



The  
University  
Of  
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**Deportation stakeholders' perceptions of their respective roles  
and agency in relation to the deportation  
of refused asylum seekers from the UK**

**By:**

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Pip Tyler, September 2016

# Abstract

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This thesis asks: *How do different 'deportation stakeholders' discuss and perceive their respective places within deportation structures and environments?* Using an inductive, qualitative approach, it examines the perspectives of people with different stakes in deportation practice about deportation and about the possibilities for change to deportation outcomes through their own agency and that of others.

The research involved a scoping survey, purposive and snowball sampling. Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with 42 individuals in the UK and Italy: 11 'policy actors' were professionals with potentially direct influences upon deportation discourse, policy and practice; 7 'deportees' were administratively-removed asylum seekers; 24 'supporters' maintained contact with deportees. Interview data was supplemented with material gathered opportunistically. Stories of 86 deportations were identified. Initial findings fed into further analysis through a grounded approach.

The thesis reveals that discussions of deportation and perceptions of choices and opportunities to exercise agency and moral responsibility within deportation systems vary with the type of actor and the frame(s) they use in relation to different moments in the deportation process. The thesis makes four contributions to knowledge:

- It develops a new set of conceptual tools to support analysis of deportation discussions and perspectives, including three participant frames ('bureaucracy', 'international interdependence', and 'human').
- It introduces UK residents as 'supporters' of deportees who are also deportation stakeholders.
- Methodologically, it focuses on a range of deportation stakeholders' voices that are linked by one context: the UK as a deporting state. The thesis also presents ways of researching hard-to-reach groups through intermediaries.
- It reveals new relationships between deportees, supporters and states. This includes supporters' resistance to domestic policy implementation, while deportee-supporter transnational relationships can maintain deportees' bonds with the UK.



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# List of abbreviations

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APPG	All-Party Parliamentary Group
BIA	Border and Immigration Agency
BID	Bail for Immigration Detainees
COI	Country of Origin Information
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
DWA	Deportation with Assurances
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
ECRE	European Council on Refugees and Exiles
EDM	Early Day Motion
EU	European Union
EURA	EU Readmission Agreement
IDP	Internally displaced people
ILPA	Immigration Law Practitioners' Association
ILR	Indefinite leave to remain
IND	Immigration and Nationality Directorate
INGO	International non-governmental organisation
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IR	International Relations
IRC	Immigration removal centre
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAO	National Audit Office
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OAU	Organization of African Unity

OHCHR Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights  
OSOP One sheet of paper  
PQ Parliamentary Question  
UKBA UK Border Agency  
UKVI UK Visas and Immigration  
UNCAT UN Committee Against Torture  
UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

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*'We may not return people - even inconvenient people - to dangerous places for subjection to unspeakable acts.'*

Ann Winterton MP (HC Deb 15 July 1996, c 812)

*'We do not say that these countries are 100% safe - indeed, that cannot be said of any country.'*

Lord Bassam of Brighton (HL Deb 10 July 2007 c 214GC)<sup>1</sup>

*'Where is Gloria now? Nobody knows.'*

(Madill 2010)<sup>2</sup>

## 1.1 Overview of the approach taken in this thesis

This thesis is concerned with the forced removal or 'deportation' of refused asylum seekers from the UK, the range of people involved in that process as 'deportation stakeholders', and how they each see their place within that system. The thesis understands deportation as a socially-constructed phenomenon that produces, constitutes and reconstitutes social and political conditions. Deportation involves a range of actors, each of whom will consider or experience deportation differently and will construct this reality in their own ways.

This introductory chapter explains how the thesis will answer the core research question, *'How do different 'deportation stakeholders' discuss and perceive their respective places within deportation structures and environments?'* It defines the key terms used in this thesis, explaining the choices for the terms selected. The core research question is then broken down into three research questions, followed by an overview of how these questions will be tackled methodologically. The chapter provides some context to explain why deportation is sufficiently compelling to be selected as the subject matter for this study. It then outlines the key contributions of

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Bassam was presenting additions to the list of countries deemed to pose no serious threat of persecution, under the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002. This is known as the 'white' list. Refused asylum seekers can be deported to such countries without the right to an in-country appeal.

<sup>2</sup> This is a newspaper article headline concerning the unknown fate of a deported asylum seeker 'Gloria'. She had lived in the UK for 14 years and had documented mental health problems. She was escorted by five security guards back to her country of origin, where she feared sectarian violence. The article appeared to be based on the concerned testimony of people in her local community in the UK.

this study to the academic literature on deportation. The chapter concludes with a step-by-step guide to the chapters of the thesis.

The research undertakes a qualitative, inductive approach to developing knowledge and understanding of the experiences and perceptions of 'deportation stakeholders'. These are people who have a direct stake, or a clear interest, in the forced removal of refused asylum seekers from the UK. This diverse group includes: political leaders and policy-makers; people involved in implementing the deportation process such as civil servants and subcontracted agencies; deportees themselves; and, their close family and friends. Data collection for this thesis with 42 deportation stakeholders took place between Spring 2010- Spring 2013, and thus the analysis is specific to that time. The policy context has developed since, and reflections on these changes are incorporated into Chapter 9.

The thesis uses a transnational lens to see deportation and deportees' lives being conducted across borders, along and even beyond the 'deportation corridor' which extends the notion of deportation to relevant moments before and after the deportation event (Coutin 2015, p.674; Drotbohm & Hasselberg 2015, p.553; Nyers 2003, p.1070). The thesis follows in the footsteps of transnational scholars such as Thomas Faist (2000; 2013), Nina Glick-Schiller (1994), Alejandro Portes (2003; 2007) and Steven Vertovec (1999; 2009). The thesis draws on expertise about migration from across a number of social science disciplines, the field of 'migration studies' and the specific subfield of deportation studies (including, but not limited to: Anderson 2013; Anderson et al. 2012b; Anderson et al. 2011b; De Genova & Peutz 2010; De Genova 2002; Schuster & Majidi 2013; Schuster & Majidi 2015; Bloch & Schuster 2005; Drotbohm & Hasselberg 2015).

## **1.2 Research questions and key themes of the thesis**

### **1.2.1 Research questions**

The thesis examines how different stakeholders discuss deportation (their discourse) in relation to their own role and that of other stakeholders, in terms of agency as well

as their relationships with, and responsibilities to, one another. It considers their different perspectives, and the way in which they discuss deportees and deportation.

The core research question is as follows: *‘How do different “deportation stakeholders” perceive their respective roles and obligations within deportation structures and environments?’* This question has been broken down into three key research sub-questions (RQs) driving the research design, data collection and analysis. Each sub-research question focuses on the perceptions of one deportation stakeholder group about themselves and other stakeholders in terms of how they see their own and other relevant stakeholders’ involvement in the deportation process. The first research sub-question considers ‘policy actors’. The second sub-question looks at the views of deportees themselves. The third sub-question introduces ‘supporters’ as the final subgroup of relevant stakeholders under consideration in this thesis.

*RQ1. How do policy actors perceive their own roles, agency and relationships in relation to deportation, and those of other deportation stakeholders?*

*RQ2. How do deportees understand their own roles, agency and relationships in relation to deportation, and those of other deportation stakeholders?*

*RQ3. How do supporters describe their own roles, agency and relationships in relation to deportation, and those of other deportation stakeholders?*

The number and range of potential deportation stakeholders involved in the research required them to be divided into relatively coherent stakeholder groups, to be able to answer the overall research question. However, individually these groups then comprised relatively small sample sizes, which limits some of the applications of the separate stakeholder group findings more broadly (discussed further in Chapter 4). The concluding chapter of the thesis will draw the analysis together to conclude how the sample as a whole, covering the fuller range of stakeholders’ perceptions, comes together to provide an overall understanding of the perspectives of those involved in deportation from the UK.

The first research sub-question concerns the perceptions of ‘policy actors’. It is important to include the perspectives of professionals with formal roles in the design, influence, and implementation of deportation policy or the provision of support to

those facing deportation required inclusion. With no pre-existing, coherent policy community on deportation to draw on, those with a professional interest in deportation were categorised according to the function they fulfil in this process: parliamentarians who influence or design deportation policy, those delivering and implementing deportation policy, as civil servants or subcontractors ('implementers'), and those with a more independent role ('interest groups'). The selection of these functional groups and associated methodological advantages and limitations are explored further in Chapter 4. Fieldwork with this group of professionals was approached by conducting semi-structured interviews, a fairly well-established approach to qualitative research, with a selection of policy actors about their views on deportation policy and practice, and their own professional involvement in this process.

Given the more sensitive and directly personal involvement of supporters and deportees in the deportation process, I took a broadly biographical approach to examining the second and third research sub-questions and explored their personal experiences of involvement in deportation. I took a more incremental approach to developing my contact with deportees and supporters as a means of building trust in this sensitive, personal subject area, using a mixed methods approach of a survey followed by semi-structured interviews.

Throughout the three research questions, I pay particular attention to the themes of discourse, agency and relationships (responsibility being an important dimension of the latter). An outline of these themes is given here, as a precursor to a more detailed discussion in Chapter 3 (section 3.2).

### **1.2.2 Discourse**

Our words and conversations are powerful. They influence our own ideas and actions, and those of other people. In the context of deportation, labels and categories can have profound impacts on migrants' lives. Negative public discourse on immigration, for example, has contributed to the 'othering' or exclusion of migrants (Gravelle et al. 2012, p.61; Leudar & Hayes 2008, p.215), while deportable migrants are subject to

discretionary decisions and actions of policy actors based on normative ideas about which individuals are entitled to membership of the community.

Therefore, the terms, phrases, and even the tone used in discussions about deportation matter. Labels and categories are constructions (Coutin 2015, p.676) and thus it is within our own control as to which we employ. The ways in which different stakeholder groups in this study chose to discuss deportation and deportees are examined in the findings chapters. The discourse of these research participants reflects their own positions on deportation, facilitating an analysis of their underlying understanding of deportation.

Relatedly, the selection and use of particular terms about deportation in this thesis also matters. In this thesis, 'deportation' is used specifically to refer to the forcible removal from the UK of these former asylum seekers whose asylum applications have been refused by the Home Office, but who have not returned to their country of origin of their own free will. The thesis refers to these forcibly removed individuals as 'deportees'.

The forced removal of refused asylum seekers is legally termed 'administrative removal' under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (thus making them 'administratively removed'), whereas the term 'deportation' describes the legal process for removing foreign nationals from the UK in the public interest (for example following a criminal conviction), according to the Immigration Act 1971. Both terms encompass a wider group of individuals than refused asylum seekers (visa overstayers, for example, can also be administratively removed).

I have decided to use 'deportation' and 'deportees' in this thesis, following in the example of other deportation scholars who apply these terms in relation to forcibly removed asylum seekers (Doppler 2015; Griffiths 2012; Schuster 2011b) and forcibly removed migrants more generally (Gibney 2013; Anderson 2013; Drotbohm & Hasselberg 2015; Coutin 2015, among many others cited in Chapter 3). 'Administrative removal' is vague and fairly mysterious-sounding, suggesting a bureaucratic, paper-shuffling exercise that obfuscates the physical nature of the activity. 'Deportation', conversely, is more easily conceptualised and understood by people involved in that

process to mean a forced removal, and captures the 'spectacular', physical nature of this act (Anderson 2013, p.117). It is less euphemistic than the alternatives of 'administrative removal' and the 'administratively removed' and thus likely to be more readily understood by a broad range of research participants and during dissemination with different audiences, which matters in a study concerned with perceptions.

In this thesis, I refer to the deportation process as being conducted by 'the state'. Deportees experience deportation because of decisions made on behalf of the state. Deportation is undertaken under the direction of the Home Office, acting on behalf of the government. I acknowledge that individual roles within that process are performed by a number of personnel on behalf of, paid for and authorised by the state. The decision to deport is taken by civil servants known as 'case owners' who have made the negative determination on an individual asylum claim, issue a written notice of the intention to deport, and set the process of deportation into motion. The deportation act itself involves a number of non-government agencies who are subcontracted to undertake particular practical aspects of the deportation process. For example, refused asylum seekers are usually detained in immigration removal centres (IRCs) that are run by private security agencies or the prison service, they are returned on commercial airlines (even charter flights), and are accompanied by 'escorts' from private security agencies who are authorised to use certain types of force and restraint to ensure the compliance of those being removed.

Similarly, I refer to the reception of deportees by individuals such as border agents, immigration staff and local police in the 'country of return' as the actions of the receiving 'state', as they will be encountered and understood by deportees as agents of the state.

There are a range of people who are in some way involved in the deportation of refused asylum seekers from the UK. These are described in this thesis as 'deportation stakeholders'. They include members of the policy community (or 'policy actors'), which includes not only policy makers but also those who influence policy and implementation, including civil servants, parliamentarians, and non-governmental organisations that lobby government or provide different forms of support to refused

asylum seekers (such as legal advice, counselling or accommodation, for example). Deportees themselves, evidently, are also deportation stakeholders. This thesis also considers UK-based friends or associates of deportees, known here as 'supporters', to be deportation stakeholders as they too can be affected by deportation and have an active role in deportation stories through their direct intervention. These deportation stakeholders each play a different part in the deportation process and post-deportation context. This thesis is concerned with the perceptions of deportation stakeholders about the ability (or agency) and obligation (or moral responsibility) of themselves and other individuals to try to shape deportation outcomes.

A specific vocabulary is adopted throughout the thesis to describe actors in the deportation process. Terms for key actors are defined in *Box 1.1*. They were designed to reflect the multi-directional nature of deportee migration as found in the transnational literature (for example, not assuming that the country of birth is also the deportee's 'home', and reflecting that the country of return may not be the country of birth but for example, another EU country). They were selected carefully given the artificial but powerful nature of the asylum structures in the UK, and in light of the discourse surrounding deportation, discussed in Chapter 3. They were chosen with the intention to avoid reinforcing negative discourse or powerlessness among deportees, and to avoid (pejorative) assumptions about states involved in the deportation system.

*Box 1.1: Definitions of key actors in the deportation process as used in this study*

**‘Deportation stakeholders’** are people who have a direct stake, or a clear interest, in deportation policy and practice. They include deportees, their supporters and policy actors.

**‘Deportees’** are former asylum seekers who have been refused asylum and forcibly removed from the UK. They have been subjected to **‘deportation’**, also known legally as ‘administrative removal’. They might have been deported to their country of birth, or to an EU member state where they had been first registered in the EU. On occasion, deportees are returned to another country.

**‘Supporters’** are UK residents who have been in contact with a deportee. They are usually members of the public who have developed some kind of personal or professional tie to a deportee, usually when they were asylum-seekers in the UK.

**‘Policy actors’** are professionals with a stake in the deportation process. They comment upon or influence deportation policy, practice and discourse in the UK. They are divided here into three functional groups: parliamentarians; implementers; and interest groups.

**‘Gatekeepers’** are usually frontline asylum and migration organisations and networks whose staff or membership have contact with deportees.

The **‘country of origin’** or **‘country of birth’** is the country where deportees were born. They are likely to have citizenship of that country. It is not a straightforward matter as to whether they feel that they belong or have a home in this country, and thus terms such as ‘home’ or ‘home community’ are avoided here.

The **‘host country’** is one where deportees have lived outside of their country of birth. The UK hosted all deportees in this study, prior to their deportations. There is an implicit suggestion in this term that the country in question actively permits asylum-seekers to stay in the UK as their asylum claim is being processed. **‘Host communities’** are the local areas in which asylum seekers lived.

The **‘deporting state’** is the country that deported the asylum seeker. In this thesis, the UK is the deporting state, unless specified otherwise. This term suggests that the state has now changed its relationship and attitude towards the asylum-seeker in question, and has rescinded their permission to remain in the country.

The **‘country of return’** is the place to which individuals are deported. This is often, but not necessarily, the same as the country of birth. Some deportees are returned to another EU country under the Dublin Regulation. A small proportion of deportees are returned to neither their country of birth nor an EU country. For example, they may have claimed citizenship elsewhere; their nationality may have been assumed by the UK authorities if they had had no identity documents in the UK; or they may have been deported to a transit country that agreed to take them.

*Source: devised by the author*

### 1.2.3 Agency

As the point of departure for this research, deportation implies a dominance of structural constraints upon deportees' lives. The act of forced removal is out of deportees' control. At that moment, it seems that deportee agency has been subdued, and perhaps, how the agency of certain policy actors has prevailed in effecting deportation. In light of the preceding section on the power of discourse, this context issues a challenge to researchers as to how they portray deportees in their work. The subdued agency of deportees at the point of deportation cannot be the entire story, since the forced migration literature tells us that 'forced migrants may opportunistically make the best of a migration crisis; they are not simply victims, but are active within the circumstances in which they find themselves' (Van Hear 1998, p.47).

Agency is an important attribute explored in this research. It has been defined as follows: 'Agency refers not to the intentions people have in doing things but to their capability of doing those things in the first place. ... Agency concerns events of which an individual is the perpetrator, in the sense that the individual could, at any phase in a given sequence of conduct, have acted differently.' (Giddens 1984, p.9). In this thesis, agency is understood as the capacity of an individual not only to exercise control over their own life and overcome structural barriers to autonomy (McAnulla 2002, p.271), but also to shape one's own social world (Bakewell 2010, p.1694).

This capacity for agency is found among all deportation stakeholders: it includes not only the ability of deportees to shape their post-deportation lives by drawing on their own social and material resources, but also supporters who practice resistance, such as attempts to prevent or disrupt deportations from taking place, or who provide resources for deportees to support them in the post-deportation environment. Further, agency is also demonstrated by policy actors, who have the opportunity to influence policy, disrupt individual deportations, and implement deportation policy in particular ways as street-level bureaucrats (after Lipsky 1980). The empirical chapters present an analysis of views, perceptions and experiences among policy actors

(Chapter 5), deportees (Chapter 6 and 7) and supporters (Chapter 8) who participated in the study.

I present a resource-based account of deportation that reflects the agency of deportation stakeholders, varying over time, circumstance and according to available resources including not only material resources, but also social capital and migratory cultural capital (after Van Hear 1998 and Vertovec 2013). While I seek to make agency evident, the structural context also matters (Bakewell 2010; Iosifides & Sporton 2009, p.105). I understand deportee agency to take place in a context, a dialectic with the very constraints demonstrated by deportation. The moments of agency and structure described by different participants show what they construed as agency and what as a structural hindrance. Indeed, one actor's expressions of agency might be perceived by other stakeholders as a structural barrier to their own agency. This complexity of the interplay between structure and agency in the deportation context, involving different actors and their various perspectives on the deportation event, is a fascinating element of the thesis.

#### **1.2.4 Relationships and responsibility**

The thesis is also concerned with relationships in terms of those between deportation stakeholders, that is, between deportees and states (often manifest as interactions between deportees and officials seen to be representing or acting on behalf of the state), between deportees and supporters, and even supporters and states. The thesis explores the different qualities of these relationships, and how they might change over time and function across space, along and beyond the deportation corridor. For example, relationships between deportees and supporters became transnational following deportation across political borders, while the relationship between deportees and the UK was in some cases maintained psychologically by deportees, despite physical separation from UK territory. Some supporters' relationships with their own state changed, as supporters became more subversive and resistant to deportation policy and practice.

Responsibility is an important dimension of some of these relationships. Responsibility is a complex concept, but it is not a controversial claim that we have a responsibility to

assist others where possible. Responsibility is understood here in terms of moral duties, rather than strict adherence to existing law, and is part of a much larger normative discussion about social justice and ethics. Relevant theoretical ideas here include Kant's idea of 'imperfect duties' where it is difficult to specify precisely when a duty has been complied with, and the associated latitude to do more or less than is expected (Kant 1996). Similarly, there are 'negative duties' not to act, such as not to harm or violate others, and 'positive duties' to act, such as to remedy situations that one has not directly caused.

The thesis is concerned with the moral responsibilities that deportation stakeholders might feel are owed to deportees (such as being treated with dignity, being provided with sufficient resources to be able to build a safe life in the country of return, being discussed in a respectful, non-derogatory manner in public discourse, or ensuring an EU country of return deals with their asylum claim), rather than the legal responsibilities of states towards refused asylum seekers (in terms of following procedures, providing information, allowing for legal representation etc.). For example, while supporters have no legal responsibilities at all towards deportees, they might feel moral obligations to support deportees they believe will be exposed to dangerous circumstances upon return. Similarly, while a deportee might legally be deported (following a formal assessment by a Home Office case owner of the safety within the country of return), their actual safety might be compromised in reality upon return, thus invoking for some a question of whether or not the UK retains some responsibility towards that insecure individual.

This discussion falls within a normative debate within the academic literature on the ethics of different approaches to immigration and borders within liberal states, as found in the work of Joseph Carens (2013) and Matthew Gibney (2004, 2006) for example. Some authors have made claims about moral considerations in relation to deportation, such as a state's responsibility to ensure deportee safety (Weiner (1995, p.195) and state responsibilities towards refugees present in its own territory 'whose fate lies uniquely in our hands' (Gibney 2006, p.156) because of the power of the state to grant permission to stay, and under specific terms.

A further important pair of ideas underpinning the concept of responsibility used in this thesis is the distinction between the 'ethics of justice' (Kohlberg 1981) and the 'ethics of care' (Gilligan 1995). The former approach is based on equitable treatment, universal principles and rules applicable to everyone equally; the latter takes an individualised approach that is empathetic, needs-centred, holistic and allows for context (Botes 2000, p.1071). These perspectives guide ideas at a policy level (such as the asylum and deportation process) and a practical one, in terms of the way in which refused asylum seekers and deportees might be treated by those with whom they come into contact, as individuals with different needs and backgrounds, or as individuals subject to the same rules and processes as other refused asylum seekers.

The nature of the relationships between different stakeholders in this thesis is evident in the way they each chose to exercise agency and perceived their responsibilities towards deportees. Stakeholders had different power and resources available to them, and different capacities and opportunities to shape and improve deportation outcomes by their specific actions or non-actions. For example, those involved in policy design might take into account opportunities to provide support (economic, security, diplomacy etc.) to deportees in the post-deportation context, while those implementing policy exercise a choice in relation to how they treat deportees in their care. This broader understanding of moral responsibility towards deportees reflects the potential impact of all manner of practical actions upon deportees within the deportation process and in the post-deportation environment. A further dimension of the idea of responsibility involves other state responsibilities to those other than deportees, such as towards its own citizens. Such responsibilities might be seen to conflict in certain circumstances. Thus it is also important to consider how different stakeholders understand responsibilities towards a range of deportation stakeholders, including both deportees, the general public and even perhaps, other states.

The deportation process involves a range of individuals at different points in space and time. The analysis of the perceptions of each type of deportation stakeholder in this thesis are identified separately for clarity, but brought together in a framing analysis to provide a set of three core ways in which they all conceptualised deportation and, in particular, agency and responsibility (in section 4.6.3). This tripartite, analytical

structure consists of: a 'bureaucracy' frame, an 'international interdependence' frame, and a 'human' frame. Each group of stakeholders had different understandings, views and experiences of deportation, which were evident in the way that they emphasised different aspects of each frame at different times and in response to different questions or contexts. This drawing together of stakeholder perceptions in one analytical structure is important for answering the core research question of the thesis about stakeholder perceptions of their respective roles, agency and responsibilities, how and in which circumstances they differ.

### 1.3 Why does deportation matter?

This study was conceived in a context of mounting public pressure to increase deportations from the UK. Asylum numbers had peaked in 2002 with 84,132 asylum applications being lodged that covered 103,031 individuals (Home Office 2016b).<sup>3</sup> This was more than double the levels five years' previously. Media furore over asylum levels was at its height, and had become a more significant consideration in relation to policy development under the New Labour government (Somerville 2007a, p.137), concerned about the potential foothold for the Conservative opposition (Campbell 2007, p.527). Public concern was brought to a head by the 'crisis' at the Sangatte refugee camp, predecessor to the 'Jungle' in Calais, which ensured that asylum became a political priority in the UK (Somerville 2007a, p.66).

Amid a plethora of subsequent reforms to the asylum system, the government introduced a series of measures to increase deportation rates of asylum seekers and other foreign nationals, known as the 'deportation turn' (Gibney 2008, p.148). Until this point, the likelihood of refused asylum seekers being deported was 'exceedingly low' (Gibney 2006, p.146). Reforms included the development of the 'white' list of countries to which the UK could easily deport, and the then-Prime Minister Tony Blair unilaterally set a 'tipping point target' designed to deport more refused asylum seekers than new claims that were expected to be refused (Somerville 2007a, p.162).

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<sup>3</sup> Figures are taken from (Home Office 2016b) 'Asylum data tables Vol.1': Table as\_01: Asylum applications and initial decisions for main applicants, by country of nationality; Table as\_02: Asylum applications and initial decisions for main applicants and dependants, by country of nationality. They provide data for the years 1979 to 2015.

Removal targets meant that deportations became indicative of the credibility of the asylum system (Stevens 2004, p.311). The ‘foreign national prisoners scandal’ in 2006 embarrassed the government over the failure to deport eligible prisoners at the end of their sentences, and led to the infamous declaration of the Home Secretary later that year that the immigration system was ‘not fit for purpose’ (Home Affairs Committee 2006, Q866).

Less well-known at this time was the suicide of Manuel Bravo in September 2005. He was a refused asylum seeker who took his own life in detention in an IRC, fearing imminent deportation to his persecutors in Angola (Herbert 2005). Manuel had known that his wife had been detained by the Angolan authorities for two months when she had recently returned to care for a relative. His suicide note revealed that he had hoped that his son would be permitted to remain living safely in Leeds as a result.

Even less well-known are the fates of deported asylum seekers like ‘Gloria’ (above), whose deportation was reported but her post-deportation life was not. She may have built a new life elsewhere, with or without the assistance of her family and friends. Alternatively, reflecting Lord Bassam’s admission (also above) that no country is ‘100% safe’, her future could have been a dangerous one. The UK is a signatory to several international treaties prohibiting the forced removal of any individual to a country where they will suffer violence or persecution, known as the principle of ‘non-refoulement’ (Articles 19, 3 and 33 respectively of: EU, 2000; OHCHR, 1984; UNHCR, 1951). Nonetheless, the UK government routinely refuses to monitor the post-deportation circumstances of refused asylum seekers. Former immigration minister Phil Woolas MP outlined the government position: that monitoring would contradict their position that asylum seekers are correctly assessed through the UK asylum process (HC Deb 27 January 2009 c 276W). The refusal to contemplate post-deportation monitoring continues to this day (personal correspondence, 2012).<sup>4</sup>

Another unknown but interesting element of Gloria’s story concerns the people at her church and her drop-in centre in the UK whom, it seems, supplied information for the newspaper article. We do not know who these individuals were and can only guess

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<sup>4</sup> Letter from the Asylum Policy Correspondence Team, dated 28 November 2012. This was in response to my request for an interview with the Immigration Minister.

what their relationship was to Gloria. Nonetheless, it seems that her deportation affected this UK community, conducted by their own government on their behalf. Similarly, we know that sufficient people were mobilised by the death of Manuel Bravo that a project in his name now provides legal support to asylum seekers in Leeds,<sup>5</sup> yet his son of Manuel Bravo who stayed in the UK faced a continuing threat of deportation himself (Bernstein 2011).

These stories about Manuel and Gloria in the context of the deportation turn highlight the range of different stakeholders with interests and roles in deportation policy and practice, from policy makers and those working in IRCs to refused asylum seekers, deportees and the family, friends and communities who have maintained relationships in some way. These individuals all perform a role in the outcomes of deportation policy, whether in design, implementation, acquiescence or resistance. Each stakeholder has a degree of control over their own actions in this context, an agency to shape deportation and, perhaps, also a responsibility for those actions or non-actions and their impact.

While this thesis was written in the context prior to 2014 (based on fieldwork conducted between 2010 and 2013), immigration continues to be a pressing policy issue in the UK. Immigration is consistently one of the top issues for the UK electorate (Duffy & Frere-Smith 2014). It is popularly understood to be a driving factor in the 'Brexit' outcome of the 2016 UK referendum to leave the EU (Viña 2015), although early academic analyses dispute this assertion (Lawton & Ackrill 2016; Spencer 2016; Fevre 2016). A recent UK initiative to prevent migrants from travelling to the UK from France, 'The Great Wall of Calais' (Smith 2016), marks its late entry to the spate of EU member states constructing fences and walls along borders deemed vulnerable to migrant incursion, in parallel with the reintroduction of some Schengen border controls. Deportation has, in fact, been seen as an important part of the EU 'solution' to the refugee 'crisis' that began in 2015. The EU secured a 'one in, one out' agreement in a 'deal' with Turkey, where from 20 April 2016, unauthorised migrant arrivals in Greece are deported to Turkey in return for the resettlement of Syrian refugees within the EU (European Commission 2016b, p.4).

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<sup>5</sup> The Manuel Bravo Project [www.manuelbravo.org.uk](http://www.manuelbravo.org.uk)

While deportation of asylum seekers and other migrants is less regularly prominent in these discussions, it still provokes fierce debate in the UK. These discussions have ranged from child welfare to human rights and national security. For example, one of the first acts of the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition was to 'end' the detention of children for immigration purposes (Gower 2014). An inquest in 2013 found that the Angolan asylum seeker Jimmy Mubenga was unlawfully killed through excessive restraints applied by his G4S escorts during his deportation from the UK in October 2010 (Travis 2013). Poignantly, news of his death reached me during an early interview for this study. Legal cases, such as that preceding the deportation of Abu Qatada to Jordan in 2013, are juxtaposed with misleading tabloid depictions of deportation being prevented, for example, because of pet ownership (Canning 2012). These issues will remain on the political agenda. For example, in relation to the terms of the UK's exit from the EU, it is not clear whether the UK will continue to participate in practices such as the Dublin Regulation, where asylum seekers are deported to first EU member state they entered. This will have an impact upon the UK's ability to deport asylum seekers to whom it has refused protection since they form a significant proportion of current asylum deportations; EU14 countries were the second largest regional destination for asylum deportations in both 2004 and 2014 (Home Office 2016c).<sup>6</sup>

Deportation is treated as an endpoint, a neat 'solution' to migration 'problems' for states (Richard & Fischer 2008, p.587) but the reality is more messy and complex, involving a plethora of individuals each acting in a way that shapes deportation outcomes. This thesis is concerned with how those involved in deportation understand their roles and agency on this matter (and those of other deportation stakeholders), and how their actions reflect the various evolving relationships between one another.

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<sup>6</sup> Derived from: (Home Office 2016c) *Removals data tables Vol.3*, Table rv\_06: 'Removals and voluntary departures by country of destination and type.' The 'EU14' group covers the EU member states prior to expansion in 2004, that is: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden.

## 1.4 The original contribution of this study

This study makes four key contributions to the literature. First, this study provides a new set of conceptual tools to enable a fuller understanding and analysis of different perspectives on deportation. This relates to the theme of discourse that runs through the thesis. Most significantly, the thesis provides an original set of three key frames or lenses used by different deportation stakeholders to discuss and conceptualise deportation. These are: a 'bureaucracy' frame, an 'international interdependence' frame and a 'human' frame. These were derived through an inductive, dialectical, grounded analysis of empirical material. As a set, they comprise a new analytical tool for understanding stakeholder perspectives and to suggest when and why their contributions to the debate diverge or converge.

In addition, the thesis proposes two principal post-deportation phases of 'survival' and 'settling', mainly based on supporters' insights into the post-deportation condition. These distinct phases enable a way to structure discussions of deportee lives in the post-deportation world, and to discuss actions and responsibilities of different deportation stakeholders during these periods. The thesis suggests some further concepts including deportees as 'persistent' migrants in light of the fact that many deportees re-migrate or internally relocate within the country of return. 'Hostile encounters' are described as significant moments between deportees and policy implementers that can affect deportees' perceptions and re-telling of their deportation. Transnational interactions between supporters and deportees in the post-deportation context can be described as 'panicky' or 'skewed' transnational activity that reflect the relative urgency and dependency that are features of some of these relationships. This extends the transnational literature on 'limited' (Burrell 2003) and 'reactive' transnational activity (Itzigsohn & Saucedo 2002; 2005) by providing examples of deportee behaviour and social relationships that cross political boundaries in a distorted manner.

These new concepts sit alongside the terms employed throughout the study for different deportation stakeholders (policy actors, deportees and supporters) and for places along the 'deportation corridor' (Coutin 2015, p.674; Drotbohm & Hasselberg 2015, p.553; Nyers 2003, p.1070) as a contribution to the academic deportation

vocabulary. This vocabulary can be used to avoid reproducing assumptions about deportees and to avoid falling into adopting popular discourse that can perpetuate negative stereotypes of migrant groups. Further than this, it helps to more accurately depict different aspects of (post-)deportation actors and environments, and to portray their understandings of their roles, agency and responsibilities.

The second contribution of this study is to introduce UK residents as ‘supporters’ of deportees who are also deportation stakeholders. These are individuals in the host country who provide some form of direct support to deportees, often (but not always) having got to know them as asylum seekers in their local community. Supporters provide important roles in deportation outcomes; they can form part of deportees’ social capital and their interventions shape what happens to deportees. Supporters can also be impacted by deportation themselves, in terms of the loss of a friend, or feeling a moral obligation to provide resources to deportees to aid their survival, for example. Supporters also can play an important domestic role as UK citizens and residents, enabling refused asylum seekers to resist deportation or themselves protesting against certain aspects of the deportation process. Supporters provide a new, alternative perspective in deportation debates, beyond deportees and members of the policy community. It is important that their voices are also heard in this discussion, and to understand their perceptions of their own roles in affecting deportation outcomes.

Third, methodologically, the thesis analyses a range of deportation stakeholders’ voices that are linked by one context: the UK as a deporting state. The sample is based around one deporting state rather than, perhaps, a more common research approach of sampling on the basis of ethnicity or nationality of the research subjects. This provides an eclectic mix of voices involved in the deportation debate to give a fuller understanding of the issue from a variety of perspectives and the ways in which they interact and relate to affect deportation outcomes.

These stakeholder voices fall into three broad groups: policy actors; deportees; and supporters. Each group is examined in turn through subsequent chapters of the thesis. Policy actors have some kind of voice and influence in public discourse, and the policy-

making and delivery process. They are a diverse group, ranging from parliamentarians to those implementing deportation policy and interest groups that lobby government and/or support prospective deportees. These policy actors have very different perspectives and priorities from one another, but are unified by a professional participation in the deportation system and their opportunities to influence at a strategic, political level. Deportee voices are vital to any discussion of deportation and its consequences because of their unique perspectives on the experience of being deported, although it can be difficult to facilitate their meaningful participation. Supporters are relatively new actors in this discussion, who are quietly involved in deportees' everyday lives, yet relatively unknown socially and politically. They provide a new perspective on post-deportation lives, offering a mediated insight to this environment. Chapter 4 collates these different perspectives to develop an analysis of the common ways in which stakeholders talk about deportation, how they see the opportunities for agency, their relationships with one another and what responsibility these relationships might involve.

Methodologically, the thesis also presents a way of recruiting deportees as research participants that are hard-to-reach, by using supporters as intermediaries. There are important ethical issues to consider when working with potentially vulnerable fieldwork subjects (discussed in Chapter 4), as well as practical difficulties in identifying, locating and contacting deportees. Supporters offered a relatively efficient way to establish links with deportees, given they had already established trusting relationships with deportees that are difficult to develop through fieldwork alone.

Relatedly, the fourth and final original contribution of this thesis is that it reveals new relationships between deportees, supporters and states that have developed as a consequence of deportation. For example, supporters may practice 'street-level resistance' as domestic citizen-stakeholders in policy and practice. In the post-deportation context, deportee-supporter relationships become distorted transnational networks created by the act of deportation, which enable deportees to mobilise their resources to survive and settle somewhere they can belong in the long-term. Deportees' relationships with supporters also can affect their relationships with

states, by enhancing their ability to maintain a psychological bond with the UK, and to where they might even plan to return in future.

With these insights into the perceptions of deportation stakeholders about deportation and their roles, agency and relationships in this domain, we are better positioned to know what is likely to happen to people like 'Gloria' who have been deported from the UK, and how different stakeholders might affect those outcomes according to their perceptions of their own place in the process.

## 1.5 Chapter outline

**Chapter two** sets the context for the study, outlining key factual elements of the asylum system that lead to the deportation process. This is set in the context of liberal states' approach to migration control and the development of UK deportation policy alongside a myriad of processes and targets. It explains why deportation to an EU country under the Dublin Regulation is included within the definition of 'deportation' employed in this study.

**Chapter three** provides contextual analysis by examining the existing literature related to deportation to establish a knowledge base about post-deportation circumstances. It discusses specific areas of the literature informing this study and how they coalesce. It does this by extracting their most pertinent concepts and ideas falling within three key themes that run through the course of the analysis: discourse; agency; and, relationships. The chapter identifies key gaps in this literature in these areas.

The purpose of **Chapter four** is to establish a fairly complex methodological framework needed to answer the research questions about a very disparate population that might not wish to engage with the research. First, it sets out the main assumptions made in the study, before providing an outline of the qualitative research design and sampling strategy for the three stakeholder groups: policy actors, deportees and their UK-based supporters. Multi-method fieldwork involved a scoping survey of supporters and semi-structured interviews with all three groups. The chapter discusses the ethical approach to a study of deportation with implications for data collection and how potentially negative impacts on deportee participants can be

minimised. It also discusses the related limitations of using third party accounts in gathering data on deportees and post-deportation stories.

Initial fieldwork findings were fed back into further rounds of analysis through a grounded theory approach to analysis. This inductive approach led to the crucial identification and development of a set of three 'frames' through which participants discussed deportation. These frames provide non-normative concepts for the analysis of interview material in the subsequent chapters, thus providing a truly dialectical process of generating, testing and revising the frames and their core referents. The chapter concludes by reflecting on the author's positionality in the study in relation to facilitating and hindering interaction with research subjects.

The analysis of empirical data commences in **Chapter five** with the voices of policy actors: parliamentarians; people implementing the deportation system (implementers); and third sector organisations providing expertise and support on deportation (interest groups). These policy actors occupy professional roles in the deportation process, and are in a position to influence the tone of deportation debates through their discourse. Some policy actors are involved in the agenda-setting, and others are 'street-level bureaucrats' (Lipsky 1980), responsible for the implementation of deportation policy. The chapter considers the way that policy actors privileged certain types of information on deportation, and how they conceptualised deportation through a framing analysis.

**Chapter six** explores how deportees in the study experienced deportation, and how their own conceptualisations of deportation emphasised different elements of the three frames compared with policy actors. In particular, these differences were revealed during 'meaningful contacts' (Valentine 2008, p.323) or what I call 'hostile encounters' between deportees and policy implementers. The chapter provides further insight to the relationship between deportees and those representing the deporting state. The analysis reveals deportees as discerning rather than bearing ill-will towards the UK as a result of these encounters, thus maintaining a relatively positive symbolic link for them with the UK. The chapter also suggests some differences might exist *between* deportees' perspectives, based on their deportation

destination (Europe or outside Europe), their household composition and their available resources.

**Chapter seven** focuses upon reports about deportee agency in the post-deportation environment from the perspectives of deportees and supporters. These two stakeholder groups presented the post-deportation environment as offering opportunities for deportee agency, as well as identifying structural constraints upon their activities – including how they saw the role of states in encouraging or hindering deportee mobility. This chapter uses the perceptions of supporters to identify ‘survival’ and ‘settling’ phases as two broad temporal periods where deportees’ agency took different forms and provided opportunities for supporter intervention. Deportees’ experiences (and supporters’ narratives of these) expressed through a human frame reveal how deportees’ agency in the post-deportation context can be compromised by time in the UK and by the act of deportation. The region to which deportees were returned (Europe or beyond) seemed to account for some variation in deportees’ experiences, as well as variations in supporters’ interventions and their feelings of responsibility towards deportees. The chapter concludes by reflecting on deportees’ reported aspirations for their futures. It reveals immigration status, mediated by the state, as another factor affecting deportees’ outcomes.

