tianeti) when the assistance provided by the returnees to their families could be defined as significant. Thus, Gvantsa (female, 29 years old, educational labour migrant, Tianeti) and Vazha (male, 47 years old, asylum-seeker, Tianeti) managed to assist and improve the economic conditions of their families back in Georgia while they were in Germany.

As for political and social changes, the influence of the returnees whom we interviewed is virtually invisible. Their political and social activities are rather limited, with most of them being concerned with their own lives. Although they are often critical of the existing lack of order and low level of quality of life, these remarks remain in vain since nothing is done and there is no expression of any desire to do something in order to make changes in the community.

There is a lot of debate currently in Georgian society about the possible impact that returnees may have on the development of various aspects of life in Georgia. This debate, however, is blocked by the lack of general sta-

tistical information about the characteristics of the returnees, so that even the very basic question posed by the experts – whether returnees are more an “opportunity” or, rather, more a “threat” to society cannot be answered.

#### 5.4 Conclusions: Sustainable return versus involuntary immobility

The concept of sustainable return, which implies the notion of a long-term settlement in the country of origin, does not cover the situation of the returnees to Georgia whom we interviewed in this study. The analysis shows that both educational returnees and failed asylum-seekers settle in Georgia for a longer time and do not plan to migrate to any other country on a permanent basis. Therefore, we could consider their return decision as sustainable in the narrow sense of this notion. However, both types of returnee had a desire to migrate to Germany/Europe on a temporary basis. While educational migrants would like to pursue further educational goals in Germany, the asylum-seekers would go to Germany or to other European countries for temporary employment. The returnees’ migration plans are less dependent on their successful or failed labour market or social reintegration in Georgia. On the contrary, we could see that successful reintegration of educational migrants could lead to further migration plans connected to professional and career-related aspirations. On the other hand, the difficult labour market situation encountered by asylum-seekers also leads to further migration plans based on pure economic reasons.

According to our findings, it was possible to distinguish between the following types of return sustainability:

- long-term return with a high probability of repeat temporary migration;
- long-term return because of involuntary immobility.<sup>25</sup>

The first type of return concerns educational migrants who successfully integrated into the Georgian labour market and society, but still are motivated to become internationally mobile for professional and educational

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25 The notion of voluntary immobility was first introduced by Carling in his study on Cap Verdean migration to Europe, Carling (2001).

reasons. The second type characterizes failed asylum-seekers who would like to become internationally mobile, but lack the material and legal opportunities for migration.

Furthermore, while individual return decisions could be assessed as sustainable, we were able to observe that returnees have an impact on the migration and re-migration plans of their social environment. So, whilst being immobile themselves, they could foster further migration to Germany by acting as advisors and by activating social networks of support for potential migrants to Germany. Those returnees who regret their return decision tend to advise migrants still living in Germany and thinking about returning, against returning, and therefore influence their decision-making process. Including those structural aspects in the analysis of returns, we can argue that sustainability should be analyzed on a structural level.<sup>26</sup> Considering the structural effects of return, we can see that returnees pass on their migration experiences in Germany to the potential migrants in their narrow social environment, and therefore contribute towards realistic assessments of migration opportunities to Germany. Other structural effects of returning, for example on the professional environments of the returnees and on the local civic society in which they live, could be considered as relatively limited according to our data.

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26 For the discussion on a wider notion of sustainability of return, see Black/Gent (2006).

# 6

## General conclusions



This study differentiates between three types of Georgian migrants to Germany: educational migrants, educational labour migrants and asylum-seeking labour migrants. The return motives and patterns of reintegration in Georgia differ according to the migration experiences of these three types of respondents.

### 6.1 Return motives

Georgian educational migrants accumulated diverse cultural capital in Germany: language skills, educational qualifications, and informal professional skills while first collecting labour market experience in addition to their studies. They were not aiming to accumulate considerable economic resources, and in fact did not do so. Their social contacts with the German population can be considered as somewhat limited. But the contacts with the Georgian community in Germany, and with other international students, were very intensive. At the time of the return, the decision that they faced was a situation clearly promoting their original return aspirations: First of all, they expected that their accumulated cultural capital would provide them with better career opportunities.

Educational labour migrants studied and worked in Germany. However, only in one case could we observe that a female migrant could accumulate some economic capital, which she remitted home and invested in a small

family business. In other cases, educational labour migrants had to finance their studies in Germany by doing additional jobs. They were able to cover their living expenses, but were hardly able to save additional money while remaining in Germany.

Educational labour migrants assessed their position in Germany as an ambivalent one. Some of them continued to be formally enrolled at the universities, but de facto worked more than they studied. On the other hand, they felt under pressure because if they failed to meet certain academic requirements set by their university, they risked losing their student residence permit. Four out of the seven respondents were unable to achieve their desired level of education, and had to quit their studies. Thus, some of the educational labour migrants did not possess German educational certificates at the time of their return to Georgia. At the same time, they were actively involved in the labour market while in Germany and accumulated skills such as language proficiency, and learned a lot about the “German work culture”. In three cases the educational labour migrants managed to graduate from German universities and gather various labour market experiences in Germany. Similar to the cases of purely educational migrants, the social contacts of educational labour migrants with the German population were somewhat limited.

The major return motive of the educational labour migrants who we interviewed in this study is the inability to attain tertiary educational certificates in Germany because of the necessity to finance their education and to cover the cost of living. The educational labour migrants tried hard to combine studying and working in Germany, and prolonged their education duration. The decision to give up their educational aspirations in Germany and to return to Georgia without a university degree was a result of a long and painful process by which such considerations as the opinions of a close social environment, the impressions from visits to Georgia, and individual feelings of being socially excluded in Germany played an important role.

The return of the purely educational migrant was a less contentious decision. The primary return motive of educational migrants was career aspirations in Georgia. Georgian returnees with a university diploma hoped to reach a more responsible and prestigious labour market position in Georgia compared with their opportunities in Germany. Interestingly, friends and relatives of the respondents discouraged them to return to Georgia, while limited social contacts with the German population were important incentives to return.

The applications for asylum were rejected in all cases of asylum-seeking labour migrants whom we interviewed in this study. The financial resources of the asylum-seeking labour migrants interviewed were very poor at the time of their return decision. Because of legal limitations to access the labour market, the interviewees in this group were unable to use their professional qualifications in Germany, and gained rather limited language skills. The social contacts of the asylum-seekers in Germany were limited to their own ethnic group and to other asylum-seekers. The return decision was therefore made against the background of very limited future prospects in Germany.

A combination of such factors as 'limited access to the labour market' and 'limited legal opportunities to stay' presuppose a return decision of the asylum-seeking labour migrants. Additionally, the family status of the respondents plays an important role in the return decision. It can be assumed that asylum-seekers without family obligations tend to prolong their stay in Germany regardless of their economic and legal situation and their living conditions there. Migrants with family obligations are more likely to return when the economic and social risks of the return decision are partly absorbed by assisted return.

Based on these findings, the study suggests that Georgian migrants who accumulated considerable cultural capital in Germany tend to return because of career aspirations, whilst migrants with limited resources return because their migration goals were not achieved. Limited social contacts with the German population were an important return incentive for both types of migrant. Relationships with family members and relatives could play a different role in the process of the return decision making. In some cases, migrants' family obligations made a major contribution to the return decision, while in other cases relatives and family members were opposed to the return of the migrants. Neither educational migrants nor asylum-seekers in our sample accumulated considerable economic resources while staying in Germany. Therefore, we are not able to draw any conclusions on the influence of migrants' saving behaviour/investment strategies based on the decision to return to Georgia.

## 6.2 Reintegration

The study assumed that the cultural capital that migrants were able to accumulate during their stay in Germany would influence the reintegration possibilities of returnees of all three types. We understand cultural capital as formal and informal qualifications that migrants gained in Germany: educational qualifications, informal professional skills or language proficiency.

Apart from one case, all the asylum-seekers in our sample reported that their main migration motive was temporary employment in Germany with the aim of accumulating some financial capital. All of them expressed deep disappointment at the lack of opportunities for legal temporary labour migration to Germany. During the time when they tried to establish themselves in Germany via the asylum migration channel, they did not manage to use their professional qualifications; they were unable to accumulate any financial capital, and most of them did not acquire any considerable informal skills that could be useful upon their return. Consequently, asylum-seeking labour migrants were unable to rely on the resources which they had obtained abroad after their return to Georgia. They are most often left out of the formal labour market, and even when employed, they perform jobs that do not correspond to their qualifications. Through access to the labour market, asylum-seekers mostly make use of social networks which they possessed before migrating to Germany.

Educational returnees were not always able to translate their cultural capital gained in Germany into successful employment in Georgia. Despite the fact that the educational returnees possess quite impressive professional and language skills, finding a proper job can still be a problem in Georgia, even for them. Their potential therefore goes to waste to some degree. All of them underline the prevalence of informal recruitment strategies on the Georgian labour market.

Apart from some individual cases, no respondents in our sample possess any relevant social/professional contacts in Germany. Against this background, the reintegration strategies of all three types of the returnee do not rely on their contacts in Germany, but very much depend on their social resources in Georgia. Personal ties in Georgia play a role not only in the subjective feeling of being socially included, but especially in the process of the Georgian returnees' labour market reintegration.

### 6.3 The sustainability of the return decision

The concept of sustainable return, which implies the notion of long-term settlement in the country of origin, does not cover the situation of the returnees to Georgia whom we interviewed in this study. The analysis shows that both educational returnees and failed asylum-seekers settle in Georgia for a longer time and do not plan to migrate to any other country on a permanent basis. Therefore, we could consider their return decision as sustainable in the narrow sense of this notion. However, both types of returnees had a wish to migrate to Germany/Europe on a temporary basis. While educational migrants would like to pursue further educational goals in Germany, the asylum-seekers would go to Germany or to other European countries for temporary employment. The returnees' migration plans depend less on their successful or failed labour market or social reintegration in Georgia. On the contrary, we could see that the successful reintegration of educational migrants could lead to further migration plans connected to professional and career-related aspirations. On the other hand, the asylum-seekers, difficult labour market situation also leads to further migration plans based on purely economic reasons.

### 6.4 The effects of the return on Georgian society

The development potential of returned migration in general can be both crucial for the development of the country as well as insignificant – it all depends on the characteristics of the return flow (Which skills and resources do they bring with them?), as well as of the country itself (What conditions does it create for returnees to participate in the social, economic and political life of the country?) and the returnees' level of influence (broad/moderate/low).

In the case of Georgia, we can observe that some returnees from Europe were offered leading positions in Government. Some of them also became top decision-makers in the Georgian economy. There have been cases when highly-educated Georgians with particular skills, experiences and resources were specifically brought back to Georgia to lead Ministries or State Departments. These are people who are in a position to formulate and undertake policy measures and, thus, their impact on the development of the country is extremely important.



However, we did not have such returnees in our sample. Our respondents represent middle and lower-middle segments of society, which we could assume form the back-bone of the migration movement from Georgia. This group of migrants, as a rule, comes back with professional skills and education, good language skills, which can be used to benefit Georgia if returnees are given the opportunity to use them accordingly. The impact of return migration can also have an economic aspect if the returnees bring financial resources and start new businesses or invest in existing ones. This certainly creates new employment opportunities and stimulates self-employment.

Our study suggests that the returnees' development potential is not being used to the full. Crucial for this conclusion are cases where the respondents are unable to find employment according to their qualification and have to rely on the help of relatives and friends to find any kind of employment. According to our data, returnees' social, political and economic influence on their social environment in Georgia is also rather limited. The returnees do not have considerable economic resources to invest in Georgia, and do not report any desire or make any attempts to be involved in the social and political life of the country.

## 6.5 The role of assisted return

In this study we asked about the influence of the state programmes assisting return on the return decision and on the reintegration success of the Georgian returnees. We discovered that information about assisted voluntary return programmes (offered by the German Government for asylum-seekers and other migrants with insecure resident permits in Germany) are especially accessible for Georgian migrants in Germany. Based on the data of our study, we assume that return assistance for asylum-seekers plays an important role in the decision making process when it considerably minimizes the risks of return. In other words, return assistance is an important factor for making the return decision a the situation of legal end economic insecurity because it provides an option to return in dignity. From the subjective viewpoint of the respondents, return assistance however does not have any impact on their reintegration chances in Georgia.

