A systematic bibliography on return migration

As the starting point for a large-scale project on return migration, our team conducted a literature review with the aim of developing the conceptual framework, theoretical background and hypotheses for our research. In preparation for the review, publications were classified according to thematic and regional keywords. This bibliography, which contains over 1100 publications, is the result of our collection and classification. The project, *Possibilities and Realities of Return Migration (PREMIG)*, explores return migration from Norway and the United Kingdom, with case studies on return to Afghanistan, Burundi, Iraq, Pakistan and Poland, and statistical analyses covering a greater range of nationalities. It is funded by the Research Council of Norway and carried out jointly by the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), Statistics Norway, the University of Bristol and the University of Sussex.
A systematic bibliography on return migration

Jørgen Carling
Elin Berstad Mortensen
Jennifer Wu
Contents

Introduction 1
  Scope of the review 1
  The process of collecting and classifying publications 2
  Patterns in the literature 3
  Limitations of the bibliography 4

Bibliography by thematic keyword 5
  Key publication 5
  Methods 6
    Quantitative methods 6
    Ethnographic methods 15
    Multi-sited data collection 26
    Theoretical or conceptual 28
  Initial migration context 32
    Asylum and forced migration 32
    Labour migration 38
    Family migration 46
    Student migration 46
  Return migration 47
    Possibilities of return 47
    Experiences of return 72
    Voluntary return 91
    Semi-voluntary return 100
    Forced return 103
    Second-generation return 105
    Ancestral return 108
    Temporary return 111
    Post-conflict (or conflict) return 115
    Complex return itineraries 118
  Transnationalism 119
    Remittances 119
    Transnationalism 123
  Country of residence 128
    Integration 128
  Country of return 132
    Post-return reintegration 132
    Development 143
  Context-independent keywords 148
    Information and communication 148
    Programmes, policy, regulations, law 150
    Politics 161
    Culture and identity 164
    Religion 174
    Climate 175
    Health and healthcare 176
    Social networks and community 181
    Violence, crime, insecurity 187
    Entrepreneurship and investment 189
    Education and human capital 193
    Livelihoods and finances 200
    Class 208
    Gender 211
    Age, generation and life cycle 214
    Family and kinship 221

Bibliography by region of origin 227
  North America 227
  Mexico and Central America 230
  Caribbean 234
  South America 239
  Europe 241
  Middle East and North Africa 253
  Sub-Saharan Africa 258
  Caucasus and Central Asia 265
  East Asia 266
  South Asia 271
  South-East Asia 274
  Oceania 277
Introduction

As the starting point for a large-scale project on return migration, our team conducted a literature review with the aim of developing the conceptual framework, theoretical background and hypotheses for our research. In preparation for the review, publications were classified according to thematic and regional keywords. This bibliography is the result of our collection and classification.

The project, *Possibilities and Realities of Return Migration (PREMIG)*, explores return migration from Norway and the United Kingdom, with case studies on return to Afghanistan, Burundi, Iraq, Pakistan and Poland, and statistical analyses covering a greater range of nationalities. It is funded by the Research Council of Norway and is carried out jointly by the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), Statistics Norway, the University of Bristol and the University of Sussex. See [www.prio.no/premig](http://www.prio.no/premig) for additional information.

**Scope of the review**

Before collecting publications, it was necessary to define the scope of the literature review: for example, which migrants to include (children of migrants? further descendants?), which types of return to cover (forced? voluntary? temporary?), and which time periods to examine. The following points provided guidance in this process:

*Which migrants?* All migrants regardless of why they originally moved (labour, family, protection, etc). We also cover return by the children of migrants (second-generation return) and return to ancestral homelands (diasporic/ethnic return).

*Which forms of return?* All forms of return, be it forced or voluntary, temporary or permanent. It is important to explore the conceptual limits of ‘return migration’. This means that we need to consider visits/holidays and circular migration as part of the picture.

*Which parts of the world?* All parts of the world. Given the purpose of the review, it will not be limited to the empirical contexts we study in the PREMIG project.

*Which time periods?* Contemporary return migration, meaning roughly after 1960. We thus include research on the return of guest workers in Europe, but exclude many historical studies. We should make exceptions if there are particularly important works that, for instance, summarize findings about return migration from North America to Europe in the early 1900s, but not aim to cover the historical literature.