An unexpected group of stakeholders in the deportation process feature in **Chapter eight**: deportees’ supporters who resided in the UK and maintained social ties with deportees. The chapter reveals these supporters to be a crucial part of the post-deportation story and a significant influence on outcomes for some deportees. Developing the framing analysis, supporters emphasised ‘resistance’ as an important aspect of deportation. Supporters established themselves as actors who also were not only affected directly by deportation but who took an active role in deportation stories. The ties supporters maintained with deportees became transnational, albeit ‘limited’ at times by deportees’ resource constraints (after Burrell 2003) but also mediated by the nature of their relationships established in the UK. Persisting transnational ties were a by-product of the deportation system, enabling deportee survival, settlement and resistance to their aggressors, and also can generate a new

type of resistance to states by supporters that is independent of deportees themselves.

Finally, in **Chapter nine** I return to the original aims and research questions of the study that concern the perceptions of different stakeholders about their respective places in the deportation process. The chapter compares and contrasts the three stakeholder groups in the study, particularly in relation to the way that they each discussed deportation using the set of three cognitive frames identified through the earlier analysis, and how they managed these competing and, at times, conflicting frames when attempting to present a coherent view of deportation and their own role within that. I reflect on the contribution of this research study to the academic literature, and identify some further areas for research.



# CHAPTER 2: THE POLICY CONTEXT OF DEPORTATION IN THE UK

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An understanding of the asylum system is a necessary precursor to examining deportation itself. This chapter provides an overview of the asylum and deportation processes in the UK, alongside statistics on recent deportations, the policies governing deportation and their underlying aims. The chapter is based around five key questions:

- What are the relevant laws and policies governing asylum and deportation?
- How does the asylum system operate in the UK?
- How does the deportation system function?
- How many deportees are there and to where are they deported?
- How effective is deportation policy?

The chapter sets the scene for the subsequent review of the academic literature surrounding deportation in Chapter 3.

## 2.1 What are the relevant laws and policies governing asylum and deportation?

Deportation is not an aim in itself or stand-alone policy; it is a part of the implementation of a complex asylum and immigration system. An abundance of immigration laws, rules and policies impact upon the deportation process. These developed particularly since the 1990s at different levels of governance, to provide a framework of national, EU and international law and policy. This section provides a basic overview of key elements of these systems in relation to deportation of asylum seekers from the UK.

The history and development of immigration law and policy in the UK is covered comprehensively in the public policy literature (Randall 1994; Stevens 2004; Schuster & Solomos 1999; Sales 2007), with some attention to the questions around deportations from the UK (Gibney 2008; Gibney & Hansen 2003; Bloch & Schuster 2005). Likewise, there is an extensive literature on EU migration policy development (Boswell & Geddes 2011; Bade 2003; Moraes 2003; Hansen 2003) and more broadly in

terms of liberal states' responses to migration (Gibney 2004; 2006; Joppke 1998; Guiraudon 2001a; Weiner 1995; Freeman 1998; Betts 2013).

Debates in the literature regarding the asylum system are relevant to deportation, but deportation is rarely addressed in its own right. These debates include how far states control borders and immigration flows (Morawska 2001; Massey et al. 2016) and how far they ought to (Carens 2013; Gibney 2004); the gaps between policy and practice (Cornelius & Tsuda 2004; Ellermann 2008), and the underlying purposes of deportation policy (Castles 2004; Mountz et al. 2013). These debates reflect a political focus on governance of immigration on a large scale, rather than the relationship between states and individual migrants.

The academic literature includes a normative debate on the ethics of different approaches to immigration and borders within liberal states, notably in the work of Joseph Carens (2013) and Matthew Gibney (Gibney 2004). These form part of a wider political theory debate about states' ability and right to exert control over immigration. For example, Gibney (2004) presents two positions on these questions. The partialist approach prioritises preservation of nation-state identity and culture through citizenship, which is critical in determining immigration policy. In this account, the interests of citizens are paramount. In contrast, the impartial, cosmopolitan position does not distinguish between citizens and foreigners on questions of immigration. This position ultimately advocates free movement with a corresponding right to settle in different countries. Modern citizenship prevents this free choice from occurring in many contexts, particularly for the poor or uneducated who might lack the resources and other credentials required to meet the settlement criteria of many countries. The EU provides an important exception, due to principle of free movement within the EU that can lead to rights to settle in countries other than your country of birth. Within these debates, some authors have asserted that moral considerations exist that can be specifically applied in relation to deportation. They make claims about a state's responsibility to ensure deportee safety (Weiner (1995, p.195), and towards refugees in our own territory 'whose fate lies uniquely in our hands' due to their physical presence (Gibney 2006, p.156).

### 2.1.1 International law

The foundation of modern asylum law is the UN 1951 *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* and its 1967 *Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees* (hereafter collectively referred to as ‘the 1951 Refugee Convention’) (UN General Assembly 1951; 1967). The 1951 Refugee Convention has been interpreted, implemented and added to through a range of laws and policies, both domestically and at EU level.

Like most deporting states the UK has an obligation under international law (including the Refugee Convention, the UN Convention against Torture, and the EU Charter) to ensure that refused asylum seekers will not face serious harm on return. This is known as the principle of ‘non-refoulement’. The refoulement clauses of several relevant international agreements, including the three mentioned to which the UK is a signatory, are reproduced in *Table 2.1*.

*Table 2.1: Examples of international agreements prohibiting refoulement*

Year	Title	Relevant sections
1951 and 1967	<b>1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol</b>	Article 33: <i>‘No Contracting State shall expel or return (“refouler”) a refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.’</i>
1969	<b>OAU Convention</b> (concerns African states)	Article 5: <i>‘no refugee shall be repatriated against his will’</i>
1984	<b>Cartagena Declaration on Refugees</b> (concerns Latin American states)	Conclusion 3(5): <i>‘To reiterate the importance and meaning of the principle of non-refoulement (including the prohibition of rejection at the frontier) as a corner-stone of the international protection of refugees. This principle is imperative in regard to refugees and in the present state of international law.’</i>
1984	<b>UN Convention against Torture</b>	Article 3: <i>‘No State Party shall expel, return (“refouler”) or extradite a person to another State where there are substantial grounds for believing that he would be in danger of being subjected to torture.’</i>
2000	<b>EU Charter of Fundamental Rights</b> (concerns EU states)	Article 19: <i>‘No one may be removed, expelled or extradited to a State where there is a serious risk that he or she would be subjected to the death penalty, torture or other inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.’</i>
2008	<b>EU Returns Directive</b>	Articles 4(b) and 5: <i>‘Member States shall ... respect the principle of non-refoulement.’</i>

*Source: compiled by the author using: (UN General Assembly 1951; 1967; Organization of African Unity (OAU) 1969; Regional Refugee Instruments & Related n.d.; UN General Assembly 1984; European Parliament and Council of the European Union 2008; European Union 2012)*

### 2.1.2 European law

A range of deportation measures at the EU level are intended to harmonise approaches to the removal of third country nationals who do not have permission to remain in Member States. Key measures include the Dublin Regulation, Readmission Agreements, and the 2008 Returns Directive.<sup>7</sup>

The Dublin Regulation 2013 has evolved from an original agreement in 1990 which came into force in 1997 (originally, the Dublin Convention 1990, the Dublin II Regulation 2003 and the Dublin III Regulation 2008), hereafter referred to as the 'Dublin Regulation'. The Dublin Regulation provides a way of determining which EU member state is responsible for processing an individual's asylum claim. It works on the principle that the responsible state is the one in which the individual first arrived in the EU and were identified. It provides for the transfer (or in this thesis, the deportation) of this individual to the responsible state.

The Dublin Regulation does not require the UK to deport in this way. The 'sovereignty clause' allows a member state to become responsible for the determination of an asylum claim, even when the applicant made their original claim in another member state (European Union: Council of the European Union 2013 Ch II, Article 3(2)). This is on the grounds that there are flaws in the reception conditions or the asylum system of that state. During this study (and before the current 'European refugee crisis' erupted) several EU Member States suspended deportations to Greece following ECHR and CJEU (Court of Justice for the European Union) judgements (Karamanidou & Schuster 2011) as well as a (so far, unsuccessful) call for a similar halt to deporting to Italy. This suggests that the common reception conditions for asylum seekers and the uniform processing of their asylum claims across the EU has been aspirational rather than embedded in EU structures.

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<sup>7</sup> Formally, *Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals.* (2008) OJ L 348

The UK currently opts in to 13 EU Readmission Agreements (EURAs) to expedite the deportation process.<sup>8</sup> In 2012 the UK returned over 3,000 individuals, including but not exclusively refused asylum seekers, to countries where a readmission agreement was in place (HM Government 2014b, para.4.19 p.51). The UK's relationship with the country of return is delicate, as there is an insinuation of poor treatment of those citizens who claimed asylum. The difficulty in reaching agreement between the states involved is clear, since the country of return has little incentive to comply with the demands of the deporting state (Ellermann 2008; Gibney 2008, p.152).

While the UK participates in the Dublin Regulation and Readmission Agreements, it chose not to opt-in to the Returns Directive. The UK participates in EU immigration law selectively, as a means to reinforce domestic policy positions (Geddes 2005). However, the UK is still affected by EU developments in which it does not participate, for example building up 'juxtaposed' border controls in Calais in response to the Schengen agreement which enabled freer movement of people within participating Member States (Migration Observatory 2014).

Further, refused asylum-seekers deported from the UK (under the Dublin Regulation) to another EU Member State that *is* party to the Returns Directive will be treated under its terms. Analysis suggests that the effects of the Directive has been to put migrants who have not been removed in a precarious position and makes them more vulnerable to exploitation, given that in practice their presence may be tolerated by the hosting Member State but there are no requirements upon states to provide for their basic needs (Baldaccini 2009). These deportable individuals may also experience inconsistent practices in different Member States (Baldaccini 2009) (counter to the spirit of the Directive) which could encourage re-migration to other EU states, rather than return to their country of origin.

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<sup>8</sup> These EURAs are signed with: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Georgia, Hong Kong, Macau, Moldova, Montenegro, Pakistan, Russia, Serbia, Sri Lanka, and Ukraine. The UK has not opted in to EURAs with Cape Verde or Armenia. It has opted in to the EURA with Turkey but this is not yet complete (HM Government 2014, Appendix C, Para.41 p.70).

### 2.1.3 Domestic law

The areas of immigration, asylum and deportation legislation are extremely complex. Key elements of domestic law pertaining to deportation are outlined in *Table 2.2*, beginning with the 1971 Immigration Act. Deportation practice is outlined in the asylum section of the 'Immigration Rules' (Home Office 2016a) and shaped by policy announcements such as the 2007 Enforcement strategy (Home Office 2007a) and relevant case law.

Further, the UK has entered into a number of bilateral arrangements known as Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with countries of return to ensure that their treatment of deportees (whether former asylum seekers or not) will not breach human rights standards. This is known as the 'Deportation with Assurances' policy (DWA). At the time of writing, there were MoUs (or equivalents) on DWA with six countries not covered by EURAs (Algeria<sup>9</sup>, Ethiopia, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya and Morocco) (Foreign & Commonwealth Office 2013). DWA policy has been relatively controversial due to its use in relation to the deportation of terrorist suspects to their countries of origin.

Detailed examination of the legal system is beyond the reach of this thesis which primarily deals with stakeholder perceptions of their roles in the deportation process. However, the way in which these laws, regulations and policies combine in practice in relation to treatment of asylum seekers and refused asylum seekers in the UK is elaborated upon in the following sections.

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<sup>9</sup> In the case of Algeria, letters exchanged between governments are considered to provide the same level of protection to deportees.

Table 2.2: Key moments in domestic deportation legislation

<p><b>Immigration Act 1971</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defined '<b>deportation</b>' as taking place if it is 'conducive to the public good' (cl.3).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Asylum and Immigration Act 1996</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removal of asylum seekers to <b>safe third countries</b> (cl.2) without substantive consideration of their asylum claim (replaced and amended by subsequent legislation).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Immigration and Asylum Act 1999</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allows for 'removal' (known as '<b>administrative removal</b>') of those unlawfully in the UK, in cases where limited leave has run out, if leave conditions are breached, or leave obtained by deception, or family member issued with removal directions (cl.10)</li> <li><b>Escorts</b> to accompany deportees (cl.14)</li> <li>Asylum seekers <b>not to be deported before a decision</b> on their asylum claim (cl.15)</li> <li><b>Appeals</b> permitted unless in the interests of national security or relations between the UK and another state (cl.64).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Revocation of leave</b> if a person is liable for deportation but cannot be removed (cl.76)</li> <li><b>Removal not permitted if asylum claim or appeal is pending</b> (superseded 1999 Act)</li> <li><b>Introduction of 'clearly unfounded' claims</b> (linked to 'safe third countries'); appeals can only be made from outside the UK (non-suspensive appeals (cl.94).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants, etc.) Act 2004</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individuals must <b>comply to obtain travel documents</b> to facilitate deportation (cl.35).</li> </ul>
<p><b>UK Borders Act 2007</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Automatic deportation of foreign criminals</b> introduced for those convicted of serious offences or imprisoned for over 12 months (cl.32)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduced <b>child welfare duty</b> upon immigration authorities to safeguard and promote children's welfare (s.55)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Immigration Act 2014</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established the <b>Independent Family Returns Panel</b> (cl.3) to advise government and promote the welfare of children in a family being deported or put into <b>pre-departure accommodation</b> (established in cl.6 for up to 72 hours)</li> <li><b>Restricted detention of unaccompanied children</b> to short-term holding facilities for 24 hours (cl.5)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Immigration Act 2016</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidance to be issued on <b>detaining vulnerable persons</b> (cl.59)</li> <li><b>Prevented detention of pregnant women</b> unless they will be removed shortly (cl.60).</li> </ul>

Source: compiled by the author using:

HM Government (1971; 1996; 1999; 2002; 2004; 2006; 2007; 2009; 2014; 2016).

## 2.2 How does the asylum system operate in the UK?

Contemporary political leaders often make statements about the UK's apparent tradition of welcoming refugees, being tolerant and hospitable, as a precursor to making a policy announcement about immigration controls. For example, in the Foreword to the 2007 *Enforcement Strategy*, the then-Home Secretary John Reid MP made the following statement.

*'[Britain] has a proud, centuries-old record of integrating immigrants from around the world and, many times down the years, it has become home to communities fleeing persecution.'*

(Home Office 2007a, p.2)

More recently, the former Prime Minister David Cameron launched into a list of the benefits of diversity, in a speech on controlling immigration:

*'How proud we are of our diversity: Poles who fought with us in the Battle of Britain; West Indians who helped rebuild our country after the war; Asians from East Africa and the sub-continent who have brought enterprise to our country; all those who have come to make a life, work hard, back our public services – these people help make our country strong.'*

(Prime Minister's Office 2015)

This is a 'sanitised history' (Schuster & Solomos 1999), rife with 'nostalgic imagining' (Stevens 2004, p.31). The UK's approach to asylum policy since the turn of the twenty-first century has generally been restrictive, heavily influenced by the managerial approach to government characterised by targets, technocratic fixes, constant redesign, legislative change, and delegation to agencies. These changes have been described extensively (e.g. Stevens 2004; Spencer 2003; Balch 2009; Somerville 2007; Layton-Henry 1992).

There has been large-scale public dissatisfaction with the Home Office's management of the asylum system. The media has reported harm, injury and even death within the asylum system linked to impending deportation. These cases included Manuel Bravo in 2005 and Jimmy Mubenga in 2010 (INQUEST 2011; Travis 2013; Herbert 2005). External observers of the system continually report on its shortcomings, such as UNHCR in their *Quality Initiative* reports to improve decision-making on asylum cases (UNHCR n.d.), reports on decision-making and successful appeal rates (Muggeridge & Maman 2011), as well as supporters and certain policy actors who extensively refer to a 'culture of disbelief' in the Home Office that biases decision-making on asylum

claims towards refusing claims (Souter 2011; Home Affairs Committee 2013).

Whistleblowers have added weight to these assertions (Taylor & Muir 2010).

There has been much scrutiny of Home Office performance in relation to the asylum system. For example, a large scale investigation into the asylum system was conducted by the 'Independent Asylum Commission' in the mid-2000s (Hobson et al. 2008a; 2008b; 2008c).<sup>10</sup> The position of 'Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration' was created by the UK Borders Act 2007 (HM Government 2007 cl.48-56), to conduct regular inspections of border and immigration functions and to report to Parliament. Furthermore, the Home Affairs Committee regularly examines the work of the Home Office in relation to asylum, frequently criticising it for failing to uphold standards, for inefficiency and an inability to provide accurate statistics, particularly in relation to old cases that have not been closed, in some cases for over a decade. Physical injury to detainees and the attitudes of staff involved in implementing the deportation process have been criticised by these bodies (HM Chief Inspector of Prisons 2014b; HM Chief Inspector of Prisons 2014a; HM Chief Inspector of Prisons 2009; Home Affairs Committee 2012).

There has also been much corresponding internal change within the Home Office to address criticism, with constant rebranding. The asylum section of the Home Office has morphed from the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND), the Border and Immigration Agency (BIA), UK Border Agency (UKBA) to, currently, UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) and Enforcement. It redesigned asylum processes with initiatives such as the New Asylum Model in 2007, regionalisation of casework decision-making, and Local Immigration Teams to lead on enforcement. A plethora of policy initiatives relating to immigration control included the introduction of a Points Based System, a Migration Advisory Committee and various action plans, strategies and targets.

A simplified description of the current asylum system in the UK is provided in *Table 2.3*. It is largely structured around the provisions of Part VI of the *Immigration and Asylum Act 1999* (HM Government 1999), hereafter 'the 1999 Act'. The left hand

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<sup>10</sup> The Independent Asylum Commission consisted of a panel of public figures from a range of political and professional backgrounds, who conducted a review of the asylum system from 2006-2008. More information is available at: [www.independentasylumcommission.org.uk](http://www.independentasylumcommission.org.uk)

column outlines the stages involved in making and assessing asylum claims. At present, the Home Office aims to conclude a 'straightforward' asylum claim within six months (Home Affairs Committee 2014, p.6) although in practice some cases take years to be resolved.

The right hand column of *Table 2.3* outlines the way in which asylum seekers are supported in the UK while their asylum claim is being processed. Since they are not permitted to work, asylum seekers' basic needs are provided by the state in the form of accommodation and a subsistence allowance in allocated properties around the country in locations known as 'dispersal' areas. This is noteworthy because asylum seekers develop social ties in these 'hosting' areas. This is an issue that becomes important in relation to post-deportation support particularly in Chapter 8.

Table 2.3: Overview of the current UK asylum process and associated support

Overview of asylum process	Asylum support
Identify self as asylum seeker to the authorities upon or shortly after arrival in the UK. Migrants already in UK may claim asylum if conditions in their country of origin change.	May require overnight emergency accommodation.
<p>Asylum seeker is screened (basic information collected about their claim and health) at the Asylum Screening Unit in Croydon.</p> <p>Decision on whether they are then detained, or dispersed / allowed to live with friends with reporting conditions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Detention:</b> Detained at an Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) and have claim ‘fast-tracked’ – particularly if they are from a country deemed to be generally safe. Suspension of fast track in 2015 following legal challenge.</li> <li>• <b>Dispersal:</b> If asylum seeker is destitute and has no means of support they are dispersed to a region on a no-choice basis where accommodation will be found for them (under Section 95 of the 1999 Act).</li> <li>• <b>Subsistence-only:</b> If they have friends to stay with, they are permitted to stay there and receive subsistence support payments only.</li> </ul>
<p>Asylum seeker makes their asylum claim at a substantive interview with case owner.</p> <p>Initial decision on the asylum claim given by case owner within 30 days of original claim. Refused asylum seeker may appeal within 7 days of decision. Case closed only when granted leave to remain or removed from UK.</p>	<p>If dispersed, temporarily housed in an Initial Accommodation centre for approximately 7 days. Later dispersal to ‘Section 95 accommodation’ (after Section 95 of the 1999 Act).</p> <p>Must leave Section 95 accommodation once given a decision on their asylum claim. Those granted refugee status now eligible to work and to use mainstream services.</p>
Refused asylum seeker given final refusal with no more rights of appeal; expected to leave the UK (programmes to assist voluntary return offered).	May be supported under Section 4 (of the 1999 Act) if they meet criteria: willing to return, cannot return due to an accepted barrier to return (e.g. medical condition), or if they have children.
Removal directions issued, and deportation order served. Removal attempt may include detention immediately prior to removal.	If not receiving Section 4 support, become destitute with no recourse to public funds. Local authorities can only support individuals if they have additional needs beyond destitution. Pending legislation will restrict this further.

Source: compiled using author’s own practice knowledge.

## 2.3 How does the deportation system function?

Refused asylum seekers are 'deportable' in the eyes of the state (De Genova 2002). They are expected to report regularly to the Home Office, receive support only if they have agreed to leave the UK, and are subject to detention and deportation at any time. To encourage departure, they are excluded from society and most entitlements, colloquially known as the 'policy of destitution'. Refused asylum seekers have a limited number of options. They can leave the UK of their own accord, leave with some support through a voluntary return programme, or abscond and hope to survive destitution on the streets with tacit tolerance by the state. Occasionally this strategy is rewarded by regularisation programmes such as the 'Family ILR (Indefinite Leave to Remain) Exercise' that took place in the 1990s and the 'Case Resolution Programme' during the 2000s. There are provisions for applying to remain in the UK on the grounds of long residence, but there is no short-term, guaranteed means of this for refused asylum seekers.

Refused asylum seekers may involve members of their local 'host community' in their struggle to survive and stay in the UK after their refusal, such as friends, MPs, and anti-deportation campaigners at a local and national level,<sup>11</sup> as well as unscrupulous employers and strangers (Crawley et al. 2011). They may draw on these contacts when they become destitute, having lost their Home Office accommodation and financial support. Some local initiatives in dispersal towns support refused asylum seekers, generally in response to absolute poverty and destitution, providing short-term accommodation, food and other crisis services.<sup>12</sup> While refused asylum seekers may evade state controls and continue to live in the UK indefinitely, there are well-documented negative impacts of living with such uncertainty such as exploitation and destitution (Crawley et al. 2011), and physical and mental health problems (Gillespie 2012).

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<sup>11</sup> Right to Remain (formerly the National Coalition of Anti Deportation Campaigns) is one of the main anti-deportation organisations at a national level: [righttoremain.org.uk](http://righttoremain.org.uk) while SYMAAG (South Yorkshire Migration and Asylum Action Group) is a local group in Sheffield that undertakes some anti-deportation campaigns on behalf of locally-residing refused asylum seekers: [www.symaag.org.uk](http://www.symaag.org.uk)

<sup>12</sup> Local level destitution support organisations include, for example, Assist Sheffield [www.assistsheffield.org.uk/](http://www.assistsheffield.org.uk/) and Destitution Concern Bradford [www.destitutionconcernbradford.org](http://www.destitutionconcernbradford.org)

The formal process of deportation from the UK is understood here to begin when refused asylum seekers are issued with one or more official notifications from the Home Office. They include a 'Notice of Decision to Deport' which is a letter outlining the reasons for the Home Office decision to remove them; a 'Deportation Order' that requires them to leave the UK, authorising their detention and banning their re-entry to the UK for a specified period of time; or, 'Removal Directions' giving the date, time, destination and method of their planned removal a minimum of 72 hours later (ILPA 2010; Right to Remain 2016; BID 2015; Home Office 2016e).

The deportation process becomes tangible when refused asylum seekers are detained in an Immigration removal centre (IRC). They might be detained when reporting routinely to the Home Office, or they might be physically removed from their accommodation during what is known as a 'dawn raid.' Refused asylum seekers such as those in the 'Fast Track' system already will have been in detention when their removal directions were issued. Some host communities act to hinder or prevent refused asylum seekers from being detained in a 'dawn raid' and from being forcibly removed from the UK. For example, a 'deportation alert system' in Sheffield coordinates several hundred local activists who support deportable individuals (Crosthwaite & Grayson 2009, p.10) and, more famously, the 'Glasgow Girls' successfully campaigned to prevent the deportation of a fellow school pupil in 2005 (Penketh 2015).

Those who are detained are usually taken to an IRC until their flight takes place. They are escorted during their journey to and from immigration detention and on the plane journey out of UK airspace by a subcontracted private security company. Various studies and reports outline the conditions, difficulties and even violence suffered within detention facilities in the UK. For example, there was a special issue on 'Immigration Detention' featured in *Population, Space and Place* Nov/Dec 2012). A smaller number report on the removal journey itself (Birnberg Peirce & Partners et al. 2008).

There may be a physical transfer or handover of the individual by UK escorts to officials in the country of return, or the deportee may independently exit the aeroplane and enter border control. It is not clear from policy documentation exactly

what information is passed to the authorities in the country of return. Ministerial statements suggest that some limited information is provided to countries of return, in order to gain cooperation from them in confirming the identity of their own nationals to be removed. Former immigration minister Phil Woolas MP has stated the following.

*'Information received from asylum seekers for their asylum claim is treated in confidence and the details of their asylum claims are not disclosed to the authorities of the country or countries they fear being returned to. ... Where claims are unsuccessful, limited disclosure of information may be made to foreign authorities. ... if it is necessary for travel documentation purposes. No reference is made to the fact the individual has claimed asylum in the UK.'*

(HC Deb 27 January 2009 c 277W)

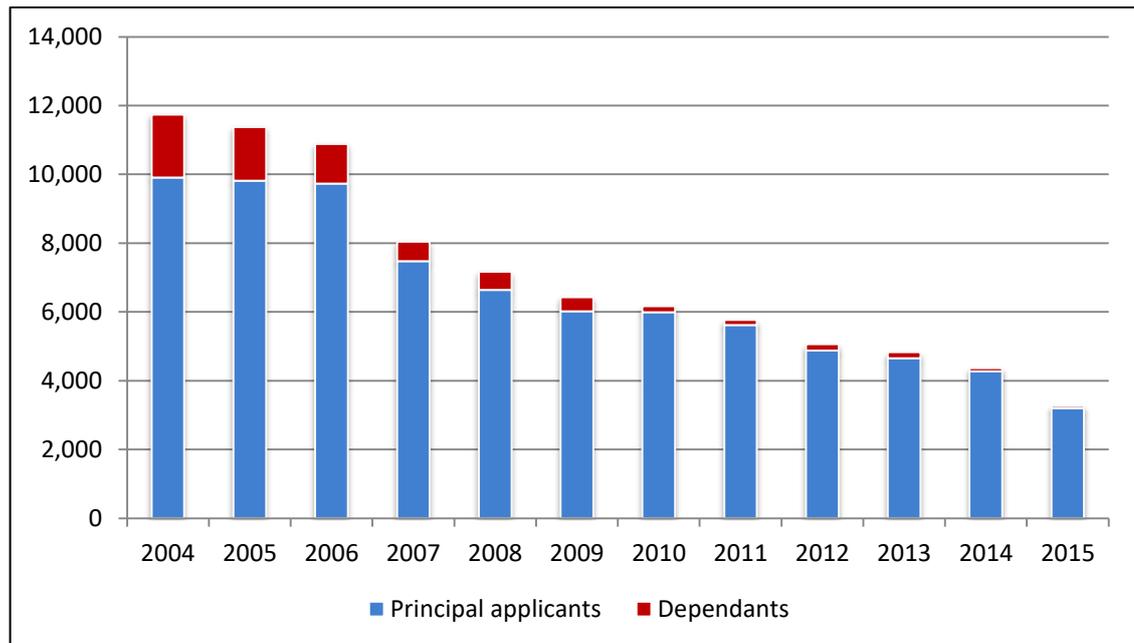
The process of deportation ends, it seems, when the UK no longer has any authority over the deportee in the country of return.

## **2.4 How many deportees are there and to where are they deported?**

Over time, the UK government has set public targets in relation to deportation. As prime minister, Tony Blair introduced the 'tipping point target' in 2004 that required the number of removals of failed asylum seekers to be higher than the number of (anticipated) unfounded asylum applications made in the same month (Somerville 2007a, p.162). The implication was that the backlog of refused cases would eventually be cleared by routinely removing more people each month than had actually been refused in the same time period. A removal target then appeared in the 2004 Public Service Agreement to increase the proportion of failed asylum seekers removed from a baseline of 21% of refused cases in 2002-3 (Home Office 2007b). By 2007, the tipping point target had been quietly abandoned and fewer numerical asylum and deportation targets were in evidence. However, the tipping point target was credited with having a broader effect, initiating a gradual policy shift towards increasing removal rates for the broader immigrant population as well as decreasing entry routes (Spencer, 2007). Deportation targets have since been subsumed into goals for removing broader groups of immigration offenders.

The number of deportations has been falling for the past decade, in line with falling asylum levels. *Figure 2.1* illustrates that the number of forced removals has dropped from 11,743 in 2004 to 3,264 in 2015 (Home Office, 2016).<sup>13</sup> It also shows the very small proportion of deportations of dependants within these overall totals, falling from 1,829 in 2004 (16%) to just 66 (2%) in 2015.

*Figure 2.1: Deportations of refused asylum seekers from the UK, 2004-2015*



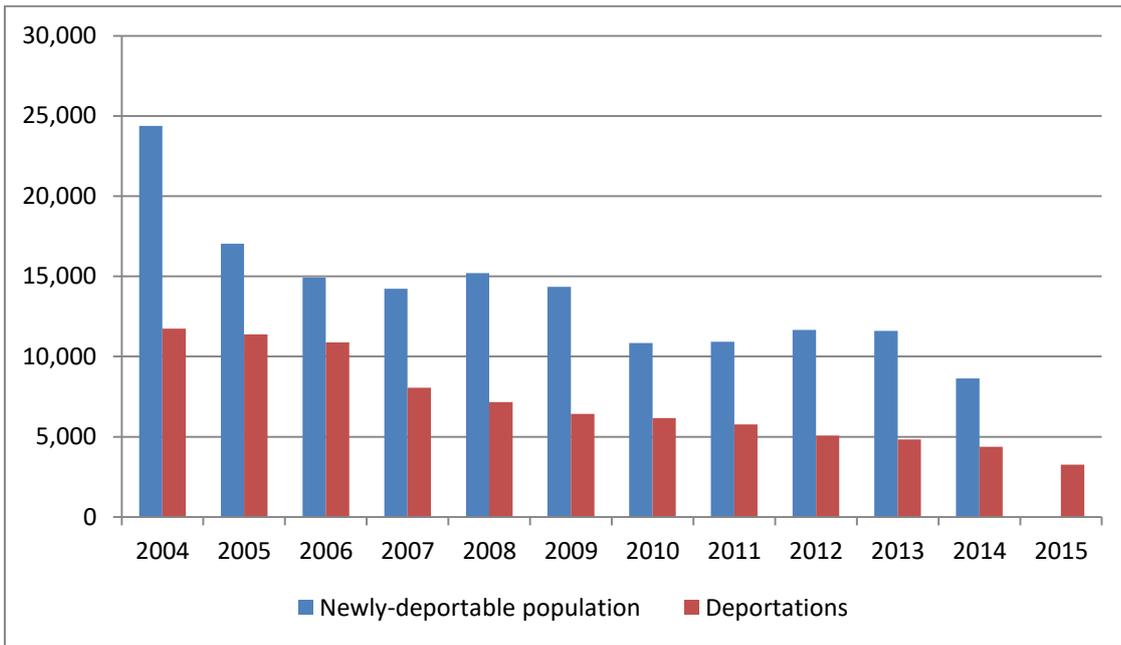
*Source: compiled by the author using data from Home Office (2016c)*

In a context of falling asylum levels, there have been fewer people eligible for deportation. *Figure 2.2* confirms that the newly ‘deportable’ population of refused asylum seekers has fallen over time. However, *Figure 2.2* also shows that the level of enforced removals consistently falls well below the potential total each year. Only 55%-60% of refused asylum seekers who are newly deportable each year are actually removed. This is clear when comparing the ‘newly deportable population’ with ‘deportations’ in *Figure 2.2*. From the continuing gap between the pairs of bars in *Figure 2.2*, we can infer that there has been an accumulating backlog of deportable individuals in the UK that have not been removed.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> These figures and the data used to create *Figures 2.2 and 2.3* are taken from ‘Removals and voluntary departures’ tables, Volume 1 from the Home Office (2016b).

<sup>14</sup> Note that the two data sources were not collected in the same way. Data on ‘deportations’ (in *Figure 2.1* and the red bars on the right in each pair in *Figure 2.2*) show the number of deportations of

Figure 2.2: Newly-deportable individuals compared with deportations each year in the UK



Source: Compiled by the author using data from Home Office (2016c)

Finally, *Tables 2.4* and *2.5* provide details of the destinations of deportees. *Table 2.4* compares the top ten individual countries of return, while *Table 2.5* compares the top five (of 16) world regions. These selected years 2004 and 2014 demonstrate change over time. They also span the period of interest for this study, since they cover the deportations of the deportees featuring in this study (as outlined in Chapter 4).

The top country has changed from Serbia and Montenegro in 2004 to Pakistan in 2014. Similarly, the top region has changed from non-EU Europe ('Other Europe') to south Asia. However, five of the top ten countries appear in both years, and the top four world regions have remained unchanged, albeit in a different ranking order. This suggests a certain degree of consistency and predictability in deportation destinations during this period. They reflect both the trends in the country of origin of asylum claimants, as well as to where it is physically possible for the UK to deport.

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individuals in a particular year. The data on the 'newly-deportable population' (the blue bars in *Figure 2.2*) give the number of refused asylum seekers for that calendar year (up to 2014), that is, who were eligible for deportation. Together, these two measures suggest the approximate proportion of refusal decisions that result in a deportation. In both datasets any number of these deportees might have submitted their asylum claims earlier that year or in a previous calendar year, thus making a true comparison impossible.

Table 2.4: Top destination countries for deported refused asylum seekers

Top countries 2004		Top countries 2014	
1. Serbia and Montenegro	1,575	1. Pakistan	779
2. Romania	864	2. Afghanistan	360
3. Germany	542	3. India	296
4. Albania	532	4. Bangladesh	294
5. Pakistan	467	5. Albania	290
6. Jamaica	451	6. China	263
7. Bangladesh	366	7. Italy	223
8. Italy	355	8. Nigeria	190
9. Afghanistan	333	9. Sri Lanka	140
10. Austria	286	10. France	91

Source: Compiled by the author using data from Home Office (2016c)<sup>15</sup>

Table 2.5: Top destination world regions for deported refused asylum seekers

Top regions 2004		Top regions 2014	
1. 'Other' Europe	2,773	1. South Asia	1,538
2. EU14	2,112	2. EU14	502
3. sub-Saharan Africa	1,532	3. sub-Saharan Africa	466
4. South Asia	1,446	4. 'Other' Europe	419
5. Central and South America	941	5. Central Asia	367

Source: Compiled by the author using data from Home Office (2016c)<sup>16</sup>

It is important to note that these tables include EU countries as destination countries for deported asylum seekers from the UK. Italy and the (pre-2004 EU members) 'EU14' group both were significant receivers of deportees from the UK in both 2004 and 2014. This does not mean that EU nationals are claiming asylum in the UK, being refused and deported. Instead, significant numbers of asylum seekers are being returned to the country where they first entered the EU, under the 'Dublin Regulation' (European Union: Council of the European Union 2013). This observation is important for the research design of this thesis. The research design incorporated deportations to the EU as part of the target sample group of deportees, in order to fully represent these deportations within the wider deportee population.

<sup>15</sup> Compiled from: Home Office (2016c) Removals data tables Vol.3, Table rv\_06: 'Removals and voluntary departures by country of destination and type'.

<sup>16</sup> Compiled from: Home Office (2016c) Removals data tables Vol.3, Table rv\_06: 'Removals and voluntary departures by country of destination and type'.

## 2.5 How effective is deportation policy?

The aims of the asylum system will be delivered in part *by* the deportation process. It is difficult to be entirely sure of the relevant aims that deportation is contributing towards, since policy aims are rarely clear or without hidden purposes.

The previous section showed that only just over half of the 'deportable' population are removed. The statistics presented above suggest that the UK experiences a tension between intention and ability to deport. This is known as the 'paradox of deportation' (Gibney & Hansen 2003). The impossibility of absolute control over entry and exit across national borders is not acknowledged by politicians and the public, but it is clear from the public policy literature. The disjuncture between immigration policy and outcomes, or 'policy gaps', are established 'empirical facts' according to the gap hypothesis (Cornelius & Tsuda 2004). The ability to deport significant numbers of asylum seekers has been described as a 'post-war myth' (Hansen 2003, p.35) since deportation is an 'ineffective tool' (Hansen 2003, p.36).

Why does the state find it so difficult to effect deportation? There are several contributory reasons. Migration is a long-term social process (Castles 2004) driven by social dynamics, globalisation and north-south relations, and political systems. In contrast, migration policies are often short-term and limited to a single issue or migrant group, due to electoral politics and public expectations (Paoletti 2010, p.6). Consequently, the cumulative power of migration is shaped, rather than controlled, by law and policy.

Restrictive immigration policies are modified or hindered by existing human rights law and other practices, such as regular parliamentary scrutiny, by the Home Affairs Select Committee for example, and an inspection regime covering IRCs. Longer-standing human rights law protects migrants to some degree. The European Court of Human Rights can prevent deportation, and require states to return and compensate deportees, for example. Contradictory public opinion fuels this tension between restrictive immigration policies and a respect for human rights. This is inevitably difficult to reconcile without compromising other goals. For example, the government has been forced to develop more 'humane' policies in some cases where it has tried to

be 'tough' on immigration, including a redesigned returns process for families that includes 'open' accommodation rather than detention.

Compared with a policy statement or goal, limited attention is paid to those at the implementation and delivery levels, which may tilt policy away from their original intentions (Somerville 2007a). This is understood to happen inadvertently for several reasons. Civil servants or 'street-level bureaucrats' (Lipsky 1980) have a certain amount of discretion available to deliver policy. Their decisions are modified by time and resource constraints, and they might focus on meeting performance targets rather than policy outcomes, that is, 'goal displacement' (Lipsky 1980, p.51).

Different priorities within migration policy have taken precedence at different times. As other migrant groups have become the focus of UK immigration policy, such as foreign national prisoners and EU migrants from accession countries, the deportation imperative in relation to refused asylum seekers waned. This shift was clear in the 2007 Enforcement strategy (Home Office 2007a), for example, that introduced a new way of prioritising migrants eligible for deportation according to the risk of 'harm' they pose to society. As a result, deportation became focused on foreign national prisoners rather than refused asylum seekers. Asylum policy became focused on resolving backlogs of asylum decisions under the 'Case Resolution Programme' announced in 2006, that was intended to take five years, but has never reached its elusive target. During the premiership of David Cameron from 2010 to 2016, the 'net migration' target dominated immigration policy. This target aimed to reduce long-term net migration to under 100,000 per year, but focused on reducing entry rather than increasing returns. The Liberal Democrat initiative to end child detention during the Coalition government of 2010-2015 further reduced the likelihood of refused asylum-seeking families being deported. *Figure 2.1*, above, shows the decreasing numbers of families being removed over time.

The aims of deportation are more complex than merely removing as many eligible people as possible. These include the importance of maintaining the credibility of the system (NAO 2005, p.10), minimising harm to UK society, and deterrence (Noll 1999, p.4). The aim to make the system credible suggests that deportation is somewhat symbolic, and the 'deportation turn' was intended to appease the public in the

context of rising asylum levels and concerns about foreign national prisoners and EU expansion in the 2000s, as described in Chapter 1. David Wood, a Strategic Director for the then-UKBA, confirmed the symbolic value of deportation in 2009. He was giving an interview to the media on a deportation flight that was removing various immigration offenders, including refused asylum seekers.

*'The effect of the charter flights is actually much greater than the numbers themselves might suggest. ... It sends out a very clear signal that Britain is determined to enforce its immigration policy. And that has an important impact on deterring people who do not comply with our rules or who are not entitled to be here from attempting to stay, because they see that we will succeed in removing them'.*

(Palmer 2009)

For the Home Office then, a primary function of deportation is to send a *'very clear signal'* to the public about its own competence, as well as being tool to discourage refused asylum seekers from attempting to stay in the UK.