Apart from three cases, all the educational returnees whom we interviewed in this study stated that they didn't know anything about possibilities to ap-

ply for return and reintegration assistance in Germany. They received information about programmes promoting the return of highly qualified Georgians after they had already returned and settled in Georgia and via private social networks. All of them considered that participation in such a programme would have facilitated their labour market access according to the qualifications and skills which they had gained in Germany. Especially those returnees who didn't complete their education in Germany were eligible either for programmes assisting asylum-seekers or highly qualified returnees. They are dissatisfied with being left alone after their return and having to rely solely on their own resources.

Based on these findings, we conclude that there is a high demand for programmes promoting the reintegration of returnees to Georgia. Such programmes should address different types of returnee, and focus on the labour market reintegration in particular. Georgia signed the Mobility Partnership agreement with the EU in 2009. The EU supports the reintegration of Georgian returnees in the framework of the mobility partnership. The EU aims to provide Georgian authorities with expertise and knowledge on effective migration management and return policies. Furthermore, projects on capacity building, individual reintegration assistance and information campaigns on legal migration opportunities to Europe are being implemented. Reintegration assistance is being implemented by the Targeted Initiative Georgia – a consortium of 15 institutions from nine EU countries (Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania and Sweden) and IOM. The Targeted Initiative Georgia started its work on 16 December 2010.<sup>27</sup> To support sustainability of return a Mobility Centre has been established in cooperation with the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia. The Centre welcomes all Georgian migrants returning under a readmission procedure or voluntarily from the EU or any other country, and offers a range of services related to smooth reintegration into Georgian society. Due to the fact that this analysis is based on interviews with migrants who returned before 2009, we cannot evaluate the impact of the initiative on the reintegration patterns of returnees from Germany. However, the initiative seems to show great promise in addressing the needs and expectations of migrants returning to Georgia.

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27 See IOM (2012).

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# Discussion Guide for Returned Migrants

## 1. General questions:

- Could you please tell me about yourself (occupation, education, age, marital status)?
- How did you come to decide to emigrate from Georgia? What was the main reason you decided to emigrate? When was it? [for the first time]?

**[here to 'catch' cases of multiple migration]**

- Do you have a/any family member(s) who has/have been abroad or who is/are currently abroad? If yes – who?

**[If several members - ask the following questions about each family member who has been abroad; if the member of the family is still abroad, ask these questions in the present tense.]**

- When did s/he go abroad? To which countries? What was the reason for her/his emigration? What was s/he doing abroad [working, studying]? **[If working:]** What was his/her occupation while abroad? **[If returned:]** When did s/he come back? What has s/he been doing since s/he came back [occupation, social life]

**[If the member of the family is still abroad:] – Does s/he plan to come back? When?**

**The following questions refer to the last emigration experience to Germany**

## 2. Departure

- Could you, please, recall how you first started thinking about going to Germany?
- How did you make your decision?
- Were other members of your family or close relatives/friends involved in the process of decision-making? **If yes** – who?
- Which events, thoughts and discussions could you recall when thinking about emigration? Whose opinion was decisive? Why?
- Which arguments were in favour of your departure? Why?
- Which arguments were against your departure? Why?
- What determined the selection of country of emigration? What else? Why did you decide to go specifically to Germany?
  - Visa
  - Acquaintances
  - Knowledge of German
- How did you obtain information on work/study opportunities in Germany? [**as detailed as possible**]
- How did you leave?
  - **invitation / visa:** How did you obtain a visa?
  - **travel money:** How much money did you need to fund your journey? How did you secure money? [**if you received a loan – what kind of loan? with/without interest**]
  - **route:** What was your itinerary? Where did you arrive first? Where did you stay for the first few days?
- Did you leave alone or with somebody? [**If not alone:**] With whom?

## 3. In Germany

Experience:

- What were your very first impressions upon arrival in Germany? What else?
- Did any of your acquaintance/s meet you there? **If yes:** Who? Did s/he assist you in some way? **If yes:** How did s/he assist you? How long did this assistance last?
- How long did you stay in Germany? Where (city, village) did you stay for most of the time? Did you need to change your place of residence? [changing either city or apartment]. If yes: How often? Why?

- Overall, how did you feel in Germany?
- How did you live in Germany? What were you doing there? [**work/study**] What was your legal status during your stay in Germany? [**If the status changed:**] How?
- How did you support yourself during your stay in Germany?
- Did you manage to support / help your family in Georgia while in Germany?

[**If yes:**]

- How did you help?
- How often / How regularly?
- During your stay in Germany, did you have periods/situations when you could not support your family? What caused such situations?
- Was your family back in Georgia helping you in any way while you were in Germany? Sending anything? [**If yes:**] – What? How often/How regularly?
- How often did you communicate with your family in Georgia? How did you usually communicate with your family? [**phone/Internet/letters**]. Did you manage to visit Georgia while you were in Germany? How many times?
- Did you manage to travel to other European countries from Germany? **If yes:** Which countries have you visited? What impressions did you have after visiting these countries?
- While in Germany, with whom did you generally socialize?
- Were there other Georgian migrants in the city/village where you lived? **If yes:** Did you know them before going to Germany, or did you meet them there? What kind of relationships did you have with them? [**renting an apartment together/working together/studying together**]
- After you settled in Germany, did you provide any kind of assistance to newly-arrived Georgian migrants? **If yes** – to whom? What kind of assistance was it? How long did it last?
- And have you assisted anyone to emigrate from Georgia? **If yes** – whom did you assist? What kind of assistance was it? Which country did you assist her/him/them to emigrate to?

### Opinion:

- Do you think, overall, that your stay in Germany could be considered as a positive or negative experience for you? Why?
- If you had not stayed in Germany, what kind of life would you have had today? And what about the situation in your family?
- Based on your personal experience, what are the main problems that Georgian migrants encounter in Germany? What are the possibilities of solving these problems?

## 4. Return

- Tell me about how you came to return to Georgia. Was it a difficult decision? Why/Why not? What influenced it? Was your decision to return in some way influenced by the Georgian return policy? **If yes:** In what way?
- Do you remember telling your family and/or friends in Georgia that you were returning? What was that like? How did they react?
- Do you remember telling friends/colleagues in Germany that you were returning to Georgia? What was that like? How did they react?
- How did it feel to know you were going to return? Happy/anxious/sad?
- When did you return to Georgia? How did you come back?  
[deportation – return programme – own decision]
- Did you return alone or with someone else?

### [if return programme:]

- Which programme was it? How did you learn about this programme? Exactly what kind of assistance did the programme provide to you? For how long?
- Do you have any contacts/communication with the representatives of this programme now?

### [if not a return programme:]

- Have you heard about programmes or organizations which assist migrants to return to their home countries and find employment here? **If yes:** Which programmes / organizations have you heard about? What did you know about these programmes/organizations? How / from which source did you get information on these programmes/organizations? When did you receive information on these organizations/programmes?



**ASK ALL:**

- What was it like when you arrived? How were your first days after you came back to Georgia? What did you feel?
  - What were your first impressions after coming back to Georgia?
  - How did you get accustomed to life in Georgia?
- How did your family react to your return?
- How did your friends react to your return?
- If you had a partner/children with you, what was it like for them?
- Some people are happy to return to their homeland, and some are sorry that they returned. What about you? Why?

**5. After return/Reintegration**

Experience:

- What have you been doing since coming back to Georgia? **[everything regarding respondent's activities / occupation after the return]** What are your activities now? Are they similar to the activities that you had in Germany?

**If employed right now:** How did you get your job?

- Was it easy or difficult to get a job?
- What problems did you have while looking for a job?
- Did the fact that you were in Germany somehow help you to get the job? In what way exactly?

**If unemployed right now:** What are the main reasons why you cannot/could not find a job? Did the fact that you were in Germany hinder your chance to get a job? In what way exactly?

- Are you in some way involved in local political activities?
  - If yes:** How did you get involved in politics? What kind of involvement is it?
  - If not:** Why not?
- Are you in some way involved in the social life of the community where you live?
  - If yes:** What kind of involvement is it?
  - If not:** Why not?
- Do you have or did you have any kind of conflict since you came back from Germany? **If yes** – What kind of conflict(s) was/were this/these?

**[political, economic, related to social norms]** With whom? What were they caused by? How they were solved? Were they in some way caused by your “German” experience? **If yes:** In what way? Can you describe in more detail one such conflict and how it was solved?

- Some people get used to life in Georgia rather quickly after coming back from abroad, whilst some have various problems in adapting. What about you? **If respondent has/had problems:** What kind of problems are/were these? How have you managed to solve them?
- Do you consider yourself to be settled back in Georgia? **If yes:** How long did it take you to settle back in? How long do you think it usually takes?
- How would you rate your quality of life now in comparison to your quality of life in Germany? **[income, standard of living, housing, travel to work, social life, health, etc.]**
- Do you currently have contacts with Germany?  
**If yes:** With whom? What is the frequency of your contacts? What kind of contacts are they [professional, personal]?  
**If not:** Why not?
- What about your family members? Do you think they might consider emigrating? **If yes:** Who [relation to the respondent]? Why? When? Which countries are under consideration?
- What do you think about your family member’s decision to emigrate? To what degree were you involved in the process of decision-making?

#### Opinion:

- Based on your experience, what is the best thing in Germany? What do you miss most of all when thinking about Germany? And what is the worst thing in Germany?
- If somebody asks for your opinion regarding emigrating to Germany, what would be your advice? Why?
- And speaking about Georgia – what is the best thing here? What was the thing that you missed most of all while in Germany? And what is the worst thing here?
- Now, after you returned, if a current Georgian migrant to Germany asks for your advice regarding his/her return to Georgia – what would be your advice? Why?
- Of course, it is hard to predict, but anyway, how do you imagine your life in ten years from now? (Where will you be, what you will be doing, how will you be?)

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## Concluding questions

- What in your opinion is the major reason people are leaving Georgia and moving abroad?
- When you look back and reflect on your migration experience, what do you think was the main goal that you wished to achieve through your emigration? **In cases where respondents have been abroad more than once, please specify the main goal** both during the first emigration and during the last emigration.

**Thank you!**

# Return Migration from Germany

## Discussion Guide for Experts



1. Could you please tell me about yourself / your occupation / background / activities?
2. Could you please tell me briefly about your organization?
  - its goals / objectives,
  - projects connected with migration issues (examples, descriptions, objectives, stages),
  - projects connected with migration specifically to/from Germany.
3. Do you collaborate with other organizations working on migration issues? Which organizations are these? What are they doing in respect to return migration?
4. Could you briefly describe migration flows from and to Georgia? What are their main characteristics?
5. What do you think are the main problems associated with emigration/immigration from Georgia?
6. What are the main characteristics of flows of Georgian immigrants to Germany?
7. Based on your experience, are there differences between migration flows of Georgian immigrants to Germany, compared to migration flows to other countries?

8. In your opinion, which types of international migrants return to Georgia? What are the main types of Georgian returnees moving from Germany to Georgia?
9. What are, in your view, the main problems faced by Georgian people returning to Georgia?
10. What do you think could be done in order to facilitate the successful reintegration of Georgian returned migrants into Georgian society?
11. Have you heard about programmes that help Georgian immigrants living in Germany to return back to Georgia?

**If yes:** Which programmes are these? How do they help? What are the strengths and weaknesses of these programmes? How is it possible to participate in these programmes?

Based on your experience, how do immigrants living in Germany obtain information about these programmes? Who funds these programmes?

Are there any differences between programmes helping Georgian immigrants come back from Germany, and programmes helping Georgian immigrants to return from other European countries?

12. Have you heard about programmes that help returned immigrants to reintegrate after they come back to Georgia? Which programmes are these? How do they help? What are the strengths and weaknesses of these programmes? How is it possible to participate in these programmes? Based on your experience, how do immigrants living in Germany obtain information about these programmes? Who funds these programmes?
13. How would you evaluate existing Georgian state politics and policy on migration issues? In what direction should policy be formulated for laws, projects and programmes? What are the main obstacles that hinder the formulation of migration policy in Georgia?



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# III.

## Return to Russia

Return Motives, Reintegration Strategies,  
Sustainability



Markus Kaiser  
Zoia Solovieva

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# 1

## Introduction



The Russian Federation is a country of immigration. “In the 1990s migration to Russia played an important role in demographic terms: net migration nearly replaced the natural decline in population in the early 1990s and in the late 1990s compensated about 45 per cent of the natural decrease” (Tsiulina 2008a: 4). According to the Russian Federal State Statistics Service, the main countries of origin of migrants coming to Russia are Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Moldova, Georgia, Tajikistan, Belarus, and Turkmenistan.<sup>1</sup> This means that the overall influx to Russia is clearly predominated by migrants from Central Asia (more than 55-60 per cent of migrants)<sup>2</sup>, with Eastern European states (Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus) following behind at a considerable distance.