*Which publication types?* Since our thematic scope is so broad, it was necessary to limit ourselves to academic literature of a certain quality. In other words, we generally excluded government reports (not research based) and conference papers (not peer-reviewed) and instead concentrated on books and journal articles.
Collecting and classifying publications

Once the scope was defined, we combined in-house expertise—libraries or bibliographies referred to us from members of our team—with online searches using the citation database ISI Web of Knowledge. The search terms we used in ISI included the following:

- [return SAME migra*]: to retrieve publications with “return” and “migration” in the same sentence
- [(emigra* OR immigra*) AND return]: intended to cover return of emigrants or immigrants
- [forc* AND repatriat*]: intended to cover the topic of forced repatriation

Our final collection of literature amounted to over 1100 publications. To classify the collection, we created a system of keywords to indicate, for example, the research methodology used, the type of return migration discussed, and other themes. The section entitled Bibliography by thematic keyword is a listing of all the publications organized by the following keywords (further explained in the bibliography itself):

- Key publication
- Quantitative methods
- Ethnographic method
- Multi-sited data collection
- Theoretical or conceptual
- Asylum and forced migration
- Labour migration
- Family migration
- Student migration
- Irregular migration
- Possibilities of return
- Experiences of return
- Voluntary return
- Semi-voluntary return
- Forced return
- Second-generation return
- Ancestral return
- Temporary return
- Post-conflict (or conflict) return
- Complex return itineraries
- Remittances
- Transnationalism
- Integration
- Post-return reintegration
- Development
- Information and communication
- Programmes, policy, regulations, law
- Politics
- Culture and identity
- Religion
- Climate
- Health and healthcare
- Social networks and community
- Violence, crime, insecurity
- Entrepreneurship and investment
- Education and human capital
- Livelihoods and finances
- Class
- Gender
- Age, generation and life cycle
- Family and kinship

Publications were also classified according to their geographical focus: that is, according to the countries and/or regions from which the migrants originated (and to which they may have returned). The section entitled Bibliography by region of origin lists the bibliography according to region and country. Note that here we only classify by country of origin: a publication on Turkish migrants in Germany and their plans for return, for instance, will be placed under Turkey, not Germany.

The regional classification is first by world region, then alphabetically by country. Publications that cover migrants from several countries are listed several times. Publications that relate to a world region (e.g. Sub-Saharan Africa) rather than to individual countries are listed under the regional heading, before the first country-level heading. The following world regions are used in the classification:
Introduction

- North America (NAM)
- Mexico and Central America (MCA)
- Caribbean (CAR)
- South America (SAM)
- Europe (EUR)
- Middle East and North Africa (MDE)
- Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA)
- Caucasus and Central Asia (CCA)
- East Asia (EAA)
- South Asia (SOA)
- South-East Asia (SEA)
- Oceania (OCE)

Patterns in the literature

After classifying all the publications, we used EndNote and Excel to analyze keyword frequencies and correlations. From this analysis we identified several topics that were broadly covered by the literature: these include the decision-making process of migrants considering return, the reintegration experiences of those who do return, and national laws and programmes related to return migration. Examples of these thematic patterns with their corresponding keywords are shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Keywords</th>
<th>Publications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The return decision</td>
<td>Possibilities of return + Voluntary return</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reintegration post-return</td>
<td>Experiences of return + Post-return reintegration</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reverse culture shock</td>
<td>Experiences of return + Post-return reintegration + Culture and identity</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deportation programmes</td>
<td>Programmes, policy, regulations, law + Forced return</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary Assisted Return Programmes</td>
<td>Programmes, policy, regulations, law + Semi-voluntary return</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugees returning to conflict/post-conflict areas</td>
<td>Asylum and forced migration + Post-conflict (or conflict) return</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of geography, we identified a large number of publications on Mexican return migration from the United States. There were also several studies on the return of Puerto Ricans from the United States, as well as on the ancestral return of Japanese-Brazilians. A substantial number of articles dealt with migration within the same country: for the United States, these often related to the regional migration of Black Americans or the return of residents to New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina; for China, publications generally dealt with issues of rural-urban labour migration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Return From</th>
<th>To</th>
<th>Publications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>Puerto Rico</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Limitations of the bibliography**