Despite the fundamental requirement not to 'refoule', the UK refuses to acknowledge any obligation to deportees. When asked about deportee welfare or conditions, ministers consistently refuse to consider post-deportation monitoring, as expressed in 2009 by the then-Immigration minister Phil Woolas MP:

*'The UK Border Agency does not routinely monitor the treatment of individual unsuccessful asylum claimants on return to their country of origin. They are, by definition, foreign nationals who have been found as a matter of law not to need the UK's protection and it would be inconsistent with that finding for the UK to assume an ongoing responsibility for them when they return to their own country.'*

(HC Deb 27 January 2009 c 276W)

There remains some doubt as to whether the non-refoulement principle is being upheld consistently by states. UNHCR notes a number examples of refoulement committed by hosting countries in Africa and Asia. For example, 'tens of thousands' of refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) were returned from the Great Lakes Region to insecure conditions in 2002, while several hundred refugees were removed from Malaysia to Indonesia in 2003 (UNHCR 2006, p.33). Small numbers of examples from western states also have been documented, for example from Australia (Corlett 2005) and Germany (Tazreiter 2004, p.179). Further anecdotal reports of refoulement are found in NGO documents (Ramos 2011; 2013; Australian

Refugee Rights Alliance 2007) and the media (Taylor 2009; McClenaghan 2015a; Gallagher 2010).

The UK government has been forced to admit numerous serious errors in deporting certain individuals, either relating to the process of removal or admission that an individual should not have been removed. For example, following the first mass deportations of Iraqi Kurds from the UK in 2005 the Home Secretary admitted a 'regrettable mistake' when a male Iraqi Kurd was deported in error having been denied legal representation (Telegraph 2005). Similarly in 2007, a female refugee from East Africa who had been tortured upon return to her country of origin was returned to the UK, and won a six figure sum in compensation (Gallagher 2010).

Finally, in 2008, seventeen members of the House of Lords publicly expressed reservations regarding removal of Iranian nationals. They agreed that while deportation may be legally permissible, *'this is not simply a legal matter but a moral one too... when we are making decisions of life or death, we must be aware of the human consequences of the cold letter of the law... we must not take deportations lightly'* (Independent 2008). That, in combination with the admission by Lord Bassam of Brighton that no country of return is completely safe (HL Deb 10 July 2007 c 214GC), suggests that the law is not, and does not presume to be, a guarantee of protection for deportees from the UK.

## 2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has laid the foundations for this thesis by outlining the operation of the asylum and deportation systems in the UK, examining the available statistics and recent trends in deportation, and putting these in the context of key domestic and international law. The asylum and deportation processes are the current embodiment of the rules and regulations governing immigration in the UK, but are continually critiqued by politicians, the press, the public and hosting communities. The statistics illustrate a downturn in the number of deportations of refused asylum seekers in the past decade, as well as a growing backlog of deportable individuals who have not been removed. They also show that EU countries, and Italy in particular, are important deportation destinations, in addition to countries of birth.

Furthermore, the chapter has suggested that the intentions of government in pursuing the deportation of refused asylum seekers are somewhat opaque and likely to be as much about reassuring the public and strengthening the Home Office's reputation as effecting stated policy. Unfortunately, this means that the pursuit of such goals could well jeopardise the sacred principle of non-refoulement, in principle and in spirit. The next chapter will frame this research within the migration studies literature, providing conceptual reference points and an overview of the academic analysis of what might happen to deportees upon return, the impact upon their social networks and their changing relationships with states.

## CHAPTER 3: ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

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Since the millennium, social science researchers increasingly have paid attention to the issues surrounding deportation (Anderson et al. 2011b, p.548), largely prompted by the efforts of states to deport (or to be seen to deport) more foreign nationals, known as the ‘deportation turn’ (Gibney 2008, p.148). This chapter situates this thesis within the existing literature relevant to deportation, and introduces some key concepts and ideas from a range of social science disciplines. The chapter answers three questions:

- What are the key literatures that inform this study?
- How can this literature coalesce in relation to deportee discourse, agency and relationships?
- What are the key gaps in deportation research?

This chapter is organised as follows. First, the chapter introduces the key bodies of social science literature upon which this thesis draws. ‘Migration studies’ covers an enormous body of scholarly work. I locate this study principally within the broad, cross-disciplinary literature on migrant transnationalism, which includes relevant sub-fields to deportation such as return migration. In addition, I draw extensively on the public policy literature and the emerging deportation studies literature. The thesis also draws on the literature from other, overlapping areas of migration studies such as forced migration, particularly on the subject of refugees and asylum seekers, as well as related work from Sociology, International Relations (IR) and Political Theory.

The chapter goes on to outline some important concepts, ideas and empirical lessons from this body of work that I later draw on to analyse my fieldwork material and answer my research questions. This is organised into three key domains of interest that provide a framework for the analysis: discourse; agency; and relationships. Key terms and concepts discussed within these three domains include: ‘reactive’, ‘small-scale’ and ‘limited’ transnationalism; the ‘deportation corridor’; ‘home’ and ‘belonging’; ‘fictive kin’; ‘social capital’ and ‘migratory cultural capital’; ‘street-level bureaucrats’ and ‘everyday resistance’.

Having mapped the existing deportation landscape, the chapter concludes by identifying some areas that are less well-explored and understood, in order to establish the contribution of this thesis to this academic literature. I explore some of these gaps in this study with a view to contributing to and developing post-deportation debates.

### **3.1 What are the key literatures that inform this study?**

Social science provides a range of perspectives, theories and tools to consider in the study of deportation. Within the social sciences, the migration studies field itself is vast. I locate this study of deportation primarily within the 'transnationalism' paradigm. The study of migrant transnationalism, as opposed to corporate transnationalism, arose in part to try to understand new migration practices. It reflects a range of social formations and practices across borders, and is seen as a fundamental way of understanding modern migration (Vertovec 2009, p.13). It continues to pursue the call to become 'unbound' from the state to embrace the impact of global forces upon migration (Faist 2013, p.2).

The transnational approach to understanding contemporary migration provides a helpful point of departure for research into the lived experience of deportation which, as an involuntary form of return migration, defies some common assumptions about migration, its direction and associated concepts such as 'home'. Non-migrants, part of my exploration of UK communities affected by deportation, are also acknowledged in the transnational literature as being affected by transnationalism (Faist 2013, p.15; Levitt 2001, p.7).

Transnationalism privileges non-institutional actors (Vertovec 2009, p.29) and allows for both the agency of the migrant and the context in any location that shapes their lives and decisions (Brettell 2008, p.136). However, transnational studies includes such a broad range of migrants that at times it minimises the importance of the original motives for migration among their subjects (Al-Ali & Koser 2002, p.3). At this point it is important to acknowledge the forced migration literature, which focuses on refugees and asylum seekers. Scholars offer useful insights for this research though their work on integration of asylum seekers and refugees into their host communities (including

Ager & Strang 2008; Strang & Ager 2010; Tejero 2013; Valentine et al. 2009; Robjant et al. 2009; Darling et al. 2009; Zetter et al. 2005; Snyder 2011); the ways in which refused asylum seekers survive in the UK host community (Crawley et al. 2011; Gillespie 2012); and work on refugees' return (such as Black and Koser (1999), Van Hear (1998), Muggeridge and Doná (2006), Omata (2013) and Zarzosa (1998)). However, the circumstances of deportee return differ significantly even compared with refugees, since deportees were never accepted as refugees by their hosting state and did not choose to leave the hosting state. In addition, there is a (perhaps inevitable) tendency within the forced migration literature to overemphasise vulnerability and a lack of agency among its subjects (Bakewell 2010, p.1690) which I wanted to avoid.

In addition, I draw extensively on the public policy literature and the emerging deportation studies literature. The public policy literature is useful in relation to situating deportation practice in the context of changing public service delivery in the UK, the institutional problems of large organisations like the Home Office and related agencies, and the ability of individuals within that system to shape policy in practice. It also sheds light on policy development processes, particularly regarding immigration, asylum and deportation policies. The deportation literature combines insights from security studies, anthropology, sociology and other disciplines to consider enforcement regimes and reflections upon the deporting society, as well as providing new vocabulary around deportation and insight into deportee lives at different sites.

Given the enormity of the migration studies field, it is worth stating that I do not linger on the sizeable 'managed migration' and incorporation literatures. This is mainly on the grounds of direct relevance. I use the managed migration literature to set the context of the thesis, in terms of states' management of migration flows, and in particular, the UK's approach to deportation, in order to locate deportees in that world. However, this literature tends to take a view of labour migration as driven by rationalist, economic imperatives, and is more focused on issues such as the politics of migration, policy design and governance. This thesis, in contrast, is focused on the lived experiences of deportation and takes a more agent-driven, resource-based approach to the analysis of migration.

The incorporation literature has been one of the dominant strands of migration research for some decades. It is concerned with the inclusion of migrants in host societies, that is, their 'absorption' or 'assimilation' (in the US) or 'integration' (more commonly in the UK and Europe). However, for the recent deportees featuring in this study, securing basic needs is their priority, before they can seriously make efforts to integrate into their new society. Elements of this literature remain helpful in relation to how deportees may have been integrated into their UK host community, and thus how the degree of inclusion they experienced might affect their post-deportation lives.

### 3.1.1 Transnationalism

The transnational perspective developed in recognition that contemporary migrants are able to have more intense relationships with their 'homeland' and thus migrants now have networks and lives spanning more than one country (Faist 2013, p.2).

Scholars such as Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton-Blanc are credited with the development of the term 'transnational' and its application during the 1990s in works such as *Nations Unbound* (Basch et al. 1994). This foundation was built on by scholars such as Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt, and others particularly within sociology, geography and anthropology (Heisler 2008, p.95). Transnationalism has dominated migration research since the 2000s as a core framework, theory or lens, even a 'buzzword' (Hardwick 2008, p.170).

Concerns of transnational scholars include issues of conceptual clarity (Vertovec 1999, p.448) and the newness of the phenomenon (Al-Ali & Koser 2002, p.4; Vertovec 1999, p.447; Heisler 2008, p.99; Vertovec 2009, p.15). Manifold explanations introduced by different waves of scholars means it is easy to understand why conceptual clarity is an issue. Transnational behaviour has been defined to include 'regular activities across national borders' (Portes et al. 2007, p.252) where immigrants 'maintain, build and reinforce multiple linkages' (Basch et al. 1994, p.6). Multiple ties interact as a network across political borders and over time with an element of deliberate repetition, intensity and simultaneity (Vertovec 1999, p.447). Regularity and frequency of contact are distinguishing features, beyond occasional contact that immigrants have always

had with their 'home' community, enabled by innovations in transport and communications unavailable to earlier generations (Portes et al. 2007, p.252). This back-and-forth interaction between migrants and former countries of residence can lead us to perceive migrants as living in more than once society at once (Portes et al. 2007, p.250), and even creating a de-territorialised community (Basch et al. 1994).

The scale of migrant transnational activity tends to lie somewhere between the micro and macro levels (Faist 2013, p.2), but transnational studies tend to have a grass-roots or 'transnationalism from below' approach, focusing on individuals and families and how their connections develop and change (Brettell 2008, p.124). There has been some discussion of how 'local' would be more appropriate than the 'national' within 'transnationalism', since transnational activities usually link specific places rather than entire nations. Faist defines transnationalism as 'sustained and continuous pluri-*local* transactions crossing state borders' (Faist, 2013, pp. 1–2, added emphasis).

Another ongoing debate among transnational scholars is how far different migrants are *truly* transnational (Portes et al. 2007, p.252; Al-Ali & Koser 2002, p.1; Faist 2013, p.3). Empirical studies assert that a multitude of types of migrant act transnationally. These include studies of transnational undocumented migrants (covered extensively in the US literature on Mexican and Central American migration such as Boehm, 2011; Itzigsohn, Cabral, Medina, & Vazquez, 1999; Levitt, 2001), transnational return migrants (examples include Reynolds, 2010; White, 2014), and transnational refugees and asylum seekers (Al-Ali, 2002; Van Hear, 2014; Koser, 2002 for example).

It is not immediately obvious whether and how far deportees fit these understandings of transnationalism. This research does not assume that deportees will act transnationally. However, as double-exiles rejected both by their countries of origin and host countries, deportees' attachments and sources of support might be located across a political boundary (Schuster & Majidi 2013), hence the relevance of considering transnational behaviour here. Transnational research has been internally criticised for homogenising transnational communities and ignoring their differentiating identities and practices (Faist 2013, p.4), but there is a recognition that transnational behaviour will vary between contexts and over time (Faist 2013, p.13)

which might be a more appropriate way of looking at deportees' post-deportation activities.

Variant forms of transnationalism suggested in the literature that seem particularly relevant include the notions of 'reactive' transnationalism (Itzigsohn & Saucedo 2002) and 'small-scale', 'limited' transnationalism (Burrell 2003). Itzigsohn and Saucedo suggest that migrant transnational behaviour directed towards the country of origin can be intensified by the hostility they experienced in the hosting society. Migrants may experience this hostility as discrimination or loss of status, for example (Itzigsohn & Saucedo 2002, p.772), for men in particular (Itzigsohn & Giorguli-Saucedo 2005). Thus migrants 'react' by minimising their associations with the hosting country and forming even closer ties with their 'home' community. Burrell (2003) asserts that migrant transnationalism can take place sporadically, infrequently and at a small-scale; this 'banal' form of transnationalism is not self-conscious and does not demand attention from observers such as researchers. Indeed, it does not even need to be tangible, but can exist at a powerful emotional level such as memories that might not even be acted upon (Burrell 2003, p.333). Her study of transnational Polish migrants in Leicester argued that while some individuals were constrained or limited in their cross-border activity due to age, ill-health or finances, they were still emotionally connected to their community overseas (Burrell 2003, p.331). These variations of transnationalism offer a starting place from which to consider deportees' post-deportation behaviour. A contribution made by this thesis will be its exploration of the 'reaction' of deportees towards the UK as their former hosting state according to their experiences as asylum seekers there, and how far their links to the UK might persist despite being small-scale, limited or psychologically-driven.

### **3.1.2 Public policy literature**

The transnationalism literature is concerned with societal transformations resulting from transnational migration (Vertovec 2009, pp.21–24) but has been less thorough in its exploration of the role of the state in, for example, setting the boundaries of inclusion and legal statuses affecting migrants. In short, including the state in the transnational realm requires 'a more sceptical conceptualization' (Smith 2002, p.xiii). I

am interested whether or not deportees or deportation has any further impact upon the host society. This might be in terms of local relationships, but also whether it contributes to social transformations in the UK, in terms of public and political discourse, asylum policy, or deportation practice, for example.

The public policy and managed migration literature were applied in a discussion of the deportation context in the UK in Chapter 2. Some key aspects of those literatures are outlined here. The 'deportation turn' (Gibney 2008, p.148) in the UK took place in a broader political context of significant changes in the way that public services are managed and delivered. The retreat of the state and trend of delegating governance to a plethora of other institutions with differing types of links to government has affected the UK asylum system (Gill 2009b, p.218) although perhaps not as much as other, less contentious areas of governance (Flinders 2008). The Home Office retains competence for decisions on asylum cases, for example. The governance literature has thus brought in a number of other organisations into its purview, such as the third sector as a service provider (Jones & Liddle 2011, p.158) and the impacts of its delivery role upon its independence and critical function (Gill 2009b, pp.219, 215). Some aspects of the asylum system, such as accommodation, support, detention and escorting have been subcontracted to other organisations. These subcontracted functions have been subject to scrutiny in other areas of social science, such as the health and social care literature (Coffey et al. 2010; Robjant et al. 2009; Crawley et al. 2011) and the deportation literature (Mountz et al. 2013; Bloch & Schuster 2005; McGregor 2011).

Given that the Home Office retains important casework functions in immigration governance at the UK level, it continues to suffer from a number of difficulties anticipated in the organisational studies literature. It is an organisation that is too big and complex to be able to reconcile its internal aims and objectives, particularly when it is evaluated in terms of activities and outputs (Brunsson 1989, p.13). It must simultaneously be responsible for the deterrence, processing, protection, and expulsion of asylum seekers. Strategies available to such organisations include dividing their contentious issues into separate areas of 'talk', 'decisions' and 'action' (Brunsson 1989). This helps to divert attention (Meyer & Rowan 1977, p.357) through a

disaggregation of functions (Brunsson 1989, p.8). Such strategies are difficult for the delivery end of organisations like the Home Office, especially in the context of an increasingly managerial culture in public services with accompanying plans, targets and monitoring processes.

The organisational studies literature has devoted substantial attention to the role of the 'street-level bureaucrat' in this scenario (Lipsky 1980). Street-level bureaucrats are public service workers charged with putting policy into effect, and have considerable discretion in doing so. Therefore, their actions can amend or subvert policy intentions. These officials are seen as increasingly powerful, autonomous agents taking discretionary decisions (Gill 2009b; Lipsky 1980). They may subvert policy inadvertently, due to resource pressures and time constraints. They may succumb to 'goal displacement', where they pursue operational targets rather than the quality of processes or clients' needs, as a way of demonstrating personal performance (Lipsky 1980, p.51).

Employees in these kinds of organisations are also subject to other seemingly unresolvable problems. Because of the sheer size and complexity of the social policy issues they are charged with confronting, alongside financial pressures, organisations may deny the existence of certain social problems. These are 'socially invisible', 'hidden events' (Westrum 1982, pp.381–382). The phrase 'fallacy of centrality' (Westrum 1982, p.393) captures the way in which social problems persist in society, as individuals refuse to believe that unexpected events are true or cannot be absorbed within their existing worldview and experience. When anomalous events occur, organisations can employ 'sensemaking' narratives (Weick 1995) in order to explain these events within the context of their known world. These are means by which public servants might have adapted to the demands placed on them in relation to managing immigration, asylum and deportation. So, for example, reports of deportees facing danger upon their return might be dismissed as the naivety or exaggeration of NGOs.

The literature offers ongoing, detailed analyses of the development of immigration policy historically (Bade 2003), at different levels of governance (Boswell & Geddes 2011) and within the UK (Somerville 2007a; Somerville 2007b; Somerville & Goodman

2010; Sales 2007; Stevens 2004), along party lines and the way in which it has been co-opted by their different agendas, such as anti-racism or immigration (Kaye 1994; Layton-Henry 1992).

This literature provides a guide to understanding the influences upon non-linear policy development at a micro-level that are relevant to deportation. Epistemic policy communities are considered extensively here, comprising different stakeholder organisations who influence policymaking. Within the immigration domain, different policy areas are subject to external influences to a greater or lesser extent. Labour migration or 'managed migration' involved a range of external influences particularly during the New Labour period of the mid-2000s, while asylum policy has been elite-driven with little room for the perspectives of (international) non-governmental organisations (Statham & Geddes 2006; Balch 2009).

It is not obvious where deportation of refused asylum seekers sits within this policy world. Deportation is the result of the asylum process, but refused asylum seekers are detained and removed under general immigration enforcement procedures that also include, for example, visa overstayers and foreign national prisoners. There is no coherent 'policy community' on deportation, as exists in other areas of immigration policy (Somerville & Goodman 2010, p.951) and considerable conflict even *within* the relatively coherent 'pro-migrant' lobby on asylum issues (Statham & Geddes 2006, p.263). Unlike many subject areas, deportation suffers from 'information scarcity' (Boswell 2012). Politicians receive relatively little information on 'illegal' migration (compared to asylum), but do appear to resist being unduly influenced by media coverage of deportation (Boswell 2012, pp.383–384). This is complicated by the fact that policy actors use 'expert' knowledge not only for instrumental purposes, but for symbolic ones too, such as to legitimise their own roles or to substantiate a pre-existing view (Boswell 2009). These uncertainties in information and policy influence regarding deportation of refused asylum seekers informed the methodological approach to this thesis; a range of policy actors were sought who might be seen as having some part in an actual or hypothetical public or political debate on deportation, a role in influencing policy or in delivering deportation practice on behalf of government.

### 3.1.3 Deportation literature

Deportation studies is a relatively new field of research that developed during the early 2000s as enforcement activities intensified across states (Coutin 2015, p.671). Deportation studies have, then, inevitably had a focus on enforcement regimes conducted by states, although some of its ethnographic works have explored deportee lives in this context. Deportation studies have been criticised for emphasising deportee powerlessness, and not considering the role of non-state actors (Coutin 2015, p.674). Ethnographic work (Lecadet 2012; Peutz 2010) and anti-deportation research (Nyers 2003; Nyers 2010) challenge this to some extent.

Important interdisciplinary contributions in this field have been the special journal issues (*Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 2015 vol. 41(4) 'Deportation, Anxiety, Justice: New Ethnographic Perspectives' and *Citizenship Studies* 2011 vol. 15(5) 'Boundaries of Belonging: Deportation and the Constitution and Contestation of Citizenship'), as well as edited volumes including: *The Deportation Regime* (De Genova & Peutz 2010) and *The Social, Political and Historical Contours of Deportation* (Anderson et al. 2012b).

The post-deportation context has received increasing academic attention in particular countries of return including Afghanistan (Schuster & Majidi 2013; Schuster & Majidi 2015), Somalia (Peutz 2010), Mali (Lecadet 2012) and Jamaica (Headley & Milovanovic 2016; Reynolds 2010). They build on the extensive work on US deportations to Mexico and Central America (Brotherton & Barrios 2011; Massey et al. 2015; Massey et al. 2016; Kanstroom 2012), but for example, also includes Cape Verde (Drotbohm 2015). While insightful, there are a limited number of studies of deportations under the Dublin Regulation to other EU member states (Schuster 2011b; Schuster 2011a; Doppler 2015), overlapping with research on undocumented migrants in Europe (Engbergesen 2001; Dahinden & Efonayi-Mader 2009).

This range of locations in the deportation studies literature provides an understanding of both departing and return societies. In a similar way that discourse about citizenship reveals much about the society denying citizenship and its existential fears (Anderson et al. 2011b; Anderson et al. 2012b), the deportation literature enables us to understand the departing state's concerns (Coutin 2015, p.675), why it constructs

'illegal' statuses (De Genova 2002) and its own views of citizenship (Walters 2010). Similarly, the way in which certain communities in countries of origin stigmatise deportees suggests how they view migration as an aspiration and opportunity, and so deny the reality of those who are seen to 'fail' (Schuster & Majidi 2015).

The concept of a 'deportation corridor' derived from the deportation studies literature (Coutin 2015, p.674; Drotbohm & Hasselberg 2015, p.553; Nyers 2003, p.1070) is particularly useful for this study, and links the different countries involved in deportation. The deportation corridor metaphor extends the notion of deportation as lasting well before and after the deportation event itself. It envisages a broader geographical space and multi-directionality of deportation, involving a range of actors and sites. Other helpful concepts derived from the recent deportation literature include: 'detainability' (De Genova 2010, p.55) and 'deportability', (De Genova 2002; De Genova 2010), describing vulnerability to detention and deportation respectively. Similarly, a 'deportspora' are an 'object class' who have been subject to deportation (Nyers 2003, p.1070).

However, these terms are indicative of the tendency in deportation studies to blur the distinctions between different types of migrants who are vulnerable to deportation. This makes it hard to identify the literature that analyses the difficulties faced specifically by deported refused asylum seekers, as opposed to a broader group of deportable migrants. Deportation studies focus on migrants who are classed as 'illegal' or 'undocumented' (such as Lecadet 2012; Richard & Fischer 2008; Nyers 2003), but make little room for these migrants' original motives for migration or their current legal status in their analysis. Instead, deportable migrants are often undifferentiated, and at times labels are deliberately used interchangeably. Nyers, for example, discusses 'undocumented' migrants in Quebec, but later refers to them as 'non-status refugees' (Nyers 2003, p.1071). Walters includes voluntary return and the *threat* of deportation within his definition of deportation (Walters 2010, p.73). This expansion arguably diminishes the experiences of those who are actually deported. The central findings of deportation studies thus need to be applied to my narrower target group with caution. Outcomes in the post-deportation environment might be quite different for deportees who have not fled persecution, claimed asylum, or even

been deported, compared to those who feature in this thesis, that is, those who sought asylum and were forcibly removed from the UK.

Having provided a brief overview of transnationalism, public policy and deportation studies as areas of the migration literature relevant to this study, I apply this knowledge to the key ideas and concepts that I will develop in this thesis. I present these ideas and concepts within three domains: discourse, agency and relationships. These areas are not mutually exclusive but provide an analytical structure for the issues I explore later in the thesis.

## **3.2 How can this literature coalesce in relation to deportee discourse, agency and relationships?**

### **3.2.1 Discourse**

#### *Migrants as subjects of discourse in the hosting state*

The ways in which migrants are portrayed and discussed in hosting societies, particularly in the media, have been subject to much academic scrutiny (Leudar & Hayes 2008; Wodak 2008; Page 2009; Crawley 2009; Mulvey 2010; Katwala & Somerville 2016; Polson & Kahle 2010; Duffy & Frere-Smith 2014). It comes as no surprise that the discourse on immigration in hosting states has been characterised as negative, exclusionary, essentialising, othering and 'demonising' (Gravelle et al. 2012, p.61). These can be summed up as 'hostility themes' denying individuals' humanity, reflecting activities that are disapproved of, or justifying their exclusion (Leudar & Hayes 2008, p.215). Migrants are portrayed as a problem or 'suspect' group by governments, along with others such as antisocial, unemployed and Muslim residents (Flint 2009, p.83). The use of this language can lead to oversimplistic, dualistic understandings of different individuals as 'good' and 'bad' since they sacrifice the nuances of different meanings. They also lead to the danger of essentialising, suggesting that processes reflect individuals' natural traits or characteristics (Brettell 2008; Malkki 1995).

Different migrant groups are subjected to different versions of this hostile discourse. A migrant 'scale of desirability' privileges certain forms of labour migration, while those

seeking asylum fall into the ‘unwanted’ end of the spectrum (Mulvey 2010, p.456) and thus face the harshest discourse. Some migrant categories clearly have deliberately perjorative, demeaning or sinister undertones, such as ‘failed’ and ‘bogus’, often used in relation to asylum seekers. A range of terms associated with those liable to deportation include: ‘illegal’, ‘irregular’, ‘undocumented’, ‘clandestine’, ‘unauthorised’, and ‘sans papiers’, although I note that the latter has been appropriated by undocumented migrants themselves.

Deportation has been associated with a broader category of ‘unwanted’, ‘deportable’ migrants who are portrayed as ‘unsavoury’, threatening (Nyers 2003, p.1070) or even criminal (Anderson et al. 2012a, p.5). While the term ‘deportee’ is not used widely in policy circles, government discourse on the deportation of what it calls ‘failed asylum seekers’ directs the public to understand them as ‘illegal immigrants’. The 2007 Enforcement strategy (Home Office 2007a), for example, includes ‘failed asylum seekers’ as a subset of ‘illegal migrants’ to be removed.<sup>17</sup> The document juxtaposes ‘failed asylum seekers’ against ‘genuine refugees’ and asylum seekers ‘genuinely fleeing persecution’. ‘Illegal migrants’ are presented as having made ‘unfounded asylum claims’ or do not ‘qualify to stay’. There is no attempt to explain the subtle differences between these labels, nor that asylum claims may be refused due to a lack of evidence or a lack of compliance with the system, rather than necessarily having made a claim spuriously.

The terms identified here are constructions rather than intrinsic or natural (Coutin 2015, p.676). Categories are not necessarily bad or harmful, but a means of making sense of a complex world, and enable researchers to differentiate between migrant groups (Al-Ali & Koser 2002). However, labels and categories can have profound, tangible impacts on individuals’ lives. They are not benign or neutral but have inherent power dynamics. Deportable migrants are subject to discretionary decisions that are based on normative ideas about which individuals are viewed as the least wanted by society, and who does not belong. Those without legal immigration status are not uniformly liable to deportation, but have been selected. Some individuals are

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<sup>17</sup> For example, within a section entitled ‘How do illegal migrants get into the UK?’, p.9 para.6 –p.10 para.10.

politically constructed as being more suitable for deportation than others, based on criminality, nationality, race and gender (Anderson 2013, p.124), and thus an 'abject class' of migrants are understood to be discriminatorily profiled (Nyers 2003, p.1070). The notion of 'illegality' maintains the vulnerability of certain groups (De Genova 2002, p.439).

There is some debate as to the relationship between policy and discourse; whether policymaking influences discourse or *vice versa*. Certainly public understanding and attitudes towards migrants are deeply affected by hostile discourse (Crawley 2009; Page 2009; Duffy & Frere-Smith 2014). Social science studies tend to blame governments or a combination of government and media for increased hostility towards migrants. Mulvey, for example, suggests that a narrative about asylum seekers and migrants developed by New Labour in the 2000s created a perception of threat, perpetual crisis, and unintentionally engendered and institutionalised public hostility towards *all* migrants (2010). This occurred despite a context of more generally increasing social tolerance (McLaren & Johnson 2004, p.196).

#### *Revealing the nature of the hosting state*

Two key functions of discourse are to problematize the object of discourse, and to legitimise the response of the state (Wodak 2008, p.55). These functions are highly relevant to migration. Categories reflect the relationships between the hosting state and its migrants. Terminology is usually directed by the receiving or host state (De Genova 2002, p.420). Migrant classification is an artefact produced by territorial and political boundaries, with legal categories and processes designed by the state to label and 'deal with' migrants (Faist 2000; Guiraudon 2001). Different labels are applied to individuals at different times reflecting the state-migrant relationship, rather than fundamental change within individuals. In this way, migrants are 'defined anew by the host nation' (Stevens 2004) and at each stage their rights and entitlements (or lack thereof) change as do the tools at the state's disposal for dealing with them.

Each migrant term betrays a political, normative position in relation to the society of which migrants want to be a part (Anderson 2013, p.117), often reflecting society's own fears and existential threats (Coutin 2015, p.675). They refer to outsiders, who

are part of the 'undeserving poor' and excluded from society (Anderson 2013, p.4). They can suggest some kind of moral deviance rather than legal status, and link mobility with criminal behaviour (Anderson 2013, p.118).<sup>18</sup> This can be seen in the UK's Enforcement strategy (Home Office 2007a). In this document 'failed asylum seekers' do not fall into the category of people who might cause the 'most harm', that is, people who have committed 'serious crime' who are involved in terrorism, drugs or trafficking. However, by virtue of their inclusion in the category of 'illegal immigrants', as well as practices such as their incarceration alongside other 'immigration offenders' in IRCs, refused asylum seekers are associated with this criminality. These comparisons and practices overtly link refused asylum seekers with the kind of moral deviance and criminality to which Anderson (2013, p. 118) refers. The public thus is encouraged to associate refused asylum seekers with deception and criminality, and are thus liable to deportation. This example encapsulates the functions of discourse, whereby the 'illegal' migrant is problematized and the government response of making some migrants 'deportable' is justified.

There has been some academic exploration of what deportation reflects about deporting societies themselves. Deportation is understood to be a practice that itself reaffirms or even constitutes citizenship in the deporting society (De Genova 2010, p.51; Walters 2010). De Genova, for example, asserts that deportation is a means of the citizenry ensuring that noncitizens are the target of government power, creating a distinction between citizens and their 'enemies', asserting the supremacy of the indigenous population (De Genova 2010, pp.51–54). Walters largely concurs with this analysis, but presents deportation as an assertion of citizenship to an external audience of other states and organisations, an attempt to persevere with the neat division of the global population into citizens belonging to their respective nation-states (Walters 2010, p.71).

In contrast, Anderson et al. assert that deportation is not simply a polar opposite to citizenship but indicative of a broader 'complex, shifting and contested' (2011, p. 553) internal debate within society and between citizens. They draw on examples of

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<sup>18</sup> Somewhat surprisingly then, Anderson herself selects the term 'illegal' on the basis that it is a state-constructed category.

mobilisation among citizens in the host community, such as localised anti-deportation campaigns where activists emphasise the citizen-like qualities of those they are championing and their contributions to the local community (Anderson et al. 2011a, p.558). This highlights divisions within the host society on questions of membership and who makes such decisions about belonging (Anderson et al., 2011, p. 558). The authors problematize such resistance movements however, since ironically, in their subjectivity they too exclude certain individuals who are deemed less socially 'desirable' in the community's eyes, such as single people, LGBT or Roma (Anderson et al. 2011a, p.560), thus reproducing exclusionary practices.

This interpretation of deportation takes us back to public discourse. Not everyone in society is swept along with the hegemonic hostile discourse on migration. The educated and the young are often understood to be more tolerant and pro-immigration compared with other socio-economic groups, for example (Page 2009, p.19; Katwala & Somerville 2016, pp.5–6). These sympathisers are subject to some characterisation themselves, as 'do-gooders' or 'noble activists' (Anderson et al. 2012a, p.5). Perhaps more surprisingly, and in relation to deportation specifically, Boswell (2012) found that the parliamentary debate on deportation, such as it exists, is not strongly associated with media attention but reliant on other information sources such as regular statistical reporting.

### *Discourse about other groups*

Discourse not only affects migrants in the hosting society. A further site of discourse and impacts upon deportees is in the country of return. Although less well explored in the literature, deportees in countries of return can also be subject to the negative consequences of labelling and discourse of their post-deportation economic and social lives, their identities and sense of belonging. Deportees are likely to be understood as 'failed migrants' or even 'failed citizens' (Khosravi 2009) rather than differentiated by the receiving population according to their reason for return. In the Dominican Republic, for example, the government does not distinguish between those deported for criminal or non-criminal offences (Brotherton & Barrios 2011, p.14). Similarly, deportees in Jamaica have been reported to experience the term 'deportee' as

primarily associated with criminality and hindered their re-integration, while the term 'deported migrant' was felt to be less hostile (Headley & Milovanovic 2016).

Stigmatisation is a commonly identified problem for deportees (Hagan et al. 2008, p.77; Schuster & Majidi 2015). Stigmatisation has been identified for example, as 'rampant' towards deportees in the Dominican Republic (Brotherton & Barrios 2011, p.15), Jamaica (Miller 2012; Headley & Milovanovic 2016) and Afghanistan (Schuster & Majidi 2015). The consequences of this can be severe. Deportees may be mocked (Brettell 2008), seen as objects of suspicion and shame, with assumed criminality (Miller 2012; Headley & Milovanovic 2016) or disease (Khosravi 2009, p.52). They may even be seen as a new ethnic category (Brettell 2008). Dominican deportees, for example, have reported that community leaders and the media fuelled a 'moral panic,' they are blamed for local policing problems, and are placed in 'preventative detention' in anticipation of criminal activity (Brotherton & Barrios 2011, pp.243–270). For some deportees, stigmatisation has been a determining factor in their re-migration (Schuster & Majidi 2015).

This response to deportees again tells us about the ideas of the society to which deportees return. Stigmatisation suggests a community response to deportees as somehow 'polluting' (after Douglas, 1966) having broken a taboo around migration success, coded in their words and practices of rejection. One might interpret deportees' stigmatisation as 'failures', then, as a way for societies to preserve their ideas about migration being the means to a better life, for example (Schuster & Majidi 2015).

Finally, it is worth highlighting a different context of discourse in the UK, which relates to officials involved in the deportation process. They have not been subject to great scrutiny in themselves, but have been characterised as either 'legal protectors' or 'henchmen' (Anderson et al. 2012a, p.5). There are some longer-standing stereotypes associated with workers in different employment sectors in the UK and elsewhere. Public sector workers are characterised as lazy and incompetent, their private sector counterparts as efficient but unethical and profit-seeking (Baldwin 1990) and the third sector as inherently virtuous (Kelly 2007, pp.3–4). The academic literature itself has been accused of reinforcing stereotypes about 'bureaucrats' (Baldwin 1990, pp.4–5).

These stereotypes might become irrelevant in future, as the New Public Management or New Public Governance literature argues that sectoral divisions are becoming irrelevant in the world of public management (Lyons et al. 2006, p.605). However, these stereotypes remain relevant to the upcoming discussion of the role of policy actors involved in the deportation of refused asylum seekers from the UK (Chapter 5).

### 3.2.2 Agency

The question of agency is important for this study in terms of exploring deportee lives after deportation. Agency is often implicitly rather than explicitly addressed in empirical research. This is partly because agency and structure are clearly interrelated, rather than one consistently predominating over another. Instead, it can be more productive to ask: ‘to what extent do actors ... have the ability to shape our destiny as against the extent to which our lives are structured in ways out of our control?’ (McAnulla 2002, p.271). Further, agency is an expression of autonomy. More than simply exercising control over our lives, agency involves exercising control over one’s own social relationships and social structures, and the ability to shape them, for one’s own purposes (Bakewell 2010, p.1694). Chapter 4 will consider how the structure-agency dynamic is approached methodologically, while the empirical chapters present an analysis of agency displayed by different actors in the deportation world. Here, I consider how the literature deals with these issues of structure and agency in relation to migrants and deportees.

There is a general agreement that migrants are the authority on their own experiences (Stone-Mediatore 2009), but it is important to distinguish between enabling deportee voices to be heard and privileging them, or exaggerating their agency. Migration studies frequently promote the migrant voice, with the intention of migrant empowerment and redressing significant power imbalances between migrants and institutions, such as the state. Migration studies particularly rely upon migrant agency for theory development and policy relevance (Bakewell 2010, pp.1689–1690) but have been accused of struggling to balance structure and agency to the point of hindering development of a grand theory (Bakewell 2010, pp.1691–1692). This is, perhaps, partly due to the implied trait of structure having some

longevity and permanence (Bakewell 2010, p.1695), which is tricky to enmesh in the context of a subject like migration whose subjects are inherently dynamic.

Deportees' voices are absent from public and political discussions of deportation in the UK. They are not the empowered voices of the subaltern (such as Spivak 1988). Coutin warns that deportation studies tend to overestimate deportee powerlessness (2015, p.674) and urges researchers to consider the agency of deportees and their advocates (2015, p.676). She suggests, as an example, agency could take the form of minimising the likelihood of being deported. Coutin's suggestion that deportees' passivity is found in deportation studies echoes the tendency in refugee studies to diminish refugee agency for fear of undermining the case for their protection (Bakewell 2010, p.1690). Deportation studies researchers may similarly fear that emphasising deportee agency or a welcome reception in the country of return could be seen as justifying or tolerating deportation as a practice, and undermine the case against wrongful expulsions.

Existing research in the deportation studies field certainly examines migrant perspectives both before and after deportation. There is a growing presentation of the deportee narrative within the existing deportation literature, often through the use of ethnographic and biographical approaches, that includes Brotherton and Barrios (2011), Corlett (2005), Headley and Milovanovic (2016), Lecadet (2012), Peutz (2010) and Schuster and Majidi (2013). However, a cursory browse through publication titles is curiously absent of deportee assertiveness, never seduced by the trap of overemphasising autonomy or 'hyperactive agency' (Bakewell 2010, p.1696). Titles declare that deportees have been 'banished' (Brotherton & Barrios 2011), are 'abject' (Nyers 2003), 'anonymous aliens' (Griffiths 2012), 'criminal aliens' (Peutz 2010) 'airport casualties' (Alpes 2015), at the 'extremes of exclusion' (Bloch & Schuster 2005) and have 'broken futures' (Gladwell & Elwyn 2012). Van Houte identifies Afghan deportees as frustrated, impoverished, angry and disappointed and ultimately being 'in no way' able to contribute to their society (van Houte 2014, pp.585, 567). This portrayal of powerlessness may be partly because research has focused on deportable migrants' lack of legal rights and the implication that they thus have no opportunities to express agency (Hasselberg 2015, p.568).

Some deportation research does highlight agency, among more organised deportee groups for example. The 'National Association of People Repatriated from Spain' in Senegal uses its status strategically to attract resources, that is, it has 'played the political game' in its use of the term 'repatriation' to negotiate with the Senegalese government. There is a suggestion, however, that these deportees have some unease in identifying with this label, indicated by the fact that the organisation was considering rebranding in the longer term (Pian 2010, p.13). Other deportee groups in Mali, for example, paradoxically re-assert their nationalities or 'phantom citizenship' in order to self-organise and survive after deportation (Lecadet 2012, p.152).

The literature is more mixed in presenting the agency of family members and the community in the country of origin, but these deportee contacts tend to be cast in the role of victim or aggressor. People in the country of origin are exposed to danger and bribery (Dolan et al. n.d., pp.12–13) and the community suffers economically (Van Hear 1998, p.187). Family members accompanying returnees must adjust to the unknown country of return, while those left behind in the host country suffer emotionally, financially and psychologically without the deportee (Hagan et al. 2008, p.84; Zarzosa 1998; Drotbohm 2015) or are at risk of violence if they travel to be reunited (Boehm 2011, p.16). Alternatively, country of origin communities stigmatise deportees as Schuster & Majidi (2015) and others have testified, or ostracise deportees who did not maintain links and send remittances while away (Dolan et al. n.d., p.15).