Among the Western European states the Federal Republic of Germany had the biggest influx of migrants from the former Soviet Union, including Russian Germans and ethnic German repatriates (Spät-Aussiedler) (esti-

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1 Cf. The Federal State Statistical Service (Goskomstat) ([http://www.gks.ru/bgd/regl/b07\\_13/IssWWW.exe/Stg/d01/04-31.htm](http://www.gks.ru/bgd/regl/b07_13/IssWWW.exe/Stg/d01/04-31.htm)) (23.06.2008).

2 The migrants from Central Asian states (and the Caucasus) are ethnically and religiously diverse and are considered to cause social tensions.

mated at between 2 and 2.5 million) and Jewish migrants<sup>3</sup> (“Kontingent-flüchtlinge”) (estimated at between 200,000 and 300,000). These groups as well as other Russian citizens who have migrated to Western Europe constitute potential re-migrants in times of broader economic prosperity in the Russian Federation.

### 1.1 Key research questions and methodology

This study<sup>4</sup> analyses current voluntary re-migration from Germany to Russia, with or without the support of special state programmes. The study is on the one hand based on an analysis of Russian legislation, material from analytical centres, press publications and specialised internet sites. The main source of analysis, however, consists of information drawn from 21 biographical interviews with recent re-migrants from Germany to Russia. Additionally interviews were conducted with experts in four regions of Russia (Saint Petersburg, Moscow, Kaliningrad and the Saratov region) plus the region of Novosibirsk. The research was carried out from March to September 2008 by the Centre for German and European Studies at Saint Petersburg State University with the support of regional partners. The sampling is based on the definition of the term “returnee” as referring to any person born in Russia or another country of the former Soviet Union who returns to Russia after having been a long- or medium-term migrant in Germany. The sample covered by the study includes four types of return:

- unassisted voluntary return without compulsion;
- unassisted voluntary return under compulsion;
- assisted voluntary return without compulsion;
- forced return (deportation/expulsion).

The study focuses firstly on central factors influencing the decision to return. The reasons for return and the attendant circumstances are differen-

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3 They were migrating under a specific humanitarian programme (“Gesetz über Maßnahmen für im Rahmen humanitärer Hilfsaktionen aufgenommene Flüchtlinge”).

4 This text is an abridged version of the original expertise.

tiated according to push factors (factors motivating people to leave Germany) and pull factors (factors encouraging re-migration to Russia rather than to another country). Secondly, it analyzes sustainable return in the form of permanent return without further re-emigration to Europe. We assume that sustainable return is based on successful social and economic reintegration in the country of return.

## 1.2 Sampling

In all, we conducted 21 biographical interviews with returnees and their family members (26 people in total). Interviews took place in March – September 2008, at the four field sites of Kaliningrad (5 interviews) and the Kaliningrad region (one interview), Saratov and the Saratov region (8 interviews in the cities of Engels and Marx and in the Marx rural district), Moscow (2 interviews) and Saint Petersburg (5 interviews). The sample for analysis includes 11 women and 10 men aged 26-30 (4 cases), 31 – 40 (8 cases), 41 – 50 (4 cases), 51 – 60 (4 cases) and over 60 (1 case) at the time of interview. There are 7 cases of individual return and 14 cases of family return. The data were gathered by means of multi-site exploration and stays in the field of up to ten days to provide an understanding of regional differences. We expected returnees settling in the provincial or peripheral regions to return to their previous places of residence. This would mean pensioners of Russian-German decent returning to their villages of origin, for example around Omsk or in the Saratov region. Moscow, St. Petersburg and Kaliningrad are potential destinations for people returning for economic/business-related or educational reasons.

It was rather difficult to obtain access to return migrants in all local settings, as they were not easy to track down, were busy and were not particularly interested either in taking time to talk or in sharing their migration trajectories, since they very often appeared to be connected with a feeling of personal failure. Re-migrants were not keen for their decision to return to become public knowledge, either in their local social environment or as part of any academic research. The interviewees explained that their return would be associated with “defeat” or “failure” as living standards etc. are generally still perceived to be higher in Germany and/or Western Europe. In some cases, this was a reason why people refused to be interviewed.

As a rule, contacts were established through local counterparts - gatekeepers (for example directors of the GTZ<sup>5</sup>-supported German Minorities Centres<sup>6</sup> and migrant associations in the regions covered by the study). It was difficult, however, to use the snowball method and obtain new contacts from return migrants themselves, because they did not have any contact with other returnees. It proved especially difficult to gain access to specific types of return migrants, such as those who had returned under compulsion, because they were rarely connected with any associations and it quickly turned out to be impossible to approach anyone without being introduced first. The sample consists for the most part of recent returnees (from several months/weeks to a maximum of 4 years), and in our view reflects the general trend of return from EU countries.

No spatial/regional concentration of returnees was found in the selected regions of study. In most cases (except one in Saratov and two in Kaliningrad) interviews were conducted with individuals but not with any other members of the same household(s). This is attributable in part to the family situation of the interviewed returnees: very often the returnee's spouse, children and parents were still resident in Germany at the time of the interview. This suggests that return takes the form of a transnational family/household strategy, with some family members returning to the Russian Federation and others deciding to stay in Germany, where they are entitled to social welfare or to participate in the educational system. This hypothesis could not be validated in this study, however, because it requires an analysis of the life strategies of family members living in Germany.

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5 The GTZ (German Agency for Technical Co-operation) was a German development agency. It is operating since 2011 as GIZ (German Agency for International Co-operation) after the amalgamation of GTZ with two other development organizations: Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst and Internationalen Weiterbildung und Entwicklung gGmbH (InWEnt).

6 The German-Russian centres were established after 1992 with the aim of supporting the German ethnic minorities in Russia. The centres are financed by the German government and the Russian state. Their main activities are intercultural education, youth work, the promotion and encouragement of Russian-German bilingualism, social assistance and the promotion of social and professional leaders of Russian-German origin. The biggest development organization in Germany - the GIZ - is in charge of the two biggest centres in Moscow and Kaliningrad. The International Association of German Culture is responsible for the centres in other parts of Russia. For more details see <http://www.giz.de/Themen/de/SID-AD8DEAF9-3868801-C/35509.htm> (23.07.2012).

### 1.3 Methods of collecting data

The following methods were applied in examining return migration in the Russian Federation: interviews, expert interviews, to a lesser extent the observation of participants and the review of documents.

Much of the empirical data on which our study is based were obtained through unstructured conversations to gain access in the local setting, as well as semi-structured interviews and in-depth interviews. Interviews were conducted at the interviewees' apartments/houses, in public spaces (cafes, market) or at the workplace. The main source of data is thus first-hand information from the returnees themselves. Consequently, in-depth interviews covering the stories of their return provided the starting point for an analysis of return migration and its patterns. The validity of the individual information from interviews has been consolidated by a series of participating observations in the places of study.

The research group developed a semi-structured interview guideline for return migrants. The guidelines were reviewed and streamlined after the initial research visits, consultations with the contractor and pre-analysis of the material obtained from an analysis of public and scientific debates on this topic in Russia. In this way it was possible to focus interviews on aspects that appeared relevant or needed clarification. The interview guide was structured around five thematic blocks corresponding to periods relating to different migratory stages: pre-emigration conditions, emigration process, experience in Germany, preparation for return and post-return conditions in Russia. To complete the picture we also conducted semi-structured interviews with return and migration experts working with state organizations and academic circles, as well as with involved non-profit organizations.

Most of the interviews with return migrants or experts were recorded on digital mini disc. Full transcripts of 21 interviews were produced in between the field-trips. Relevant everyday conversations during the field study were not necessarily recorded on the spot - except by noting a few key words. In the case of the unrecorded conversations and the participating observation of participants, notes were taken and records were subsequently drawn up from memory. Additional observations were recorded in researcher field diaries. Documents and materials were collected both in digital form and as hard copy. Life-story accounts were always tape-re-

corded. In addition to the tapes, we wrote down descriptions regarding the setting of the interview, the atmosphere and personal impressions. Interviews were conducted in the Russian language (except in two cases where German was used on the interviewees' initiative).

#### 1.4 The political and legal background to return to Russia

Lawmaking on migration in Russia started in 1991 after the break-up of the USSR. There was a need for the swift establishment of a new legislative framework, as most of the Soviet laws and normative acts did not meet the needs of the considerably changed economic, political and social situation in Russia. Newly erected borders between the Russian Federation and its new neighbouring states – the former Soviet republics – complicated the situation and resulted in many citizens of the Russian Federation suddenly finding themselves in a foreign country from one day to the next.<sup>7</sup> Conversely, in the territory of the Russian Federation citizens of the other former Soviet republics suddenly became foreigners. The situation caused considerable population movements – to and from Russia. Thus, the main purpose of lawmaking of the early 1990s was to regulate the movements of the former citizens of the USSR and to support the Russian-speaking population living in the former Soviet Republics.

In the first decade after the collapse of the USSR, the Russian government paid little attention to regulating and managing labour migration within the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States)<sup>8</sup> region, concentrating instead on issues such as Russians coming back to Russia or the naturalization process for former Soviet citizens in Russian territory. The migration of the Russian-speaking population to Russia did not take place on such a scale as might have been expected, however. For example, ethnic Russians living in the other Soviet republics made up 18.2 per cent of the total Russian population in 1989; this number declined to only 14.7 per cent in 1999 (Heleniak 2003: 137). In the late 1990s the Russian government became conscious of the grave consequences of long-lasting demo-

7 In 1989 25.3 million Russians lived in the non-Russian successor states (Heleniak 2003: 137).

8 The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was created in December 1991. At present the CIS comprises: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Ukraine.

graphic changes and the national economy's need for migrants in the face of economic expansion, particularly in booming regions such as Moscow and St. Petersburg. The first decade of the 21st century thus witnessed the emergence of a new approach towards migration and the establishment of a new legal framework and an administrative and institutional organization. Step by step a new regulatory – and more liberal – migration policy was developed. On 17 March 2005 President Vladimir Putin formulated the new migration policy goals: “People should be sent where there is demand for them. We need specialists and workers with certain specialties in places where there is truly a demand for them, and not only where migrants would prefer to live” (Pravda 2005).

In 2002 the fundamental law determining the new approach to migration was adopted – Federal Law No. 115-FL “On the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens in the Russian Federation”. The law forms the legal basis for the regulation of entry and residence rights of foreign citizens in Russia. First and foremost the law defined a foreign worker (Article 2). It distinguished between two types of foreigners: those in need of a visa to reside on the Russian territory and those allowed to enter Russia without a special allowance (up to 90 days; Article 5, Clause 1). Furthermore, for the first time an annual quota system was introduced for invitations/work permits for migrant workers (both on a visa and visa-free basis) depending on the region's needs for labour and with regard to the demographic situation (Article 18, Clause 1).

Other important legal acts on migration which were adopted or amended in the first decade of the 21st century were Federal Law No. 114-FL “On Procedure for Exit from the Russian Federation and Entry into the Russian Federation” of 1996 (with significant amendments in 1999, 2003, and 2008) and Federal Law No. 109-FL “On Migration Registration of Foreign Nationals and Stateless Persons in the Russian Federation” of 2006. These two laws regulate in detail the procedure for the registration (and de-registration) of foreign nationals and stateless persons coming to Russia for both temporary and permanent stays. Under the latter law, information on all foreign nationals and stateless persons is stored in a unified database. The Government Decree “On the Procedure for the Issuance of Authorization Documents for Conducting Temporary Economic Activities by Foreign Citizens in the Russian Federation” of 2006 stipulates a list of necessary documents for obtaining a work permit for both categories of foreign workers – on a visa-free and visa basis.



Despite the liberalization of migration policy in 2006 the Federal Law “On Retail Markets and on Amending the Labour Code of the Russian Federation” was passed, severely limiting the share of migrants engaged in economic activities in retail markets. The main argument for the law was the need to control health and sanitary problems in retail markets, because migrants coming from countries with allegedly difficult sanitary and epidemiological situations could represent a danger to public health. Another argument was that increasing numbers of migrant workers engaged in “sensitive” sectors of the economy could increase the probability of ethnic tensions. In general, the Russian government argued that it would prefer to reduce the numbers of immigrant workers of “foreign” ethnic origin and to encourage the migration of ethnic Russians to Russia.