A bibliography such as this can hardly be complete. Despite our efforts, it is obvious that there will be gaps. First, the pace of publication is such that a handful of new publications would need to be added every week. Second, our systematic search for journal articles is limited to ISI-indexed journals; many articles from other journals have also been included, but not in an exhaustive way. Third, even with the range of search terms used, we may have missed ISI-indexed articles that address return migration but use an unusual terminology. Finally, there are probably relevant books and book chapters that we simply did not discover. On the other hand, the bibliography also contains entries that may seem at odds with the scope of the bibliography as described above. These are likely to be publications sourced from the pre-existing bibliographies of our team members, which would not have otherwise come up in our searches. Despite these inconsistencies, we are confident that the more than 1100 items in the bibliography constitute a reasonable representation of ‘the literature on return migration’. The ambiguities of inclusion and exclusion nevertheless caution against bibliometric analysis.
Bibliography by thematic keyword

**Key publication**
Systematic reviews, or comprehensive empirical studies, or important theoretical contributions, or widely cited by others.


Methods

Quantitative methods

Based on statistical analysis of data. (Simply presenting migration statistics, for instance, is not sufficient.)


**Ethnographic methods**

*Based on first-hand qualitative interviews/fieldwork. Presumably rich, in-depth data.*


Multi-sited data collection

Data collection in the country of residence as well as in the country of return (or in multiple countries or residence/return).


Theoretical or conceptual

Explicitly theoretical/conceptual, or with sections that have this focus, or relevant to challenging the concept of return.


**Initial migration context**

**Asylum and forced migration**

Migration that is motivated by a need for protection and/or make use of the asylum regime.


**Labour migration**

*Including guest workers, professionals.*


Labour migration


Family migration

Migration for formation (marriage) and family reunification.


Student migration

Migration for the purpose of education and/or making use of student visas.


Alberts, H.C. and Hazen, H.D. (2005) ‘“There are always two voices...”: International students’ intentions to stay in the United States or return to their home countries.’ International Migration, 43(3):131-154.


Possibilities of return

Everything that covers all migrants who may return, or which compares those who do with those who don’t. Includes determinants of return, myth of return, return intentions, return decisions, patterns of return.


Alberts, H.C. and Hazen, H.D. (2005) ‘“There are always two voices...”: International students’ intentions to stay in the United States or return to their home countries.’ International Migration, 43(3):131-154.


Possibilities of return


Experiences of return

Experiences of return
Everything that concentrates on those who do return and/or the communities to which they return. Includes reintegration, development impacts, contribution to peace building, etc.


Experiences of return


Experiences of return


Experiences of return


Voluntary return

Return that is not linked to restrictions on residence, work or settlement; e.g. return of citizens/permanent residents for retirement.


Semi-voluntary return

Return in situations in which remaining in the country of residence is not an option, e.g. VARPs.


**Forced return**

Forcible return against the will of the returnee; deportation


Second-generation return


Second-generation return

‘Return’ by children of migrants to their parents’ country of birth.


**Ancestral return**

‘Return’ by descendants of migrants to their ancestors’ origin.


Ancestral return


**Temporary return**

Return for shorter periods and/or without the intention to stay; explorative visits; ancestral tourism.


Boccagni, P. (2011) ‘The framing of return from above and below in Ecuadorian migration: a project, a myth, or a political device?’ *Global Networks*; 1-20.


Post-conflict (or conflict) return

Return to an ongoing armed conflict or to a post-conflict society.


**Complex return itineraries**

Return to third countries or places other than the migrant’s origin; geographical challenges to the concept of return.


Remittances

Remittances, transfers of savings (generally from country of residence to country of return).


Transnationalism
Publications that address transnationalism or transnational practices.


References


Country of residence

Integration

Processes of integration, inclusion/exclusion within the country of residence; including racism and discrimination.


Development

Development processes, usually in the country of return (e.g. the potential development impacts of return migration).


Context-independent keywords

Information and communication

Communication between people, access to information, information campaigns, etc.


Programmes, policy, regulations, law
Programmes, policies, regulations, legislation, etc. (not necessarily about migration)


Programmes, policy, regulations, law


Programmes, policy, regulations, law


Evaluation Unit. Commissioned Report: Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit.


Politics

Formal and informal politics, including relations between interest groups, politically laden discourses, etc.

Alberts, H.C. and Hazen, H.D. (2005) ‘“There are always two voices...”: International students’ intentions to stay in the United States or return to their home countries.’ International Migration, 43(3):131-154.


**Culture and identity**

*Culture (in the traditional/popular sense); cultural, ethnic, national, linguistic, professional or other identity*


Alberts, H.C. and Hazen, H.D. (2005) “‘There are always two voices...’: International students’ intentions to stay in the United States or return to their home countries.” International Migration, 43(3):131-154.