Coutin has also instructed that deportation studies must avoid voyeurism and suggests a focus on the society that deports, rather than deportees themselves (2015, p.678). This view has already been adopted by some studies, for example, emphasising what anti-deportation activism tells us about hosting societies. As such, research has expanded our view of who is involved in the deportation industry, such as passengers and pilots etc. (Walters 2010, p.70). Coutin appears to present a (perhaps false) dilemma for deportation researchers: they either reproduce deportee powerlessness by discussing their expulsion, or avoid voyeurism by not studying deportees at all in favour of the departing society.

The transnational literature on return migration supplies a useful concept which may be helpful here, as it identifies migrant agency through their use of resources. 'Migratory cultural capital' (Van Hear 1998, pp.50–51) and 'migration-specific capital' (Vertovec 2013, p.3) describe migrant resources that will help to fuel deportees' agency after their deportation. Migrants have multifaceted migration histories. Forced removal is only one part of deportees' migratory journeys (Lecadet 2012, p.150). With each journey made, migrants accumulate knowledge and experience about moving, deal with official and unofficial agents along the way, develop and maintain social ties and accrue information about finding work and housing. This is 'migration-specific' or 'migratory cultural' capital.

While the concept of migratory cultural capital has been used in the return literature to explain repeat or circular migration (Vertovec 2013, p.3), we can apply this to the deportation context and consider what this might involve. Deportees might arrive in the country of return with some assets that they did not have prior to migration (notwithstanding the likelihood of having fewer *material* assets) such as English language skills, experience of Home Office interviews, knowledge about their rights in the UK e.g. to legal advice, surviving through informal work, and social relationships developed in their host communities or in detention. Deportees might also have accumulated experiences that might dissuade them from re-migrating, such as detention and hostility in the host state, a 're-entry ban' to the UK and the effects of the Dublin Regulation on lodging an asylum claim in different EU states. These assets would have an empowering impact on deportees' planning and decision-making for their futures. The thesis will explore if these applications are present in the deportation stories related during fieldwork.

### *Resistance and challenge to deportation*

Resistance is a form of agency. It is a refusal to wholly submit to structural constraints and even contest domination and power. Deportation research has documented contention, challenge and resistance by a range of actors within the deportation process, demonstrating Anderson et al.'s earlier observation that deportation highlights internal divisions in society (2011a, p.553). Geographically speaking, resistance activity is not necessarily even or consistent, and may not mirror the

geography of domination (Pile 2009). Resistance to deportation is not necessarily limited to the deportee and the state at the site of deportation. As the border has effectively shifted to the lived spaces of everyday life, so too do these challenges.

There is increasing interest in the minor activities practiced by actors who have the least power and influence within systems of domination. The concept of 'everyday resistance' is relevant at this scale (Routledge 2009). Originally based on peasant struggles in South-East Asia, 'everyday forms of ... resistance' are prosaic practices by 'powerless groups' that have greater chance of minor success compared with full-scale rebellion or revolution (Scott 1985, p.29). Actions that on the surface seem relatively harmless actions and avoid direct confrontation with the authorities can be effective, such as 'feigned ignorance' and 'false compliance' (Scott 1985, p.29).

We have established from the public policy literature (in section 3.1.2) that street-level bureaucrats have opportunities for exercising resistance to policy. The number and extent of public officials involved in deportation and the surveillance of potentially deportable migrants, albeit tangentially, has increased. Educational institutions have a duty to report on their overseas students, for example, while landlords and banks are expected to conduct checks on prospective migrant clients under the Immigration Act 2014. Deportation research has highlighted a range of these actors involved in challenging deportation practices, operating from both within and outside of the formal deportation infrastructure. A significant example involving public sector workers in this field was a 2004 pilot known as 'Section 9' (of the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants) Act 2004), where refused asylum-seeking families had financial support withdrawn and faced the prospect of their children being put into the care system. This was intended to push parents into returning home voluntarily. The pilot was judged to be a failure and the measure was never implemented due to the resistance of local authority social care staff, and seen as a victory for those opposing the policy (Kelley & Meldgaard 2005).

Public service workers are not the only actors capable of distorting policy objectives at the ground level. Citizens are now considered stakeholders rather than simply observers or objects of national policy outcomes, and are considered to have some level of responsibility in ensuring them (Barnes & Prior 2009). In relation to

deportation specifically, they are increasingly expected to contribute to enforcement aims as a duty of citizenship (Anderson 2013, p.131). UK residents also participate in resistance activities relating to deportation, as 'subversive citizens' (Barnes & Prior 2009). There are more formalised anti-deportation organisations (Nyers 2010; Nyers 2003) and there are well-developed practices among ordinary residents who seek to prevent deportations from their community. These are usually in defence of or in solidarity with asylum-seekers who are subject to immigration detention. Examples in the literature include local residents resisting deportations from Osnabruck, Germany to another EU member state under the Dublin Regulation (Doppler 2015), French residents and local officials supporting undocumented migrants in their community (Chauvin & Garces-Mascarenas, 2012; Guiraudon, 2001) as well as local examples from the UK in Glasgow (Penketh 2015), and the City of Sanctuary movement across the UK (Darling et al. 2009) supporting asylum-seekers in their communities.

The literature on social movements and contentious politics is relevant at this point given the deportation research on anti-deportation movements. The concept of 'transnational activism' will be relevant to some forms of resistance activity if it takes place across borders. Transnational activism is usually understood to describe self-organised migrants in a host country choosing to maintain their links back 'home' (Tarrow 2006), but the site and direction of activism in relation to deportation inevitably will be altered. The 'republican godfathers' in France, are one example. These were residents who supported undocumented migrants living in France, who then used their networks to attempt to regularise migrants' status in Italy when the opportunity arose (Chauvin & Garces-Mascarenas, 2012; Guiraudon, 2001). Their activities across borders were described as 'panic transnationalism' (Guiraudon, 2001).

Critiques of these resistance movements include that organised resistance can potentially reproduce deportee powerlessness in excluding some migrants, on the basis of normative values rather than legal compliance (Anderson et al. 2011b, p.560). Coutin, for example, notes that anti-deportation campaigners do not acknowledge migrant offenders' sense of partial blame for their predicament, and effectively exclude them from their predominant activities that focus on more 'deserving' groups

(Coutin 2015, p.676). Coalitions of resistance including mainstream actors such as churches and local government, alongside left-wing activist groups, have also been critiqued. Councils involved in ostensibly supporting migrants can reinforce the binaries of migration discourse (Doppler 2015, p.10) and white, middle-class citizens in populist campaigns might reinforce their privilege through 'white guilt' (Ünsal 2015, p.10). By focusing on the agency of *non-deportees*, this research brings other actors into the picture, but risks downplaying deportees' own agency and effectively disempowering them too. The dangers of perpetuating victimisation or marginalisation of research subjects are key reasons for ensuring deportees were included in the study design for this thesis, and will be explored further in Chapter 4 when discussing research choices made in this study.

Deportation studies also demonstrate the potential for individual migrants to resist. Research has covered migrant protest in the form of self-harm (such as Richard & Fischer, 2008) and destruction of identity documentation in immigration detention (summarised in Hasselberg, 2015, p. 568). Hasselberg's own (2015) research on foreign national offenders liable to deportation, presents detainees' agency in choosing not to participate in anti-deportation campaigns, acknowledging their own criminality, participating in the legal system and subsequently complying with the demands of the law. For them, these actions demonstrated that they did not pose a risk to society and that they had endured their punishment of incarceration. However, in the post-deportation context, migrant protest is less clearly covered by the literature.

### **3.2.3 Relationships**

Relationships, or social ties, are a key aspect of exploring the experiences along the deportation corridor and impacts of deportation in the post-deportation environment. Some social encounters are not fully-fledged relationships, but they can still be transformative (Valentine 2008). Deportees' more significant social relationships are an important potential resource in the post-deportation environment. Non-movers can have important influences over migrants (Cohen & Sirkeci 2011) and vice versa (Vertovec 2009). Evolving opportunities, attitudes and relationships in different

locations affect deportee decision-making (Hagan et al. 2008, p.82). Both the community in the country of origin, as well as 'host' communities in the country of migration are important, although the latter tend 'to be neglected in considerations of migration' (Van Hear 1998, p.261).

### *Relationships between the state and deportees*

Within the early end of the deportation corridor, asylum seekers have a formal relationship with the hosting state, manifest in deportees' interactions with immigration officials and others working within the deportation system. It is worth introducing two normative approaches to moral perspectives here: 'ethics of justice' and the 'ethics of care'. These contrasting approaches were advocated by Kohlberg (1981) and Gilligan (1995) respectively. An 'ethics of justice' approach is based around ideas of fairness and equitable treatment for everyone, founded on the application of universal principles and rules; in contrast, an 'ethics of care' approach is empathetic, individualistic, needs-centred, holistic and allows for context (Botes 2000, p.1071).

These perspectives guide our normative conceptions of fairness, that relate not only to ideas at a policy level (such as the asylum process), but also the way in which refused asylum seekers and deportees might be treated by those with whom they come into contact. They are helpful in an analysis of the different approaches and perspectives of actors towards deportees and deportation in general. For example, McThomas has shown that whether one takes an ethics of justice or an ethics of care approach, these positions are more influential upon people's attitudes towards immigration policy than their partisanship, ideology or demographic characteristics (2015, p.185).

Relatedly, I draw on the concept of 'meaningful contact' (Valentine 2008, p.323). This refers to encounters between relative strangers that have value beyond that immediate moment. Valentine used this term in relation to encounters between different social groups who may consequently reconsider their prejudices and develop respect for one another. 'Sites of connection' (Valentine 2008) along the deportation corridor provide opportunities for deportees to meet officials that might be significant to either party. Deportees might be treated without empathy during deportation by

implementers who might hold an ethics of justice approach to deportation, that is, those who feel that deportees should simply be treated according to existing rules and do not merit additional concern. Even those with an ethics of care approach to their work might not be kindly towards detainees and deportees, if they construct certain these groups as a threat to their own in-group (McThomas 2015, p.180). Whatever the nature of their contact with immigration officials during their deportation, deportees might interpret those instances as representing the state. Thus these moments of interaction might impact upon deportees' views of the UK and their long-term plans.

### *Social capital*

Deportees will need to draw on their resources after deportation, after their 'double-abandonment' (Lecadet 2012, p.156) by their country of birth and their hosting state(s). We know that networks of personal contacts enhance migrant capacity to adapt (Van Hear 1998). It is inevitable that deportees will try to maintain important social connections as they cross borders in order to provide resources for their survival. Deportees will rely on people with whom they share a sense of belonging, whether in the country of return, the country of birth, the host country or countries of transit.

As popularised by Putnam (1993), 'social capital' refers to the ability of an individual to mobilise their economic, social and cultural resources due to their membership in social structures and networks (rather than the resources themselves) (Vertovec 2009). This provides access to opportunities, information, resources and status (Ebaugh & Curry 2000, p.190). Participation in groups can lead to positive outcomes for individuals and society (Portes 1998, p.2).

Key features of social capital are trust, norms and networks (Putnam 1993, p.4). Social capital is built through shared values, reciprocity and trust, and maintained through social activities such as visits, marriage, events etc. (Vertovec 2009). Characteristics of social capital transactions may seem opaque, as they include 'unspecified obligations, uncertain time horizons, and the possible violation of reciprocity expectations' (Portes 1998, p.4). Resources gained by employing social capital can be interpreted as a gift (Portes 1998, p.5) and can be repaid in different forms, including rather tenuous

offerings such as approval or allegiance (Portes 1998, p.7). Social capital brings not only rights but obligations (Ebaugh & Curry 2000, p.189); it 'cuts both ways' (Portes 1998, p.18). Negative consequences of social capital are less well-explored in the literature. Some people are excluded from social networks, while others are subject to disproportionate claims on their resources; they may feel they are being 'taken for a ride', if requests are deemed presumptuous, too large or frequent (Portes 1998, p.15).

#### *Social capital in the country of origin*

It is reasonable to think that deportees in the country of birth would draw on their social capital in their 'home' community in order to adjust to life after deportation. However, different areas of migration research provide a strong basis for assuming the idea of 'home' might be problematic for deportees, as it is for the displaced and the socially excluded (Ralph & Staeheli 2011). The refugee literature has long demonstrated that the dominant policy view of repatriation or return 'home' as a 'durable solution' for refugees and asylum seekers is often inappropriate (Black & Koser 1999; Muggeridge & Doná 2006; Omata 2013; Malkki 1995, p.509). The return migration literature concurs that re-integration into the 'home' community can be difficult psychologically for returning migrants (McHugh 2000, p.84; Van Hear 1998, p.199; Chambers 1994, p.6) and in terms of support available from family and community members as they try to re-establish themselves (Van Hear 1998, p.Ch.5; Hagan et al. 2008, p.68; Nixon 1994; Zarzosa 1998, p.196). This marries with the problem of stigmatisation outlined earlier in the deportation literature (in section 3.2.1).

Experience of return does, however, depend on how relations with country of origin community were maintained while away (Van Hear 1998). Not all of these communities reject returning deportees (Maguire 2006, p.16; Van Hear 1998). Some migrants actively maintain these networks as a 'safety net' prior to possible return (Muggeridge & Doná 2006, p.425). Some communities relocate in different parts of the world as 'transnational insurance' (Van Hear 1998, p.198). Networks may also 'unravel' as migrant loyalties shift to other places (Levitt 2001). Deportees may be 'still rooted' with continuing strong ties to the country of birth, 'suspended' with oscillating attachments to different places, or 'footloose' and deterritorialised, characterised by

transience, repeated migration and restlessness but little intention to return to former places (McHugh 2000, p.83). Some social connections may have been severed in the country of birth because this is also the country of persecution. Unlike voluntary migrants, refugees often avoid involvement in the place they fled (Portes 2003, p.879) either for fear of the consequences for those 'left behind' or because of the persecutor's presence there.

Deportees' migratory movement is a 'coercive reversal' (De Genova 2010, p.50), involving a lack of choice and a return direction due to the actions of the hosting state, rather than through deportees' own decision-making. For deportees, 'deportation rarely means returning *home*' (Khosravi 2009, p.52). They may not be welcomed by or familiar with the country of return (Van Hear 1998, p.55). The 'home' community may no longer exist if kin are scattered among a diaspora, as was the case for Afghan deportees with families now in Paris (Schuster & Majidi 2013). The departing country is arguably the 'sending' country and a 'home', according to how individuals had adjusted to life there as asylum seekers, particularly children (Khosravi 2009, p.52). For some deportees, there is nowhere to feel at ease; Dominican deportees, for example, experienced an ongoing tension between home (as they have reunited with family) and exile (as the threat of their undocumented legal status continues to loom) (Brotherton & Barrios 2011, p.290).

The transnational perspective acknowledges these dilemmas for migrants. It recognises complex migrant routes, motives and influences, multi-directional patterns created by migrants and the impact on their identity, citizenship and sense of belonging. Complex linkages across the world mean that it is increasingly meaningless to classify 'home' in opposition to 'sending' countries, to clearly demarcate 'host', 'destination' and 'receiver' countries (Faist 2000). The notion of 'home' is changeable, it can be imagined and recreated according to the different places in which migrants have lived (Al-Ali & Koser 2002, p.6). Migrants develop a sense of belonging in these different locales derived from their journeys and social ties in those different places (Wood & Waite 2011, p.202). In the absence of a physical place or territory to call 'home', a sense of belonging may also be metaphorical for some deportees.

### *Belonging as an alternative to 'home' as a location of social capital*

The broader literature on 'belonging' may be helpful alternative to 'home', less fixated with place but including social and psychological links. It involves a *sense* of being 'at home', as well as emotional attachment and a sense of safety (Yuval-Davis 2006, p.197). Belonging is both social and material, and encompasses security, recognition and understanding (Wood & Waite 2011, p.201). It is contingent on *others* to legitimise their inclusion (Ralph & Staeheli 2011). Belonging in the literature is strongly associated with and enabled by personal and social relationships. This links with the literature on integration in host communities.

A helpful way of breaking down the notion of belonging is into three interrelated levels described by Yuval-Davis (2006, pp. 199–203). These are: social locations (common axes of difference such as gender, race, class, ethnicity, sexuality etc. and their intersections); identifications and emotional attachments (the way we describe ourselves to ourselves and others); and ethical and political values (the way in which the other two categories of location and identity are valued and judged, and where boundaries are drawn between them).

Three forms of social connection have been theorised as 'bonding', 'bridging' and 'links', attributed to Robert Putnam and Michael Woolcock (Strang & Ager 2010; Ager & Strang 2008). Bonding and bridging are particularly relevant. 'Bonds' are connections within close groups or those in similar situations, and are crucial to integration of refugees in host societies. Close groups include family, ethnic kin, religious kin, and even those in geographical proximity (Strang & Ager 2010, pp.596–598). 'Bridging' capital enables building less intense connections to other communities, such as the wider host community.

People providing 'bonded' or 'bridging' social capital in host communities have been described in anthropological literature as 'fictive kin' or 'ritual kin' (Ebaugh & Curry 2000, p.191). Their relationships are often based on religious participation, or close friendships within ethnic communities in the host society (Ebaugh & Curry 2000, p.189). The motivations of those providing kin-like resources are complex (Portes 1998, p.6) or unknown (Engbergesen 2001). Ebaugh & Curry (2000, p. 193) suggest fictive kin are less common in indigenous white communities; the 'republican

godfathers' described above seem an appropriate example (in section 3.2.2. on agency).

As asylum seekers, deportees needed opportunities to meet local people to build social bridges and to establish fictive kin. This is difficult for many new, isolated migrants (Ahmed et al. 2015; Strang & Ager 2010, p.599). Migrant integration is understood to require commonalities such as language, culture and intermarriage (Ralph & Staeheli 2011) or 'meaningful interchanges' (Vertovec, 2007, p. 1045) such as religious occasions (Snyder 2011).

Although exclusion from a local community could have been exacerbated for deportees when they were moved around dispersal and detention sites, it is possible that deportees may not require a large number of contacts in order to mobilise their social capital. They will not necessarily draw on their best-established contacts with closest or 'bonded' kin; the benefits of social capital are not predicated on having a large number of social ties. In fact, thinner networks with 'structural holes' may be more effective because they are less likely to confuse participants with redundant information but provide new knowledge and resources (Portes 1998, p.6). The benefits of these 'weak ties' have been well-established in the sociological literature (Granovetter 1973).

#### *Social networks that become transnational after deportation*

Deportees may have social networks that include social ties around the world. Migrant social networks are understood as 'the sets of cross-border interpersonal ties connecting migrants, return migrants, and non-migrants through kinship, friendship, and attachment to a shared place of origin' (Levitt 2001, p.8). The concept of social networks derives from social network analysis, whereby each individual is a 'node' linked with others to form a network (Vertovec 2009). Social networks can be analysed descriptively (Vertovec 2009). The concept of social networks enables us to consider migrants' active networks cutting across other forms of organisation, such as neighbourhood and kin (Vertovec 2009).

Transnational practices change according to different conditions, life stages and settlement (Vertovec 2009). Some migrants will display transnational features more

frequently and with more intensity than others (Portes 2003, p.879). Not all migrants have the capacity or desire to act transnationally. Transnational research has shown transnational activity to be most common among the well-educated, connected, integrated and secure, rather than recent arrivals or the marginalised (Portes 2003, p.887). Some migrant contacts are exploitative or abusive (Van Hear 1998, pp.256–257) so might be avoided.

Deportees' social networks might be with people in the country of birth, fictive kin in the hosting state, as well as any other country in which they have spent time. Thus they may be 'transnational' social networks according to members' respective locations within or crossing borders. Consideration of transnational social networks also enables us to include those who are 'left behind' by migration and the impacts upon them (Levitt 2001, p.7). Further, since social networks provide opportunities for social action (Vertovec 2009), it is possible that deportees' transnational networks will involve contentious challenges between non-state and state actors or the authorities across state boundaries (Vertovec 2009). They may even become transnational social movements that undertake political activity outside the state (Vertovec 2009).

If deportee transnational behaviour is not continuous, it may take place at certain moments. A number of variations or 'modes' of transnationalism have been identified in the literature that are helpful to consider in relation to deportees, beyond the frequent and sustained activity that is indisputably transnational behaviour. These modes include: 'broad' or 'sporadic' (Itzigsohn et al. 1999), 'broad' meaning regular but occasional (Portes 2003), 'expanded' meaning periodic and occasional (Levitt 2001), 'ambivalent' and 'forced' for refugees (Smith 2002, p.xiii).

Some of these variations may be apt in a scenario where deportees experience constraints in maintaining regular contact with people in their networks. 'Reactive transnationalism', theorised by Itzigsohn & Saucedo (2002) and 'small-scale', 'limited' transnationalism (Burrell 2003) are particularly developed here in application to deportees. Deportees may 'react' to their deportation by either intensifying or minimising their links with the UK. They may not have much social capital or embrace transnational behaviour to warrant being called transnational migrants, but instead

may practice a form of 'small-scale' transnationalism that while being 'limited' by constraints such as ill-health or finances, can exist simply through memories (Burrell 2003, p.333). The thesis will explore the 'reaction' of deportees towards the UK as their former hosting state, and how far their links to the UK might persist despite being small-scale or psychological.

### *Relationships in international relations*

This thesis also considers interactions between actors at the national and international levels. This means states and institutions as actors who play a part in the deportation regime, and include the deporting state (the UK), the country of return (either the country of birth or an EU country), and supra-national institutions such as UNHCR and the EU. The underlying principles of International Relations (IR) theory are helpful as a basis for understanding how they act in relation to one another in a general context, and thus the ways in which they act in relation to asylum and deportation issues. Important rules of behaviour between states are known as 'norms' as they are voluntary and not enshrined in law. However, they are powerful in moderating state behaviour and maintaining order in an anarchic world system of interdependent states and institutions. Collingwood's (1940) work on absolute presuppositions is also helpful here. He theorised that norms are so firmly embedded in the speakers' understanding of the world that they are thought to require no further explanation or reasoning. IR norms are often expressed as absolute presuppositions. Sovereignty, for example, is seen as important in its own right, a type of circular reasoning.

The international relations norm of 'non-interference' is particularly relevant to the post-deportation context, as it prevents any routine involvement of one state in another's internal affairs. That is, their domestic authority and independence in the state system, or 'sovereignty' is respected (Dunne & Schmidt 2001). Only in exceptional cases will states flout this norm, such as in times of war or humanitarian intervention, but even then there is usually significant debate and retrospective judgment upon that decision (Wheeler & Bellamy 2001).

Relatedly, the concept of 'burden-sharing' is relevant in relation to deportation. Burden-sharing here refers to the ways in which states understand that they should accept 'unwanted' migrants into their territory, on the basis of fairness to other states. IR theory understands states as acting in their own interests, and so in this reading, burden-sharing is less of a benevolent act but rather a 'multi-level game' between hosting states who seek to maintain their reputation and standing in the international system (Noll 2003, p.251). This understanding of the concept of burden-sharing is related to substantial academic work on migration and the EU (such as Boswell & Geddes 2011).

### **3.3 What are the key gaps in deportation research?**

#### **3.3.1 Discourse in the deportation literature**

Grounding this thesis in the discourse on migration and deportation paves the way to explore the ways in which different people talk about deportation, whether they work in the realm of policy with its limited discourse, live in 'ordinary' communities where deportation is visible, or from deportees' perspectives themselves.

Current analysis of deportation discourse is focused on the hosting state in terms of policy and its official and public discourse, and most recently in relation to how far the deportability and deportation of 'illegal migrants' reinforce an existing sense of citizenship. There has also been some consideration of the public discourse about deportees in countries of return, which, on the current evidence, has been largely stigmatizing.

Both of these approaches tend to silence deportees. Their perspectives on being a citizen or what it takes to belong to a society are not apparent. Similarly, there has been little analysis of the discourse of the indigenous host community, and whether citizenship remains a useful analytical lens for analysing their views on deportation.

#### **3.3.2 Agency in the deportation literature**

Portraying agency in deportation research is not straightforward. The temptation to under-estimate (and also possibly over-estimate) the agency of individual migrants within the deportation process is an outstanding challenge for researchers. The

deportation research identifies the agency of different actors at various scales (at the individual or collective level), in different directions and across time and space at different points of the deportation corridor. However, these have tended to accumulate at specific visible, accountable sites that comprise the deportation 'spectacle', such as detention settings and anti-deportation campaigns. Research examining other sites and scales of agency, such as beyond the deportation event, are less prolific.

There is a broad range of other actors who exercise agency in the deportation context in their own right: from immigration officials to anti-deportation activists, with ordinary citizens and public service workers in-between. Some have been researched, but could be explored further, employing notions of 'street-level bureaucracy' and 'everyday resistance' that are already well-established in the literature. A further analytical question worth exploring is whether these actors constrain or enable deportees' agency. Street-level bureaucrats are considered as agents if they subvert policy aims. If instead they constrain deportees through a sense of civic duty, then it is debatable whether they are representing structural obstacles to deportees or expressing their own agency.

I also observe an impact of 'methodological nationalism' among deportation studies. Deportation research design implies that nationality is a most significant axis of difference in deportation experiences. Thus we have an expanding number of studies where deportee nationality and the country of return match (such as Afghanistan, Somalia, Cape Verde etc) with the exception of Lecadet's consideration of deportees of various nationalities arriving in Mali (2012). Instead, inverting Lecadet's work, a deporting state could provide the unifying characteristic of deportees studied. This would offer more possibilities to consider deportees returned to a range of countries including those that are not their country of birth, such as the EU. This is important particularly in the UK context because of the sizable number of deportations conducted under the Dublin Regulation to other EU member states (detailed in Chapter 2) and would build on suggestions in the literature of circular EU migration among deportees (Schuster 2011a; Doppler 2015). Using a single deporting country would also enable consideration at the smallest scales of deportation, where

individuals are returned unceremoniously, alone or in households. Their reception is likely to be different to groups on charter flights or whose destination is more common.

### 3.3.3 Relationships in the deportation literature

Research on deportees' social relationships has been almost exclusively focused on their immediate family members (as outlined in section 3.2.3), whether they are in the host country or the country of return, rather than other kinds of relationships. Rather than engaging in academic debates about whether or not deportees' activities meet a definition of what it means to be transnational, the ways in which deportees survive after deportation could be considered in terms of how and why they mobilise their UK resources at this point. Well-developed sociological concepts such as 'social capital' and '(transnational) social networks' are critical to the analysis of deportees' resource mobilisation post-deportation.

In light of many negative impacts and responses by country of origin communities towards return migrants described in the literature, it is likely that deportees will struggle to re-establish their resources through social networks in their country of birth. New social conditions that might have been created as a consequence of the deportation event are not yet clear, but fictive kin established in the host community may be a resource for deportees acting across borders.

These social ties will influence where migrants may feel they belong, but also encounters with officials may have an adverse effect upon their views of the UK. Thus deportees might practice a potentially inverse form of small-scale or reactive transnationalism if they mobilise resources through transnational networks linked to the UK. Deportees might only require a little social capital in order to improve their post-deportation prospects, as the sociological literature has confirmed that weak ties and social networks with 'structural holes' are often efficient and valuable. However, there is a danger that studies looking at social capital end up with a tautological conclusion, a danger of looking at the effect first and then working out the reason for the differences as causative (Portes 1998, p.20). This means in practice, for example, that deportees will not necessarily thrive on account of having and drawing upon

social capital. It is important to also be open to the possibility that some deportees may well thrive without social capital.

### 3.4 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to situate this study within the academic literature on deportation. It began by asking what key literatures will inform the study and how they coalesce under the broader themes of discourse, agency and relationships by the adoption of certain concepts, issues and empirical knowledge. It also raised the question of gaps in academic understandings of deportation.

This chapter has laid the foundations for this study that is located primarily in the literature on migrant transnationalism. This is largely due to its flexible characterisation of contemporary migration to conceive of different migratory trajectories. Within this framework, deportee migration can be understood as multi-directional and unrestricted by inappropriate dualistic categories such as 'home' or 'host' community, but reflecting the uncertainty of these terms for someone who is a double-exile without a fixed, single place of belonging. Individual deportee behaviour in this context then, is critical to their survival, and they must mobilise their resources of migratory cultural capital and social capital. How this takes place across borders and with what patterns is to be determined, but may be categorised as 'small-scale' or 'limited' transnationalism, and the direction of that activity might be affected by their experiences in the UK, and thus be a form of 'reactive' transnationalism.

I have not been limited solely to this tranche of literature, but have found it enlightening to also draw on other, overlapping areas of social science. The burgeoning deportation studies field is not only furthering our understanding particularly about the stages of deportability and detention which are particularly reflective about deporting societies, but is also providing a new vocabulary for researchers. The concept of the 'deportation corridor' in this light is a good example, although I observe that it runs the risk of assuming that the deportation event is the centralising, pivotal or critical moment in deportees' lives.

Different disciplines and areas of work have contributed helpful concepts and themes appropriate to deportation, whether or not they were coined with regards to migration. For example, I have borrowed a number of exceptionally helpful concepts from sociology (such as 'social capital'), International Relations theory (such as 'non-interference' and 'sovereignty') and normative ethics (the 'ethics of justice' and 'ethics of care' debate). Together, these existing works provide a cross-disciplinary approach that maximises our current understanding of deportation.

The different areas of migration studies outlined in this chapter are particularly pertinent at different points of this thesis. My fieldwork was based around three different stakeholder groups who all had an interest in or experience of deportation: 'policy actors', 'deportees', and 'supporters'. Each group is defined in Chapter 4, and analysed separately in the empirical chapters. The public policy literature is particularly relevant to the chapter on policy actors (Chapter 5). The deportation studies and transnationalism literature provide the basis for the deportee chapters (Chapters 6 and 7). For the supporters' chapter (Chapter 8), a different blend is employed, this time combining the transnationalism and the public policy literature.

I have provided some reflections of the current state of deportation research within the realms of discourse, agency and relationships, and where this might usefully be directed in future. Key gaps in the deportation literature identified here include deportees' narratives and strategies (taking care not to exaggerate their agency or passivity), which include the possibility of positive post-deportation relationships and experiences. Deportees' relationships with the indigenous host community are a key element of this, which may arise in new social conditions created as a consequence of the deportation event and offer the opportunity to mobilise deportees' resources. The influences of non-activists in particular at the everyday level on deportees and the deportation process are another area for exploration. Finally, it is important to test the spaces and boundaries of the 'deportation corridor'. Some sites, such as detention facilities, are better explored in the literature than others, while areas such as transport, flight and handover in the country of return are less investigated. In addition, a longer-term post-deportation context or the EU as an indefinite destination (rather than as a site of expulsion) might be alternative areas to pursue.

There is an opportunity in this thesis to explore some of these gaps through new fieldwork and analysis, with the concomitant need to develop an accompanying vocabulary to address these previously neglected issues.

# CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

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This chapter establishes the epistemological and methodological framework that is appropriate to the study's aims to explore the perceptions of different relevant stakeholder groups about deportation, their agency and relationships in this context. This chapter answers the following questions:

- What methodological approach has been taken for researching the perceptions of different stakeholders about deportation?
- What assumptions have been made?
- What research design has been selected?
- How was fieldwork conducted?
- What ethical considerations need to be taken into account in research design and conduct?
- How was the analysis carried out?
- What are the influences of the researcher in this study?

The chapter is divided into seven sections. In section 4.1, I present this research as a qualitative study of 42 deportation stakeholders. In section 4.2, the assumptions made in this thesis are made explicit. I discuss my approach to fieldwork design and purposive sampling of three groups: 'policy actors', 'deportees' and their UK-based 'supporters' in section 4.3. Section 4.4 provides details of fieldwork decisions. In section 4.5, I outline the ethical considerations of conducting primary research with deportees. I explain my approach to analysis in section 4.6, using principles of grounded theory and a framing analysis derived inductively from interview data. I present a set of three cognitive frames used by research participants when discussing deportation; a 'bureaucracy' frame, an 'international interdependence' frame and a 'human' frame. I conclude in section 4.7 by reflecting on my positionality in the study, and highlight unexpected issues that arose out of the research process.

## 4.1 The methodological approach

This research is concerned with exploring a wide and unique range of perspectives on deportation. Deportation stakeholders are people who have a common interest or experience: the realm of deportation from the UK. However, they are a diverse group

and pose a methodological dilemma regarding sampling. Interviews were conducted with a total of 42 deportation stakeholders, of whom 11 were policy actors, 7 were deportees and 24 were supporters. There was great value in conducting in-depth, qualitative interviews with this range of individuals, at times lasting several hours, as they provided a rich and detailed understanding of a wide range of different stakeholder different perspectives on deportation. However, by taking this approach, the consequence was that the size of each of the three interviewee groups was admittedly small. This was particularly true of the policy actor and deportee groups (the supporter group was more substantial, as was the deportation stakeholder group as a whole). The individual group sizes were not ideal and reflect the limitations of the time and resources available to conduct the research, particularly the way in which deportees were reached through supporters, which added further time spent in negotiating that contact. The findings for each interviewee group are not representative of their wider populations, which I acknowledge limits the generalisability and applicability of the research.

A decision was made to divide deportation stakeholders into three broad groups to ensure a range of views from both professional and personal viewpoints. Even within these groups there was considerable diversity, and thus this chapter will outline the decisions made to seek diversity within each of the three participant groups. Similarly in the analysis phase, differences both *between* and *within* each participant group was looked for, although any emerging findings within groups are tentative, given the small numbers involved at that stage, and again have limited broader applicability.

A qualitative approach is appropriate to draw out different deportation stakeholders' perspectives on deportation. Traditional approaches to conducting qualitative fieldwork such as semi-structured interviews (as presented by Bryman 2008; Pierce 2008; and Blaikie 2000) were appropriate when seeking the views of policy actors and supporters in this study, as they were not notably vulnerable and were geographically immobile. However, since deportation is a politically controversial policy area, it was important to approach these research participants with some sensitivity (Rice 2009). Research with deportees was, of course, more challenging, not only in terms of locating and contacting them, but in interacting with them in a way that did not

exploit their potentially powerless position and enabled them to portray themselves as they chose. I drew on the wider qualitative literature for methodological precedents. I heeded advice from research about conducting research with migrants, and in particular those who might be vulnerable (Dahinden & Efonayi-Mader 2009; Smith 2010; Schmidt 2007; Van Liempt & Bilger 2009; Bilger & Van Liempt 2009) or 'hard-to-reach' social groups (Duncan et al. 2003; Stern 2003).

Deportee and supporter interviews were based on biographical, life history, and narrative approaches used widely in migration studies (Iosfidies & Sporton 2009; Findlay & Li 1997; Halfacree & Boyle 1993; McHugh 2000). These approaches are pertinent to research questions 2 and 3 of this thesis, namely to explore perspectives of deportees and supporters about deportation, because these individuals have personal rather than professional links to deportation. For these individuals, deportation is part of their own personal histories.<sup>19</sup> Biographical methods are used to enrich our understanding of the complexities of migration, taking into account the socio-cultural context of migrants' decisions and the meanings they assign to those decisions (Iosfidies & Sporton 2009, p.103). They reconstruct the ways in which research participants make sense of the world, and enable us to consider their practices and interactions and the role of personal, social relationships in their lives (Iosfidies & Sporton 2009, p.101). These methods have been used by migration researchers across various migrant groups such as, for example, Findlay & Li (1997) with professional skilled workers, Halfacree & Boyle (1993), Wright & Onate's (1998) oral history of returning Chilean refugees, and O'Neill & Harindranath (2006) working with refugees and asylum seekers.

Life stories enable research subjects such as deportees to participate in research relatively easily, since they are the authority on their own lives and can relate to their experience more easily than abstract questions or those concerning principles or policy. Telling stories is a way for a researcher to try to explore people's behaviour and motives through their descriptions of their own behaviour (their practical

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<sup>19</sup> That is not to say that no policy actors would have a personal history or story related to deportation, but this would not be the case for all policy actors. Thus the methodological approach to policy actors' interviews had to be on the basis of their shared professional role in deportation rather than assuming a personal background that could be told biographically.

consciousness). Research participants can describe their actions, even when they cannot always directly explain *why* they do things themselves, that is, their underlying or unconscious motives (their discursive consciousness). These concepts of practical and discursive consciousness derive from the work of sociologist Anthony Giddens (1984, pp.6–7) and his social theory of structuration that considers the relationship between structure and agency. Practical consciousness is the knowledge that arises from everyday life, and does not require great conscious deliberation. Discursive consciousness concerns the ability to articulate knowledge. These both inform the ability of the actor to act against the structural constraints in their lives, to know what action is possible; where they are unaware of the possibilities of action, structures are reinforced. Thus biographical approaches can ensure that agency is not overplayed in research analyses, but that the structural constraints in migrants' lives are acknowledged as part of a structure/agency dualism (Iosfidies & Sporton 2009, p.105).

The biographical literature had to be applied thoughtfully to be able to draw out the elements of deportees' perceptions and experiences that expressed both their agency and the structural constraints they faced. The research was particularly focused on exploring the part of deportees' lives surrounding deportation, which included the length of the deportation corridor. However, this would be too narrow without taking into account other elements of deportees lives, their friends, families (their social capital) and their migratory knowledge from prior to their deportation (their migratory cultural capital). These factors would undoubtedly affect their post-deportation perceptions, actions and experiences.

Deportees were asked broad, open questions about their lives before, during and after deportation, and their hopes for the future (as per Appendix D3). They were encouraged to talk about their families and homes (before they fled their country of origin) as far as they were comfortable to do so, the story of how they got to know their supporter in the UK and what had happened in their lives since being in the UK. Supporters in this study were asked to relate the stories of deportees with whom they were in contact, to describe the 'story' of their relationship and their own personal engagement in asylum issues. The precise details of this approach are discussed in subsequent sections of this chapter.

## 4.2 Assumptions

A number of assumptions were made in light of the research methods literature reviewed in Chapter 3. Here, I make explicit several important assumptions that influenced the way in which fieldwork was conducted and the kinds of questions that were asked of participants.

### 4.2.1 Assumption (i): Engaging with research subjects will be difficult

My first assumption is that participants might be reluctant to engage in this research. Deportees and supporters could be suspicious of researchers, and particularly as I also work for local government on migration issues (see section 4.7.1 on reflexivity and my positionality). None of the participants had a direct incentive for participating in a research project, since there was no prospect of payment or reward. Securing policy actors' participation would be difficult since elites have more power than researchers in the research context (Rice 2009, p.71) and they might be reluctant to participate in research on a politically-flammable subject that could potentially damage their reputation (despite assurances of anonymity for research participants).

Even if they were willing to engage, deportee participants might find it difficult or distressing to talk about deportation in an interview. Like other foreign nationals, they might have experienced hostility, self-harm, injury or deteriorating mental health during detention and deportation from the UK (Fischer 2015; Robjant et al. 2009; Steel et al. 2006; Coffey et al. 2010). They might also find it emotionally challenging to discuss ideas of 'home' and 'belonging.' Chapter 2 established these concepts as problematic for migrants generally, as well as for returning refugees specifically who might face their persecutors upon return (Ralph & Staeheli 2011; Goodman et al. 2015; Muggeridge & Doná 2006; Nixon 1994; Black & Koser 1999; Valentine et al. 2009; Wood & Waite 2011). Therefore it was vital that the research approach and interview questions did not cause distress to deportee participants, and that they felt free to decline to participate in any or all aspects of their interviews, as discussed in section 4.5.

#### 4.2.2 Assumption (ii): Data will be based on perceptions of truth

My second assumption is that participants provide responses that they perceived to be true. I am concerned with participants' stated perceptions, views and experiences (rather than any 'objective', 'out-there' 'truth'). Participant accounts would undoubtedly be simply their own version, perspective or interpretation of their own experiences. For example, since part of my data collection method involved supporters recounting stories about deportees, verification of these stories would be near-impossible and deportees' own telling of these events no doubt would have been different to some extent.