The strategy to attract ethnic Russians first became apparent in the late 1990s. The Federal Law “On State Policy of the Russian Federation towards Compatriots Living Abroad” of 1999, the Government decree “Basic Directions of the Russian Federation’s State Policy towards Compatriots Living Abroad for 2002-2005” of 2002, the Programme for Collaboration with Compatriots Living Abroad for 2006-2008 and the Programme for Voluntary Re-settlement of Fellow-nationals Living Abroad of 2006 were legal acts aimed at intensifying the “re-migration” of the Russian-speaking population living outside Russia. To the Russian government, the re-migration of ethnic Russians to Russia seemed less likely to result in social tensions and interethnic conflicts on account of the given cultural and ethnic closeness, and more likely to be accepted by the local population. However, in spite of these attempts large-scale resettlement failed to take place. By now such programmes were actually unable to counter labour shortages or to make a substantial positive impact on the demographic problems of the Russian Federation. Moreover, the numbers of labour migrants of non-Russian ethnic origin increased after 2008. Around 1.2 million labour migrants from Tadjikistan and more than 500,000 Kirgiz were living in Russia in 2010 (Wolkowa 2011).

One of the central concepts in the discussion of voluntary re-migration is the concept of “fellow national” (‘sootchestvennik’, also referred to in the relevant literature by the term ‘compatriot’). Russian-speaking re-migrants are defined as “fellow nationals” and distinguished according to the categories of migrants from «near» and «far» abroad. The “migrants from near abroad” are people coming from the former Soviet republics which became independent states after the collapse of the USSR – the Com-

monwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Baltic states and Georgia. “Migrants from far abroad” include Russian-speaking people from all other countries, first and foremost the countries of “traditional” emigration from the USSR - the USA, Israel, Germany, France etc.

### **The State Programme for Voluntary Re-settlement of Fellow-nationals Living Abroad**

The State Programme for Voluntary Re-settlement of Fellow-nationals Living Abroad (2006-2012) aims to support re-migration, to stabilise the size of the Russian Federation’s population and to attract people of working age to regions whose population declined during the period of economic instability from 1990 to 2000, especially in Siberia and the far east (12 pilot regions). Regions participating in the federal programme are required to be able to create jobs and infrastructure for this group of migrants, to provide them with social and medical assistance and to offer simplified naturalization procedures. The federal budget provides funds only for the basic compensation payments to participants (transport and moving expenses and a monthly supplement for a transitional period of six months). The principal institutions responsible for the programme are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Federal Migration Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, along with regional executive institutions (these may depend on the local government structures in the respective regions). Russian-speaking people from “near abroad” and from “far abroad” are encouraged to participate in the programme, that is, to apply for assistance from the Russian state by making a decision to return, to settle in under-populated regions and to contribute to their economic development.

The authorities stress that “the main idea of the programme is to test in practice how far this resource – the human capital of compatriots living abroad (in the broad sense as defined by the law on compatriots) – can really constitute a source of potential by attracting qualified labour [...] In this respect it is essentially an economic project and by no means a large-scale re-migration programme, such as many have assumed” (Pantelev 2007). At the same time the Ministry for Foreign Affairs declared that “the programme will<sup>9</sup> allow several million people to relocate and live permanently in Russia” (out of 20 million living near abroad and 10 million far abroad). According to the programme, “compatriots” are people who were

9 See: <http://www.rusintercenter.ru/?lang=ru&menu=137>.

born in other states or who live or have lived outside of Russia but who possess attributes of a Russian identity such as language, religion, cultural heritage, traditions and customs, and also the direct descendants of such people. The re-migrants are required to apply to participate in the programme at one of the relevant offices in their country of residence. This may be a body representing the Federal Migration Service (FMS), the Russian embassy or other Russian authorities responsible for cooperation with the Russian diaspora abroad.

The programme distinguishes between return regions in terms of their social and economic situation. Firstly, the programme includes regions belonging to border territories of special strategic importance to Russia which are characterised by declining populations (A). Secondly there are regions with large investment projects which need to attract large numbers of migrants because of labour market shortages. Areas (regions and republics) of the Russian Federation which include such territories are characterised by positive social-economic development trends higher than the average for Russia and a rate of inward migration lower than the Russian average (B). Thirdly, the programme includes territories with stable social-economic development where a decline in population and (or) an outflow of emigrants has been observed in the last 3 or more years (C). Twelve regions are included in the programme: Kaliningrad region (A); Lipetsk region (B, C); Kaluga Region (C); Tambov region (B); Tver region (B, C); Amur region (A); Tyumen region (A, B, C); Novosibirsk region (B); Krasnoyarsk Krai (B); Kharbarovsk Krai (A); Irkutsk region (B); Primorsky Krai (A, B).

The programme was officially adopted in June 2006 but was not put into effect until the end of 2007. It was not until 2008 that the participating regions provided funding and the legal framework for realisation of the programme was developed. In 2008 2,081 re-migrants participated in the resettlement programme. These data were provided by an expert at the Russian Federal Migration Service. The most popular regions for return are European economically developed regions of Russia – Kaliningrad (556), Kaluga (186), Lipetsk (105), Tambov (68). Siberian, northern and far eastern regions attract far fewer returnees – Krasnoyarsk (27), Tyumen (13), Kharbarovsk (1). Among the first five sending countries are former republics of the Soviet Union with a high concentration of Russian nationals - Kazakhstan (307), Kyrgyzstan (154), Ukraine (172), Moldova (96) and Armenia (42). “Far abroad” countries are represented by only 8 participants

– Germany (4), Israel (2), USA (1) and Bulgaria (1), five of whom chose Kaliningrad as a host region.

The programme was criticized by experts for several reasons. The programme strictly defines the regions and even specific towns and villages to which participants can migrate. Very often these are small villages with underdeveloped infrastructure and low salaries, with no guarantee of receiving permanent or even temporary accommodation and registration. The payments granted to participating re-migrants are insufficient to cover all the costs of re-migration – they amount to 20,000 roubles (approx. 540 euros) for 6 months. These payments are nevertheless above the average level of salaries in the regions. This means that if a participant in the programme does eventually find work they are likely to receive a salary even lower than the benefit payment. Participants in the programme are not guaranteed registration of their place of settlement, and this is necessary in order to receive the benefits from the regional authorities to which they are supposedly entitled, for example social and medical services. Participants in the programme are not allowed to change their place of permanent residence as defined in the “Certificate of participation in the state programme” for a period of two years. As yet, no simplified procedure has been devised for the application for Russian citizenship for those who have re-migrated. Experts also note serious shortcomings in the work at Russian consulates, where the process of approving applications seems to be very inefficient. The programme’s procedures as a whole are extremely bureaucratic; people wishing to participate need to collect a large number of certificates and documents to apply for the programme. The system for informing compatriots abroad about the programme is badly organised. Apart from the re-settlement programme, the Russian compatriots’ policy aims to cooperate with the Russian-speaking diaspora living abroad. In 2006 the Russian diplomatic service began to operate a department for cooperation with compatriots abroad. In October 2006 a World Congress of Russians Abroad was held in Saint Petersburg, attended by the President of the Russian Federation, whose speech confirmed that it was a priority to improve relations with compatriots abroad. From this point in time, the Russian-speaking population living in the “far abroad” also became a focus of the policy on compatriots. Cooperation with the Russian-speaking diaspora is supervised by the “Government Commission on the Affairs of Compatriots Abroad”. The commission was created by a decree of the President of the Russian Federation on 11th August 1994, No. 1681 “On the basic objectives of state policies of the Russian Federation in relation to

Compatriots Abroad". The Commission funds projects and supports community-building and the self-organization of compatriots living abroad. Such projects should be related to the improvement of Russian language proficiency among children of Russian descent, rehabilitation for veterans of the Second World War, the financing of literature and textbooks for Russian-speaking community organisations, subscriptions to the Russian press and the funding of publications by the diaspora itself. The Commission runs cultural and historical festivals abroad, organises forums of compatriots and provides humanitarian and legal aid to Russian-speaking migrants in need. Since 2007, compatriots from the far abroad have also been eligible to apply for funds (Krasin 2007).

### **The registration requirement: Propiska**


The Russian registration system ("propiska" system) is one of the main obstacles to successful integration for both international and internal migrants. The system was created in 1925 to control interstate movements of the population of the Soviet Union. Citizens of the Soviet Union were obliged to register their interstate movements and to possess an official document authenticating their place of residence. In the Soviet Union the introduction and development of the registration system was closely connected with the internal passport system. In 1932 a unified passport system was introduced in the Soviet Union and a passport and visa service was created within the structures of the Ministry of Interior Affairs. This service was charged with maintaining population statistics, controlling migration and combating anti-Soviet elements and non-working citizens ("parasites"). In practice the passport and registration system was a means of managing internal migration by the population of the USSR, although officially the constitution of the USSR granted freedom of movement. By 1974 practically the whole population of the USSR had passports. Up to this time any person leaving their place of residence for longer than 6 weeks was required to apply for a removal from the register of the former place of residence and obtain a new registration at the new place of residence (with the exception of work-related travel and holidays). 3 days were allowed for the completion of de-registration and obtaining new registration. Breach of the registration regulations and living without a legal registration document were criminal offences. In 1993 the administrative act of propiska was replaced by "the registration of residence" and the concept of registration at the place of arrival was also introduced. At present the registration system is governed by the 1993 law "On the rights of citizens of the Russian Federation to freedom of movement, choice of places of

stay and residence inside the Russian Federation” and the 1995 Law “On the rules for registration and deregistration of citizens of the Russian Federation on the register of places of stay and residence inside the Russian Federation”. In practice the new system of registration reproduces almost exactly the Soviet system of propiska.

A lack of registration at the place of residence seriously limits the rights of Russian citizens and of migrants as well. Without registration it is almost impossible to obtain an internal or external passport, a driving licence, to apply for a pension or other social security allowances, to obtain loans, to secure employment, to obtain the tax identification number which is necessary for such purposes as entering into an employment contract, to gain access to medical assistance or to participate in the state educational system. “Propiska” is a fundamental part of the mechanism for carrying out practically all social programmes in Russia. Experts note that the complexity of the registration system is one of the main reasons for the increase in the numbers of unregistered migrants, and, as a result, the loss of control over mass movements of people and a lessening of the extent to which migratory processes can be managed (Pravozashchitnik 1998; UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 2003).

# 2

## Reasons for return



The interviewees were asked to list and describe their main reasons for emigrating to Germany and for returning. They state various reasons for migrating to Germany, for example economic grounds, marriage to a German partner, reunification with family members already residing in Germany, a wish to live in a “German environment” (especially important for Russian Germans), educational aspirations and a wish to provide better future prospects for their children. Most of these motives are quite typical reasons for international migration in general. This means that migration to Germany was not motivated primarily by economic or employment-related reasons; economic considerations were nevertheless mentioned in practically all of the interviews, regardless of age and gender. Table 1 below presents a breakdown of the sample according to the labour market positioning of interviewees prior to migration to Germany and during their stay in Germany. The table takes into account 18 out of 21 cases making up the sample. Three cases were excluded from the analysis because they represent middle-term stays of less than one year and therefore cannot provide us with the necessary information on labour market positioning in Germany.

**Table 1: Labour market positioning of the interviewees in Germany compared to their labour market status prior to migration**

Factors	Total # (18)	PRE	PG	PRE	PG	PRE	PG	PRE	PG	PRE	PG	PRE	PG
		HS	HS	LS	LS	SE	SE	STU	STU	UNE	UNE	RET	RET
<b>Sex</b>													
Male	9	3	1	0	3	3	2	1	1	2	2	0	0
Female	9	3	2	3	6	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	1
<b>Duration of stay</b>													
1 - 5 years	11	3	1	2	6	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1
6 - 10 years	4	2	1	0	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
11 - 19 years	3	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
<b>Education received in home country</b>													
No education	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Secondary school	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
College or polytechnic	2	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Uncompleted Higher education	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0
Higher education	10	5	3	0	5	3	2	2	0	0	0	0	0

PRE pre-emigration employment status in home country

PG employment status in Germany prior to re-migration/migration to Russia

HS highly skilled: job requires high professional skills and higher education, very often managerial position, prestigious; not necessarily backed up by high income (in Russia)

LS low-skilled: job does not require professional skills and special training, low paid, not prestigious; person is eligible for social security benefits (in Germany)

SE self-employed (small business, cross-border trade, private tutoring)

STU student

UN Unemployed (includes cases of illegal activities and unemployed asylum seeker)

RET retired



Reduction of employment status

Source: own elaboration on basis of the collected data.