Religion

Religious groups, beliefs, institutions, etc.


---

**Climate**

**Climate and weather**


Health and healthcare

Individual health status, health risks/benefits, healthcare services.


Social networks and community cohesion (or lack thereof).


Social networks and community


Violence, crime, insecurity

Violence, crime, insecurity and related issues.


Entrepreneurship and investment

Entrepreneurship, business, innovation, productive investment (overlaps with livelihood).


Alberts, H.C. and Hazen, H.D. (2005) ‘“There are always two voices...” International students’ intentions to stay in the United States or return to their home countries.’ International Migration, 43(3):131-154.


### Education and human capital

About education/skills or about certain professional/educational groups (e.g. highly-skilled migrants).

### About education/skills or about certain professional/educational groups (e.g. highly-skilled migrants).


Education and human capital


Livelihoods and finances
Earning a living, work and employment, savings, financial investment, borrowing (may overlap with entrepreneurship).


Alberts, H.C. and Hazen, H.D. (2005) ‘“There are always two voices...”: International students’ intentions to stay in the United States or return to their home countries.’ International Migration, 43(3):131-154.


International Migration, 14(1-2):134-162.


Livelihoods and finances


Potts, D. and Mutambirwa, C. (1998) ‘“Basics are now a luxury”: perceptions of structural adjustment’s impact on rural and urban areas in Zimbabwe.’ Environment and Urbanization, 10(1):55-76.


Livelihoods and finances


Class

About certain socio-economic groups, or relations across the class spectrum; inequality.


Gender

Exclusively about one gender or about gender relations.


Age, generation and life cycle

Relations between generations/age groups; the life cycle, children, old age, retirement (the age/time aspects of kinship).


**Family and kinship**

*Conjugal relations, proximity/distance to family and relatives (the network aspect of kinship).*


Laoire, C.N. (2007)


Bibliography by region of origin

North America

North America Region

Canada

Canada


**United States**


---

**Mexico and Central America**

**Mexico and Central America Region**


**Costa Rica**


**El Salvador**


Guatemala


Honduras


Mexico


Nicaragua


Panama


Caribbean

Caribbean Region


Barbados


**Cuba**


**Dominica**


**Dominican Republic**


**Grenada**


**Guadeloupe**


**Haiti**


**Jamaica**


**Martinique**


**Puerto Rico**


Saint Kitts and Nevis


Trinidad and Tobago

South America
South America Region

Argentina

Bolivia

Brazil

Chile


**Colombia**


**Ecuador**


**Guyana**


**Paraguay**


**Peru**


Suriname


Uruguay


Europe

European Region


Suriname


Albania


**Austria**


**Bosnia and Herzegovina**


**Bosnia and Herzegovina**


**Bulgaria**


**Croatia**


**Cyprus**


**Czech Republic**


**Denmark**


**Estonia**


**Finland**


**France**


**Germany**


Greece


Dikaiou, M. (1994)

Dikaiou, M. (1994)

Dikaiou, M. (1994)

Dikaiou, M. (1994)

Dikaiou, M. (1994)

Dikaiou, M. (1994)


**Hungary**


**Ireland**


**Kosovo**


**Latvia**


**Macedonia**


**Malta**


**Moldova**


**Netherlands**

Alberts, H.C. and Hazen, H.D. (2005) ‘“There are always two voices...”: International students’ intentions to stay in the United States or return


**Norway**


**Poland**


**Portugal**


**Romania**


**Russia**


Serbia and Montenegro


Spain


Slovakia


Slovenia


**Sweden**


**Ukraine**


**United Kingdom**


Yugoslavia


Middle East and North Africa

Middle East and North Africa Region


Algeria


Egypt


Iran


Israel


Israel


**Jordan**


**Lebanon**


**Libya**

Morocco


Palestinian Territories


Tunisia


Of three Turkish samples living in different
symptoms, and cognitions: A preliminary study

The Significance of Success in School for
Childbearing in Turkey.

International Migration and Its Effect on
Psychiatry,

Sponsored repatriation from Germany.

Emigration and Return.

Communities
Exodus, dispersal and regrouping of migrant

Economic Development: A Biographical Perspective

Transnational Lives: A Biographical Perspective

on "Turkish-Dutch" Houses in Turkey.’


exodus, dispersal and regrouping of migrant


Emigration and Return.’ International Migration

‘Mental health of refugees following state-
sponsored repatriation from Germany.’ BMC
Psychiatry, 8(88).