The way in which interviewees presented their stories would also be affected by their audience. Primarily, interviewees would provide information in a way that they wanted to be understood by me as a researcher, and from the information I had provided about myself and the research study. On the occasions where other people were also present during interviews, this further affected the way in which participants presented themselves and their stories. Some participants appeared to be 'performing' a little for other people also present, by modifying their responses apparently to please or placate those individuals. For example, in the case of two policy actors who asked to be interviewed together, one was the line manager of the other. This seemed to affect the way that they answered the interview questions. Similarly, two deportees brought family members to their interview who appeared to have minimal knowledge of English. Family members seemed to affect how the deportees disclosed certain information, as interviewees were more surreptitious about how they admitted to certain aspects of their stories.

In light of this assumption, I adopted a self-consciously trusting attitude towards research participants to encourage them to disclose information and elaborate on their answers. I tempered this by probing interviewees, asking for clarification and exploring their responses with further questions. This was done with care, since questioning research participants' answers too much could have affected our rapport and could have reinforced power differentials between myself and deported research participants. It could have reinforced negative stereotypes associated with the participant group, such as those concerning public, private and third sector employees

as well as hostile public discourse towards migrants, as discussed in Chapter 2 (Leudar & Hayes 2008; Wodak 2008; Lyons et al. 2006). For deportees, I was conscious of the impact of trauma on the ability to present a coherent, chronological narrative (De Haene et al. 2010), and the possibility of causing harm to vulnerable participants by suggesting disbelief in what they recounted.

#### **4.2.3 Assumption (iii): Agency and structure both matter**

My third assumption is that both agency and structure matter in this account of deportation, as already discussed and defined in Chapters 1 and 3. Deportees do exercise agency but under what are extraordinary constraints. The deportation literature presented in Chapter 3 is clear about the possible range of constraints upon deportees. Indeed, my own research design is centred on the deporting state; I am acknowledging the deportation event as a manifestation of significant state constraint upon individuals. However, I counterbalance this with a resource-based approach which highlights deportees' actions after deportation, indicating that rejection by the hosting UK state did not eradicate the potential for deportee agency irreversibly. I look for the ways in which deportees mobilised their resources in this environment. The post-deportation context is interesting in this respect, as deportees adjusted to a new set of structural constraints and opportunities to exercise agency, and thus continued the interplay between structure and agency. So while I focus on participants' perceptions and own actions, I also seek to identify where structural constraints were evident in their stories, where participants' actions were shaped by different circumstances, consequences and others' actions (as discussed by Iosifidis & Sporton 2009, p.106, in relation to discourse among immigration stakeholders).

This agency/structure dialectic will also involve other actors. The role of supporters, for example, is a pertinent one. While they do not have an official role in the deportation process, they may influence it or the post-deportation environment. Their own interventions in deportees' lives might have empowered or constrained them; they might have acted as catalysts for deportee agency or may have inadvertently imposed another set of (social) constraints. Supporter interventions highlight the

complexity of the structure/agency dualism that involves a myriad of actors, their own actions at times constraining or enabling the agency of others.

#### **4.2.4 Assumption (iv): The asylum process is artificial but has a powerful reach**

I consider the asylum process in the UK to be neither the sole nor inevitable way for a state to respond to asylum seekers. Further, it is not an infallible system. As discussed in relation to discourse and the construction of categories in Chapter 1, deportation and becoming 'deportable' are not inevitable human conditions, but determined by individual decision-makers in artificial but evolving asylum processes (De Genova 2002). Some individuals such as 'survival migrants' (Betts 2013) simply do not fit the criteria of the moment or have fled due to conditions that were not anticipated by the Refugee Convention, such as environmental change or generalised insecurity.

Asylum processes in the UK had little consistency until the 1990s, and contemporary refugee status determination regimes vary significantly between countries (Hamlin 2014). Asylum processes are not necessarily 'right' or 'wrong', 'correct' or 'incorrect' in themselves, but they do have profound implications for refused asylum seekers and their families. Deportation involves power relations in the way that choices are made and the outcomes of these choices. Failure to navigate these systems impacts upon refused asylum seekers' lives and future opportunities, by being left destitute in the host society (Crawley et al. 2011; Gillespie 2012; Hintjens 2012) or being ostracised in the country of return (Headley & Milovanovic 2016; Schuster & Majidi 2015; Brotherton & Barrios 2011).

### **4.3 Research design: sampling and recruitment**

#### **4.3.1 Sampling participants and methods of data collection**

Data collection for this research took place between Spring 2010 and Spring 2013. 42 interviews conducted with deportation stakeholders provided the principal source of data. *Table 4.1* summarises the sampling and recruitment strategies and methods of data collection with each target group that occurred at different times during the fieldwork period. The development of these methods is discussed in some detail in the following sections.

Table 4.1: Sampling strategy and methods of data collection with each target group

Target group	Link to research questions	Sampling strategies and inclusion criteria	Data collection method	Dates
<b>Gatekeepers</b> (organisations, networks and individuals)	To identify reachable deportee and supporter populations	Purposive sample: Over 100 individuals, networks and organisations working on migration issues contacted to participate in scoping survey. An advert was placed on a charity website. A self-selecting group of 25 supporters responded to scoping survey and made onward referrals. All were invited to participate in interviews.	Scoping survey of 25 individuals identifying 80 deportees	Spring 2010
<b>Supporters</b> (as gatekeepers and also subjects)	To explore supporter perspectives on deportation (RQ3)	Purposive and snowballing sampling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25 survey respondents invited to interview, of which 18 agreed to be interviewed.</li> <li>• Further interviewees were referred by survey respondents (snowballing)</li> </ul> Inclusion criterion: stayed in contact with a deported asylum seeker (enforced/administrative removal – not voluntary return)	Semi-structured interviews with 23 individuals and 1 deportee family member.	Sep 2010 – Oct 2011
<b>Deportees</b> (as subjects)	To ascertain deportee perspectives on deportation (RQ2)	Purposive, with some opportunistic and snowball sampling, from a reachable population of 83 deportees in 62 households. Interviewee selection narrowed using inclusion criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could communicate in conversational English, and</li> <li>• Neither deportee nor supporter advised against inviting to interview.</li> </ul> Italy and the UK selected as fieldwork sites due to geographical clustering of deportees and variation in deportee characteristics. Five interviewees identified through supporters, one opportunistically, one through snowballing.	Semi-structured interviews with 7 deportees.	Italy: Oct 2011. UK: Feb-Mar 2013
<b>Policy actors</b> (as subjects)	To find out policy actor perspectives on deportation (RQ1)	Purposive sample: 42 policy actors (27 parliamentarians; 15 organisations) invited to interview based on inclusion criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current/former post with asylum or deportation responsibility, or</li> <li>• Has made a public statement about deportation.</li> </ul>	Semi-structured interviews with 11 individuals	Jul - Dec 2012

### 4.3.2 Difficulties in identifying an accessible deportee population

The first stage of fieldwork design required establishing the existence of a deportee population that was contactable. Information on the deportee population was limited. Home Office statistics suggest a falling number are deported from the UK as refused asylum seekers, down to just over 3000 in 2015 (see *Figure 2.1*, Chapter 2), the majority of whom were male adults. There are a wide range of deportation destinations including, significantly, the EU. I had expected deportation destinations to be exclusively third (non-EU) countries, yet the published statistics list the EU as the second destination region for refused asylum seekers in both 2004 and 2014, with Italy being listed within the top ten destination countries in both years (see *Tables 2.4* and *2.5*, Chapter 2). Thus I included the EU as a deportation destination from the UK.

It was impossible to sample deportees systematically, given the lack of public records about individual cases and given that deportees could by now be living anywhere in the world. It was also my assumption (specified above in section 4.2.1) that deportees were likely to be reluctant to participate in this research project. At this point I drew on the migration literature in relation to methods for research with 'hard-to-reach' groups.<sup>20</sup> Other migration researchers concur that quantitative, structured sampling techniques can be difficult with migrants who do not have settled immigration status. Bailey et al. (2002) for example, had to change from a quantitative stratified sampling technique to a more qualitative approach when researching Salvadorians in the USA who had temporary immigration status. Dahinden and Efonayi-Mader (2009, p.115) found difficulties in identifying willing participants among asylum seekers and migrant sex workers for their research. Therefore I anticipated that my sampling strategy would need to be purposive and opportunistic, trying different approaches to identify a deportee population and access their stories.

Several ways of identifying a deportee sample were considered then dismissed. First, visiting IRCs and issuing detainees with my contact details. The risks of this method

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<sup>20</sup> This difficulty was summed up in advice from Professor Michael Collyer, a prominent academic in this field: '*Unfortunately, you've hit the most difficult problem, which is contacting people who've been deported. Generally they are impossible to contact and if you can contact them it is extremely difficult to persuade them to talk*' (personal correspondence, 10.10.08).

included difficulty in gaining permission to recruit detainees as potential participants, the unknown proportion of these who would subsequently be deported, and the onus on them to initiate contact after deportation within a timescale of months. It would also exclude those not in the particular IRC(s) visited, and those who are deported without being detained. Second, I considered ethnographic research through voluntary work in a UK host community. This would have enabled access to refused asylum seekers (who might in the course of the study become deportees) and to those residents in touch with deportees who were former residents. This approach would have required community acceptance, no mean feat. More problematically, it also would have involved a perverse anticipation of deportations from that community, which would have been an uncomfortable ethical position.

#### 4.3.3 UK scoping survey to establish a reachable deportee population

Transnational research studies offered an insight to solve the problem of identification and access. They demonstrated migrant communication through transnational social networks to maintain relationships with the country of origin. Kleist (2008) and Wahlbeck (2002), for example, report the use of email, telephone and visits to communicate and send remittances. I hypothesised that deportees overseas might employ similar techniques, but communicating with supporters who were in the UK. News and campaigner updates on deportee stories seemed to be based on information from UK residents such as neighbours and social care or NGO practitioners (Madill 2010; McClenaghan 2015b; Taylor 2009).<sup>21</sup> These individuals were potential gatekeepers to the deportee population and, once accessed, deportee cases might snowball naturally. This is similar to the research strategy of contacting hard-to-reach groups through professionals (advised by Lee 1993). Scrutiny of the literature on migration also suggested gatekeepers could be a successful option (Bailey et al. 2002; Dahinden & Efonayi-Mader 2009). In a reverse direction, Massey et al. (1987, pp.1510–1512) have used ‘parallel sampling’ with deportees in Mexico to contact other family members still in the USA. For this research, several contacts in

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<sup>21</sup> Some campaigning websites (such as those of NCADC, now known as Right to Remain) and email lists provided details about anti-deportation campaigns of specific, named individuals, alongside some contact details of a UK resident for further information. The Right to Remain website no longer performs this function.

the asylum sector were consulted regarding a potential strategy of contacting UK supporters to gain access to deportees; their responses were encouraging.

A scoping exercise using purposive sampling techniques was conducted to explore this strategy for contacting deportees through people they were still linked to in the UK. Over 100 organisations, networks and individuals across the UK were contacted with information about the research, a call for participants (the organisations contacted are listed in Appendix A1). The selection was based on my existing knowledge, professional contacts and internet research on third sector organisations working with refugees and asylum seekers in asylum dispersal cities. They were also sourced from deportation news and campaign reports which provided contact details for deportee cases. This strategy was intended to ensure a range of participants, mindful that Dahinden and Efonyi-Mader warn that gatekeepers must be diverse to minimise the bias of reliance upon the limited range of contacts per individual (2009, p.103). One organisation also advertised the study on their website.

The call for participants asked individuals to complete (or forward) a short, five question survey about whether or not they were in touch with any former asylum-seeking friends or clients who had been deported (the scoping survey is reproduced in Appendix D1). No identifying information about deportees was requested, to minimise concerns about confidentiality. Survey responses were received from 25 individuals. These supporters confirmed that they were in touch with approximately 80 deportees between them.

#### **4.3.4 The supporter sample**

23 UK-based supporters were interviewed.<sup>22</sup> They comprised 18 scoping survey participants, and five supporters recruited through snowballing methods (four of these were referred by scoping survey participants, and one deportee saw

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<sup>22</sup> One interviewee called her teenage daughter into the interview after it had begun. Although I went through the process of obtaining informed consent with her, I have not included her in the interviewee statistics as she was not the principal respondent. Note that two other interviews were conducted with supporters. This material was excluded from the analysis because the deportees they discussed did not meet the definition of a deportee for this study (one deportee had agreed to voluntary return, while the other deportee had not claimed asylum).

information about the study online and suggested his UK supporter as an interviewee). Their characteristics were as follows:

- 12 supporters had become involved with a deportee through their work (10 in the voluntary sector and two in the statutory sector); five made contact through volunteering as a befriender at an IRC; three through faith groups; two were activists; and, one was a neighbour.
- Supporters were geographically dispersed, largely reflecting the pattern of asylum dispersal in the UK. They were clustered around London and the South East, South Wales, the Midlands and Yorkshire. There were gaps in participants from the North West and Scotland.<sup>23</sup>
- 17 supporters were female, 6 were male.
- 16 supporters were of working age. Three were university students, and four were of retirement age (although certainly two if not others continued to have work-like commitments).
- 12 supporters retold stories of just one deportee household; 11 retold stories of more than one household.
- Interviewees retold stories of 57 deportee households and 78 individual deportees in total.

More details on interviewed supporters' characteristics are provided in Appendix B2.

One family member of a deportee was also interviewed (in Italy). He was a working age, third country national living in Italy, whose nephew had been deported from the UK. Although not a UK resident and being recruited through a supporter, his profile fit better with the supporter group than with any other, since he was actively in touch with a person who had been deported from the UK. His details are not included in the bullet point list above but appear in Appendix B2.

Interviews with supporters elucidated further details about the deportees in their survey responses, thus identifying potential deportee participants in the study. A further purpose was to explore the views of supporters themselves about deportation, their personal roles within that process and their relationships with deportees (as per RQ3).

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<sup>23</sup> One individual responding to the scoping survey was based in Manchester but did not engage with the research any further. In Scotland, asylum dispersal takes place almost entirely in Glasgow. I knew of a prominent anti-deportation organisation based in Glasgow, but was unable to elicit a response from them.

### 4.3.5 The deportee sample

#### *The potential deportee population for this study*

The deportee population, from which I could potentially sample, comprised 83 individuals:

- 78 deportees in touch with interviewed supporters
- Four deportees identified opportunistically through my job (I met one deportee at a work event who was also in touch with another deportee, while professional contacts put me in email contact with two deportees)
- One deportee in touch with a friend, who was in turn in touch with an interviewed supporter.

The deportation destinations of these 83 deportees are illustrated in *Figure 4.1*.

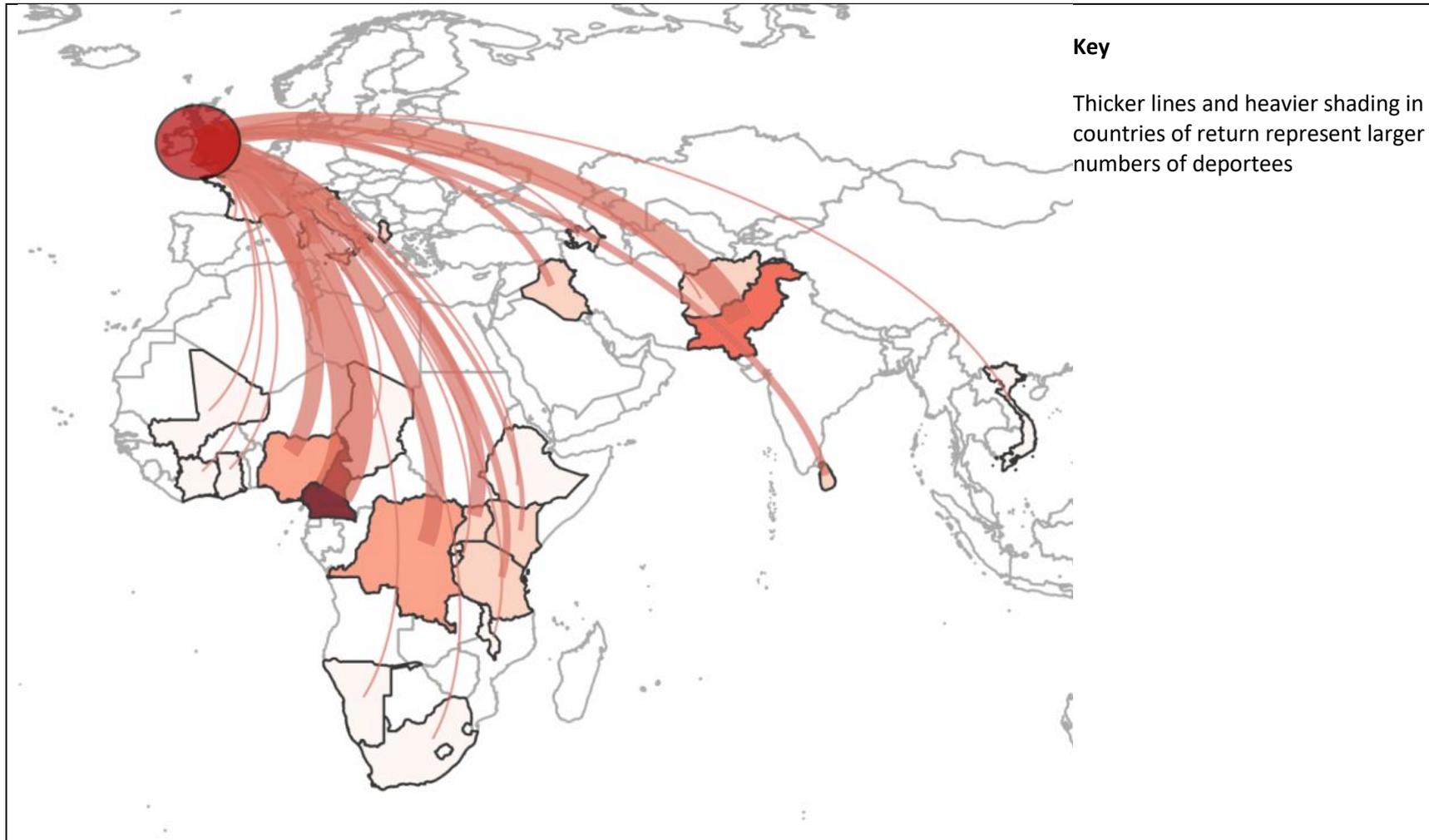
#### *Sampling and fieldwork locations*

It is clear from *Figure 4.1* that the identified deportees were geographically scattered. This provided advantages in terms of their diversity and their stories gathered during fieldwork with supporters. It also presented a practical challenge in terms of systematically sampling and interviewing them.

A further challenge in sampling was that the information about deportee characteristics was largely based on information provided by supporters. This information reflected supporters' subjective and incomplete understandings of deportees' backgrounds, characteristics and circumstances, as well as their own censoring of information based on their judgment to protect these deportees and what they felt they were authorised to share.

This geographical scattering and supporter sources meant that it was most practical to structure the sample according to deportees' geographical location and only subsequently, within that geographical constraint, to maximise the diversity in participants' characteristics as provided by supporters.

Figure 4.1: Deportation destinations of all deportees identified in the study



Source: Produced by the author with the assistance of Dr Steven Cinderby

In order to select fieldwork sites to interview deportees, two inclusion criteria were applied.

- First, deportees must be able to communicate in English sufficiently to hold a conversational interview (evaluated from the perspective of supporters). Using translators seemed impractical due to the range of languages and locations involved, with the additional risk of introducing another unknown party to the situation.
- Second, that supporters had not advised against an interview. This was necessary in order to maintain a respectful link with supporters who could facilitate contact with deportees. Some supporters believed certain deportees would not want to participate in the research; some supporters thought the deportee might re-migrate imminently; some had lost touch or had slightly awkward relationships; some felt that the deportees were too vulnerable or their lives were too chaotic; and others concluded it would not be safe to travel to their locations.

Having applied these criteria, several countries were identified as potential fieldwork sites since several deportees were living there. The most economically efficient way of conducting fieldwork was to make a selection based on geographical clustering of deportees (to keep expenses realistic), and provided some insurance in the event of participant attrition.

Having applied these criteria and pragmatic considerations, it meant that the deportee sample would be rather small. This would have consequences for the findings of the research and limit their applicability since they would not be representative or generalizable to the wider deportee population.

Italy and the UK were selected as fieldwork sites. Eleven known deportees lived in these countries. Their characteristics and backgrounds were varied in important ways. Firstly, the mix of deportation destinations involved was of interest. Some of these deportees had been deported from the UK to Italy under the Dublin Regulation. They were of interest because of the relatively high numbers of deportations from the UK on these grounds (as outlined in Chapter 2), yet relatively little research on this (as outlined in Chapter 3). Others had been deported to non-EU countries and had managed to return to Italy or the UK subsequently despite there being a legal ban on return for most deportees for five years; the research could explore the ways in which deportees exercised their agency to overcome this significant legal barrier. A further

variable of interest was that some deportees had spent some of their childhood in the UK; exploration of their experiences would enable some understanding of this age group in retrospect from an adult perspective (research with children in this context, of course, would have been prohibitive because of significant ethical concerns).

Not all deportee circumstances could realistically be explored in this research. Most notably, deportees were not interviewed if they had been deported to non-EU countries and subsequently had remained outside the EU. Similarly deportees without supporters could not be identified in any large numbers (with just two in this research identified opportunistically).

The variations in circumstances among deportees selected for interview provided the opportunity to explore their perspectives and accounts of their lives in some detail. While the numbers of deportees involved were small, this is a qualitative study and the more intriguing aspects of their situations in relation to their deportation destination (particularly deportees to the EU, and to non-EU states who had returned to the EU regardless) could be pursued through rich, in-depth interviews. This would highlight potential areas of work for the future with a larger, more representative sample.

#### *The interviewed deportee sample*

A total of 11 deportees were possible interviewees, meeting the inclusion criteria and living in one of the two fieldwork sites.<sup>24</sup> Seven deportees were willing to participate in an interview. Their characteristics were as follows. Appendix B3 provides further characteristics of this interviewee group in a tabular format.

- Five deportees were living in Italy and two in the UK at the time of the interview. Three had a form of temporary permission to be in that country. Four did not and were undocumented.
- Interviewees came from four countries of birth: three were from Eritrea, two were from Albania, one was from Niger, and one was born in Tanzania but had Burundian citizenship.
- Six interviewees were male and one was female.

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<sup>24</sup> Several further deportees living in these countries were potential interviewees, but details about them had barely been provided by my sources and they did not result in any interviews. My limited knowledge of them, however, added further weight to the decision to select the fieldwork sites.

- Two had spent some of their childhood in the UK. One of these was deported as a child, while the other was deported after he reached adulthood. The remainder were in their twenties when they were deported from the UK.
- All seven had been deported from the UK in the 2000s.<sup>25</sup>
- Only one was deported with family; the remainder were deported alone. One family unit was split by deportation, as the deportee was the guardian of his brother in the UK, but his brother was not deported.
- Four had been deported to Italy under the Dublin Regulation, while three had been removed to their assumed country of birth (Kosovo and Tanzania) and re-migrated later. The two individuals who were initially removed to Kosovo had not actually been born there, although shared ethnicity with Albanian Kosovans. One admitted to the authorities on his flight that he had given incorrect information, and was then transferred to his country of birth.
- Interviewees had lived in different parts of the UK. Two had lived in Luton, while the others lived in different cities spanning: Hastings; Leicester; Liverpool; London; Manchester; Swansea and Wakefield. One had not lived in a local community but had spent virtually all of his time in immigration detention.
- Three had been deported from the UK on more than one occasion; four had been deported only once from the UK. Six of the seven interviewees had re-migrated since their first deportation from the UK to another EU country.

The sample was unbalanced in terms of gender and age, being skewed towards young men. This reflects the gender balance in the recorded deportee population: in 2015, for example, 91% of asylum deportations were male. However, the age range is more spread in the national statistics, with just 48% of asylum deportees in 2015 aged under 30 years (Home Office 2016c).<sup>26</sup> The sample was also skewed towards those who had travelled overland across the EU (rather than flying directly to the UK), although this imbalance was unknown prior to fieldwork with these deportees.

#### *Additional primary material*

Because of the small size of the sample and that deportees removed to non-EU countries who hadn't returned to the EU were part of the interviewee group, several deportees from the original group of 83 were invited to participate in the study

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<sup>25</sup> One deportee had left the UK once before as a small child in the 1990s. She believed this might have been a deportation, but was uncertain.

<sup>26</sup> Calculated using *Home Office (2016c)* 'Removals tables' Vol.1, Table rv\_02: Removals and voluntary departures by type, asylum / non-asylum, age at departure date and sex.

remotely (over email, social media, telephone and skype). However, attempts to do this were unsuccessful for various reasons. Those who had been willing to participate did not respond meaningfully to written questions or had a very poor telephone connection. These incidents confirmed the necessity of collecting data in person.

However, a small volume of primary data from deportees in this category (with a non-EU deportation destination and non-EU current location) in the form of deportees' own words was collated, gained through non-interview, opportunistic sources. Their empirical material was provided in the medium of personal correspondence and audio recordings.

- Primary material from deportee Marie was provided by her supporter Will, in the form of recorded phone calls between them. Will had made these recordings of his conversations with Marie. He felt he had the right to decide how to share them and that he was acting in Marie's interests by providing evidence of her self-expression, adding credence to his own retelling of her story.<sup>27</sup> Like other interviewees, he was aware that the research would anonymise Marie and ensure she could not be identified from the research.
- Two deportees, Abel and Yusuf, emailed me directly, having been put in touch via a professional contact.
- One deportee, Kaikara, had emailed his statement to supporter Amy's contact, who shared it with me. Similarly to Will, Amy's contact felt that she had the right to decide how to share this, based on her relationship with Kaikara and that she was acting in his interests by sharing his story as he had told it himself.

The background details of these deportees are provided in Appendix B4.

#### 4.3.6 The policy actor sample

The policy actors who were sought to participate in this study were a broad group of professionals who had some kind of appointed role in the deportation process. While they are a varied group, the formal, remunerated roles to which they have been appointed with concomitant responsibilities and expectations, distinguishes them collectively from other participants in this study (deportees and supporters) whose interest in deportation was personal, and (for supporters) also was voluntary.

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<sup>27</sup> Similarly, during their interviews other supporters also used the words of deportees by reading out emails, texts and letters they had received from the deportee in question, as well as showing me photographs of them, as a means of validating the stories they were re-telling.

Structuring the sample (along the lines of political position on deportation for example) presented a challenge since there was no pre-existing 'policy community' on deportation, as found in other areas of managed migration or asylum policy (Somerville & Goodman 2010, p.951), where attributes had already been identified and organised. It was clear from the literature in Chapter 3 that views on immigration are not reliably predictable according to political party, ideology or demographic characteristics (McThomas 2015), while the allegiances of subcontractors in the asylum system are also unclear (Gill 2009b). While interviewees to some extent represented their respective organisations or parties during their interview, they inevitably elaborated with personal views and understanding. It is not realistic to try to disengage the personal from the professional view, but worth recognising.

Given that the group as a whole is defined by having formal roles in deportation, the sample was structured according to the type of function expected from these professional roles. These fell into three main groups:

- Parliamentarians: those with political influence over policy design as elected MPs or as peers
- 'Implementers': those with responsibility for policy delivery, including civil servants and subcontractors delivering a specific element of the deportation process
- 'Interest groups': those funded to provide support services to refused asylum seekers facing deportation such as legal advice, lobbying etc.

While this subdivision ensured a range of voices within the policy actor group, it also had a very practical implication; that only a small number (three to four individuals) could be interviewed from each group. This meant that the findings would be limited in their applicability since the sample from each subgroup could not be sufficiently large to be representative. Despite this limitation, the participating policy actors provided an insight to professionals' perspectives on deportation as the grounds for further exploration in the future.

Variation in those approached to participate in the study was sought, as outlined in Appendix A2. 42 policy actors were invited to interview. This included 15 organisations that were members of the asylum policy community, and 27 parliamentarians from across both chambers and four political parties.

Parliamentarians invited to interview were selected on the grounds of having an overt interest in deportation, such as having made a (broadly positive or negative) public statement about deportation or had held a position that included responsibility for asylum or deportation during the course of their political career. For example, they might have had a portfolio on immigration, had an IRC located in their constituency, asked Parliamentary Questions (PQs) about deportation or belonged to a relevant committee or All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG).

27 parliamentarians were sought from a range of political parties were invited to interview (Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrats and UKIP), from both Houses of Parliament or as an MEP. Four agreed to an interview: a Labour MP, a Liberal Democrat MP, a Liberal Democrat Lord and a crossbench Lord. Despite approaching a dozen Conservative parliamentarians, none agreed to participate. This unfortunately limits the representativeness of the interview material gathered, although it was noted earlier that immigration issues do not readily fall along partisan lines.

A smaller range of implementers and interest group representatives were known to have direct roles in deportation. Implementers include civil servants within the Home Office who oversee asylum casework that involves the decision to deport, and subcontractors deliver an element of the deportation process, such as immigration detention, transportation and escorting deportees on flights. Interest groups provide support services to refused asylum seekers, that is, potential deportees. They operate in what they perceive to be the 'best interests' of potential deportees, from lobbying activity to providing legal advice and representation. 15 organisations were approached as implementers or interest groups based on my professional knowledge of the sector. They included the Home Office, three solicitors' firms, three INGOs and eight NGOs. From these 15 organisations, seven individuals agreed to be interviewed.

In terms of implementers and interest groups, the thesis is situated in a context of the 'retreat' of the state from frontline service delivery coupled with the practice of commissioning public services. The New Public Management / Governance literature argues that sectoral divisions are becoming irrelevant in the world of public management (Lyons et al. 2006, p.605). Selecting participants along functional lines rather than sector avoided making assumptions about their views on deportation, the

stereotyping of workers in different sectors (Baldwin 1990). For example, the third sector as a delivery partner (Jones & Liddle 2011, p.158) is often characterised as virtuous, more altruistic and committed to service users (Kelly 2007, pp.3–4).

Subcontracting implementers might find their independence or policy positions either altered or compromised by entering into a formal, accountable relationship with government. The greying of boundaries between government and non-statutory organisations occurs increasingly in the context of a general drift towards delegating governance across Whitehall departments (Flinders 2008) that includes the asylum sector (Gill 2009b, p.218). It also means that the allegiances of such actors are not immediately obvious; they may effectively be ‘co-opted’ by the state or there may be a ‘turf war’ for their loyalty (Gill 2009b, pp.219, 215). Given this context, I consciously assigned one participant (P10) to the implementer group, despite representing an organisation that is considered an interest group in other contexts. The organisation’s functional role as a subcontractor in the deportation process, as street-level bureaucrats, meant they functioned as implementers for the purposes of this analysis. In sum, 11 (of 42) policy actors accepted the invitation to participate in an interview. They are referred to throughout the thesis as P1-P10.<sup>28</sup> Four interviewees were parliamentarians, three were implementers, and four were from interest groups. Further details of interviewees are provided in Appendix B5.

#### **4.3.7 Supplementary material**

Additional material was collected upon the initiative of both the researcher and interviewees. For example, some interviewees shared accounts of deportee situations they had written for another purpose, while some policy actors shared relevant reports in which they had had involvement. Supporters were approached for an update on deportees discussed a year or two after initial interview. I attended relevant, ad hoc events to which I was invited by interviewees. This supplementary information developed my understanding of deportation and fed into the analysis, contributing to the iterative qualitative process.

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<sup>28</sup> The first interview (P1) was held with two individuals who are referred to as P1a and P1b.

#### 4.3.8 Sampling bias

Only a limited number of people had the opportunity to participate in this study, due to the purposive and snowball sampling techniques described. A select number were invited to participate according to my selection criteria, and not all were available at the times offered for interview. Only policy actors with an overt interest in deportation were invited to participate. Supporters and deportees could only be identified through the organisations and networks I knew. Gatekeepers withheld access to some potential supporters. For example, some online groups did not permit me to join, while one project had wanted their service users to be paid for participation, which I declined to make.

Similarly, identified supporters had significant influence over deportee participation. Some supporters were selective about which deportees they discussed. For example, one confessed she was concerned about discussing certain deportees because they had not fulfilled the 1951 Refugee Convention criteria and she did not want them to be judged or to reinforce popular discourse about 'undeserving' migrants. She also decided not to discuss a deported family back in the UK who were fearful that their undocumented status in the UK would come to light with the authorities.

A limited number of deportees were selected by supporters as appropriate to be approached to participate in the study, and then were selected according to my selection criteria. Thus, deportees were not invited to participate in interviews if their English was not to a conversational level or if they did not live in the UK or Italy. Clearly the small deportee sample means that the findings will only be indicative and not generalisable to the wider deportee population. This is unfortunate, but the constraints involved in undertaking this research, through the method of using supporters to identify and contact deportees, meant seeking further interviewees was not practical in the timeframe permitted.

## 4.4 Conducting fieldwork interviews

### 4.4.1 Developing interview schedules

Three interview schedules were developed, one for each interviewee group (supporters, deportees and policy actors, as reproduced in Appendix C). They were deliberately developed consecutively in order to build upon learning from the preceding set of interviews. Supporters were targeted first to provide evidence of a contactable deportee population. Deportees were contacted relatively soon after supporters in order to minimise dropout, and to maximise time for alternative approaches if it transpired to not be a viable method. Policy actors were targeted last to draw on information from deportee cases in their interviews. In light of the experiences of other migration researchers, I adopted the following measures when designing interview schedules.

#### *Adopting interviewees' terminology*

I mirrored the terminology I expected different interviewees to use in the interests of establishing a working relationship. I was aware through my professional work of some policy actors' insistence to use legal terminology, but this would have been inappropriate with other interviewee groups. For example, Dahinden & Efiyani-Mader (2009) explained that the migrant subjects of their study considered themselves to be dancers rather than 'sex workers'. Specifically with deportees, Schuster and Majidi (2013) and Headley and Milovanovic (2016) found stigma associated with the term 'deportee', although the latter suggested that 'deported migrant' was more acceptable. Lee (1993, pp.76–78) advises using familiar terms with interviewees, and thus I initially employed 'sent back' with deportees, 'deported' with supporters, and the technical 'administratively-removed' with policy actors. I then adapted my vocabulary according to their lead; for example, deportees used an unorthodox mix of informal and technical language based on their experience of the asylum system. The word 'Dublin' was used by some interviewees as a short-hand for the Dublin Regulation, while they used 'papers' to mean having formal permission to reside in the country.

### *Delaying difficult questions or asking indirectly*

An optimum interview schedule uses non-threatening, normalising questions at the start of an interview. Following Pierce (2008, p.125), I began with open, rapport-building questions for each group, asking supporters and policy actors about the origins of their interest in asylum or deportation issues, and asking deportees about their childhood, families or lives in their country of birth. For supporters and deportees, I discussed their relationship initially and their experiences in living in the UK, before asking crucial questions about post-removal experiences. This was a less threatening way of building up to potentially difficult recollections, as well as of situating the deportation within the wider context of individuals' lives.

For the most difficult or sensitive topics, questions were not asked directly but embedded within other broader questions (Lee 1993). In deportee interviews it was of primary importance to gain detailed post-deportation stories. Given the limited time available (one meeting) and wary of their reactions, I avoided asking deportees directly about the root cause of their flight from their countries of origin. I felt that this line of questioning could have mirrored their asylum claim interviews with the Home Office. Re-living those experiences also risked causing distress. This was confirmed by one deportee who stated that he was emotionally unable to discuss a particular matter. I relied upon supporters for such background details, where appropriate, although aware that this was their subjective re-presentation of the deportee story.

An alternate approach is to use projective techniques to acknowledge others behave in similar ways, or vignettes as hypothetical stories that are less threatening (Pierce 2008, pp.132–134). In this vein, deportees were asked what advice they would give to others contemplating travelling to the UK, while policy actors were given different points of view about deportation in order to suggest that different perspectives were on the table.

#### **4.4.2 Supplementary ways for deportees to participate**

Deportee interviews were supplemented with creative alternatives. I could not make assumptions about language and literacy levels, and wanted to provide other ways for

deportees to share their stories that were less reliant on language skills. I also wanted to reduce the likelihood of 'socially desirable responding' (Dahinden & Efonayi-Mader 2009) in terms of repeating answers from their Home Office asylum interview.

Creative methods are often advocated by migration researchers. For example, O'Neill and Harindranath (2006) promote 'ethno-mimesis', that is, hybrids of art and ethnography. I developed a set of creative methods to draw on as appropriate, which included the following.

- Maps and diagrams. Some interview questions could be explored using maps and diagrams. They were intended to facilitate conversations about migratory journeys and social networks, after Bagnoli (2009) and Worth (2011).
- Guided tours. I suggested to some deportees during their interview that they show me round the local area. The intention of this was to see the host country through their eyes, rather than my researcher's or tourist's eyes. In this way they could identify places and people in their lives, and explain their importance.
- Taking photographs. Deportees interviewed in Italy were provided with disposable cameras and pre-paid envelopes to be able to show aspects of their current daily lives that I could not see at the interview location (and were promised copies for themselves).
- Online social networking. I created a closed social networking group for deportees, supporters and myself to interact post-interview, share stories and information, and for me to ask questions or provide further information about the research.

The success of these alternatives were mixed, but only provided ad hoc additions to the data collected through interviews. Using maps of Africa and Europe with deportees facilitated some conversations about their migratory journeys, although some seemed more responsive to place names rather than the map itself. In retrospect, consulting maps prior to travel is, perhaps, not a luxury afforded to many forced migrants. After his interview, one deportee gave a guided tour of the village near to where he lived, revealing further insights into his daily life. Diagrammatic representations of social relationships seemed to lead to confusion rather than clarity, so were abandoned after one or two attempts. All deportees appeared willing to take photographs and send the disposable cameras to me, but none were returned. Finally, social networking enabled me to keep track of deportee lives after our meeting, but

the closed group was fairly inactive, perhaps due to limited internet access, lack of anonymity within the group, and little incentive to meet other deportees.

#### **4.4.3 Pilots and preparation**

Interviews were piloted with two supporters and a deportee, and questions were subsequently refined. The most significant change was a reduction in the deportee schedule from over 30 to six broad questions. This was in part due to the disruption that this volume of questions would pose to a biographical narrative (as anticipated by Iosifides & Sporton 2009, p.102), the anticipated interview taking longer than was realistic, and because it would deny the opportunity to shape their own storytelling. These six questions were to be supplemented by the original questions if they became pertinent.

Other preparation work included sending written information to each interviewee in advance. Interview schedules were memorised, in order to focus on other cues and ask relevant questions out of order without interrupting the conversational flow. Information already provided about deportee cases was reviewed prior to meeting supporters, to ensure all relevant deportee cases would be covered and to reflect the value attributed to the information already supplied. Deportees were contacted to increase their familiarity with me and to reiterate meeting arrangements. Supporters were informed of these arrangements. Deportee countries of origin were researched in case details of places, political context, languages and ethnic groups were part of the deportee story. Policy actors' statements on immigration and deportation were researched prior to meeting, along with details of their relevant asylum or deportation work.

#### **4.4.4 Behaviour and rapport**

Researchers should adopt certain conscious behaviours when interviewing, for ethical reasons and to encourage disclosure (Pierce 2008, p.129). These include, for example, ensuring the interview location is appropriate, not dominating the conversation and not always filling silences. Non-verbal cues such as mirroring body language develop subconscious rapport. I encouraged different levels of formality for different

interviewees, noting that Schuster and Majidi (2013) used informal conversations with families of Afghan deportees, and so interviews with most policy actors were fairly formal, while those with deportees and supporters were deliberately conversational.

Points of similarity between the myself and the interviewee were highlighted, since people communicate most effectively where they are overlapping fields of experience in culture, language, life experience and so on (Pierce 2008, p.128). I presented myself in ways to achieve some equivalence or commonality with interviewees. For example, I emphasised my professional links with policy actors, but sought points of commonality based on my personal life with deportees and supporters. With deportees I encouraged some discussion of the supporter as our mutual contact, and the place where they had lived in the UK.

#### **4.4.5 Recording interview and post-interview data**

All interviews were recorded, except in three cases due to interviewee preferences (in these instances more extensive handwritten notes were taken). Recordings were supplemented by notes made during and after the interview. Field notes recorded offhand comments or afterthoughts made by interviewees at end of an interview, which can be significant (Pierce 2008, p.129). However, some information was difficult to record well, such as photographs and written records shown to me during interviews.