We can observe that especially highly qualified migrants experienced a decline in their labour market status in Germany. They worked in lower-qualified positions compared to their labour market positions prior to migration. In other words, those interviewees possessing higher education degrees experienced professional de-qualification in Germany. A decline in professional and social status was thus the main reason for returning to Russia. Only in two cases did interviewees (both women) manage to achieve a higher employment and professional status in Germany. Against this background the migration goals were evaluated by the interviewees according to how their expectations were fulfilled. On the basis of the answers provided, the interviewees can be divided into three groups in respect of their return motive, i.e. return as result of success, of failure or involuntarily.

## 2.1 Return based on success

The main return motives of returnees who interpret their migration as successful are:

- Successful educational career (validation of Russian professional diploma or a university degree in Germany);
- Acquiring language skills in everyday and professional German;
- Finding work in accordance with their professional qualification which led to career development and to obtaining management positions.

For example, a Russian German woman aged 57 emigrated from Kyrgyzstan in 1989 together with her husband and two sons. In Frunze (today Bishkek) she worked as a chief engineer in a specialized institute working on fire alarms. She left the country without any knowledge of German. In Minden the headmaster of the school where her older son was studying discovered that she was an engineer. He recommended her to a company (later to become her employer) which asked her to translate some documents for wood-working equipment into Russian, as it was to be exported to Russia. She was able to perform this work well, thanks to her training at a polytechnic institute in Russia and the proficiency which she had already acquired in the German language. She then attended courses in

technical German, passed an exam and had her Soviet engineer's diploma recognized. At the same time she also gained a diploma as a legal translator. She attended an 18 month-long course and obtained a qualification as a financial manager in the manufacturing sector. From 1994 she took up employment with the previously mentioned company which produced wood-working equipment and was responsible for exports to the countries of the CIS. In 2005 the owner of the company offered her the post of director of the Moscow branch of the company. She agreed and, in 2006, moved to Moscow together with her husband. Her husband's career had not been so successful. He had lost his job and had difficulties finding new employment. The fact that he was unable to fulfil himself professionally in Germany was a contributory factor in the decision to move to Moscow. It should be noted that interviewees assignable to this category had stayed in Germany for longer than 10 years. Overall, return was presented only in two cases as a real story of success. The first interviewee was able to obtain official recognition for her "Russian" educational diploma in Germany. The second completed a programme of education in Germany. Both studied German on courses provided free of charge by the Germany state. The decision to return was made because of professional career opportunities with German companies. Both interviewees were of Russian German descent and moved to Russia because they were placed in charge of their companies' Russian branches. Interestingly, they reported that personal motives contributed to their decision to return to Russia. In one case the Russian husband of the interviewee had difficulties finding employment in Germany and strongly supported the decision to go back to Moscow. In another case the interviewee's decision to return was spurred by the beginning of a relationship with a Russian partner who was unhappy with the idea of moving to Germany.

In comparison to these successful interviewees, other interviewees with higher education certificates from Russia reported that because of economic constraints in the time directly after their arrival in Germany they went straight into jobs which were often unskilled and poorly paid (as cleaners, labourers employed on a contract basis by temporary employment agencies).

## 2.2 Return based on failure

Against the background of the migration goals presented at the beginning of this chapter, many more interviewees stated that their goals had not been achieved and their hopes associated with migration had been disappointed. More than half of the respondents (12 cases) reinterpreted their decision to migrate to Germany as a “mistake”.

“I wanted to return from the very beginning. As soon as I arrived at the hostel, I didn’t like it.”

(Man, 59 years old, Saratov)

“I shouldn’t have done it. Yesterday I called a friend from Omsk. We studied together at the university. He is still working at the airport which I built. I was the senior engineer and he was the chief engineer. Now he’s the deputy general director of construction works. He says: ‘Why did you go? What have you achieved? Maybe now you could have been the chief engineer and that’s a job with a good salary. You lost everything. You sold your flat, your garage and your dacha and all that just wasted away in Germany’. If I had stayed there everything would have been alright. I think it was a big mistake that I made.”

(Man, 53 years old, Kaliningrad)

Several returnees present their decision to return as being motivated by a desire to escape low income, an unacceptable position on the German labour market, bad housing conditions and limited opportunities for children considering secondary and higher education. In general they report that their human capital was not rewarded in Germany. The interviewees felt like “second-class citizens” and saw no opportunity of realising their professional ambitions or achieving an appropriate social status in Germany. This motive for return is to be found among respondents in all regions: Saratov and Saratov Oblast, Saint Petersburg, Kaliningrad and Kaliningrad Oblast. All returnees who were dissatisfied with their professional and social status in Germany possessed higher educational degrees and were highly satisfied with their professional position in Russia prior to migration. They interpreted their decision to migrate to Germany as a knee-jerk reaction to short term economic hardships in Russia during the 1990s or as a decision made under pressure from relatives who had already migrated to Germany.

Another motive for return stated by several interviewees was problems experienced by children in adapting to life in Germany. In several cases the family was split into those who wanted to return to Russia and those who were more successful in Germany and did not countenance any plans to return. One example here is a family consisting of four people - a mother (Russian), father (Russian German) and two daughters who moved to Germany in 2005. The mother and younger daughter returned to Russia in 2007. Prior to migration to Germany the older daughter was studying at a law school in Saratov, while the younger daughter attended a secondary school. The elder daughter went to language courses in Germany and received an Otto-Benecke-Stiftung grant. She moved to Kassel to study at a high school there. The younger daughter experienced problems at school, however. In the mother's opinion this was because she had to study in a class where the pupils were two years younger than her and was also due to discrimination against her as a Russian. The girl stopped going to school, after which her mother decided to return to the Saratov Oblast (village of Pavlovka) where the family had a house and relatives (the interviewee's mother and brother). At the time of the interview the interviewee was in Russia together with her younger daughter while the husband and elder daughter remained in Germany. The interviewee mentioned that several other families (one of which had lived in Germany for at least 6 years) had returned from Germany to villages in the Marx region of Saratov Oblast because of similar reasons.

The interviewee herself was unable to find a job in Germany, which was a source of disappointment to her. She supported her daughter's decision to return as she herself felt isolated and distressed:

"It was a strain on me there, sitting alone all day. So I cried and said to myself, I'm sitting in a gilded cage. And where should I go? And you've got to have money. You've got to have money to call someone. So you just sit and watch TV. Now it sounds funny, why was I sitting at home? [...] I didn't go to church [...] My husband went to church. My relatives were doing it, but I was just like that [...]"

(Woman, 43 years old, Saratov)

Divorce is cited as a motive for return by women married to German partners. Interestingly, the female interviewees who decided to break up with their partners and return to Russia did so not necessarily because of serious family conflicts, but mostly because they felt isolated and frustrated in their careers.

“I decided to go to Germany because I wanted to earn better money as a journalist than in Russia. And I wanted to get my personal life in order, because in Engels (a small city in Russia), male singles of my age are rare...In Hamburg I tried to get a job. I started with a Russian newspaper there and managed to earn 150 euros in two months... This wasn't acceptable for me and I decided to return... All my family in Russia are urging me to go back to Germany and my husband is waiting for me there. But I'm not very motivated. Here (in Russia) I don't have a partner, I'm a single mother, but I'm not a “second-class” citizen.

(Woman, 29 years old, Saratov).

Several migrants who attended university in Germany abandoned their education and returned because they expected limited labour market opportunities in Germany compared to Russia. They referred to the fact that they expected discrimination on the German labour market because of their “Russian” names and foreign accents. At the same time they hoped that their educational experience in Germany and their knowledge of the German language would land them well-paid positions in Russia.

“I studied law. I wasn't thrilled at the quality of education. I started at the low faculty in St. Petersburg and we had a more systematic approach to different law sectors. In Germany you get some aspects in one semester and another in another semester and you have to create your own system at the end of your studies. But if you don't manage, you graduate with half-knowledge... So it was very eclectic and somehow boring there... Additionally I slowly understood that no German would go to a lawyer with a Russian name. I thought I would be better off working for German clients in Russia than in Germany. Now I work for a German company in Russia and I'm very satisfied”

(Man, 22 years old, St. Petersburg).

In their self-characterization as “second-class citizens”, the interviewees stress the absence of opportunities to fulfil their potential, above all in professional terms. The example of a man aged 53, electrical engineer, is a case in point. He worked in Omsk as a chief engineer for 10 years. In Germany he had managed to obtain a job as an electrician, earning 800-900 euros a month. His wife found unskilled work on a factory conveyor belt, but then she was forced to leave this job for health reasons. In the final year before returning to Russia both received unemployment benefits (Arbeitslosengeld II):

“It was hard, I was not feeling fulfilled. I don’t want to work as a street sweeper, it does not suit me. In short, I was losing my skills. I worked as an energy specialist for ten years, 24 years altogether with the army in Russia. Why should I end up as a caretaker? It wasn’t a good place for us. After three years I was feeling desperate, it was hard, with no alternatives. Your diploma, they say, flush it down the toilet, your recognized diploma.”

(Man, 53 years old, Kaliningrad)

The interviewee also notes the sharp decline in the standard of living in Germany, inflation, the worsening of his material situation in recent years and also the fear of poverty in old age. His professional experience in Russia was not taken into account when calculating his future pension benefits in Germany. He explained that with his current work record he could expect a pension of 186 euros from the age of 67. His wife, whose work experience in Russia was taken into account (because of special regulations on pension benefits for ethnic German repatriates stipulated in Paragraph 4, of the Federal Expellees Act) could expect to receive 450 euros from the age of 63. The low pension and prolonged unemployment in Germany were the main reasons for returning.

### 2.3 Voluntary return under compulsion and forced return

In some cases the decision to return was voluntary but the interviewees had to leave because of an expiring residence permit. In two cases the interviewees got divorced from their partners in Germany and were refused an individual residence permit. In one case the interviewee was accused of illegal employment as a surgeon at a state hospital. All these interviewees cited limited career prospects in Germany which made it impossible for them to stay in the country.

“I worked at the German hospital as an intern for five years. A couple of months after my appointment, my boss allowed me to perform surgery. He saw how I worked, was impressed and allowed me to operate. I performed surgery twice a day, it was back-breaking. I was an assistant surgeon, but it turned out that I wasn’t allowed to perform surgery without a corresponding work permit. I obtained a European internship and conducted a research project in the hospital. A private investor financed my work there, but according to German law I wasn’t

allowed to perform this work, I didn't possess permission to participate in the German labour market because of my Russian passport. One day the police came to the hospital and started to investigate my case. And my boss didn't want the problem with me to get out of hand and go to court. So I quit ... I have a family in Germany, my wife is a Russian German and she is still there. We have two children. And I decided to return to St. Petersburg and to provide for my family from here..."

(Man, 39 years old, St. Petersburg)

In three cases the returnees, all of them men, were forced returnees, i.e. they were deported from Germany to Russia. None of the interviewees planned to go back and had consequently no return motives. However, all of them had been aware of the risks of deportation. Their hopes of stabilizing their legal situation in Germany and staying longer were disappointed and they had to begin "a new life" in Russia.

In one case a man aged 47, with a degree from the foreign languages faculty of the University of Yerevan, came to Germany annually from 1988 as a "tourist" to earn money, staying on an irregular basis for up to six months, until he was detected and deported.

"I started going there in 1988 and I worked both there and in Armenia. So I travelled and spent, say, 6 months there. I know people there and they said to me "come and work on the black market." People are not afraid of working on the black market; there are different ways to avoid the law without really breaking it. First I travelled on a guest visa and then on a business visa. I have a brother in Yerevan and he worked with Italians, and then he organized it so that I could start off with them in Italy and do whatever was necessary there, and then travel on to Germany for 3 - 4 months. I had the job of restoring old books on a computer, copying, scanning and everything had to look perfect [...] I have some skills, I know Corel Draw well and Photoshop - they just showed me what they needed done and I said "I can do that!". It was in their interests - in a week I can do 180 pages, I hardly slept. Then they gave me a computer and they paid me 720 euros for a week's work."