White, K. and Buckley, C.J. (2011) ‘Exposure to
International Migration and Its Effect on
Childbearing in Turkey.’ International Migration

Wolbert, B. (1991) ‘More than a Golden Bangle...
The Significance of Success in School for
Returning Turkish Migrant Families.’
Anthropology & Education Quarterly, 22(2):181-
199.

Yorulmaz, O. and Işık, B. (2011) ‘Cultural
context, obsessive-compulsive disorder
symptoms, and cognitions: A preliminary study
of three Turkish samples living in different
countries.’ International Journal of Psychology,
46(2):136-143.

“Euro Turks”: Overseas Nationals as an
Ambiguous Asset.’ in Östergaard-Nielsen, E.
ed.) International Migration and Sending
Countries. Perceptions, Policies and Transnational
Relations. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 77-–
98.

Yemen

Return Migration.’ International Migration

of the old migration order in the Arab world.’ in
Gould, W.T.S. and Findlay, A.M. (eds)
Population, migration and the changing world

exodus, dispersal and regrouping of migrant


Sub-Saharan Africa

Sub-Saharan Africa Region

Adepoju, A. (1991) ‘Binastructure Communities and
Labor Circulation in Sub-Saharan Africa.’ in
Papademetriou, D.G. and Martin, P.L. (eds) The
Unsettled Relationship. Labor Migration and
Economic Development. Westport: Greenwood
Press, 45-64.

the Potential of Migration and Return to Promote
Development. Applying Concepts to West Africa.
IOM Migration Research Series, 5. Geneva:
International Organization for Migration.

Problem of Reintegration.’ International
Migration, 38(5):59-82.

The Remitting Patterns of African Migrants in
the OECD.’ Journal of African Economies,
19(5):605-634.


Gaillard, A.M. (1994) Migration return. A
bibliographical overview. New York: Center for
Migration Studies.

migration and AIDS.’ Aids Care-Psychological

Transfer of Technology (RRTT): Towards a
Comprehensive Model of the Migration of
African Experts.’ International Migration,

Lydié, N. and Robinson, N.J. (1998) ‘West and
Central Africa.’ International Migration,


Cape Verde


Côte d’Ivoire


Eritrea


Ethiopia


Ghana


**Guinea**


**Kenya**


**Liberia**


**Malawi**


**Mali**


**Mozambique**


**Nigeria**


**Rwanda**


**Senegal**


Sierra Leone


Somalia


South Africa


Sudan


Swaziland


Tanzania

Alberts, H.C. and Hazen, H.D. (2005) “‘There are always two voices...’: International students’ intentions to stay in the United States or return to their home countries.” International Migration, 43(3):131-154.


Togo


Uganda


Zambia


Zimbabwe


Caucasus and Central Asia

Caucasus and Central Asia Region


Armenia


Georgia


Kazakhstan


Kyrgyzstan


Tajikistan


East Asia

East Asia Region


China

Alberts, H.C. and Hazen, H.D. (2005) ‘“There are always two voices...”: International students’ intentions to stay in the United States or return to their home countries.’ International Migration, 43(3):131-154.


Hong Kong


**North Korea**


**South Korea**


**Taiwan**


South Asia

South Asia Region


Afghanistan


**Bangladesh**


**Chagos Islands**


**India**


Nepal


Pakistan


South East Asia


Cambodia


East Timor


Indonesia


Laos

**Myanmar**


---

**Philippines**


**Thailand**


**Vietnam**


**Oceania**

**Oceania Region**


Australia

Cook Islands

Fiji

French Polynesia

New Zealand

Niue

Papua New Guinea

Samoa

**Tonga**


Vanuatu


A systematic bibliography on return migration

As the starting point for a large-scale project on return migration, our team conducted a literature review with the aim of developing the conceptual framework, theoretical background and hypotheses for our research. In preparation for the review, publications were classified according to thematic and regional keywords. This bibliography, which contains over 1100 publications, is the result of our collection and classification. The project, *Possibilities and Realities of Return Migration* (PREMIG), explores return migration from Norway and the United Kingdom, with case studies on return to Afghanistan, Burundi, Iraq, Pakistan and Poland, and statistical analyses covering a greater range of nationalities. It is funded by the Research Council of Norway and carried out jointly by the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), Statistics Norway, the University of Bristol and the University of Sussex.