### **4.5 Ethical considerations in research design and conduct**

#### **4.5.1 Standard procedures: informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality**

The research received ethical approval from the University of Sheffield's Ethics Committee. Responsible research practice includes obtaining informed consent and the assurance of anonymity and confidentiality for all research participants. The following steps were taken to ensure these practices were observed with interviewees.

- Three information sheets were sent in advance to all interviewees: a consent form, interview schedule and further background information, providing explanations of anonymity and confidentiality (reproduced in Appendix C). In

the one exception where a deportee did not have email access, I telephoned him to establish contact and his understanding of the project.

- This advance information was summarised verbally to all interviewees at the start of their interview, and they were given the opportunity to ask questions.
- Interviewees were offered the opportunity to suggest their description or pseudonym for the research.
- All interviewees were asked to sign a consent form and were provided with a copy for their own records.

This approach seemed successful in ensuring interviewees had control over their participation in the research. For example, some participants did not consent to having their interview audio recorded. Some interviewees asked questions about the research and the consent form. Deportees often spent more time reading the consent form compared to other interviewees. At this time, several deportees mentioned how fingerprinting in their first EU country had had enormous consequences for them later, suggesting the seriousness they associated with signing a formal document and being identified. Some deportees, whom supporters approached about being part of the study, declined to participate.

Supporters presented their own stories and views about deportation during their interviews, which included some retelling of deportation stories in their own words. Given the focus of RQ3 on *supporters'* perspectives, they were able to present deportation stories as they understood them, were involved in them and chose to portray them, and therefore the research did not require informed consent from deportees themselves. As a courtesy and good practice however, supporters were asked to discuss their own participation with those deportees they were going to discuss in their own interview, if appropriate and possible according to the supporter's judgement. The response to this varied, although many supporters stated that the deportee had been informed about the study and had confirmed they were happy for the supporter to participate. Other supporters were unable or decided not to inform the deportee, largely due to sporadic contact or where they felt it was not appropriate until there was a likelihood of the deportee participating directly in an interview themselves.

#### 4.5.2 Additional measures for deported interviewees<sup>29</sup>

Researchers have a responsibility to critically consider their approach to overseas fieldwork. This includes approaching different cultures sensitively, minimising uneven power relations, being aware of the seriousness of making promises, avoiding perpetuating inequalities or stereotypes, and being aware of their own fortunate position to be able to undertake research (Smith 2010).

I considered further the ethics of researching deportees, many of whom were potentially marginalised in their current location due to their immigration status and social status. Not only were deportees from a different culture to myself, many were also living in a different culture themselves.

There is a tension between choosing not to involve deportees in research because they could be vulnerable, and the imperative to provide a space for deportees to have a voice in that research. Researchers should be mindful not to exploit participants for their own academic purposes (Dahinden & Efiomayi-Mader 2009). For my research, I had ethical concerns concerned avoiding deportees having to re-live perhaps deeply emotional and distressing stories, not exposing them to further physical vulnerability through travelling to attend an interview, and in retelling their own stories that might be overheard in a context where they could be fearful. It also seemed ethical *not* to offer a direct reward or incentive for participation to participants in this research since it could be coercive, although the question of payment, incentive and reward is not straightforward for researchers from a position of relative power and affluence, but loaded with ethical dilemmas (Hammett & Sporton 2012, p.496; Lammers 2007).

During interviews with supporters, I asked whether or not they felt it would be appropriate to contact the deportees being discussed, to hear the deportation story from their own perspective. In some cases, supporters confirmed the deportees they knew might be exposed to further harm by participation in the research, as explained by supporter Gemma when discussing her former client Ganette:

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<sup>29</sup> Policy actors and supporters as other participants in the research did not warrant such additional measures, beyond the standard procedures. They were unlikely to be at risk of harm themselves or to experience any power imbalance in my favour.

Interviewer: *'I'm going to try and get in touch with some of the people who've been sent back and visit them in some cases if that works out. How do you think she [Ganette] would feel about that kind of involvement, say being in email touch with me, do you think it would be something she'd consider or would it be out of the question?'*

Gemma: *'I think it'd be quite difficult for her. And I think as well just in terms of her [pause] I guess just in terms of her health ... I found when she had to tell her story she found it very, very, very difficult and very traumatic. So I think language-wise it would be difficult but also retelling that story when she's potentially in a context where she's living that story, it might be hard.'*

Although this is the supporter perspective on deportee vulnerability, they had a better insight to deportee circumstances than myself. In light of this tension, I chose to develop my understanding of deportation largely through supporters' stories about deportation rather than involving a large number of deportees directly. This was appropriate for answering RQ3 on supporter perspectives. Working with supporters also ensured total anonymity for deportees; only first names of deportees were used in interviews, and in two cases supporters used a pseudonym for the deportee during the interview. I recognise the compromises involved in this approach and acknowledge that the information gathered from supporters was less reliable than seeking stories directly from deportees themselves, since supporters would only have a partial, subjective story to disclose. Nevertheless, this compromise was the optimal ethical choice in order to prioritise deportee wellbeing.

Supporters were often conscious of their own influence on the stories they were relating. Returning to supporter Gemma, for example, she reflected during her interview that deportee Ganette would be likely to tell her own story differently: *'If she was to be sitting here ... she might say ... completely different things.'* While I avoided seeking large numbers of deportee research participants, it was important to include some deportee voices for the research to be credible, and to be able to answer RQ2 satisfactorily on deportee perspectives.

All seven deportees who did participate directly in interviews were understood to be not particularly vulnerable and would not be exposed to harm as a consequence of their participation. These deportees were able to give informed consent to participate, since they were provided with information about the study in writing and verbally, presented by their supporter and by me at different times prior to interview,

and given the opportunity to ask questions and to opt-out. Nonetheless, *Table 4.2* outlines certain additional actions taken to minimise potential harm that they could have faced by their participation, in addition to the more routine procedures of ethical practice.

Agency is a key theme of this study. Deportees are likely to have perceived a power imbalance between themselves and me for many reasons (the classic researcher-researched relationship), due to the differences in our backgrounds as outlined above. I was also conscious of the many ways in which their agency had been denied during the asylum process and possibly in their current situation (if they were undocumented, for example). *Table 4.3* outlines some steps that were taken to encourage deportees to make their own decisions about their participation in this study.

Table 4.2: Actions taken to minimise potential risks to deportee interviewees

<p><b>Choice of time and venue</b></p>	<p>Deportees could have taken a personal risk in agreeing to participate in the study. Undocumented migrants are known to be ‘continually on guard’ and avoid travel (Engbergson 2001, p.237). I would have preferred longer and numerous meetings with deportees to build trust and rapport. Instead, I kept them relatively short and adhered to deportees’ location preferences. My concerns seemed justified. Four deportees in Italy had an unresolved immigration status and explained that they were wary of being out in public and potentially apprehended by the police. One showed me the friend’s work permit he carried in case of being stopped by the police. Another had travelled on the bus to his suggested venue, wanted to hold the interview across the street and immediately got back on the bus afterward. Only then did I realise why my own ‘touristic’ suggestion to take a short walk down to the beach had been less well-judged.</p>
<p><b>Gender sensitivity</b></p>	<p>The deportees interviewed in Italy were all male and some were Muslim. They might have found our gender and cultural differences awkward or culturally inappropriate (Pierce 2008, p.17). I ensured the interviews took place in public places, for my husband to meet the interviewee and for him to be present or nearby during the interview. One exception involved a married male who invited us to meet his wife in their apartment. My husband’s presence affected the information gathering process in positive ways. Some deportees shared additional details with him. As an academic, he added value asking very occasional questions, writing a fieldwork log, providing an information-checking function, and giving an additional interpretation of deportee behaviour.</p>
<p><b>Age</b></p>	<p>Only adults were interviewed. Two deportee interviewees were former asylum-seeking children in the UK, but were adults at the time of the interview. Information about deportees who were children or young adults was obtained indirectly through supporter interviews.</p>
<p><b>Provision of helpful information</b></p>	<p>I provided support information to deportees where appropriate. For example, I found information about local services in Italy in case deportees were unaware of these. On several occasions, I gave practical information to deportees about other questions they had, such as where to apply for internships or the general rules on applying for citizenship.</p>
<p><b>Not agreeing to all requests</b></p>	<p>On some occasions I did not acquiesce to deportee requests, in order to protect their interests. For example, two deportees wanted to be named in the research. They explained that they had ‘<i>nothing to hide</i>’ and wanted to contribute to positive change. Other deportees asked I if could help to resolve their immigration status. Again, I made clear that this was not possible as I was unqualified to do so. One deportee in question commended my honesty in admitting the lack of direct reward for him participating in the research.</p>

Table 4.3: Ways in which deportees were given choices during the study

<b>Initial approach</b>	All interviewed deportees were approached about participating in the research through their supporters. This provided them with information about the study from a trusted person with whom they could discuss their response. Several potential interviewees declined to participate without any contact with me.
<b>Providing information and building trust</b>	Participating deportees were told about the research in several different ways to ensure that they were fully informed. The research was explained to them by their supporter, who also introduced us. This should have reinforced the information I subsequently sent to them, ensured better comprehension, and helped to establish some trust in me.
<b>Location</b>	Interviewees were asked to suggest a location for the interview so that they could pick a familiar setting and feel at ease. In some cases the interviewee was unfamiliar with the area; this also provided equality.
<b>Last-minute changes</b>	Flexibility was necessary to ensure interviews took place. I accepted last-minute, changing arrangements to suit interviewees. For example, some deportees delayed their interview time to accommodate work or travel plans. The presence of family members in two interviews had not been anticipated, none of whom were able to communicate well in English. Conscious of the detrimental impact this could have upon the interviewee's willingness to share sensitive information (Pierce 2008, p.134), I adjusted my interview technique to engage with these family members where possible, while maintaining the predominant input from the deportee.

#### 4.5.3 Consequences of facilitating agency

The cumulative effect of these actions was that I developed sufficient trust with interviewees to access their deportation stories. Interviewees were comfortable enough to disclose information about deportee lives. In fact, during one interview a deportee described events in the presence of his parents who did not understand English, and he admitted that he had not disclosed some of these stories even to them.

Using supporters as intermediaries actually resulted in significant benefits to the quality of the data collected. It enabled relatively rapid access to detailed, sensitive information about deportees, without building such relationships myself. Schuster and Majidi (2013) had needed four years to build trusted relationships in their deportation research. The information provided by supporters was not based on deportees

presenting what they thought I might have wanted to hear, based on their previous immigration interviews with state authorities. Instead, this information had been provided in a trusted context where deportees may have portrayed themselves differently and possibly with more agency.

Using supporters also brought some responsibilities for transporting messages and gifts between them and deportees (as it did for Bailey et al. 2002). Yet, this too had tangential benefits of proving that I had the trust of the supporter, and was an added incentive for the deportee to participate in research where I was unable to offer any kind of incentive or reward.

Sometimes the measures taken in the spirit of an ethical research project meant that those elements were not under my own control and the interviews were compromised. For example, at times interview conditions were sub-optimal. Some locations were too noisy, hindering recording clarity and discussion. Interviews in a larger group that included other family members reduced some of my ability to direct the interview, and the amount and sensitivity of material that could be covered. At times I felt it was difficult to build up to more sensitive questions in their presence. Furthermore, working through supporters also impacted on deportee agency in other ways. Supporters acted as gatekeepers, either limiting or enabling the interaction between myself and the deportee. Some deportees may have opted to participate had they been given the choice by the gatekeeping supporter. These compromises were a requisite part of the research, given the efforts made to provide room for agency of participants.

#### **4.6 Inductive analysis: grounded theory and a framing structure for analysis**

This is a policy-oriented piece of work that is grounded in the views of a range of policy stakeholders, from politicians and street-level bureaucrats to ordinary citizens and deportees. While the design and conduct of fieldwork could deal with each interviewee group separately, there seemed to be little precedent for the *analysis* of empirical material which combined the views of very different political types of participant. I thus felt that an inductive approach to analysis was necessary.

This section provides details of the approach to analysis taken in this thesis. Through an inductive method based on grounded theory, I present a structure for analysis that has been generated from the empirical data in this study. This structure consists of a set of three cognitive 'frames' used by research participants in their discussions of deportation: a 'bureaucracy' frame; an 'international interdependence' frame; and a 'human' frame. These three frames provide a way of understanding how different stakeholders in the deportation debate conceptualise and make sense of deportation. The frames are applied to the analysis of the empirical chapters (Chapters 5-8), to provide a consistent and unifying analytical approach across the three groups of participants. However, while this structure is based on the views of all participants, the frames are not always stable or internally consistent. This also allows for the differences between participants to be illuminated. Differences became evident by the ways in which each interviewee group employed each frame or emphasised certain elements within that frame.

#### 4.6.1 Grounded theory

Grounded theory is a method of inductive analysis used in social science. It is not an actual theory, 'put simply, grounded theory is a method for the generation of theory from data' (Gibson & Hartman 2014, p.1). It is based on the pioneering work of the sociologist Barney Glaser and his colleague Anselm Strauss in their work *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (1967). Grounded theory is used to identify and build themes in qualitative data. It is intended to generate theory or concepts from data and analysis, discovering order and generating theory, rather than testing hypotheses (Bryman 2008, p.541).

Grounded theory is particularly useful for exploring sensitive social problems that are less readily discussed (Glaser 1965, p.436). It is problem-focused, based or 'grounded' on the perspectives of those who work in the field and how they resolve those problems. This study is 'grounded' in the perspectives of deportees, supporters and policy actors, all of whom are concerned with deportation from different perspectives.

While I do not claim that this research project adhered to pure grounded theory, the method has significantly influenced my approach to analysis. Grounded theory seeks

to avoid 'forcing' or imposing ideas, wherein the researcher tries to make evidence 'fit' with pre-existing ideas, theories and dominant ideas in the social world. While a grounded approach involves no literature review or pre-selected theoretical framework, I did read extensively on the subjects outlined in Chapter 3, such as transnationalism, return migration, deportation studies and the refugee studies literature, as well as the political science literature on the history of migration, policy development and organisational theory. These readings influenced my approach to research design, data collection and analysis. However, I was aware of how relatively little was theorised specifically about deportation of refused asylum seekers at the time of beginning this study, and how new insight ought to be drawn out of empirical data. More modestly than generating theory, I sought to generate concepts with which to be able to analyse deportation and to understand the perspectives of different stakeholders in that debate.

There is no absolute, fixed and narrow analytical method to apply, which would be against the 'spirit' of grounded theory (Gibson & Hartman 2014). A proliferation of methods and variations of the founding work saw even Glaser and Strauss each advocating different interpretations of their original method and causing a rift among scholars (see for example, Glaser 2002). However, key aspects of the grounded approach to analysis that I adopted were a systematic approach to the data through coding and the 'constant comparative method' (Glaser 1965). This involves continually comparing the data (rather than a one-off, linear activity), comparing data in different forms such as 'slices', categories and units of analysis, and writing memos about the data, in order to find similarities and use them to build statements. Codes are continuously compared and reduced (to avoid being overwhelmed) and the researcher is 'constantly redesigning and reintegrating' theoretical ideas (Glaser 1965, p.437). Gibson & Hartman (2014) describe this as an 'interactive' process, collecting then analysing data, only to collect more data and continue that analysis in order to develop your concepts and theory.

The process of memo-writing is another integral part of this method. These are 'adaptive narrative tools' that are crucial to this method, effectively providing the researcher with a way to converse internally, which generates the most authentic

insights by the researcher (Lempert 2007, p.247). Particularly when conflicts arise in the thought-process, researchers immediately write 'memos' or notes about their ideas to keep them fresh (Glaser 1965, p.440) leading naturally to abstraction (Gibson & Hartman 2014, p.172). This ongoing theme-building for the duration of the research is productive because insight develops slowly and allows the researcher to respond to data and findings throughout, rather than at one single moment (Cope 2010; Schiellerup 2008; Bryman 2008). Thus the analytical structure is ex post, based on ideas developed during the study rather than a priori ones.

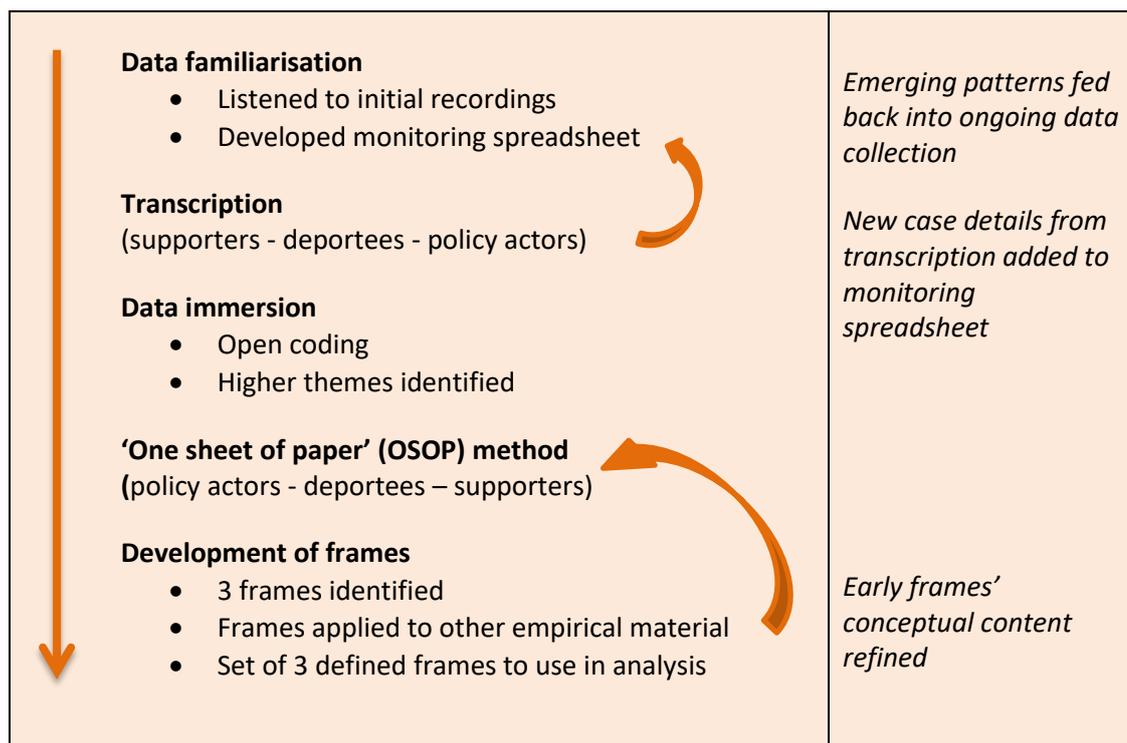
#### 4.6.2 Generating themes from the empirical data through coding

Analysis was an iterative process that began during (rather than after) fieldwork and involved a continual back-and-forth reviewing of the data. Notes were made on thoughts, insights and questions arising throughout the research. For clarity, this section describes the processes undertaken to analyse the data in broadly chronological steps, as per *Figure 4.2*. However, this does not reflect the continued back-and-forth nature of the phases. In addition, while the fieldwork was undertaken first with supporters, then deportees, and finally with policy actors, this ordering was reversed at one stage of the analysis, in order to balance the relative influences of each group in terms of the developing analysis.

##### *Initial stages: familiarisation and ordering data*

Audio recordings of the first few interviews with supporters were listened to shortly afterwards, and well before all supporter interviews were completed. A monitoring spreadsheet was devised to capture emerging patterns and themes from these interviews. This was a first step in organising a 'chaotic' process (Cope 2010). Themes and patterns from those early interviews were drawn into the subsequent interviews to verify them, and examples from initial interviewees were presented to later interviewees in response to their points or to verify developing patterns. For example, the policy actors' interview schedule included questions regarding deportee handover in the country of return, as well as their subsequent circular migration around the EU. These issues had arisen during deportee and supporter interviews and thus influenced these later interviews.

Figure 4.2: The stages of analysis



Source: devised by the author

Each audio recording was transcribed verbatim. Transcripts included a description of the location, marking unclear words and phrases, long pauses, breaks in the interview, particular gestures or emotions that might not have been clear in the transcribed word. Audio recordings of short telephone conversations provided by a supporter were also translated and transcribed from French into English by my bilingual colleague. These conversations had taken place between the supporter and a deportee he had discussed in his interview.

#### *Data immersion and coding*

A period of data immersion followed whereby transcripts and other data were re-read in order to become totally familiar with the data. I continued to keep field notes during this phase, noting for example what was *not* said, those who chose not to answer certain questions, silences, and use of humour (Cope 2010).

Systematic, thematic open coding of transcripts and secondary material confirmed and developed the emerging themes from the monitoring spreadsheet and identified deviant cases (Cope 2010). Allowing themes and codes to arise from the data was

more effective than trying to identify a priori codes (which had been attempted initially then abandoned when they did not help to 'make sense' of the data). Codes were also eliminated during the process (as Cope suggests) as they were subsumed into other categories or seemed less important in the spectrum of themes identified. These codes led to five higher themes being identified across the fieldwork that linked with theoretical literature:

- Power, choice and constraint among deportation actors
- The continuing search for belonging through post-removal migration
- Vulnerability and responsibility
- Allies in resistance, protection and survival
- Injustice: the problems of truth and fairness.

These were important themes that encompassed the main concerns of the research participants. However, they seemed too big to tackle in one thesis without being superficial, yet too important to select one or two at the expense of the others.

#### *'One sheet of paper' (OSOP) analysis and the development of frames*

I then considered each interviewee group separately. Thematic analysis was then undertaken, primarily using 'one sheet of paper' or 'OSOP method' for analysis (Ziebland & McPherson 2006). This is a fairly simple method of taking quotations and information from one interviewee group on a particular topic, and pulling them together. This enables consideration of specific issues more comprehensively and to develop explanations for them, as well as identify any outlier perspectives or issues that did not readily fit with the rest of the group. I undertook OSOP analysis, but reversed the order in which I considered each interview group. Earlier, I had interviewed then added to my monitoring spreadsheet in chronological interview order (supporters, deportees then policy actors). This time I started with policy actors to be able to develop fresh insights.

It became clear through these processes that each of the three interviewee groups (policy actors, supporters and deportees) talked about deportation in different ways. This was an important realisation. Goffman (1986, pp.2, 4) describes something similar to this, a kind of 'shock' when moving from one person's 'sub-world' of experience to

another. By observing how different interviewee groups talked about deportation differently, I went on to employ a 'framing' analysis to situate the different perspectives of my actors in relation to deportation.

Framing derives from the work of the sociologist Erving Goffman (1986). It is a tool used in social sciences to analyse how individuals interpret the world and provides a way of understanding the influence of social and cultural perspectives upon a policy area. Frame analysis is used to explore how people organise their experiences or views on an issue, rather than the structures actually in place in society (Goffman 1986). It is used to explain individuals' preferences (Druckman 2011, p.279).

In politics, framing is used because political choices do not usually have 'correct' answers, and so individuals consider competing values and resolutions to decide how they would tackle a problem issue (Druckman 2011, p.288). Individuals compare different aspects of an issue, and through that comparison they develop a preference. The different dimensions or considerations that affect this preference-making or evaluation are known as 'frames in thought' (Druckman 2011, p.280). Druckman (2011) often uses an example of whether race hate rallies should be allowed: different considerations or frames here might be free speech or public safety. These considerations are quite separate, and are known as 'emphasis' frames (or 'issue', or 'value,' frames).<sup>30</sup> In immigration issues, for example, people might frame an argument in terms of economic benefits and costs, multiculturalism, or social justice (Hirst et al. 2014, p.4). The individual will come to a position on the issue at hand according to what weight they place on each frame, or the frame's potency (Druckman 2011, p.285). Their evaluation or decision about the preference they reach is based on their underlying attitudes.

Individuals do not consider all possible frames on an issue (Druckman 2011, p.283); the world is simply too large and complicated, and people usually entertain a limited number of considerations. Druckman helpfully outlines three ways in which people determine whether or not to draw on a particular frame. The decision depends on

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<sup>30</sup> Druckman (2011) also describes 'equivalent' or 'valency' frames which are not distinct, but perceived as logically equivalent perspectives. For example, preferences might be shaped according to whether a problem is described using a negative frame (how many lives are lost in a scenario) or a positive one (how many lives are saved). Equivalency frames are not explored further here.

whether frames are 'available', 'accessible' or 'appropriate' in any given scenario (Druckman 2011, p.284), which I now paraphrase (and confess, simplify). To be available, a frame must exist in your mind through a memory. To be accessible, it must be unconsciously embedded in the mind in order for it to be easily drawn upon. To be considered appropriate, the individual must consciously assess that the frame is relevant to the subject at hand, which is dependent upon their own context.

Through my OSOP analysis, it became evident that the policy actor group discussed deportation and justified their own views through two frames that helped them to make sense of the asylum and deportation world. These frames concerned the asylum system and the perspectives of other countries (particularly the country of origin). Policy actors also were concerned to include human stories of deportation, but this frame was not as strong. These three perspectives were then applied in relation to the OSOP analysis of deportee interviews, followed by supporter interviews. They all showed similar groups of concerns within their interviews. Different interviewees inevitably had different issues that they prioritised or emphasised. For example, while policy actors had emphasised the importance of adhering to the rules of the asylum and deportation process, the issue of 'resistance' to this process was key for supporters, while 'persistence' was important to deportees in what they perceived to be an inconsistent set of rules and procedures.

Through this 'constant comparative' method of testing and refining, a core element of grounded theory, the three overall perspectives were amended and evolved according to interviewee accounts. They became: a 'bureaucracy' frame, the 'international interdependence' frame and a 'human' frame. These three frames bore a relation to the dominant codes and themes I had previously generated across the entire dataset. For example, the higher theme of 'injustice' was indicative of a view where rules and processes matter; this became a 'bureaucracy' frame. It is important to note here that stakeholders did not often use all of these specific terms in their discussions of deportation. The particular labels used within these models (for the names of each frame as well as their constituent concepts) were derived through the analysis of fieldwork material and, rather than being selected and assigned by interviewees, were subject to my own interpretation of their meanings,.

The set of frames developed through this study are not an exhaustive set of frames on the issue of deportation. Nor are they internally consistent; different interviewees emphasised different aspects of a frame or interpreted them differently. For example, policy actors saw international interdependence as a restrictive category, and explained sovereignty as a barrier to intervention in post-deportation lives of deportees. In contrast, supporters used this international interdependence frame to suggest hope or solutions to deportee dilemmas in the form of international institutions and organisations. A further illustration is the different emphases found within a human frame. Policy actors tended to use a human frame to emphasise the vulnerability of deportees, while deportees themselves prioritised whether they were treated with respect and could preserve their dignity during deportation.

The value of the framing approach taken in this thesis has been to identify a compelling way of understanding different perspectives in the deportation debate. The frames are presented and defined in the next section, in *Table 4.4* and *Figure 4.3*. They are also discussed further in the findings chapters, which are preserved in their interviewee groups to enable the reader to understand their differential interpretations of the frames, their different uses and combinations of the frames to discuss their ideas on deportation.

#### **4.6.3 The analytical framework: a set of three frames**

##### *A 'bureaucracy' frame*

A 'bureaucracy' frame is an introspective frame concerning national and international rules, policies, laws and processes associated with the UK asylum system. It operates as a zero-sum game, with a logical endpoint of deportation as the counterpart to granting protection; the 'deportation imperative' (Richard & Fischer 2008, p.587). This system is described by research participants as an entity in its own right, and privileges structure. In fact, structure is reified. It is perceived as fixed, authoritative, immutable and objective yet, simultaneously, it is inconsistent and flawed. The frame emphasises individual rights based on universal rules, an ethics of justice approach to ethical decisions.

Table 4.4: Core characteristics of the set of frames used by interviewees when discussing deportation

Frame	Scale	Key ideas and priorities	Space for agency	View of deportation and responsibility
<b>Bureaucracy</b>	State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutional and inward-facing</li> <li>• Rights-based, ethics of justice approach</li> <li>• Fixed, universal rules, a rights-based, legal frame</li> <li>• Fallible and inconsistent.</li> <li>• Only incremental change is acceptable, improving efficiency and quality of decisions.</li> </ul>	Privileges structure, suppresses agency. Everyday resistance and persistence matter.	Deportation part of zero-sum game, imposing control on irregular migration arrivals. Priority to maintain status quo and preserve existing system
<b>International interdependence</b>	International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutional but outward-facing</li> <li>• Norms of interaction (Sovereignty, non-interference)</li> <li>• International law (human rights, non-refoulement)</li> <li>• Burden-sharing and citizenship are important.</li> </ul>	Privileges structure. A little room for influence by international actors.	Priority to reinforce international reputation, relationships between hosting states and countries of return, and reinforce citizenship. Deportation is a symbolic corrective to uncontrollable migration flows.
<b>Human</b>	Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-institutional</li> <li>• Ethics of care approach</li> <li>• Humanises discourse, tells moral stories and exposes deficiencies in systems</li> <li>• Dignity, respect, personal security and vulnerability are important concepts.</li> </ul>	Acknowledges structure/agency dialectic. Privileges agency but may be hampered by vulnerability. Resource-based action is possible.	Moral responsibility to treat deportees as human beings

Source: devised by the author

The system attracts much criticism, even internally among those employed to perpetuate it. Yet, there is no ambitious consideration of a radical alternative, its hold is so embedded among stakeholders. Opportunities for changing the system are rare, and only formally acceptable through incremental changes that enable the system to become more efficient and improve quality. This reflects a cycle of morphogenetic change (Bakewell 2010, pp.1696–1697) where actions shape change, and subsequently amended structures then influence social action. However, agents can take advantage of the fallibility and inconsistency in the way that the system is implemented (through street-level bureaucrats). Thus individuals' opportunity for change is through persistence to take advantage of that inconsistency, or in everyday resistance activities practiced by a range of actors involved in the deportation system, from street-level bureaucrats, to deportees and citizens.

#### *An 'international interdependence' frame*

An 'international interdependence' frame is an outward-facing frame beyond the nation-state. It emphasises interactions and relationships between states and institutions at the international, supra-national and global levels of governance. Therefore it incorporates important actors in the global refugee regime such as UNCHR, IOM and Amnesty International, as well as profit-seeking interests such as global security firms involved in detention and escorting deportees, and transnational smugglers and traffickers. Interactions can occur between these different levels. The rules of this frame are not enshrined in law, but arguably more powerful, behavioural international relations norms of international society. In particular, they include the norms of 'sovereignty' and 'non-interference' which forbid states from intervening in one another's internal affairs (Dunne & Schmidt 2001). Mutual recognition and interaction reinforces institutions' own roles and identities in relation to migration. Important referential concepts also include notions of responsibility such as 'non-refoulement' and 'burden-sharing', although they are not purely benevolent but can be interpreted as game-playing (Noll 2003).

This frame is theoretically underpinned by the understanding of deportation as reinforcing citizenship (De Genova 2010, pp.51–54; Walters 2010, p.71). That is to say, deportation is an act that affirms the sovereignty of the nation-state, by publicly

stating that its citizens should live within its own territorial boundaries and the same should hold true for other states. Relatedly then, although this frame is focused on the international level, it also relates to individual citizens in terms of assumptions about where they belong based on their nationality. This might lead individuals to reinforce these norms and support deportation on the basis of being a 'good' citizen themselves, or it might lead to objections by cosmopolitans who do instead support the idea of a global citizen and thus deny the value of political boundaries. Challenging the underlying principles of this frame is even more challenging than those universal rules of a bureaucracy frame, since international relations norms are founded on unchallengeable 'absolute presuppositions' (Collingwood 1940) which do not even require justification by their proponents. Therefore the opportunities to change this system are rare and rather unlikely at the individual level of the deportee. Instead, the hope for change is fixed upon international institutions that are human-rights oriented. INGOs (such as Human Rights Watch) are able to exert influences in the international arena, unlike most ordinary individuals who do not hold political power.

#### *A 'human' frame*

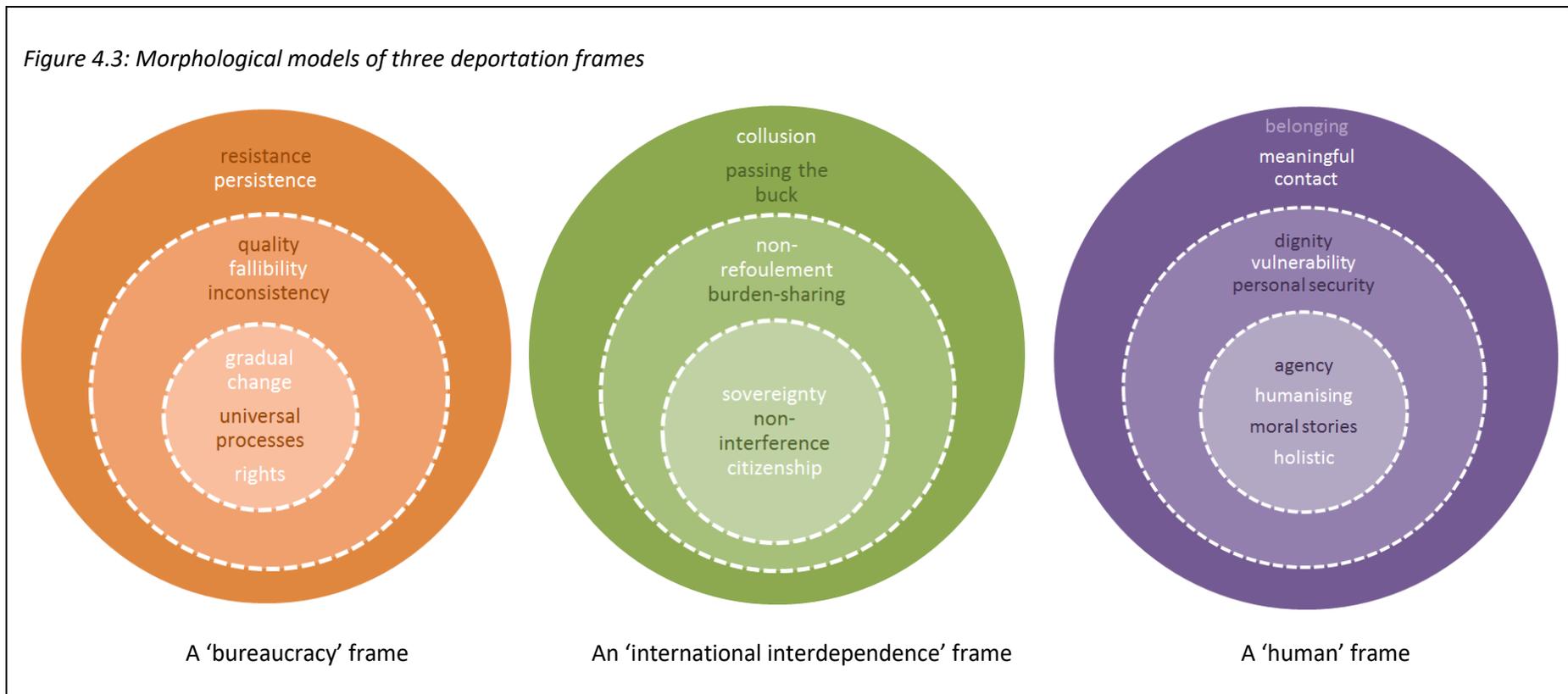
A 'human' frame is an anthropocentric frame that attributes value to deportees as individuals and their personal experiences in the deportation system. It is grounded in an ethics of care approach that is empathetic, needs-centred, holistic and allows for context. Therefore it rejects the notion of rules and laws to meet human needs, and may result in an outcome-focused notion of fairness, justice and responsibility. It is used to humanise discourse and for instrumental purposes to improve the outcomes of the system for service users by exposing deficiencies or problems based on service user experience. Thus there is a moral element to this frame. However, it can also be used to legitimise an actor's position or moral code within the deportation system. It is also used to tell stories about different actors along the deportation corridor, encountering one another at moments of 'meaningful contact' between relative strangers that have value beyond that immediate moment (Valentine 2008, p.323). Important concepts in this frame include dignity, vulnerability and responsibility. However, in recognising the vulnerability of deportees, their agency is concurrently suppressed due to the structural causes of their vulnerability. The frame certainly

allows for agency, but does not deny the powerful constraining role of structure for deportees. Further, in taking a needs-based rather than rule-based approach, people employing this frame in relation to deportation risk perpetuating the exclusion of certain social groups, based on their own preferences and understanding of who constitutes their in-group and groups of moral concern (McThomas 2015, p.180)

The interviewees conceptualised deportation using a mix of these three frames, emphasising different constituent elements and interpreting the frame differently. This was clear from the way in which the internal concepts were identified at different points in the analysis. *Figure 4.3* provides a way of visually representing the frames like 'essentially contested concepts' (Gallie 1956) by adapting Freedén's model of ideological morphology (Freedén 1996). Interviewees in the research interpreted the meaning of each frame subjectively, emphasising different aspects or attributing more value to some elements over others. The model provides a visual means of hierarchically classifying the cluster of concepts within each frame that were identified in *Table 4.4*. They provide a view of the whole frame as well as its constituent elements and how they relate to one another. The 'core', central concepts are fairly fixed, but further concepts 'adjacent' or 'peripheral' to the central ideas are neither fixed nor permanent, but have sufficient fluidity to be able to be reconfigured according to the individual interviewee.

As an example, interviewees concurred on the approximate meaning of a 'human' perspective, but used this frame in different ways. All interviewees used a human frame to personalise and humanise their responses, and as such this is included in the 'core' of the frame. Policy actors emphasised the vulnerability of deportees, while deportees were far more focused on retaining their dignity and being treated disrespectfully. These were important concepts for each group, and thus both are included in the 'adjacent' ring. Deportees stories of officials they encountered during the deportation process seemed important to deportees, yet not the main use of the frame, and thus 'meaningful contact' appears in the outer, peripheral ring.

Figure 4.3: Morphological models of three deportation frames



Source: devised by the author, using Freedon (1996)

These three frames are not mutually exclusive. They were used by each interviewee group at different times and in different combinations. However, given the contradictions within and between frames, resolutions to contentious deportation questions (such as issues of responsibility) were not straightforward. Actors drew on different elements of different frames to come to their own resolutions, however unsatisfactory or contradictory their position might appear. Some actors prioritised one frame over another in order to do this with some degree of consistency in their final position. The empirical chapters employ this framing structure in order to analyse the interviewee data.

## 4.7 Reflections on the research process

### 4.7.1 Reflexivity and positionality

Qualitative research demands reflection on the researcher's influence upon the study. Positionality involves disciplined subjectivity and being mindful of one's own ethnocentricity and biases (Baxter & Eyles 1997). The forced migration context in particular is one of 'heightened reflexivity' (Schmidt 2007) where the methodological approach is conditioned by the political or institutional environment, the purposes of the research and the audience. Reflexivity is particularly important in cross-cultural contexts (Twyman et al. 1999) and the fieldwork with deportees in this context was complex in this respect. While my relationship with deportees was indeed cross-cultural, fieldwork sites for deportees were not in their own countries of birth. This meant differing degrees of familiarity and ease for them depending on their immigration status and sense of belonging, for example. This section reflects on how my own position in this study affected the research, particularly as a white British, female, public sector professional in my 30s.

#### *Personal influence on research design and access to potential participants*

My employment history influenced many of my choices. My relevant positions included researcher at a large children's charity, then at Migration Yorkshire, a local government partnership organisation in Yorkshire and the Humber. At the start of my PhD, I had spent two years at Migration Yorkshire (then the Yorkshire and Humber

Regional Strategic Migration Partnership) as a policy officer supporting regional strategic migration partnerships across the UK. This meant that I was aware of how the asylum system operated, understood relevant immigration laws, policy and statistics, and understood the concerns of different stakeholders at local and national levels. At this time I observed a palpable lack of knowledge and interest among this 'policy community' about what happened to deportees, unless it could have a direct link to their current work.