(Man, 47 years old, Kaliningrad)

In the second case a man, aged 35, of Armenian origin, lived illegally in Germany from 1992 onwards. He stole cars and sold them, took drugs and was eventually sent to prison. After serving his sentence he was deported

to Russia.

“The first year I stole things in shops. Well how did we steal? Honestly we sometimes stole for 100 marks a day. Well not bad? [...] In a couple of months we had saved up 10.000 marks. We lived well, dressed in the best clothes, ate and drank the very best food and drinks. But I felt homesick for Russia. You have to live. You have to do something. I thought of my own sort of scam I stole good cars and I punished Turks.”

(Man, 35 years old, Kaliningrad)

In the third case a man, aged 30, a refugee from Grozny with a history degree, fled to Germany after the beginning of the second war in Chechnya in 1999 via Ingushetia, Moscow and from there to Germany (and later to Holland and Norway, and to Germany again). In Germany he lived as an undocumented person, without any identification papers or a legal residence permit. He was supported economically by friends and relatives living in Germany and sometimes he found occasional jobs. His living budget was around 300 euros a month. During one of his journeys from Holland to Germany he was picked up by the police and deported to Russia.

## 2.4 Conclusions

The analysis of decisions to return shows that in almost all cases the decline in professional and social status was the main reason for the interviewees to return to Russia. We see that push factors such as an unacceptable economic situation in Germany, professional deskilling, a feeling of isolation and exclusion from society had a strong influence on the decision to return, as well as uncertain legal status, concerns about their childrens' future and expected or experienced discrimination on the labour market. Interestingly, the decision to return was often made not by the whole family, but by those parts of the family who felt deprived in Germany. More successful family members tended to stay in Germany. These “transnational” life strategies of the families could be interpreted as a reaction to social exclusion in the country of immigration, but also as an attempt to achieve an optimal social position for all family members despite the obstacle of territorial separation. The analysis suggests that the return to Russia seems to be a selective process: the less successful tend to leave Germany while the more successful tend to stay. However, this small-scale data analysis only allows a tentative hypothesis regarding the negative




selectivity of return migration to Russia. Large-scale empirical research is needed to verify this assumption.

In addition to the above-mentioned push factors, pull factors such as supportive social networks in Russia play a role in influencing decisions to return. Half of the returnees in our sample had relatives or friends in the regions of return who supported them in their decision to return and provided help in the initial period after their arrival. In the two cases of return for career purposes (return based on success) personal motives were as important as the wish to improve the returnees' professional status. In both cases the interviewees' partners expressed a strong wish to live in Russia and thus encouraged the interviewees to make a decision to return. Half of the interviewees had no friends or relatives in the regions of return. In these cases the interviewees did not return to their regions of origin, but moved to prospering regions of Russia on account of the better economic and professional opportunities to be found there.

# 3

## Patterns of reintegration and sustainability of the return decision



This chapter is dedicated to the topic of reintegration. Firstly, we will describe the regions where the interviews were conducted. We will focus in particular on the structural conditions for the reintegration of returnees in these regions of return. We will also pay special attention to the Russian Programme for Voluntary Re-settlement of Fellow-nationals Living Abroad and describe the situation of the interviewed returnees who participated in this programme. Secondly, we will discuss the individual reintegration strategies. Thirdly, we will focus on the question of the sustainability of the return decision, defined as long-term settlement in Russia, which we see as being very closely linked to the returnees' satisfaction with their current situation in life.

### 3.1 Selected regions of return

#### Kaliningrad Oblast

The government of Kaliningrad Oblast began implementing active policies for the social and economic development of the region when Georgi Boos entered office as the Governor of the Oblast in 2005. The new governor formulated a programme whose goal was to achieve the same level of

economic development as the neighbouring EU member states of Poland and Lithuania by 2012. In 2010 Georgi Boos was replaced by Nikolai Zukanow. However, the main goal of accelerated economic development of the region remained on the political agenda.

In the last decade the Kaliningrad region participated in almost all major national programmes. In particular the region was actively involved in the implementation of high-priority national projects in the fields of education, health services, construction, the national government programme for tourist and recreation zones, gaming zones, the construction of a deep water port, and the programme for road building in Russia. Several Special Economic Zones (O EZ) with certain tax benefits for businesses have been established in the territory of the Kaliningrad Oblast. By order of the President of the Russian Federation, Kaliningrad Oblast was also included in the list of regions taking part in the Programme for Voluntary Re-settlement of Fellow-nationals Living Abroad.<sup>10</sup>

As noted by high-ranking members of the government administration, labour migration into the region remains a high priority for the region to the present day. The region's growing economy lacks well-qualified specialists in particular, as well as less-qualified Russian-speaking workers. The Kaliningrad Oblast can be characterized as a region with a declining population. 936,738 people were living in the territory of Kaliningrad Oblast in 2008. The population has barely grown in recent years, totalling 941,873 in 2010. This increase in population is due mainly to migration from other parts of Russia to Kaliningrad.

In the early 1990s, migration of ethnic Russians and Germans from the republics of Central Asia and from the Baltic Republics to Kaliningrad filled the gap left by the negative demographic trends in the region. However, migration rates were already on the decline in the late 1990s and the first years of the new millennium. At the same time, the fast rate of economic growth and the ambitious targets set by the Oblast administration require a large inflow of labour into the region. The Oblast's participation in the Programme for Voluntary resettlement of Fellow-nationals Living Abroad was thus intended to attract a large quantity of migrants from the former Soviet republics as well as from the European countries. As Governor Boos stated in an interview in 2008, Kaliningrad Oblast is ready to accommo-

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10 For the program see chapter 1.4.

date more than 300,000 migrants, which would increase the population by a third.

However, the resettlement programme failed to attract large numbers of migrants. In April 2008 1,173 arrived in Kaliningrad (interview with migration service representative in Kaliningrad, 2008). In November 2009 this figure increased to 6.354.<sup>11</sup> According to expert assessments, the local administrations are ill-prepared to receive a large number of new residents; there is a lack of accommodation facilities for new arrivals and of money to provide them with medical services and to finance school places for their children

There has been criticism of the implementation of the resettlement programme from the non-profit organizations in Kaliningrad. Victor Gofman is the director of an influential social organization in the region - the National-Cultural Autonomy of Russian Germans. As a rule, when participants in the Voluntary Re-Settlement Programme come from Germany and experience adaptation problems, they go to the Russian German cultural centre in Kaliningrad - the German Russian House. Therefore, Victor Gofman is very familiar with the problems faced by migrants arriving in the region. He has a critical view regarding the readiness of the Oblast government to provide housing for migrants, and the readiness of municipalities to provide them with any other support. Vladimir Mukomel, leading researcher at the Institute of Sociology Russian Academy of Science, holds similar views regarding the functionality of the resettlement programme:

“According to my information they are now having problems with housing and employment there. They [the administration of Kaliningrad Oblast] claim that they are ready to take around 300,000 people under the programme but they won’t take them. They say that they have money in the budget, but they do not. The programme for 2007-2011 should cost the Kaliningrad government 186 billion roubles (5 billion euros) but the government budget doesn’t have that amount of money”

(Expert interview, Moscow)

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11 For more information see [http://www.kaliningrad.aktuell.ru/kaliningrad/im\\_gebiet/kaliningrad\\_%e2%80%99bersiedlerprogramm\\_klaeglich\\_gescheitert\\_173.html](http://www.kaliningrad.aktuell.ru/kaliningrad/im_gebiet/kaliningrad_%e2%80%99bersiedlerprogramm_klaeglich_gescheitert_173.html) (10.07.2012).

### Saratov Region (Volga basin)

Saratov is one of the regions of the former Volga German Autonomous Oblast. The Volga German Autonomous Oblast was formed as part of the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic in 1918, with its capital initially in Saratov and subsequently in the towns now called Engels and Marx. In 1941, after the start of the war with Germany, the Volga Germans were accused of collaborating with the fascist regime and deported to Siberia and Central Asia. Today about 18,000 Russian Germans live in this region. There are two registered organizations of Volga Russian Germans (national-cultural autonomies) in the Saratov and Marx regions, as well as six Russian German non-profit organizations and more than 30 Russian German cultural centres.

Saratov is not a region where the State Programme for Voluntary Re-settlement of Fellow-nationals Living Abroad is in operation, although the region does attract returning Russian Germans from the former republics of the USSR. In the 1990s there was a political conflict regarding the possible restoration of the autonomous Volga German Republic to its pre-war boundaries (as they were until 1941). The president of the Russian Federation, B. Yeltsin, first promised to restore the republic, only to subsequently go back on his undertaking, resulting in concern and dissatisfaction among the German population in the region - some of whom had moved to the Saratov region from other former republics of the USSR (Kazakhstan, Kirgizia, Uzbekistan) and from Siberia in the hopes that the republic would be restored following the fall of the USSR.

Typically, the directors of the German houses in the cities of Marx and Engels are themselves migrants from Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan who moved to Saratov in the 1990s. The disappointment of the Russian Germans at the failure to restore the autonomous republic, the economic crisis and the outbreaks of nationalism in the region all led to the active emigration of the Russian German population to Germany. Today the Saratov government still tries to attract Russian German people by providing funds from the regional budget. In 2008, 500 million roubles (approx. 13.8 million euros) were budgeted for the reconstruction of the Russian German community there.

In this study the interviews were carried out with the directors of the German Houses in Engels and Marx and the representatives of the National Cultural Autonomies of Germans in these cities. The German centres in

these towns have the purpose of preserving German culture and language in the region. In practice they provide many more services to the Russian German community. For example, the German House in Marx organizes cultural and educational events as well as providing a wide range of social services - help in finding employment, in completing administrative paperwork by the newcomers mainly from the former republics of Central Asia, dealing with housing problems, etc. The director regards economic and social support as providing a basis for the restoration of the German community in this city. The interviewed experts in the region pointed out that Saratov Oblast attracts not only Russian German migrants from the former republics of the Soviet Union but also returnees from Germany. However there is a lack of any data on numbers returning from Germany. The experts' estimates range from several hundred to at most several thousand families returning from Germany.

### **Saint Petersburg**

Saint Petersburg is the second largest city (after Moscow) in the Russian Federation. The total permanent population of Saint Petersburg on 1st January 2006 stood at 4,575,800. According to official statistical data about 5,000,000 people were living in Saint Petersburg in 2010. The population growth is a result of labour migration to Saint Petersburg from other regions of Russia as well as from outside of Russia.

Foreign migrants in Saint Petersburg have problems finding legal work, however, due to the system of quotas limiting the number of jobs for foreigners. Employers in Saint Petersburg had already exhausted the set quota for foreign workers by August 2008. For returnees who do not have Russian citizenship, the system of quotas and the process of obtaining a work permit create additional obstacles in the process of reintegration. In practice, an employment contract with a foreigner cannot be concluded for a period of more than one year, since the size of the regional quota changes annually.

### **Novosibirsk region (Western Siberia)**

In the Novosibirsk region two expert interviews were carried out – with the deputy director of the Russian-German House and the director of the commercial house-building project for Russian Germans, “Alekseevka”. The deputy director of the Russian-German House in Novosibirsk told us about the large numbers of applications received from Germany in 2006-2007 from people wishing to return to the Novosibirsk region and western

Siberia as a whole. These applications arose predominantly in connection with the publication of the Order of the President of the Russian Federation “on measures for cooperation in the voluntary return to the Russian Federation of compatriots living abroad” in June 2006. Potential re-migrants are interested in the economic situation in Novosibirsk Oblast, and also in the possibility of participating in the Programme for Voluntary Re-settlement of Fellow-nationals Living Abroad. However the director of the Russian German house in Novosibirsk considers that the current economic situation in the region (April 2008) would confront re-migrants from Germany with severe difficulties in finding accommodation and work. For this reason he does not recommend return for Russian-speaking people from Germany who request advice on their labour market and housing opportunities in Novosibirsk, although he believes that re-migration from Germany would positively influence the region’s development.