Knowledge of the asylum system gained through my work meant that I understood the context well. I knew appropriate organisations through which I could identify potential research participants from each functional subgroup (policy actors, supporters and deportees). I was sufficiently familiar with the processes, the technical language used by this 'policy community' on asylum issues, and inherent tensions between stakeholders, to relate to and be taken seriously by potential interviewees in the policy actor and supporter groups. However, this did not guarantee access to policymakers within the civil service, perhaps because of my age and seniority at work. At the other end of the spectrum, my employment may have deterred some potential participants if they felt that my organisation colluded with the Home Office.

I used my employment history to facilitate access to some policy actors, although this also constrained some of my own behaviour. For example, I secured an interview with Home Office civil servants through my professional connections. Conscious that Migration Yorkshire was partly funded by a Home Office grant, I felt unable to challenge some of their responses as strongly as I might otherwise have done. Similarly, I secured another interview because of my former role at the interviewee's organisation, but felt a sense of obligation and loyalty that slightly curbed my critical questioning during the interview.

### *Reflections on positionality during fieldwork*

I maximised common ground with interviewees by emphasising my different roles at different times; the 'elasticity of positionality' (Rice 2009). With policy actors and supporters in professional roles, I described myself primarily as a local government officer working on migration across different sectors. In contrast I emphasised my

position as a research student with deportees and academics, and highlighted my former position in the voluntary sector with policy actors in NGOs and charities.

The moment of meeting interviewees and the time prior to beginning the recorded interview were significant for establishing trust, rapport and identifying points of commonality. These times usually involved distracting activities, such as a short journey to the place of interview, eating or drinking together, and greeting relatives or colleagues in the vicinity. At times, these conversations required me to divulge more personal information than I had anticipated. Some interviewees wanted to know more about me and the study, to reassure them prior to sharing their own views on a politically-sensitive or personal subject.

All policy actors who were interviewed were white, (I assumed) British and well-educated. They were either older or of a similar age to myself. Seven were male and four were female. Where these characteristics matched, it served to subconsciously develop some rapport. There were power differentials between us, since policy actors were aware of my need for an interview without any reciprocal action. By emphasising my employment and academic credentials, and given our respective time constraints, they were prepared to begin interviews with minimal introduction and with little need to establish further trust.

My positionality affected my interactions with deportees in different ways. I anticipated a significant gulf between myself and deportees. Most of the deported interviewees were young men, all had been born outside the UK and most did not speak English as their first language. Language and gender differences matter deeply in the interview context and shape the research (Twyman et al. 1999, pp.314, 320). The differences in our backgrounds and privilege were so great that it was important for me to establish some commonality with them in order to develop some trust and rapport during the interview. I tried to maximise the trust and rapport I had already built with supporters in the UK in order for them to effectively 'vouch for me' to deportees, and to engender sufficient confidence in me that deportees would participate in the study. I began interacting with deportees by discussing their supporter and transferring any gifts or messages from that person. I drew on my other skills to develop this rapport. I hold a counselling qualification and I had a good

grounding in ethical research with vulnerable service users from my previous researcher role in the third sector. I have some cross-cultural experiences from having briefly lived in West Africa as a voluntary teacher for a year in 1998, and from visits to several refugee settlements in Zambia as part of a Winston Churchill Memorial Trust fellowship in 2007.

Supporters were the easiest research relationships to establish. Many overlapped with my own characteristics, being white British, well-educated, being familiar with the UK asylum system and holding politically left-wing views. I was able to fairly easily establish these points of commonality during my interactions with supporters and thus establish a relaxed rapport prior to beginning the interview. Being younger or a similar age as most interviewees might have made them feel at ease and more likely to divulge information. Given these points of commonality, at times I was slightly uneasy about assumptions that supporters may have made about me, as I did not wish to mislead them. I resisted overtly agreeing with interviewees and respectfully challenged them at times. I was aware that my later analysis might make statements with which they disagreed, and I wished to avoid making them feel that I had been insincere during the interview.

#### **4.7.2 Unexpected issues arising from fieldwork**

There were three instances where the fieldwork took unexpected turns, largely in relation to supporters. These more surprising elements of fieldwork led to the identification of supporters as a group who were not only gatekeepers to deportees, but also worthy of examination in their own right.

Firstly, supporters in the sample were not usually identified through NGOs as I had expected. This could have been due to an inherent risk to organisations reliant on public or government support of making statements on a politically-sensitive subject or due to being over-researched. Instead, many supporters were relatively isolated from the more established and prominent asylum policy community but were recruited through more informal email networks and volunteer groups. Thus the supporter sample might be weighted towards those with a more personal than professional link to a deportee.

The second surprising element of fieldwork was the impact of time on the information collected. Paradoxically, prolonged a fieldwork period was both necessary and detrimental to the study. There were more steps involved in identifying and contacting deportees indirectly through supporters than with usual interviews. Conducting a part-time PhD study elongated the periods between initial contact with potential participants and making arrangements to meet. This meant that a number of potential interviews did not take place, either because of non-responses, participants moved or even died. However, a longer study period also meant that I was able to track some deportees beyond the instance of their interview, with later updates provided by themselves or by supporters. This led to a richer understanding of deportees' post-deportation lives.

Third, some supporters and deportees gave richer and more emotional details than expected. Several supporters for example, raised the issue of deportee involvement in taboo activities such as prostitution or illegal activity. Others were emotional during their interviews. Some deportees admitted to socially unacceptable behaviour towards officials, criminal activity such as using false documentation or lying to officials, and imprisonment. These incidents confirmed the trust established with the participant, were indicative of the veracity of their claims, added value to the data collected and confirmed the importance of supporters as information sources.

## 4.8 Conclusion

This chapter has answered a range of important questions about the approach to researching the consequences of deportation in this research study. It has set out a detailed epistemological and methodological framework for exploring deportation and its consequences. It has presented a qualitative approach to fieldwork, drawing on the research literature about researching migrants, vulnerable and hard-to-reach groups. The research was designed to encourage a range of relevant voices to be heard and their underlying motives to be analysed. This was done by examining the views of deportation stakeholders and identifying the agency and structure dialectic inherent in their accounts.

It has been no mean feat to source stories of deportation around the world. It has required a careful, multi-staged process to identify and recruit potential participants who can recount deportation stories with any authority. The selected research design has capitalised on the existing trusted relationships between deportees and their supporters to maximise the quality and richness of the data collected.

At the same time, it has been of fundamental importance to minimise the potential emotional and security risks for deportees divulging their personal stories. At every opportunity, participating deportees were provided with choices. This concern to minimise any harm from participation revealed a unique role for supporters, who related many deportation stories themselves. Curiosity about supporters as actors themselves in deportation stories was explored further in the supporter chapter (Chapter 8). This has enabled the focus of the research to include the wider context and crucial ties that directly affected deportees' post-deportation outcomes.

No study is without external influence. Researcher influence upon this study has been identified and their effects have been acknowledged in the pursuit of transparent, robust research. Ultimately, this should enable the reader to be aware of the impact of these influences upon the findings.

Initial analysis led to the identification of framing in interviewee accounts. By employing a grounded theory approach, the frames were refined. A set of three key frames has been defined as used by interviewees as stakeholders in the deportation debate. This is used during analysis in the empirical chapters to identify the perceptions of participants in relation to deportation, their respective priorities and shared understandings.

The research design outlined in this chapter has provided a basis for examining the deportation debate from the separate perspectives of three groups of individuals, each with their own stake in the overall story. However, their perceptions are interrelated. These connections are explored in the conclusion. The next chapter provides a starting point for the analysis phase of the research. It looks at the perspectives of policy actors on deportation, and demonstrates how their thoughts and views are presented through the three frames identified during this chapter.

## CHAPTER 5: POLICY ACTORS

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*'Just as the Home Office is out to discredit as many asylum seekers as possible, so [solicitors] Miriam Cooper Associates maintain that every one is a genuine refugee. Thus the trenches are dug and two equally absurd brands of moral indignation stand off.'*

(Saint 2003, p.78)

This chapter presents the first analysis of my empirical fieldwork, and is concerned with a group of interviewees I label 'policy actors'. As defined in Chapters 1 and 4, policy actors are a broad group comprising individuals employed in institutions that seek to make, shape, influence or implement UK immigration policy and practice. The chapter focuses on the research question (RQ1) regarding how policy actors perceive their own roles, agency and relationships in relation to deportation, and those of other deportation stakeholders. The following questions are answered by this chapter in relation to the policy actor sample:

- What do policy actors 'know' about deportation?
- How do policy actors discuss deportation?
- How are deportees described by different policy actors?
- How do policy actors understand responsibility in relation to deportation?

The chapter will identify what kinds of knowledge policy actors drew on about deportation and how they used it to inform their perspectives on deportation, drawing on Boswell's (2009) work on the political uses of 'expert' knowledge. This leads us to what I call a 'hierarchy of limited knowledge' that effectively ranks the different types of information used by policy actors, and how they use it to inform their perspectives on deportation. The key domains of discourse, agency and relationships set out in Chapter 3 will run through the analysis, as they will for the other empirical findings chapters. Discourse is the principal domain of interest here, since policy actors' roles in influencing policy and practice will affect and be affected by discourses on migration, asylum and deportation.

When opportunities arise, policy actors will influence policy ideas, debates and developments on deportation according to how they see the world, their construction of reality, and how they understand and attribute agency and responsibility. Due to

this subjectivity, I used a ‘framing’ analysis to situate the different perspectives of interviewees in relation to deportation, as outlined in Chapter 4 (section 4.6.3).

Framing is a tool to help understand how individuals organise their views on an issue, and how they interpret the world (Goffman 1986; Druckman 2011). Three key ‘frames’ (identified in Chapter 4) through which all participating stakeholder groups in this study discussed deportation were: ‘bureaucracy’, ‘international interdependence’, and ‘human’ frames.

This chapter presents an analysis of how policy actors used these frames and how they emphasised particular internal traits of a frame. While they held highly divergent views about deportation, the analysis shows that these policy actors largely concurred (using a ‘human’ frame) that moral responsibilities exist towards deportees. At the same time, they emphasised that these responsibilities are constructed within the context of a framing hierarchy, where precedence is accorded to constructive international relations (an ‘international interdependence’ frame) and the maintenance of the UK’s asylum process (a ‘bureaucracy’ frame) at different locations and times along the deportation corridor.

## 5.1 The policy actor sample

The chapter uses primary, in-depth interview material from ten interviews with eleven policy actors, referred to throughout the chapter as P1-P10.<sup>31</sup> As outlined in Chapter 4, these policy actors did not form part of a cohesive ‘policy community’ on deportation, as found in other areas of immigration policy (Somerville & Goodman 2010, p.951).

Their views on deportation were not immediately obvious and the position of any individual or group of policy actors here cannot be assumed as there is considerable conflict even *within* the relatively coherent ‘pro-migrant’ lobby on asylum issues (Statham & Geddes 2006, p.263). Therefore interviewees were subdivided into three broadly functional groups to locate them in the deportation ‘world’ as follows:

- **Parliamentarians** (P2, P4, P6 and P8) include MPs and peers who have clear interests and potential influence over asylum and deportation policy.

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<sup>31</sup> The first interview (P1) was held with two individuals who are referred to as P1a and P1b.

- **Implementers** (P1a, P1b and P10) are charged with delivering asylum and deportation policy in their professional lives. They matter because these are the street-level bureaucrats of deportation, translating policy into a tangible event. Their performance determines how policy is delivered in practice.
- **Interest groups** (represented by P3, P5, P7 and P9) provide support services to refused asylum seekers. They matter because they participate in policy and public debates, seek to privilege or represent the migrant voice, and often engage with politicians and the general public on migration issues.

The views of this broad group of policy actors matter, as they have various opportunities to influence policy, practice and discourse. Policy development is not linear, but subject to a great number of influences according to the issue at hand. The interrelationships between policy, practice and discourse are complex and disputed, and thus they are often separated functionally within organisations in order to try to avoid contradictions (Brunsson 1989; Meyer & Rowan 1977). Within the immigration domain, different policy areas are subject to external influences to a greater or lesser extent, with managed migration and asylum policy being respective examples (Statham & Geddes 2006; Balch 2009).

Amid this complexity, parliamentarians might have policy-related discussions directly with government ministers or senior civil servants, can set the tone of public and political debates through their speeches and PQs, and raise issues of interest through membership of Select Committees and APPGs. Interest groups exchange ideas with parliamentarians and policy-makers through stakeholder groups and lobbying activity, influence the public through campaigning, and advise refused asylum seekers who are in a state of 'deportability'. Implementers can influence policy-makers through internal mechanisms as well as by subverting policy implementation through their own discretionary power as street-level bureaucrats. Subcontracting relationships to deliver an element of the asylum or deportation process also can become a more covert channel of influence, as confirmed in an interview with P10 whose organisation noticed a change in their influence once they became a subcontractor.

*'I had experience of banging my head against a brick wall for literally years [but now] working with UKBA [on a deportation project] ... has been a challenge but ... has meant that probably more doors have opened for us in terms of being able to talk about things. ... We're doing a lot of behind-the-scenes work. ... A lot more of our campaigning on asylum*

*is the behind-the-scenes, talking to people to try and get things changed, things that people externally might not even know were issues, rather than the all-out-there lobbying.'*

(P10, implementer, 03.12.12)

The positions of some stakeholders on deportation were not always foreseen even by policy actors who regularly interacted with one another. This is unsurprising given the shifting portrayal of immigration within political parties over time, and the location of immigrant groups on different political agendas such as anti-racism or immigration (Kaye 1994). For example, P7, representing an interest group, admitted surprise at the political persuasion of some of their anti-deportation allies and opponents:

*'Some MPs, some politicians have said 'Oh we don't touch deportation cases' ... [and] it was a Labour MP. But sometimes Conservative MPs can be the strongest advocates against issues like immigration detention. I was astonished when I discovered who were the most vocal opponents to immigration detention, and a lot of them are Conservative.'*

(P7, interest group, 07.11.12)

The fact that party lines are not the principal determinant of politicians' views on immigration can be understood in light of the strong influence of the normative ethical positions of ethics of justice and ethics of care, as demonstrated by McThomas (2015, p.185). In fact, from the sample of eleven interviewees, only parliamentarian P4 and interest group representative P7 explicitly stated that they did not support deportation practice per se. The fact that only these two interviewees rejected deportation policy outright is significant, because the views of the remaining nine interviewees are not so easily categorised. P10 for example, might hold views associated with implementers such as civil servants, or those more akin to other interest groups. These remaining nine policy actors accepted the principle and practice of deportation to different degrees, but not without reservations. A framing analysis, then, provides a means to identify and understand differing perspectives of these uncoordinated but influential policy actors on deportation, and their views about one another.

## 5.2 What do policy actors 'know' about deportation?

Deportation is not easily visible to UK citizens at the everyday level. As a practice, it removes people from society, creating a void or an absence in communities. This

section examines the kinds of knowledge that interviewed policy actors drew on to formulate their ideas on deportation and how they used those information sources for different purposes. There is a popular understanding that there is so much information available 'out there' on any social policy issue that it is overwhelming (Newman et al. 2005, p.1). This is not necessarily the case with deportation, which suffers from 'information scarcity' (Boswell 2012). While politicians receive relatively little information on 'illegal' migration (compared to asylum), nonetheless they appear to resist being unduly influenced by media coverage of deportation of refused asylum seekers, instead drawing on regularly published statistical information (Boswell 2012, pp.383–384). Policy actors might also draw on other sources of knowledge from their professional lives, and will inevitably be subject to bias in favour of information produced from within their own organisations. As decision-makers they will be subject to competing influences themselves (Newman et al. 2005, pp.1–3; Frost et al. 2006).

This section draws on Boswell's (2009) account of the ways in which political actors use 'expert' knowledge from academic research, either instrumentally or symbolically. Policy actors might use their knowledge instrumentally to improve specific policies and practices, or to 'enlighten' by expanding their own background knowledge base. They might use information more symbolically, for example Boswell shows they use knowledge selectively to reinforce their pre-existing views ('substantiating'). They also use expert knowledge to legitimise their practice or their individual role or that of their organisation. I extend Boswell's work in this section to incorporate types of knowledge *other* than academic research, such as policy documents, practice experience and casework. This follows Newman et al. (2005, pp.1–3) and Frost et al.'s (2006) work on applying research to social care practice settings, which acknowledges that decision-makers are faced with competing influences, sources of knowledge and claims to authority, of which 'expert' knowledge is only one. While it is understood that sources of evidence differ in their academic rigour (Newman et al. 2005, p.13), this research suggests that the relative value attributed to each deportation information source by policy actors was not necessarily based on reliability, but availability and presumed influence.

### 5.2.1 A hierarchy of limited knowledge

The first notable observation from policy actor interviews was that none of the eleven interviewees referred to specific academic research. In fact, implementer P1a acknowledged that his only interest in this research study would be to confirm his organisation’s good treatment of deportees. Instead of using academic research, interviewees referred to a range of practice-oriented sources including non-academic research or monitoring reports that had not been commercially published or peer-reviewed, which I call ‘grey literature’ after Newman et al. (2005, pp.36–37). The grey literature was considered to be influential or trustworthy, but not necessarily both. Examples included the Home Office’s *country of origin* reports (mentioned by P1b, P2 and P4) used in decision-making on asylum cases and assessments of risk upon return, and UNHCR’s *Quality Initiative* reports to improve this decision-making (P1b, P3 and P9). Interviewees also used their own organisations’ reports and information from their client base (P5, P7, P9 and P10). These information sources appeared to be loosely ranked by policy actors into what I call a ‘hierarchy of limited knowledge.’ *Figure 5.1* provides an illustration of this hierarchy.

*Figure 5.1: Policy actors’ hierarchy of limited knowledge about deportation*



*Source: devised by the author*

Policy actors accorded significant weight to the *authors* of certain sources, particularly certain international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), the Home Office and

UNHCR. At times, authorship seemed more important than content to interviewees, especially in terms of how much influence the authoring bodies had over policy development and discussions. For example, P1, P5 and P7 concurred that UNHCR was a particularly influential organisation. These observations were reinforced in Home Office correspondence, which provided details of information sources used internally to compile the country of origin reports to inform asylum decision-making.

*'The material produced by the COI [Country of Origin Information] Service is compiled from a wide range of reliable external information sources including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, human rights organisations, inter-governmental organisations, non-governmental organisations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, news media and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.'*

(Asylum Policy Correspondence Team, UK Border Agency, 28.11.12<sup>32</sup>)

Apparently '*reliable*' sources of information mentioned here included UNHCR, (I)NGOs and government bodies. Interestingly, the media were included but academic sources were not.

Policy actors did use this kind of official information critically. Several interviewees were sceptical about the reliability of country of origin reports, or were concerned about their misinterpretation. Two parliamentarians (P2 and P4), for example, raised concerns about the accuracy of these reports. P4 suggested INGO evaluations contradicted country of origin reports about the same contexts. Note that P4 also emphasised authorship as a source of credibility (but not influence).

*'I've always been very sceptical of the information on which the Home Office bases its decisions. They used to rely only on Foreign Office descriptions or analyses of countries, and now they have their own Home Office section. ... I'm just really sceptical because sometimes it's diametrically opposite to what a whole range of human rights groups are saying: Amnesty, Human Rights Watch, Islamic Human Rights etc.'*

(P4, parliamentarian, 06.11.12)

In advocating for international interest groups such as Amnesty International to exert more influence over the Home Office practice, P4 confirmed a deficit in certain types of knowledge used to influence asylum and deportation practice. This echoes what Statham and Geddes demonstrated regarding the minor role of international organisations in asylum policy networks in the UK (2006, p.253).

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<sup>32</sup> Letter from the Asylum Policy Correspondence Team, dated 28 November 2012. This was in response to my request for an interview with the Immigration Minister.

Anecdotes and hypothetical scenarios were used to fill gaps in interviewees' knowledge base. Anecdotes were a common information source across the three groups of parliamentarians, implementers and interest groups. Interviewees drew on examples from their own experience of working with asylum seekers, and P1a, P1b, P2 and P5 all used deportee examples. Implementers mentioned clients at different sites along the deportation corridor, from deportable refused asylum seekers in the UK to deportees overseas. Interest groups had been involved in supporting and advocating for deportable asylum seekers. Parliamentarians discussed a broader range of people affected by migration using examples from their constituencies and other areas of their work. They discussed not only those individuals facing deportation, but the local host communities who might, for example, resist the deportation of a community member, or demand more control over immigration levels. Where real life examples did not exist, some invented hypothetical examples that they felt were plausible to illustrate an answer (including P4, P5, P7, P8 and P9), possibly loosely (but not explicitly) based on personal or practice knowledge. There was an ambiguity about the sources of anecdotes and hypothetical examples, as they appeared to be based on practice knowledge, but this link was usually not explicit.

Ironically, policy actors were aware of the danger of using this kind of information as a source of knowledge. P3 warned of using anecdotes based on 'hearsay' which undermined the credibility of NGOs using them in policy discussions. P2 wanted to draw on an anecdote from a deportee in a broader project to challenge country of origin reports, but was aware of the dangers of letting 'admittedly emotional' stories constitute evidence in challenges to policy. Implementers used some anecdotal examples during their interviews, but were keen to warn of the dangers of losing impartiality and objectivity by focusing exclusively on asylum seeker narratives.

*'Other organisations who look in on the UK Border Agency ... only see one side of the story and that's the story of the individual. They don't often see the whole picture, they often don't have the background information. They only ... hear what the person wants to tell them.'*

(P1b, implementer, 17.07.12)

Like P3, P1b challenged the use of individual stories by certain interest groups (but not parliamentarians), which she saw as biased and partial because support organisations *'only ... hear what the person wants to tell them'*.

Interviewees relegated statistics to the status of an inadequate, unreliable source of information on deportation, in contrast to Boswell's findings where they were valued by politicians in a context of scarce information (2012, pp.383–384). Interviewees from all three subgroups were fairly consistent in their rejection of published deportation data. It is likely that interviewees recalled and were influenced by other inflammatory data-related incidents in the migration arena. Particularly relevant here were the 2004 introduction of the tipping point target mentioned by P2, as well as the 2006 foreign national prisoners 'scandal' (covered in Chapter 2). They would also have been acutely aware of the media's use of data to bolster hostile discourse.

Interviewees' scepticism of deportation statistics centred on the symbolic way in which targets and data were presented and employed. P7 gave examples of unclear elements of published deportation figures, while P4 doubted their value at all, given that each case should be judged individually on its own merits. Further, P4 found the use of statistics to be distasteful, likening it to a game, while P9 was equally scathing. One might expect implementers to feel obliged to defend the published statistics because of their own roles. P10 evaded being drawn into a discussion, saying *'I'm not really target-focused'*. Interestingly, P1a provided a lucid example of how deportation targets could be achieved without increasing the level of deportations themselves.

*'The latest published one [target] is ... Ministers have said they will see 50 000 removals with a lot of those coming from better data matching procedures, so finding out people have left actually after they've gone by checking manifests, databases. ... It's not necessarily [achieved] though enforced return and ensured removals.'*

(P1a, implementer, 17.07.12)

This is a good example of goal displacement occurring in relation to contentious issues among street-level bureaucrats in large organisations, where practice is modified to focus on the way in which evaluation occurs (Lipsky 1980, p.51). Other policy actors confirmed goal displacement within the asylum system that was induced by the statistics. P2 for example, applied this to the former tipping point target (see section

2.4), saying: *'I think that gave the wrong impression to people in the UKBA that actually they should refuse more [asylum seekers] than they accept.'*

### 5.2.2 Using the hierarchy of knowledge

#### *Instrumentally*

A complicating factor in analysing the instrumental use of policy actors' knowledge about deportation is their lack of common purpose. There was no coherence within this group over what would constitute a desirable deportation outcome since, as we have established, they are not a 'policy community'. Deportation 'success' to each group will look very different, and thus they use different information sources for different purposes. Implementers might be concerned with meeting certain targets, complying with operating standards, or deporting with minimum distress to deportees, for example. Interest groups on the other hand, might be concerned with preventing a deportation or securing legitimate immigration status for refused asylum seeking clients. The different roles of Parliamentarians make it is less easy to know how they would interpret success, given their national and local remits.

Nevertheless, interviewees clearly attributed an instrumental value to some knowledge sources. P9 (from an interest group) for example readily gave examples of 'good' practice in a number of other countries (such as Canada, Norway, Australia and Sweden) and cited publications from these places. Despite their general distancing from published deportation statistics, several policy actors did find some instrumental value in performance, auditing and evaluation information (P1a, P1b, P3, P7, P10), although none of these were parliamentarians.

#### *To substantiate*

Policy actors often used anecdotes or hypothetical scenarios to substantiate their existing positions and actions. On several occasions, implementers used these to corroborate their position that some asylum seekers did not have a fear of return.

*'Quite often people will ... pop home. ... Inheritance laws in various countries require you to be physically present in order for the will to be read, or for you to benefit from the will. So they'll go home to do that, get the benefit, and they'll come back.'*

(P1a, implementer, 17.07.12)

This quotation is significant in a number of ways. Using the nonchalant phrase '*pop home*', P1a efficiently encapsulated popular perceptions that some asylum seekers might not fear return, and could easily, willingly return home if it suited them. He also reproduced (whether intentionally or not) popular perceptions about migrants taking resources (by saying they will '*go home to... get the benefit*'), and their apparent mastery of passing through political borders unhindered (by being able to simply '*come back*').

### *To legitimise*

A third use of 'expert' knowledge is to legitimate a position or role related to the issue under discussion. Interviewees across the three groups were keen to demonstrate that their organisation had an important, positive influence on the deportation process (although their understandings of a 'positive' influence would inevitably vary between organisations, and could mean preventing *or* effecting deportations). Interviewees used a wider range of sources than anecdotes here. For example, one interest group (P5) had monitored and collated deportee stories to influence court decisions, while an implementing organisation (P10) claimed to have used their practitioner knowledge to influence the Home Office. Those with client caseloads used knowledge of individuals' characters and backgrounds to support their asylum claims. P4 described, for example, how he attended asylum appeals for constituents whom he knew '*very well*'. P9 proudly explained how his organisation's collation of deportee experiences in one country of return had been used.

*'We're invited to intervene on cases ... where we have got some evidence to give to indicate the risk that those people may be at. ... In those [name of country] cases ... Mr Justice Wilkie spoke highly of our evidence and used, relied upon it very heavily. ... We gave a test that the judge adopted.'*

(P9, interest group, 21.11.12)

P9 underscored the value of his organisation by highlighting the fact that *they* were sought out by the courts (not vice versa), they held knowledge that constituted legal 'evidence', and designed a legal 'test' that had been accepted and used in the legal system.

### 5.2.3 Discussion

This section has looked at the role that knowledge plays in developing policy actors' perspectives on deportation to show that policy actors applied knowledge in ways consistent with Boswell's (2009) work on the uses of expert knowledge in policy circles. Instrumental, legitimising, and substantiating functions of knowledge (Boswell 2009, p.4) were clear in their interviews, although they were not based on 'expert' sources of information, as in Boswell's work. Instead, interviewees referred to a range of information sources about deportation, including published statistics, grey literature, practice experience, and anecdotes. These information sources were not treated as equivalent but used in a hierarchy according to their perceived value, as per *Figure 5.1*. This corresponds with the known range of potential influences on social policy actors and the relative claims to authority of each source (Frost et al. 2006; Newman et al. 2005).

This hierarchy of limited knowledge about deportation places reports from bodies such as UNHCR and the Home Office at the apex, followed by information from other non-academic publications. At times interviewees emphasised the influence of particular organisations providing information, although not necessarily equating this with quality of content. For example, country of origin reports were disputed but still acknowledged to have a very important role in Home Office decision-making. Interviewees were also aware of the problems of anecdotal evidence, but persisted in using these stories, perhaps in the absence of other knowledge (and to fill silences in the interview) but also to legitimise their own expertise. Interviewees relegated statistics even further down the hierarchy, primarily for its substantiating deployment by others. There was a notable absence of references to peer-reviewed academic publications as a source of knowledge. Similarly there was little mention of the media as a source of information; minimal interest in this concurs with Boswell's (2012) findings. The range of sources used by policy actors was limited by these voids, creating this 'hierarchy of *limited knowledge*'.

The prioritising of evidence in a hierarchy suggests interviewees employed discernment when drawing on them. They each assessed their sources and the way in which information was presented and interpreted, and so each actor will have their

own slightly modified, subjective version of a hierarchy of knowledge according to their own knowledge base, interests and assessment. While one may dispute their assessments, such critical thinking is an indicator of a developing and informed discussion on deportation. Their critical assessment was not only used for symbolic purposes, but was also used to 'enlighten', to develop their understanding of deportation in the longer-term. As an example, policy actors could have some immunity to the demonising tendencies of popular discourse and the presentation of government statistics to give the impression that migration is under control. The next section builds on this understanding of what information policy actors accrue about deportation, how they might use it in public or political debates, and what they do when their information is too limited.

### **5.3 How do policy actors discuss deportation?**

This section explores the ways in which different policy actors in the research sample expressed their views on deportation, informed by their own personal hierarchy of limited knowledge. A framing analysis organises these perspectives based on three cognitive frames identified as being used across all interviewee groups: bureaucracy, international interdependence and human frames. The analysis demonstrates how policy actors in this study conceived of deportation drawing on different frames at different times. It also highlights the characteristic elements within each frame that they emphasised. Each of these is defined and explored in turn. For reference, *Table 5.1* provides a summary of these three frames, derived from the more detailed definitions provided in Chapter 4 (section 4.6.3).

Table 5.1: Core features of bureaucracy, international interdependence, and human frames

Frame	Core features
<b>Bureaucracy</b>	An introspective frame concerning national and international rules and processes associated with the UK asylum system. The 'system' is described as an entity in its own right, and privileges structure. It is perceived as fixed, authoritative and objective yet, simultaneously, inconsistent and flawed. The frame emphasises individual rights based on universal rules, an ethics of justice approach. Opportunities for change are rare and incremental. Persistence through everyday resistance is practiced by participants in the system, from street-level bureaucrats to deportees.
<b>International interdependence</b>	An outward-facing frame beyond the nation-state that emphasises interactions and relationships between states and institutions at the international, supra-national and global levels of governance. Interactions between the different levels are included. Mutual recognition and interaction reinforces institutions' own roles and identities in relation to migration. Important referential concepts include norms of 'sovereignty', 'non-interference', but also notions of responsibility: 'non-refoulement' and 'burden-sharing'. Theoretically underpinned by the understanding of deportation as reinforcing citizenship (De Genova 2010, pp.51–54; Walters 2010, p.71).
<b>Human</b>	An anthropocentric frame that attributes value to deportees as individuals and their experiences in the deportation system. It is grounded in an ethics of care approach that is empathetic, needs-centred, holistic and allows for context. It is used to humanise discourse and to tell stories about different actors along the deportation corridor encountered at moments of 'meaningful contact' between relative strangers that have value beyond that immediate moment (Valentine 2008, p.323). Important concepts in this frame include dignity, vulnerability and responsibility.

Source: devised by the author

### 5.3.1 A bureaucracy frame

A bureaucracy frame of reference is used to describe deportation within the context of the rules, policies, laws and procedural aspects of processing an asylum claim in the UK. I begin with the general observation that policy actors in the sample group generally contextualised deportation as a zero-sum game. For most, the asylum process was a process that concluded with either the granting of protection or a refusal. Deportation was an intrinsic part of this system for resolving refused cases; a neat, fixed resolution. This is known as the 'deportation imperative' (Richard & Fischer 2008, p.587), brought about by following asylum-related policies, rules and legislation

to their ultimate conclusion. All policy actors interviewed made statements about deportation with explicit and repeated reference to the asylum system as a fixed, immutable process. Even if they were critiquing it, interviewees still held the asylum system as a fixed point of reference, and did not suggest radical alternatives to it. I call this way of locating deportation within rules and processes a 'bureaucracy' frame. The purpose of this section is to explore this viewpoint, using a bureaucracy frame to understand policy actors' perceptions and the logic of deportation.

#### *Uses of a bureaucracy frame by subgroups*

A bureaucracy frame was inevitably prominent among the three interviewees comprising the implementer group, since their own reputations and livelihoods directly related to the success of delivering these processes. It was also inevitable that they appeared defensive in their interviews; my field notes record that interviewee P1b '*stuck to official lines – clear and almost vehement at times ... quite defensive around the quality of case owner decisions*' (field diary entry, 17.07.12). Implementers felt a responsibility to work within existing procedural rules, ultimately having a role to uphold the overall asylum system, as expressed by interviewees P1a and P1b.

*'We ... have to work within the policy and the guidance. ... We're confident that the processes we have in place... are there. ... We feel we've been fair and objective about what we've done in terms of that decision.'*

(P1b, implementer, 17.07.12)

*'We follow a very rigorous procedure.'*

(P1a, implementer, 17.07.12)

These quotations are interesting because these implementers denied that their own subjectivity played a part in their decision-making. They believed that in adhering to the set rules and a '*rigorous procedure*', fairness and objectivity were guaranteed. They suggested that as implementers they had minimal agency and power in relation to the asylum casework decisions they took. P1b explained: '*In terms of enforcement policy, we work with it, we feed back on it, but we don't create it and we don't influence it in a direct way.*' This self-perception starkly contrasts with our understanding of officials as increasingly powerful, autonomous agents taking discretionary decisions (Gill 2009b; Lipsky 1980). By extension of this line of defence (noting P1b's defensiveness above), implementers can deny responsibility for any

adverse incidents involving deportees; they are culpable only if they do not follow the rules correctly. This ethics of justice approach is not focused on what might be the best outcome for the individual, but on the equitable application of the rules. In distancing themselves from the human consequences of their actions, it seems implementers were keen to avoid blame for mistakes. This does reflect the role of the street-level bureaucrat, not in trying to subvert policy aims directly, but in distorting implementation by taking actions to evade personal blame.

It was established earlier that policy actors do not form a coherent policy community, and that their individual positions on deportation are not readily guessed. Therefore, it is a little surprising that while a bureaucracy frame was inevitably pervasive for implementers, *all* the policy actors interviewed repeatedly used a bureaucracy frame, albeit critically. Policy actors, including implementers at times often critiqued the end stages of the asylum process leading up to deportation, namely: the decision to refuse asylum, and the appeals, detention and removal systems. Their criticisms of the system were wide-ranging, concerning both the system itself and individuals within it. Perhaps this overwhelming focus on the UK asylum system is a reflection of what limited knowledge interviewees held and could discuss with authority, and legitimised their own roles within or outside of the system, as per their own hierarchies of knowledge.

Criticisms were directed at individuals and agencies involved in implementing the system. Parliamentarian P2 criticised the then-UKBA due to the level of complaints made against it, and P5 blamed the attitudes of Home Office staff and (appeal) Tribunal staff as *'jaded'*, for example. Implementers also partook in this blame game, directing attacks on other actors. For example, P1b suggested that the judiciary can behave in *'bizarre'*, surprising and unpredictable ways, and P10 highlighted inadequate legal representation and professionals failing to notice indicators of trafficking in asylum cases.

Some interest groups, with their outsider's view of the asylum process, suggested that there is a fundamental problem of broader, functional design governing the asylum and deportation system. These interviewees criticised the broader asylum system, as though it were a self-conscious autonomous agent (like 'the state'). Some assertions

were vague, unable to pinpoint a precise problem, but pointed to undesirable outcomes as indicative of an unjust system.

*'If the state is losing on 25% of cases on appeal then that suggests there is something badly wrong.'*

(P4, parliamentarian, 06.11.12)

*'The system works in a particular way that forces particular narratives from people, and people tell the story that they think they're being asked to tell.'*

(P7, interest group, 07.11.12).

Such flaws are rather inevitable difficulties for large organisations with contradictory purposes that rely on public support but are primarily evaluated by their activities and outputs (Brunsson 1989, p.13). In this context, the Home Office's roles in relation to asylum seekers are inherently contradictory: it must simultaneously be responsible for the deterrence, processing, protection, and expulsion of asylum seekers.

Organisations can employ a number of strategies in this scenario to diffuse attention to their internal contradictions and dysfunction (Meyer & Rowan 1977, p.357) such as systematic disaggregation of functions (Brunsson 1989, p.8). This is difficult for the delivery part of organisations, especially in the context of an increasingly managerial, technocratic and transparent approach to government (as described in Chapter 2).

Interviewees were well-aware of this contradictory role.

*'It makes absolutely no sense to have people who are responsible for the borders and keeping people out who then be [sic] the people also responsible [for deciding asylum claims] – staff at the same department.'*

(P7, interest group, 07.11.12)

*'It's wrong in principle that you have the same Agency dealing with both whether you let people into the country and how you get rid of them. ... You can't have that kind of mentality straddling two departments like that, and in a way that's slightly been recognised now ... by separating out the Border Force from the other parts of the Border Agency. ... But there's still too close a nexus.'*

(P9, interest group, 21.11.12)

P9's support for a separation of functions between the 'Border Force' and the 'Border Agency' is a classic organisational solution to the problem of inconsistent functions, after Brunsson (1989). In this case, that is, the Home Office needing to objectively assess claims for protection whilst also facing targets to refuse and deport the same client group. In fact, the asylum system does not merely suffer from these conflicting

functions, but is currently designed to encourage such a crossover. As an example, the 'new asylum model' was a reorganised asylum process introduced in 2007, celebrated as an 'end-to-end' casework system where asylum claims were allocated a case owner 'managing all aspects of the claims ... through to integration or removal' (Home Office 2007a, p.23, para.58). Implementer P1b described the end-to-end asylum casework function that includes initiating enforcement activity as a 'duty to work with enforcement colleagues to ensure a return.'

Faced with apparently conflicting aims and demands of their organisation in addition to populist discourse on immigration, it is possible that case workers might feel ambivalent about the outcomes of their decision-making. Is the goal of the border official to allow vulnerable people to claim protection, or to keep asylum entry low? Do positive decisions protect the vulnerable, or create more local tensions due to increased demand for public services? Do negative asylum decisions provide evidence of a 'tough' system, or will they highlight incompetence in the removal system?

Case owners might find it difficult to be able to strive for and assess success, given the vagaries or contradictions of stated asylum policy aims, organisational objectives such as 'We will protect our border and our national interests. ... We will tackle ... immigration crime. ... We will implement fast and fair decisions' (UKBA 2009, p.7), coupled with the pressures of time and resources with an unpredictable client group, following Lipsky (1980). We can understand why street-level bureaucrats such as case owners pursue operational targets rather than the quality of processes or clients' needs, as a way of demonstrating personal performance, as 'behaviour in organizations tends to drift toward compatibility with the ways the organization is evaluated' (Lipsky 1980, p.51). Indeed, an absolute focus on meeting removal targets has been confirmed directly by Home Office staff elsewhere (Düvell & Jordan 2003, p.316; Sales 2007, p.166), and confirmed by P1a earlier in relation to meeting removal targets as a priority, rather than actually carrying out more removals (in section 5.2.1). Despite these recognised problems, policy actors in the research seemed committed to the existing asylum system. No interviewees suggested radical or fundamental rethinking but instead supported incremental change and action within the current system. Interviewees in this research sought to effect change within these

parameters. For example, they made suggestions such as looking at good practice, earlier access to legal representation, learning from inspection reports etc. P10 opted for opportunities to influence the Home Office *'behind-the-scenes'* (quoted in section 5.1). Some parliamentarians and interest groups in the sample had intervened directly in trying to prevent particular deportations. This overt resistance to individual deportations was interpreted by implementing civil servants as attempts to *'frustrate removal spuriously'* (P1a), seen as problems to be solved so that the deportation could take place. P1b explained *'It's a very difficult but lengthy barrier to sort out when an MP intervenes'* (P1b). These approaches echo the position of other policy actors, such as the Independent Asylum Commission which was led by a range of deportation stakeholders with a professional interest in the asylum system.<sup>33</sup> Like policy actors in this research, the committee proposed minor adjustments to the asylum system in their 2008 report *Safe Return* (Hobson et al. 2008b).

This section has discussed how policy actors accept deportation practice, using the asylum system as a point of reference in their view of deportation through a bureaucracy frame. Implementers worked within the system, and the remainder were critical observers; both groups have secured their roles in the asylum system. They acknowledged the contradictions in the Home Office role in relation to protecting and excluding asylum seekers, and saw the separation of functions, the pursuit of targets and incremental change as possible solutions. In acknowledging that the system was flawed, they implicitly acknowledged the possibility of refoulement. However, policy actors generally felt the solution in this case was to improve the quality of the existing system. P10 did acknowledge that refoulement could occur as a consequence.