Although the Programme for Voluntary Re-settlement of Fellow-nationals Living Abroad is being implemented in the Novosibirsk region, the representative of the Russian-German house noted that people and migrant support organizations in the region are not well informed about the conditions relating to the programme and criticize its low level of funding:

“If it existed [a mechanism for providing help under the programme] the regional administration would tell you about it, at least they should have done. But in that case there wouldn’t be so many people coming to us. And if people come here, and call us - it means that nothing works, and I don’t think it will all become clear in the near future. But again you have to understand that it is extra money. And we already have other problems here in Novosibirsk. It’s not like Moscow where they have plenty of money. We have always had a lack of resources. Our city is suffocating for lack of bridges now. It needs 8-10 but we only have two or three. There isn’t any money for infrastructure. And it’s just the same with this problem [implementing the return programme]. You can’t ask the region to pay for everything, it needs additional federal resources; after all it’s not the Oblast’s fault that people want to come here. We have a lack of labour power, the Oblast would be happy to receive more people. I think that it’s better if fellow-nationals return than if foreigners come. And it costs less money and causes less problems if people come who already belong to this culture.”

(Deputy Director, Russian-German House, Novosibirsk)

In Novosibirsk Oblast there is a commercial house-building project for Russian Germans called “Alekseevka”.<sup>12</sup> The initiator of the project, Vladimir Rimmer, plans to create a small village of Germans (migrants from Central Asia and Germany) in the region of the economically depressed city of Ob. According to its creator, the project has already received 700 applications from potential home buyers (in April 2007). At the time of conducting this research the project was being actively advertised in Germany. Rimmer has carried out his own small-scale market research on types of potential returnees from Germany:

“The average age of re-migrants is 35-45, they are people of Slavic identity, unemployed in Germany but with professional qualifications and higher education... In Germany there is an economic crisis and people are being made redundant. When there are vacancies, local people are preferred over new arrivals. The social security payments continue to cover rent costs. Among migrants there is a high rate of suicide. It is not publicized but it is the case. A lot of people would like to leave Germany.”

(Director of “Alekseevka”, Novosibirsk)

The initiator of the Alekseevka Project expects a lot of administrative barriers for people returning from Germany:

“It isn’t clear how you can get a visa, and where you can get documents. The state is not ready for people arriving. There isn’t any special ministry which could take responsibility for the resettlement programme. Regions don’t want to allocate a budget for it and it’s a big extra burden for a local budget. Apart from the financial reasons, the representatives of local administrations also have a negative attitude towards people who moved to Germany and now want to come back. In their opinion they betrayed the motherland and for that reason there’s no need to help them to return. Rather, the people who need help are those in Central Asia, who found themselves outside of Russia for reasons beyond their control. Now the policy of re-migration to Russia is being sabotaged by the regions. The Alekseevka project is not included either in the Novosibirsk resettlement programme or in the regional social-economic programme. This is because the administration sees it as a threat: ‘You bring these people here, and what are we supposed

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12 See <http://www.alexeevka.ru> (10.07.2012).



to do with them? Pay them unemployment benefit? But the people who will come are precisely those who want to work. If they wanted to live on benefits they would stay in Germany. The people who want to come are professionals, with skills that we need here and which are well-paid. Crane operators, for example, earn 60,000 roubles in Novosibirsk Oblast [approx. 1,700 euros], that's more than they get in Germany. Now qualified workers in Russia earn more than they do in Germany. The situation with salaries has changed radically in comparison with the times when people left the country."

(Director of "Alekseevka", Novosibirsk)

At the time when the interviews were conducted in Novosibirsk there was no specialist in the Oblast government who could give an expert interview on the state of progress in implementing the resettlement programme in the region.

### 3.2 Returnees' experiences with the Programme for Voluntary Re-settlement of Fellow-nationals Living Abroad

We conducted interviews with two families, one of which was a participant in the Russian State Programme for Voluntary Re-settlement. Another family made an unsuccessful attempt to become a participant in the programme. Both families lived in Kaliningrad at the time of the survey (July 2008). Both families were deeply unsatisfied with their living conditions in Kaliningrad. One family considers their return decision to have been a mistake and plans to migrate to Germany again.

To illustrate the situation of these families in Kaliningrad we would like to present a short summary of the interview with a male participant in the Russian re-settlement programme who is 53 years old, has an engineering degree and holds Russian as well as Germany nationality. The interview took place in the man's room at the Migration Accommodation Centre for participants in the programme, in the village of Severniy of Kaliningrad Oblast. The interviewee planned to find work in his profession after returning. He is an electrical engineer. He planned to borrow money to buy a one-room flat and then bring his younger son over to Kaliningrad with his family. After moving into the accommodation centre his car was stolen. He couldn't find a job and started to drink. His wife was unable to cope with the situation and left for Germany.

Three days after arriving in Kaliningrad the interviewee and his wife moved into the Migration Accommodation Centre for participants in the programme:

“Of course, after Germany, it’s a huge contrast. It’s a bit chaotic. Straight away in the city, it’s a bit European there. We came here, and here it’s out in the wilds. Look at how things are. mud, puddles, everything overgrown, the house is dilapidated, they don’t clean the toilets, the kitchen is dirty, but that’s not the main thing. It’s very different from Europe. Well, the administration does what it is supposed to. They are not in very close contact with us but if you need something, they give information, something else if a question comes up. They give out contact details, fill in the forms. Nothing bad.”

(Man, 53 years old, Kaliningrad)

The centre is located in the village of Severniy, approximately 40 km from Kaliningrad. It has very poor bus services to the neighbouring villages and towns. No new bus routes were introduced in connection with the opening of the centre. The accommodation centre had 250 residents - all participants in the resettlement programme. Most of them came from the former Soviet republics. There is practically no social infrastructure in the village. It is very inconvenient to get to work in other villages or towns or to reach administrative services in Kaliningrad. This makes it difficult for people to take on jobs in other places in Kaliningrad Oblast and to obtain legal residence documents in a timely manner. Because of these problems of geographic isolation, several participating families moved back to where they had been living before or to other parts of Russia.

“A couple of families have already gone, I watched them leave. V. from the second floor has gone. He went to Kazakhstan. One family was migrating to the Lipetsk Oblast, they got tired of it too. They lived for four months they said, nothing is coming through. They were given a flat there. And then there are people who came with money, of course. In a word - they are all in the city, they rented or bought flats and they are living there. They don’t have anything to do with us anymore. So the people who ended up here are the ones who came without much. People like me who cannot rent a house.”

(Man, 53 years old, Kaliningrad)

About half of the residents at the centre were unemployed at the time of collecting data for this study.

“People are working. A couple of people I know are working at the meat factory near here. Then somewhere on the other side of Melensk there’s a factory where they assemble fridges and they work there. Then if you go on towards Mamonovo there’s a state livestock farm so that’s three of the people I talk to. A few people work in Kaliningrad, one woman works as an accountant in some firm. So people have found work in different places but the main bulk of people, more than 50 percent, aren’t working.”

(Man, 53 years old, Kaliningrad)

One of the main problems for returnees is obtaining registration. In Russia, registration is a prerequisite to accessing health and social care services, eligibility for housing programmes and access to educational institutions.<sup>13</sup> The officials in the Oblast administration turned out to be unable to register the returnees either in the city of Kaliningrad or in their place of temporary accommodation. At the Migration Centre it was only possible to obtain a document of arrival, which gives a person almost no social rights:

“Last week some people from the administration were here and from the Federal Migration Service and from the Oblast administration. They reacted to our letter. That is, we wrote a letter, first and foremost to ask about the prolongation of our registration, and secondly about loans. They reacted and came, with a purpose: attack is the best form of defence. So everybody was sitting there, 50-60 people. So they started to call people out in front of everybody and ask them to report, who are you and give your opinion, what’s your problem? So to explain briefly we didn’t come to any common position, our questions all remained unanswered, registration, mortgage loans, they didn’t reply to anything then they went away... You know, the message was: Wait and your time will come, maybe things will get better.”

(Man, 53 years old, Kaliningrad)

At the time of the interview the interviewee had not decided whether he would continue trying to improve his legal and labour market situation in Russia or give up his dreams of returning and migrate to Germany again.

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13 For the relevance of registration see chapter 1.4.

### 3.3 Migrant resources and reintegration strategies

Apart from two cases mentioned above, no interviewees in our sample returned with help from any return or reintegration programmes. They had only themselves to rely on in their efforts to reintegrate in Russia. By analyzing the reintegration patterns we were able to observe that people who managed to accumulate professional and economic resources and to acquire language skills in Germany had less reintegration problems in Russia compared with people who were unemployed or worked in low-paid and low-skilled positions in Germany. On the basis of this observation we can identify two main reintegration patterns: the reintegration strategy which aims at making use of diverse resources acquired in Germany and the strategy which seeks to reactivate social and other resources which interviewees already possessed in the local return environments prior to migration. Both reintegration strategies apply for interviewees who did not experience any legal problems in Russia (mostly those holding Russian citizenship). In three cases the process of reintegration stalled at the stage of obtaining access to legal residence status because the interviewees were citizens of the former Soviet republics and needed residence registration and work permits in Russia. The economic, labour market and social situation of this group of returnees is very closely linked to their insecure legal situation.

#### Making use of resources acquired in Germany

Half of the interviewees in our sample managed to make use of the economic resources, qualifications and social contacts they had acquired in Germany after returning to Russia. Two of them experienced upward professional mobility and worked as directors of the Russian branch offices of their German firms. In other cases returnees secured well paid jobs or invested their saved capital in property after returning to Russia.

The returnees invested money saved in Germany mostly in real estate:

“I’m very thankful to have been to Germany because we got a lot of opportunities there. If we hadn’t migrated we wouldn’t have been able to save money for a house here. We didn’t earn a lot there, but we saved. We saved really hard. Here in Russia we wouldn’t have been able to save money for a house.”

(Woman, 28 years old, Saratov)

For interviewees, property investments were not only a guarantee of secure housing. The possession of property was also an important prerequisite for the acquisition of official registration and subsequent access to most social rights in Russia.<sup>14</sup>

Several returnees used their professional contacts in Germany to further their career in Russia or to establish their own businesses:

“When I came in 2001, I observed that there are a lot of opportunities in the construction business. So I invited two German specialists in road construction. I was responsible for providing clients and they implemented the projects. That was the start of my own business in the construction sector... Later I employed two Ukrainians who had working experience in Germany. They were involved in the building construction projects. Today I have a holding with twelve different construction firms.”

(Man, 33 years old, Kaliningrad)

For several interviewees their German language skills and their professional or educational experiences in Germany were important in finding employment after return. Interestingly, the possession of formal German language or educational certificates was not a decisive aspect for employers. Informal qualifications and the experience of having been employed or having studied in Germany per se were much more important. Consequently, not only returnees with tertiary educational certificates but also people who had abandoned their studies in Germany were able to obtain attractive positions in firms dealing with German partners or working for German-speaking clients:

“I got a job in a private medical clinic called MEDI. I was a manager and worked with German-speaking clients. So when German clients came I informed them about our services and the therapies that our doctors suggested for them.”

(Woman 29 years old, Saint Petersburg)

“Of course, the experience of living in Germany and the knowledge of the German language offer good prospects of a well-paid job. Foreign employers appreciate these informal qualifications in particular. For

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14 For the relevance of registration see chapter 1.4.

Russian business which is not oriented to the international market, such experience isn't of value. But for foreign firms it is an advantage. They saw me as a person who knows how to deal with clients from abroad and how to behave on the Russian market, and who would be able to connect these two areas of knowledge."

(Man, 33 years old, Saint Petersburg)

### Activating resources accumulated in Russia prior to migration

Interviewees who did not manage to accumulate substantial resources in Germany and returned to their former places of residence in Russia were very much dependent on the support of friends and former colleges.

"About three months after return our situation was unclear. I couldn't find work. But my husband got a job in the place where he worked before Germany. He was appointed by his old firm because they knew him and did him a favour."

(Woman, 38 years old, Saratov)

"I was lucky because the musician who took my position after I went to Germany did not appear to be good enough. The parents of pupils at the music school weren't happy about him... At the time of my return the music school was looking for a new teacher and I was able to start there almost immediately after arriving. I regained all my former pupils who found out that I had come back. And I got an additional job at another music school. So I started again as a vocal trainer and I got a piano class there."

(Woman, 29 years old, Saint Petersburg)

An additional factor conducive to their reintegration after return was the possession of Russian citizenship. Russian passports were important in dealing with administrative and legal problems such as obtaining official registration in Russia. Administrative barriers and difficulties in registering their residence in the places of return were cited by almost all interviewees. Corrupt and bureaucratic administrations were often reluctant to register the returnees and expected bribe money. Especially for returnees who possessed the passports of the former Soviet Union and did not live in the regions of return prior to migration, obtaining official registration in the places of return turned out to be an almost insurmountable task.

### Struggling with legal and administrative barriers

For returnees who did not have a valid Russian passport and/or who did not possess or were unable to buy property, obtaining official registration and a work permit in the places of return proved a struggle. They often rented small flats or even one room in shared apartments on uncertain terms (not having an official rental contract) and were employed informally. For these people, the task of obtaining official registration in the place of return became a central issue if not the overriding factor determining their decision to stay in Russia or to migrate again. Most of these interviewees were dissatisfied with their living conditions in Russia and were thinking about repeat migration to Germany.

“In the beginning I started to work at night in a round-the-clock grocery store. I worked only at night because I didn’t possess a residence registration and therefore I wasn’t permitted to work in the city and most checks took place during the day. I worked for a year every night... My goal is still to get official registration documents. This is my main goal. When I am allowed to work officially, I will be able to take out a loan, buy a property and obtain a secure legal status here...”

(Woman, 33 years old, Kaliningrad)

“We lived in this flat and paid rent daily because the landlord wasn’t sure that we would be able to pay regularly. Then I started to work at a school as a teacher. But I still didn’t have any official registration documents. So I worked on an irregular basis. The school needed a German language teacher, it was really urgent for them, because they hadn’t had anybody for a year. So for four months I worked irregularly there. Other teachers received my salary. Formally the payments were declared as bonus money for one or another teacher at school. But in fact they gave this money to me. This was my salary. So my salary alternated from 4.000 to 10.000 Roubles a month. At the same time I tried to get registration documents. And the administration put me off every time. They always said: Wait, be patient! And we are still waiting...”

(Woman, 48 years old, Kaliningrad)

In general, it can be stated that the regions covered by this research hardly provide any support structures for internal or international migrants. The regional branches of the Federal Migration Services were not responsible for integration issues at the time of our analysis. Residents possessing official registration documents in the region are provided with social services

by the regional departments of the Service for Social Protection. Returnees and other migrants without registration are not eligible for all these services. As a rule, for migrants from the “near abroad” (largely from central Asia) the functions of social assistance, support in finding work and accommodation are carried out by the ethnic communities and migrant organizations. Returnees from Germany were rarely able to rely on such assistance, instead making extensive use of their private networks.

### 3.4 Sustainability of the return decision

In this study we defined the sustainability of the return decision in terms of satisfaction with the living situation of returnees in Russia. Returnees without Russian passports and official registration in their places of living were mostly dissatisfied with their return decision and were considering re-emigrating to Germany. Returnees who were relatively satisfied with their lives after returning also considered the prospect of repeated migration, however, especially when they possessed both Russian and German citizenship or a valid residence permit in Germany.

However, the goals relating to the potential repeated migration of dissatisfied returnees differed from the migration objectives of the satisfied interviewees considerably. Dissatisfied returnees were looking for further opportunities to migrate to Germany or to other European countries because they wanted to escape economic hardships and saw no chance of improving their legal status in Russia. At the same time, most of them possessed few economic resources for repeated migration.

Interviewees who were deported to Russia or had to leave Germany under threat of deportation also possessed limited opportunities for repeated migration to Germany.

“I think about repeated migration. I don’t believe that we will have any future, whether in Armenia or in Russia and I try to do anything to go to Germany again. We lost everything when we left Germany: we had a flat there and various domestic appliances, furniture, a car. We left everything to our landlord, because we had to leave Germany. I want to go to Germany again, but it is difficult to get a legal residence permit there [...] So I think about it.”

(Woman, 48 years old, Kaliningrad)



Migration goals of satisfied returnees were of different nature. They were thinking of educational opportunities for their children in Germany or would appreciate short- or middle-term migration for labour purposes. They additionally possess greater economic resources and face lower legal barriers to migration due to their dual citizenship or still valid residence permits.

“I see my future in Russia. And at the same time I really appreciate the knowledge and experience which I got in Germany. I would like to build on these assets. I would like to study languages and to become a translator and to work with German partners anyway. And I would like to go to business trips there... But to live there for a longer time wouldn't be my priority. I would like to study there.”

(Woman, daughter of one interviewee, 17 years old, Saratov)

In the cases of satisfied and dissatisfied interviewees who had returned voluntarily we observed very high potential for circular migration. As already mentioned, in several families only part of the family returned while other members stayed in Germany. Several interviewees cited close contact with their relatives and friends still living in Germany. And in several cases of successfully reintegrated returnees their employment with German firms entailed frequent trips to Germany. In one case the interviewed family still possessed a house in Germany and travelled “home” regularly to take care of it.

***“Do you have a place to live in Germany?”***

Yes, of course. My wife lives there. She has a flat there. She gets social assistance there, and I'm also registered at her flat. And this opportunity to be allowed to go back is an important supporting factor for me psychologically.”

(Man, 53 years old, Kaliningrad)

“Of course, we work and live here in Moscow. But when we go back to Germany, it feels like we are going home. And that's because we have a house there and our children live there. And these circumstance go 90 % of the way to making Germany feel like home...”

(Woman, 57 years old, Moscow)

### 3.5 Conclusions

The analysis of reintegration patterns showed that interviewees in our sample rely mostly on themselves and on the support of friends and relatives in the regions where they settle after return. Particularly for the interviewees who did not return to their places of origin but settled in the selected regions because they hoped to find employment there, the administrative barriers to obtaining official registration at their places of residence were a central obstacle to reintegration.

In general, we can state that the Russian registration system (“propiska” system) is one of the main obstacles to the successful integration of both international and national migrants. Propiska (registration) is an administrative act which verifies the official place of residence of all citizens of the Russian Federation (cf. chapter 1.4). From participation in the welfare system, through legal work permits to access to social services – almost all social rights in Russia are only exercisable at the official place of residence and thus depend on possession of the propiska document. Acquiring real estate is the simplest way to obtain an official registration document in the place of residence. Another legal way is to obtain registration in the place where relatives live. This is why house/apartment ownership (even if the house/apartment is in a very poor condition) constitutes the first step to successful reintegration in Russia.

Returnees who managed to accumulate sufficient economic resources in Germany and bought real estate upon their return, or those who already possessed property before migrating to Germany were in a better structural and legal situation from the outset than returnees without these resources. Housing problems were named as one important obstacle to reintegration by those who had to rent a flat or even a room in a shared apartment, because the rental housing market is very poorly organised, very often black-market in character and liable to violations of tenants’ rights. As a rule, the owner of a rented apartment refuses to register tenants at this address. The ability of local authorities to provide returnees and migrants with a place in a dormitory or any other temporary housing is extremely limited and in some regions non-existent.

Apart from housing conditions, the situation on the local labour market was a very important reintegration factor. Interestingly, hardly any of the interviewed returnees had difficulties finding employment upon return.

In some cases people were employed despite the fact that they did not possess official registration in the place concerned, because companies and institutions were in urgent need of their skills. These experiences correspond with the official data on the labour market situation in Russia. The current official data show a renewed decrease in unemployment in 2011. The official unemployment rate stands at 1.7 % in 2012 (RIA Nowosti 2012).

Returnees developed two strategies to reintegrate into the labour market and to deal with housing and registration problems. On the one hand, they tried to make use of the resources which they had accumulated in Germany. Such resources as economic capital were used to buy property. Professional and educational experience, qualifications and contacts in Germany as well as knowledge of the language were important to obtaining a satisfactory position on the labour market for half of the interviewees. Another section of the interviewees used “old social ties” in their places of origin which they were able to reactivate after return: contacts with former colleagues, support from relatives living in the same region and other relevant social contacts helped them to secure registration and often to find jobs. An analysis of the reintegration patterns enables us to make a tentative hypothesis that returnees who acquired substantial resources in Germany were able to attain higher positions on the labour market and within the overall social structure upon return and were to a larger extent satisfied with their overall situation in Russia.

In particular, returnees who did not manage to overcome the administrative barriers and to obtain registration in Russia were very dissatisfied with their decision to return and harboured a wish to migrate back to Germany. Satisfied and well integrated returnees also displayed a highly mobile attitude, however, associated with educational opportunities, short- and medium-term employment prospects and business trips to Germany. Beyond this, we observed very high potential for circular migration in almost all cases of voluntarily return, because interviewees maintained close social and family contacts with Germany and often possessed legal opportunities to migrate. This study is unable to undertake any quantitative estimates as to the scale and intensity of actual circular migration between Russia and Germany or the effects of these circular movements on German and Russian society, however. The issue of circularity could be an interesting topic for further research.

# 4

## Main research findings



In the mid 2000s Russia changed its attitude towards Russian-speaking people living abroad. In the booming Russian economy, potential re-migrants were no longer seen as a burden but as an asset. Presently, governments at both federal and regional level are proclaiming that it is essential to tap this potential for the development of the Russian regions, especially those where the population has fallen dramatically in the last 20 years. Since the beginning of the 2000s a comprehensive return policy has been evolving, aimed at attracting well-qualified Russian-speaking people to Russia.

At the same time, the analysis of the 21 interviews with returnees from Germany shows that a decline in professional and social status in Germany seem to be the main reasons for Russian-speaking immigrants to leave Germany and seek a fresh start in Russia. Unacceptable economic situations, deskilling, a feeling of being isolated and excluded from society, uncertain legal status, worries about their childrens' future and expected or actual discrimination on the labour market strongly influenced the decision to return by most of the interviewees in our sample. Almost all interviewed returnees were well or highly qualified. Due to general labour shortages they found jobs relatively easily after returning to Russia, on either the formal or the informal labour markets.

We nevertheless observed that Russian return policy has failed to address these returnees and to develop any effective support mechanisms for this

group of re-migrants. In their reintegration strategies they relied almost entirely on their own resources and on the support of their personal social networks in the regions of return. On the one hand, they made use of the resources which they had accumulated in Germany, investing savings in property or applying their German language skills or professional experience in their employment strategies. On the other hand, returnees mobilised the resources (most notably professional contacts) which they possessed in Russia prior to migration. The major obstacles to reintegration were administrative barriers to obtaining registration documents at the place of residence or a work permit. Some of the returnees cited the unreliable housing situation, a lack of opportunities to rent an apartment on a legal basis and high costs of living which were noticeable despite their being in full-time employment.

Returnees who failed to overcome the administrative barriers and at the time of the interview had been unable to legalize their residence status in their place of residence regretted their decision to return and were willing to leave Russia. However, they did not have any economic resources and commonly lacked the necessary legal prerequisites for repeated migration. This group of returnees includes three interviewees who were deported from Germany and did not possess Russian citizenship but were nationals of other states of the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States). They settled in Russia because of the better security situation and better economic/labour market conditions compared to their places of origin and experienced problems regarding legal and administrative recognition, compounded by a lack of valuable social support networks in the places of return.

Interestingly, successfully reintegrated returnees were also interested in repeated migration to Germany or to other European countries. They preferred temporary migration for purposes of educational and professional improvement. In general, the study indicated high potential for circular migration among voluntary returnees. Voluntarily returned interviewees often had close relationships with friends, relatives and family members still living in Germany. Additionally, many of them possessed both Russian and German citizenship or long-term residence permits in Germany. Based on these observations the study gives rise to a number of assumptions concerning aspects determining the decision to return, factors influencing the reintegration process and the sustainability of return:

1. Relative deprivation of well or highly qualified migrants seems to be an important push factor influencing decisions to return. Economic growth and intact networks of social support in Russia are factors which reinforce the feeling of “not living in the right place” among the group of well- and highly qualified migrants and trigger the return process.
2. The accumulation of resources during the stay in the country of immigration has a positive effect on reintegration after return. Returnees were able to invest accumulated economic capital and knowledge in their return contexts and improve their living conditions. However, success on the labour market and economic success are not necessarily accompanied by successful legal or social reintegration. Legal or administrative barriers or resentment among the local population can prove key obstacles to successful economic or labour market reintegration.
3. Successful reintegration does not necessarily lead to long-term settlement in the regions of return. On the contrary, economic or labour market success presupposes a willingness to be highly mobile for career purposes. The study shows that successful returnees are open to opportunities provided by their diverse private and professional links with Germany and do not rule out repeated migration there. Against this background the widespread assumption that the sustainability of return migration can be measured by the absence of further migration plans seems to overlook the new realities of mobility patterns in a globalized world.

Considering the methodological framework of our study we must stress that the study only develops tentative hypotheses on the factors determining the current return processes from Germany to Russia. For further development of the comprehensive models of return migration, its causes and effects, large-scale and comparative research is necessary.

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