*'However perfect or imperfect that system is ... if somebody has been through that process and been refused asylum in the UK, then they will need to go back to their country. ... We have borders, and we have the UKBA there to protect our borders and therefore there need to be consequences, otherwise what's the point?'*

(P10, implementer, 03.12.12)

This kind of 'sensemaking' (Weick 1995) does not remedy the situation for deportees. Crucially, P10's comment not only presumed the inevitability of deportation in an

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<sup>33</sup> These policy actors known as 'Commissioners' included representatives from the judiciary, the academic world, parliamentarians, lawyers, religious leaders, journalists and interest groups, some of whom were also of a migrant background.

asylum system, but that deportation must occur *even if* the system was *'imperfect'*; that is, even if the decision it has made on a claim was unjust. While acknowledging flaws in the system that could, ultimately, lead to refoulement, interviewees insisted the solution was to improve the earlier process, rather than admit the possibility of refoulement.

*'I think it's inevitable ... that there will be some mistakes. ... It's really crucial that those mistakes are understood and that we learn from them. ... We should ... improve ... the first decision.'*

(P8, parliamentarian, 19.11.12)

*'Those who cannot establish a legal right to remain in the UK should leave but we want to see greater attention to ... whether the individual failed asylum seeker has received adequate legal representation. ... All of us in the NGO sector talk about front-loading, front-loading in lawyers, ... identification, ... clinical intervention. ... If you put all those resources into the beginning of the process, you get dividends down the other end.'*

(P9, interest group, 21.11.12)

This unified position is problematic for those who take an anti-deportation position and for deportees for whom improving the system is too late. Policy actors acknowledged that having a flawed system means there is potential for flawed decisions and refoulement. Policy actors, then, are suggesting that this is an acceptable cost, paid by deportees, because we have to prioritise honouring our existing system. P10 accepted this logic.

*'I don't think anybody would try to argue that our asylum system was perfect. ... It may be that some people who have gone through the asylum system and been refused actually have grounds for seeking asylum and may well be at risk in the country that they go back to.'*

(P10, implementer, 03.12.12)

This point has parallels with the human impact of miscarriages of justice within the criminal justice system. Wrongly convicted defendants suffer usually temporary consequences, but deportees suffer permanent costs, as will be explored in Chapter 7.

### *Discussion*

The ubiquitous hold of a bureaucracy frame as a reference point was somewhat inevitable for policy actors in this study, since they worked within or alongside the asylum system in their professional lives. They reified structure as rigid and largely beyond the effects of agency (Bakewell 2010, p.1695) and thus appeared passive

when employing this frame. It may be disappointing that the existing asylum system is so embedded within the mindset of potentially more independent interest groups and parliamentarians that they only advocated for incremental change, and did not propose ambitious, systemic changes. Criticisms of the asylum system or the people within it were widespread, even among implementers who had a personal stake in its continuation. Here then, is where the potential for change lies in a bureaucracy frame. These minor challenges themselves will affect the existing structures in a 'morphogenetic cycle' (Bakewell 2010, pp.1696–1697), whereby actions shape structural conditions, which then themselves influence later social interactions, in a cycle that constantly produces modified structures ultimately leading to social change. However, this negates any opportunity for refused asylum seekers and deportees to be part of this change.

This leads to some important observations. The usually fractured stakeholders in the deportation process in this research did present a relatively agreed position that others (like Statham & Geddes 2006) have been unable to find. They generally concurred that the asylum and deportation system should remain intact and only be subject to gradual, incremental improvements, in the spirit of P10's declaration above about what '*all of us in the NGO sector*' think. This leads to, perhaps, the suggestion that there could be a deportation 'policy community' after all, that differs only in *how* to change the system, not the nature of that change (as slow and incremental). Second, this position reveals how a bureaucracy frame engenders a particular conception of responsibility towards deportees. Through this framing lens, policy actors in this study accepted the existing asylum system despite its inevitable fallibility, by defending the status quo. Thus policy actors can accept *the refoulement of refused asylum seekers* as a potential consequence. This is a crucial way in which potential refoulement can be explained, yet simultaneously policy actors attribute collective responsibility towards potential deportees to improve the current system.

### 5.3.2 An international interdependence frame

An 'international interdependence' frame was used by policy actors as a way of discussing deportation beyond the deporting state. This perspective concerns the

interactions between states, institutions and transnational networks that govern international migration. International *norms* such as ‘non-interference’ and ‘burden-sharing’ are central to the understanding of the cross-border relationships between states, rather than the fixed rules in a bureaucracy frame. An international interdependence frame is also grounded in the literature concerning the relationship between deportation and citizenship. This literature interprets deportation as a tool for the global population ‘police’ (Walters 2010, p.90) to reinforce individuals’ identity and belonging primarily on the basis of nationality. Thus deportation is an external expression of the deporting state’s power, authority and identity to a global audience. There is also an implicit responsibility of states toward their own citizens in terms of protecting state borders and the wellbeing of citizens within their own territory.

Interviewee P1a articulated this view, recognising the transnational relationship between the asylum system in the UK and these international actors.

*‘The asylum world it’s not a self-contained unit. It’s not a regular feed that comes in. And we’re dealing with international relations and intra-state conflicts. ... There’s a whole economy around it and there’s a whole structure around the UK, so there’s people who facilitate entry and take money for it and they’re paid, and this is big business in some countries.’*

(P1a, implementer, 17.07.12).

P1a not only recognised the bearing of other states and the volatility of the state system upon the arrival of asylum seekers in the UK, but also of transnational networks of individuals such as smugglers and traffickers who benefit from it. He demonstrates the interdependence of these actors, and thus implies states’ lack of power in controlling asylum levels. Thus deportation is also a minor, symbolic way for individual states to resist the inherent anarchy of the international system, by reallocating individuals to their countries of birth.

Policy actors used an international interdependence frame at later sites of the deportation corridor. Interviewees tended to use this frame in the post-deportation context outside the UK, in contrast to how they used a bureaucracy frame to locate deportation wholly *within* the UK asylum process. Interviewees considered international actors to be relevant only at those later stages.

Policy actors tended to use a different tone with this new frame, which is more difficult to convey in a written thesis. They seemed more respectful and deferential compared to their use of a bureaucracy frame which, under the weight of interviewee defensiveness and criticism, had seemed to be endured or suffered as a *fait accompli*. Interviewees accepted, without question, the fundamental influence of the international apparatus on the UK. Interviewees used vocabulary such as '*duty*,' '*obligations*' (P5), and '*higher-order imperatives*' (P1b) in relation to international law. This change of tone implied that participation in relevant international conventions, such as the 1951 Refugee Convention, were respectable, laudable choices of the UK. Of course, states are also acting in their own interests; burden-sharing, for example, has been described as a 'game' between hosting states (Noll 2003, p.240).

Policy actors' criticism in this frame centred on the EU rather than global-scale international institutions, agreements or norms. Interviewees criticised both initiatives enabling states to deport, such as joint deportation flights and the Dublin Regulation, and institutions hindering deportation, such as the European Court decisions allowing appeals or preventing deportations. Policy actors focused on implementation problems, rather than the underlying principles or content of the agreements. For example, interviewees had concerns about imperfect implementation of the Common European Asylum System and the Dublin Regulation by member states, manifest in inconsistencies in decision-making (P9) and by the judiciary (P8). This pragmatic concern echoed their earlier critiques of the asylum system. There are similar contemporary problems in responding to the 'EU refugee crisis,' that is, various burden-sharing statements have been agreed by member states but there has been a palpable lack of progress in their implementation.<sup>34</sup> These prevalent implementation problems again reflect the ways in which large organisations resolve difficult,

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<sup>34</sup> While the current situation will have no doubt developed since the writing of this thesis, it is notable that in 2015 the EU agreed two burden-sharing principles to deal with newly-arriving asylum-seekers in Italy and Greece. The 'emergency relocation' of 160 000 asylum seekers from Greece and Italy to other EU states was agreed under the 'European Agenda on Migration' in May 2015. Three months later, by 30 August 2016, only 8% of these places had been pledged by individual member states (12 990), and just 3% of the target figure had been relocated (4445 individuals) (European Commission 2016a, p.2). Similarly, the 'one-for-one' 'Turkey deal' to deport unauthorised arrivals but accept an equivalent number of refugees for resettlement took effect on 20 March 2016. Despite an fallen average to 47 arrivals per day since 1 May (European Commission 2016b, p.2), three months later by 16 June 2016, just 462 migrants had been deported and 511 Syrian refugees had been resettled (European Commission 2016b, p.4 para2.1, 8 para3.1 respectively).

paradoxical issues, by dividing them into areas of ‘talk’, ‘decisions’ and ‘action’ (Brunsson 1989).

The reputation of international actors in relation to asylum seekers was an important issue for policy actors in the study, and they embraced the contribution of a range of international stakeholders in deportation debates. Policy actors recognised the relevance of international bodies not directly involved in UK deportations because of their own deportation practices and how in turn they perceived UK practice.

Interviewees (P7 and P9) cited examples of ‘good’ practice that the UK should emulate from Canada, Norway, and the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE). Policy actors held the UNHCR in particularly high regard, its position at the apex of the ‘hierarchy of limited knowledge’ resonating here. For example, P5 felt that the Home Office and the European Commission appeared to only take notice of UNHCR rather than small, third sector organisations. Her illustration concerned attempts of different stakeholder agencies to prevent deportations under the Dublin Regulation, on the grounds that individual asylum seekers would not receive equivalent consideration of their asylum claims in different countries.

*‘[In a Dublin Regulation case] a report by UNHCR saying “Under no uncertain circumstances send anyone back to Greece” ... The [European] Commission ... said “You need that level, you need UNHCR. ... [You need] something as strong as that.” ... So the Home Office hears it doesn’t matter how many little organisations you have - unless you have UNHCR ... then it’s not enough.’*

(P5, interest group, 06.11.12)

P5’s statement is interesting for a number of reasons. She found the UNHCR’s voice to be a direct and unrivalled influence upon EU policy compared to other lobbying ‘*little organisations*’. She noted inconsistent practice across the EU. She also suggested the European Commission influenced the Home Office in relation to deportation policy.

Relatedly, interviewees interpreted UNHCR’s *Quality Initiative* assessment of the UK’s asylum processes quite differently, but in their own interests. On one hand, a civil service implementer portrayed these assessments as evidence of the quality of the UK’s asylum process compared to other countries.

*‘UNHCR have assessed what we do. ... [We] are very confident in our asylum process and it’s held up as one of the best in the world.’*

(P1b, implementer, 17.07.12)

P1b clearly cared about UNHCR evaluation, seeing it as pivotal for the UK to maintain a positive international reputation. In contrast, an interest group focused on UNHCR criticism of the same UK asylum procedures.

*[UKBA assumes] the asylum system has worked and the asylum decisions have been right all along, which is very clear it's not. UNHCR have made it very clear. Their reports is it's not. ... I don't think the UK system for deciding asylum cases is good, but it is better than some other countries.'*

(P7, interest group, 07.11.12)

Notably, these two interviewees concurred that UK asylum processes were of a higher quality than in many other states, reinforcing their position to maintain and incrementally improve the UK asylum system. They also concurred that capitalising on UNHCR endorsement was an important means for the UK to maintain a good international reputation.

Similarly, policy actors asserted that maintaining constructive relationships between international actors was important. They were acutely aware of the need for the UK to interact constructively with countries of return to ensure they would re-document and readmit deportees, particularly as this is often not in the interests of the country of return (Ellermann 2008). Parliamentarian P6, for example, proposed using the foreign aid budget for international development projects to ensure that deportees rebuild their lives in countries of return, and to incentivise cooperation from readmitting states.<sup>35</sup>

The importance of positive inter-state relations between the UK and countries of return was most clear in relation to UK involvement in the post-deportation context, including the question of its relationship with (and responsibility for) deportees. These drew the most vociferous response from interviewees, who used an international interdependence frame to defend their position.

*'They're a foreign national and they're living within their country's sovereign borders and it's the responsibility of that state to look after them. ... I think the foreign state would say that if we were sticking our nose into their affairs.'*

(P1a, implementer, 17.07.12)

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<sup>35</sup> A similar policy was introduced at the Valletta Summit between the EU and African leaders in November 2015. It claimed a *'high degree of interdependence'* between EU and Africa on migration-related problems (European Council 2015, p.2). The intention of the agreement is to discourage initial migration from Africa, but the fund also includes funding for readmission and reintegration of *'returnees'*.

*'You've got no right to interfere with the other country. ... We would be very wary of people investigating Great Britain after they've been returned. ... This is the awful business of interfering in the business of a sovereign nation. ... What the country then does with them is nothing to do with us.'*

(P2, parliamentarian, 05.11.12)

These policy actors used the concepts of sovereignty and non-interference (or, less eloquently, *'sticking our nose into their affairs'*) as irrefutable reasons for ending the UK's involvement with deportees. Interestingly, they provided no further justification. This is reminiscent of Collingwood's (1940) work on absolute presuppositions; that norms are so firmly embedded in the speakers' understanding of the world that they are thought to require no further explanation or reasoning. By extension, policy actors were suggesting that regardless of the potential for refoulement, non-interference norms were rightly immutable and unchallengeable. Individual deportees who might be refouled (in the face of international law) were not important enough to merit a routine challenge to the delicate and weighty realm of inter-state relations. This is also the first time that we see different scales of interaction within the 'multi-level game' of burden-sharing (Noll 2003, p.251). In this scenario, P2 was suggesting that two states (deporting and receiving) would work together at the expense of the individual.

### *Discussion*

In contrast to a bureaucracy frame, an international interdependence frame is more specifically directed at the post deportation context of the deportation corridor. Policy actors' statements through this lens demonstrated their unquestioning deference to international relations concepts of sovereignty and non-interference, further reifying structures in the deportation realm. Interviewees undoubtedly felt that the UK's international reputation and influence outweighed the needs of individual deportees. Interviewees prioritised building positive relationships between the UK, UNHCR and countries of return, over relationships with individuals and non-citizens.

These understandings of deportation expressed using an international interdependence frame complement Walters' ideas on the deporting state as, effectively, the international population police (2010, pp.72, 90) and that citizens should remain in their countries of birth. However, by drawing on the concept of citizenship, Walters inadvertently *does* invite us to consider the individual citizen. His

view effectively equates citizenship with the notion of 'belonging', and reinforces the tendency of the policy world to assume that return 'home' or 'repatriation' (as a 'durable' solution to the refugee 'problem') is a satisfactory policy solution for asylum seekers, which it is not for many individuals (Black & Koser 1999; Muggeridge & Doná 2006; Omata 2013).

Citizenship may also be an underlying influence upon street-level bureaucrats adopting an international interdependence frame, since they understand themselves not as actors in the international realm but as stakeholders in domestic public policy (Barnes & Prior 2009). They may see themselves as citizens exercising a little agency and bearing a small part of the responsibility to the international balance of states through maintaining the practice of deportation to encourage citizens to remain in their countries of birth.

Ultimately, interviewees felt strongly that the UK could not even contemplate formal, visible intervention in the country of return in order to protect deportees because the long-term interests of the UK were at stake, particularly in needing to ensure future cooperation by countries of return. This has parallels in the International Relations (IR) literature on the longstanding dilemmas of humanitarian intervention, with regard to the seriousness of overruling the principle of sovereignty and the norm of non-intervention, even in order to protect individuals (Wheeler & Bellamy 2001). Various accusations of refoulement bear this out, as they have not changed removals policy or practice. Law practitioners have challenged UK deportations to Iraq and Zimbabwe on the grounds of ill-treatment upon return (REDRESS & ILPA 2006, pp.7–8) and there have been occasional media reports of the UK re-returning deportees back to the UK having been refouled (Telegraph 2005; Gallagher 2010). These examples of individuals being refouled have not had any apparent effect upon subsequent deportation practice. The message from policy actors under this frame was that the potential for refoulement is a tolerated price to protect the idea of citizenship and to maintain a strong international reputation and working relationships between the UK and countries of return.

### 5.3.3 A human frame

The essence of a human frame is reference to individuals and their personal experiences of deportation. It is based on an ‘ethics of care’ approach (Gilligan 1995), responding to individual needs and contexts rather than a uniform approach to cases. Given their lack of knowledge about the period after deportation, policy actors often used anecdotal or hypothetical examples of refused asylum seekers and deportees. Interest groups used client cases as examples, and parliamentarians drew on constituency examples, as their peers do in PQs on deportation.<sup>36</sup> Implementers used asylum casework examples, although infrequently.

Interviewees used these examples within a human frame in three clear ways: to humanise discourse, to emphasise their own humanity, and to hypothesise about the post-deportation environment. Each of these is explored briefly below.

#### *Humanising discourse*

Interviewees advocated for a more humanitarian, caring approach in asylum and deportation systems. P1b and P3 both talked about the need for ‘*humane*’ and ‘*dignified*’ approaches to deportations. P6 suggested that immigration officers need a ‘*humanitarian test*’ during training, and P4 mourned the deficit of human-centred perspectives in immigration discussions.

*‘We are supposed to be caring for humanity, sometimes a difficult concept to put into a debate on immigration.’*

(P4, parliamentarian, 06.11.12).

*‘We’d rather individuals return with dignity rather than an enforced removal’.*

(P1b, implementer, 17.07.12)

These examples suggest a moral void within UK asylum and deportation systems, as well as the general public discourse on immigration and asylum. P1b’s promotion of the benefits of voluntary returns strongly implied the unspoken inverse: that forced removals are *undignified* and *inhumane*.

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<sup>36</sup> Pamela Nash MP for example, asked a PQ about Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) asylum policy with reference to a lesbian deportee in Uganda who was injured during removal, whose sexuality was revealed so felt unable to access medical treatment and later died. *HC Deb 2 April 2014 c969*. Ian Mearns MP expressed concern for a deportee family who had lived in his constituency and were unable to get from the airport to their home. *HC Deb 90 Jan 2015 c1010*.

Interviewees discussed drawing on personal examples in their attempts to influence public opinion to provide a more persuasive argument. For example, P5 used stories based on her clients to encourage people to think about immigration issues differently.

*'If you tell someone you're an immigration solicitor then they're [responding] "You're keeping ... foreign prisoners here, those rapists." ... What I say is "Well let's look at their case, if I give you an example of one person." ... If you use an example, people are like "Gosh that's terrible" or if you say "Would you want to go to Iraq?" then they'll be like "Oh no, how can we send someone back there?" But when they look at the figures, at the generalities, they're like "Yeah we need to get rid of these people."'*

(P5, interest group, 06.11.12)

Both P5 and P4 above used a human frame as a tool for challenging anti-immigrant sentiment in their public and professional discourse, P5 when talking with people outside of work, and P4 during his professional discussions about immigration.

#### *Establishing actors' own humanity*

Implementers and parliamentarians in particular appeared to want to demonstrate their own humanity and integrity during interviews for this research. Implementers used anecdotes within a human frame as another way of clarifying the limits of their own roles in the deportation system and their lack of influence over policy, in contrast to our understanding of street-level bureaucrats. They emphasised their own humanity and countered what they perceived to be a negative narrative about themselves within the policy world.<sup>37</sup> P10 was *'ashamed'* to admit her ignorance of deportation processes. P1a emphasised that he was not *'cold or callous'* about deportees. Implementers provided anecdotes about positive encounters with deportees, with P1a and P10 both recounting phone calls with deportees. These examples confirm that anecdotal knowledge was used to legitimise actors' roles in the deportation process on the basis of their own good character, and to demonstrate their work took place with an ethics of care approach.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Similarly, during an informal conversation with subcontracted implementers prior to starting this study, a group of employees provided stories of deportees who had contacted them with thanks for support while they had been in the UK. These implementers thus affirmed their own humanity in a contentious removal process.

<sup>38</sup> Comparatively, deportees in the study also wanted to demonstrate their moral qualities, and were mystified as to why their good character was insufficient to be granted permission to stay in the UK.

### *Hypothesising about post-deportation*

A human frame was also used by policy actors was to hypothesise about post-deportation contexts, including potential problems for deportees and the responsibilities of other actors toward them. This was a good way of being able to discuss deportation without having expert knowledge, reports, data or stories to draw upon, a tool for filling a void in their limited hierarchies of knowledge. P4 provided a good example, as he drew on his own knowledge and experience of the Democratic Republic of Congo, a country to which the UK deports refused asylum seekers, in order to speculate about how deportees might fare upon return.

*'For example in Congo, you deport somebody to Kinshasa. There is no road to Goma in the East. There's no road to the west of the country. If you've got money the only way you could go would be by plane. If you haven't got money, you go by a series of buses, trucks, walking or rivers to get anywhere, and it is a very dangerous place, and the family might not want you back anyway, and you'd be seen as a failure for returning. And that's if ... you can get out of the airport.'*

(P4, parliamentarian, 06.11.12)

This is an interesting application of experience in that country. P4 provided details of the difficulties he himself faced in that country, conscious of his privileged, protected position there, and then envisaged a (much less powerful) deportee's difficulties to be greatly magnified upon return. Similarly, P9's organisation had done some work on Sri Lankan deportations, so could envisage the possible problems for deportees who tried to inform staff in the UK embassy about any ill-treatment upon return.

*'The other thing I was worried about and sought assurances was if somebody [a deportee] did phone up the reception at the British High Commission very often the first question is "Are you a British national?" and if they said "No I'm not" they would have the phone put down on them.'*

(P9, interest group, 21.11.12)

P9's hypothetical, humanitarian concern was that not only might Sri Lankan deportees experience ill-treatment by their own authorities on return from the UK, but they could be refused any assistance if they approached the UK authorities for support on the grounds of their (lack of) citizenship.

There were prominent silences in implementer accounts when they were asked about deportees needs or post-deportation circumstances. This is a moment where one policy actor group (implementers) responded differently to others (parliamentarians

and interest groups). The three implementers at times declined to answer questions about post-deportation contexts, denying knowledge and the possibility of post-deportation problems. Implementers' expressions of this refusal varied. P1a seemed uninterested, stating *'They [deportees] are no longer our problem.'* My field notes recorded that P1b seemed *'quite triumphant'* answering several questions about what happens to deportees at the handover point between escorts and the country of return (field diary entry, 17.07.12). Looking at the interview schedule, she declared in quick succession: *'No idea; haven't got a clue; and can't comment on that one'*. While P10 declined to speculate about what happens to deportees, she did acknowledge her assumption that those returned to another EU state would have their asylum claim heard. In contrast to P1b, P10 was self-conscious in admitting her ignorance of the deportation and post-deportation environment.

*'I'm a bit ashamed to say I don't know a lot about what happens when a family or an individual is escorted. ... I don't really know what happens when an escort hands over and I don't know the legalities of it. ... I just don't know. So I don't really want to speculate too much I'm afraid.'*

(P10, implementer, 03.12.12)

Implementers' silences about the post-deportation environment were perhaps unsurprising but insightful. Implementers may have expected a confrontational interview due to their participation in the deportation system. They may have been engaging in a form of 'sensemaking' (Weick 1995); rather than making sense of surprising incidents in retrospect, they were making sense of the possibly terrible consequences of deportation by regarding them as unknowable. As implementers and employees, these actors did not want to be confronted with the possibility of post-deportation problems linked to their organisation, so dismissed them as implausible. They may have been suffering the 'fallacy of centrality' (Westrum 1982, p.393) whereby organisations deny problems exist on the grounds that they have not heard about them. Rich knowledge already exists in the deportation literature about commonplace post-deportation difficulties (as outlined in Chapter 3), but for some policy actors they seemed to be 'socially invisible' 'hidden events' (Westrum 1982, pp.381–382) and did not appear in their hierarchies of limited knowledge.

## 5.4 How are deportees described by different policy actors?

### 5.4.1 Defining and labelling deportees<sup>39</sup>

Policy actors used different terms and ways of describing deportees through each frame. They were reluctant to use the term ‘deportee,’ perhaps conscious of the legal meaning of the term ‘deportation’ as opposed to ‘administrative removal’ (outlined in *Table 2.2*) and the associated absence of an accepted term to describe individuals who have been subject to administrative removal.

When using a bureaucracy frame, many interviewees used the term ‘*asylum seeker*,’ in reference to deportees’ history in the UK. This is a retrospective label, which did not reflect that deportees were physically absent from the UK at the time of the interview. Interviewees also used more inanimate terms like ‘*removals*’ (from ‘administrative removal’) or ‘*returns*’ (from ‘enforced returns’) but without specifying whether they were referring to individuals or the process of deportation. For example, implementer P1a discussed targets saying ‘*the latest published one is ... 50 000 removals this year?*’ while parliamentarian P2 referred to ‘*an inquiry into enforced removals.*’ P5, representing an interest group, explained ‘*a lot of my work in the High Courts is involved in removals.*’ It is likely that interviewees adopted this opaque, official policy language from government sources, such as published statistics.<sup>40</sup>

Despite their earlier scepticism in relation to the media and statistics about migration, interviewees struggled to avoid more obvious traps in wider asylum and migration discourse around ‘othering’ and binary adjectives. This discourse can be summed up as ‘hostility themes,’ denying individuals’ humanity, reflecting activities that are disapproved of, or justifying their exclusion (Leudar & Hayes 2008, p.215). Some described refused asylum seekers pejoratively as ‘*these people*’ (used by P1, P5 and P6, although P5 also used this phrase to portray the public). P1a used ‘*rogue element.*’ Many struggled to use a wider vocabulary beyond simplistic, polarising descriptors

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<sup>39</sup> Given the legal meaning of the term ‘deportation’ as opposed to ‘administrative removal’ (outlined in Chapter 2) and the absence of a term to describe individuals who have been administratively removed, the interview schedule used several different terms to describe deportees to encourage respondents to use a term that they preferred, rather than being directed to any particular one.

<sup>40</sup> The regular *Immigration Statistics* publication for example, has a section entitled ‘*returns*’. Within the data, deportees are described as ‘*asylum enforced removals*’. See, for example, cell M4, tab rv\_06 in the *Immigration Statistics* (Home Office 2016d).

that were essentialising. Interviewees' descriptions posed *'genuine'* against *'not genuine'* (P5 and P8), *'those that deserve it, and those that don't deserve protection'* (P1b). There was the sense of refugees being the opposite of an economic migrant: *'You claim in the first safe haven that you come to' not 'go shopping around the EU ... for ... [somewhere] you can stay and find work'* (P1b). Even those who were heavily critical of public discourse described asylum seekers in relation to these stereotypes. P4 stated *'I find asylum seekers actually are quite determined to achieve something in their lives, quite hard working and very motivated otherwise they wouldn't have managed to get out'*. A bureaucracy frame is in evidence through these descriptions, reflecting zero-sum migration systems designed to categorise people as either legitimate or not legitimate.

Not all policy actors fell into the traps of popular discourse. Two interviewees introduced alternative terms for asylum seekers that implied some agency. P9 proposed *'participant'*, declaring that a spirit of cooperation could yield positive engagement between asylum seekers and the Home Office.

*'The Border Agency ... it's still treating asylum seekers as objects within the system rather than as, the term I use, as participants. Whereas if you have got people who are participants ... they will be more eager to cooperate and to help elicit the true information about things.'*

(P9, interest group, 21.11.12)

While the intention is admirable, this term *'participant'* itself is disputable as it suggests an equivalent capacity for agency between asylum seekers and case owners. Note also that P9 reinforces the discourse that asylum seekers present either *'true'* or *'false'* information to the Home Office.

P1b and P7 mentioned MPs who consider immigration detainees as *'constituents'*. However, these two interviewees had opposing views on the appropriateness of this term. P1b equated a constituent with a voter, and so understood this term as inapplicable to detained asylum-seekers. P1b was adamant that deportable migrants as non-citizens were not entitled to MP's services. This is in line with Walters' (2010) and De Genova's analysis of deportation as reflecting the deporting society's ideas about citizenship (2010, pp.51–54). In contrast, P7 considered using the term constituent to be *'astonishing'* and *'a fantastic point of view'*. Disagreement between

P1b and P7 exemplifies how deportation can reveal contestation about citizenship within the host society (Anderson et al. 2011b, p.553). Although imperfect and retrospective, these interviewee terms - '*participant*' and '*constituent*' - offer more positive alternatives to populist discourse on migration.

When implementers and interest groups were specifically directed to discuss the post-deportation context there were changes in their language (although this was not the case for parliamentarians). They used a small range of phrases, reflecting the lack of an obvious vocabulary available to them. These new phrases demonstrated a shift to an international interdependence frame. The phrases included: '*foreign national*' (P1a, P9, and also the Asylum Policy Correspondence Team in declining an interview), and '*citizen of their own country*' (P1a). People who become refugees after deportation were described as '*internally displaced people*' (IDPs) (P3) or '*refugees sur place*' (P5 and P9). P3 also considered deportees to be '*returnees*'; a more politically neutral term but includes any type of returning migrant, and thus negating the forced nature of deportees' initial migrations. These terms again situated deportees in relation to their citizenship: as non-citizens of the UK or as (unprotected) citizens of countries of birth.

Interviewees rarely described deportees using a human frame. On the occasions that this did occur, they described deportees as '*outsiders*' (P7), '*rejected*' (P4) or a potential '*enemy*' of the country of return (P4). It is important that some interviewees, if only two, acknowledged deportees might not be welcome or 'belong' to their former community in their country of birth. This demonstrates a resistance to the accepted policy view of return as a solution, and concurs with the return migration literature about return being inappropriate or difficult for migrants (Black & Koser 1999; Muggerridge & Doná 2006; Omata 2013; Khosravi 2009; Van Hear 1998). These terms, however, also suggest that deportees lack agency and positive traits. They imply a failure of the country of return to protect them, as did the use of 'IDPs' or '*refugees sur place*' in an international interdependence frame.

#### 5.4.2 Deportees as vulnerable to risk

Policy actors acknowledged that deportees returning to their country of origin were potentially at risk. Interviewees used a human frame to envisage a range of difficult or risky situations in which deportees might find themselves in their country of origin. Notably, none dwelt on potential risks faced by deportees returned under the Dublin Convention to another EU country. Interviewees drew on practice experience, anecdotes and hypotheses about individual cases. They identified potential risks to deportees in the post-deportation environment that centred on physical vulnerability to injury, violence, torture and retribution etc. (including all the parliamentarians: P2, P4, P6, and P8 as well as P5, P7, and P10). Other risks included social isolation (P2 and P4) and an inability to meet basic needs (P2, P4 and P7) due to a lack of social capital upon return. Their responses echo (but do not cite) similar findings in the deportation literature (such as Van Hear 1998; Hagan et al. 2008; Nixon 1994; Zarzosa 1998).

Civil servants P1a and P1b were unwilling to enter into much speculation about risk on return, but did acknowledge some potential areas of vulnerability for deportees, framing their responses within a mix of bureaucracy and human lenses. They painted a scenario where asylum seekers were afraid to return because of financial obligations to family and other agents who facilitated their journey to the UK. P1a used this example to explain that these individuals might be fearful but would not meet the criteria of the 1951 Refugee Convention to be designated as refugees. She described this as *'the wrong type of fear.'* She also acknowledged that deportees might be exposed to an unspecified *'negligible'* risk on return, which is evaluated by a standard risk assessment conducted by case owners prior to deportation.

When considering UK procedures for removing deportees, interviewees' perceptions of further vulnerabilities were revealed. In an attempt to reconcile the disjuncture between the fixed, top-down system and the needs of the individual, between a bureaucracy frame and a human frame, policy actors agreed that certain individuals being deported might require additional measures or attention. Interviewees were almost unanimous in their prioritisation of children and families for different, compassionate treatment. Nine of eleven interviewees specifically raised this. This is not particularly surprising in context, as families were a clear political priority at the

time of conducting fieldwork in 2012, the early period of the Conservative-led Coalition government that had introduced a new family returns process and 'ended' child detention. Other exceptions were made by individual interviewees for deportees with ill-health (P8) or disabilities (P10), for young adults (P7) and those who had been tortured (P9). Policy actors here reinforced their deference to the asylum system, suggesting amendments and allowances to it for what are seen as exceptional cases, rather than prioritising a human frame.

It is noteworthy that interviewees felt some groups also merited adjustments to the deportation process, even suggesting potentially vulnerable groups not prompted by the interview schedule. Examples included: refused asylum seekers who had been in the UK for a long time who might not remember their country of birth or have social networks in place there (three parliamentarians, P4, 6, 8 and implementer P10); refused asylum seekers whose return may be unsustainable (P3 and P6); and torture survivors (P9). Again in context it is understandable that interviewees were concerned about asylum seekers who had been in the UK for a long time without a decision on their asylum case. They will have been aware of the long-running Home Office Case Resolution exercise for such cases that began in 2007 and, despite much parliamentary scrutiny, has never been fully completed (see Chapter 2).

A framing analysis has exposed policy actors' different understandings of deportees' vulnerability to risk. On one hand, most policy actors recognised that the (bureaucratic) asylum system should proactively anticipate the potential additional vulnerabilities of certain social groups. From a human perspective, they also recognised the risky situations that *all* deportees may face upon return regardless of their social and demographic characteristics, particularly around physical liability and a lack of social capital.

## **5.5 How do policy actors understand responsibility in relation to deportation?**

In the preceding section, policy actors acknowledged that deportees might lack agency and face risks upon return to their countries of origin. The relationship between the UK and deportees can be considered in terms of the responsibility that

the UK might have towards those it has deported while being potentially vulnerable to risk. Does the deportation action by the UK imply acknowledgement of this relationship with deportees and a concomitant moral obligation to act in these circumstances?

Policy actors in this research saw a responsibility in the purview of states; they did not attribute any responsibilities to individuals in the country of return, having foreseen why one cannot assume deportees would be protected by their communities in the country of origin. However, there was significant conflict between interviewees when discussing ways in which moral responsibilities towards deportees could be met. We can now comprehend these conflicting positions using conceptions of responsibility found in each frame of reference. To recap from Chapter 4 (section 4.6.3):

- In a bureaucracy frame, the primary responsibility is to preserve the asylum system, even at the cost of potential refoulement.
- In an international interdependence frame, the primary responsibility is to maintain national identity, reputation and relationships among other states, again at the cost of potential refoulement.
- Only in a human frame are deportees owed a moral responsibility as human beings with individual needs.

There is clearly some tension between these conceptualisations of responsibility. This does not mean that under the bureaucracy and international interdependence frames there cannot be action to reduce risks to deportees. However, any intervention must be consistent with the priorities of that frame to be acceptable to other actors. Some illustrations follow as policy actors proposed four broad ways in which risks to deportees could be minimised by states.

First, they suggested preventative solutions within a bureaucracy frame. These included improving escorts' knowledge (P7), improving country of origin information and understanding of the conditions in the country of return (P2), fairness and transparency of the deportation process, including appropriate physical handling (P2), and access to legal representation during the asylum process (P2, P10). Such solutions are likely to be acceptable to policy actors because they are consistent with the need to preserve the integrity of the asylum system; the core responsibility under a bureaucracy frame.

Relatedly, the second proposal was that governments could decide not to deport individuals at risk. This was an option for over half of interviewees (P1, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8 and P9). If deportees faced a threat to their personal security (P5, P6, and P9) then, under an international interdependence frame, the principle of non-refoulement would be an acceptable reason not to deport the person in question. Interviewees P5, P8 and P9 also accepted the option to not deport if deportees faced a threat to their human rights, such as family separation, or due to age or ill-health. This is consistent with a bureaucracy frame's requirement to preserve the integrity of the system by adhering to human rights legislation.

Some interviewees proposed options which were contentious because they were not always consistent with the conceptions of responsibility found in the bureaucracy and international interdependence frames. Four interviewees, three of whom were parliamentarians, proposed a third option for the UK: some kind of post-deportation intervention (P2, P4, P6 and P7). For example, the UK could work with the country of return to establish their intentions during the first 24 hours after a deportee's return (P2). The UK could bring a deportee back to the UK following legal breaches (P7), it could ensure deportees were met by a trusted organisation at the airport (P7) and accompanied to their 'home' community (P4). The UK could also undertake post-deportation monitoring and develop a mechanism so that deportees could contact UK representatives in the country of return (P6 and P7).

This kind of direct intervention might be a preference under a human frame, but was strongly rejected by interviewees P1a and P1b as well as in government statements (described in Chapter 1). More unpredictably, two parliamentarians P2 and P4 themselves immediately rejected their own intervention proposals, due to the prospect of violating international relations norms. This merits a little further detail.

*'There ought to be sufficient contact with the receiving country in advance so what's going to happen immediately, for the first 24 hours or so, is known in advance. Obviously you can't do more than that, you've got no right to interfere with the other country.'*

(P2, parliamentarian, 05.11.12)

P2 was concerned about the immediate safety of deportees in terms of arrival, getting through the airport and onward travel to where they would stay, all of which will

occur within the first day after removal. It is interesting that for P2 the need for assurances during the initial 24 hour period did not seem to constitute 'interference', yet he also believed the international relations norm of non-interference would prohibit further UK involvement beyond one day.

Similarly, P4 believed that the UK had a responsibility to ensure that deportees return to a community, rather than simply being left at the airport, because of the physical vulnerability of deportees in the immediate post-deportation period.

*'I think there should be a guarantee of safety to get them back to the community where they came from, and that would mean ... that the national government of the receiving country would have to allow British officials to accompany them to that spot. Now that's something that most national governments would be very reluctant to do I suspect ... because the sovereignty issue then comes up straight away.'*

(P4, parliamentarian, 06.11.12)

Again we can see from P4's own words how international interdependence norms would prevent the UK from acting to ensure the safety of deportees: that there ought to be a 'guarantee of safety' yet for him, 'the sovereignty issue then comes up' which would prevent safety from being secured.

From these examples, I infer policy actors' resolution to the dilemma of post-deportation responsibility: that while it might be morally preferable to intervene, the importance of maintaining delicate international relations overrides action to ensure deportees' safety. Both of the quoted parliamentarians, along with parliamentarian P6 who suggested a need to monitor deported children, felt a responsibility on the UK's part to safeguard and protect deportees, understood through a human frame.

However, both P2 and P4 immediately closed down their own arguments in deference to international relations norms. They did not even explain the norm to which they deferred, under the assumption that it was self-explanatory and unchallengeable. This is perhaps understandable, since a state might intervene in the case of their own citizens detained in another country, but this is always a delicate, diplomatic matter. How much less then, would a host state dare to advocate for a non-citizen in the latter's own country of origin? Fundamentally, intervention in countries of return in the post-deportation context, derived from a humanitarian impetus, clashes with the imperative under an international interdependence frame to maintain constructive

relations with countries of origin and to respect the norm of non-interference.

Further, direct intervention also clashes with the conception of responsibility under a bureaucracy frame, which requires deportations in order to preserve the integrity of the system.

A fourth option to minimise risks to deportees was suggested by several policy actors (P1b, P2, P4 and P8 but no interest groups) who felt that some responsibilities involved other international actors. They felt that the UK should engage in dialogue with other countries of return - not only countries of origin (P1b, P2 and P4) but also other EU member states (P8). These options fit with the priorities of bureaucracy and international interdependence frames, as states wish to be seen to maintain their national laws and systems and uphold their international reputations by complying with international norms and expectations.

However, such dialogue is not straightforward, since it presumes an acceptance by both parties that deportees might face risks within their own countries of origin. This contentious presumption is evidenced by the difficulties deporting states have experienced in developing agreements with countries of origin, such as memoranda of understanding to secure deportees' human rights after removal (Ellermann 2008). From the perspective of a human frame, it is perhaps inconsistent that countries of origin, originally unable to prevent the threat of persecution, might later be expected to protect deportees at risk. This objection was raised by P9 in relation to individuals who had been tortured in their country of origin.

*'According to the committee (UNCAT) there is an obligation on the receiving state to provide rehabilitation [for torture survivors]. ... The anomaly would be of course ... in order to get your rehabilitation you've got to come back to the country which tortured you in the first place. There is that degree of illogicality about that.'*

(P9, interest group, 21.11.12)

P9 is saying that there is an international obligation upon the state to provide treatment for resident torture survivors but in the example of deportees, the state obligated in this way may also be a perpetrator. Such paradoxes are inevitable if deportees are returned to states that will not in practice keep them safe.

## 5.6 Discussion: the emergence of a framing hierarchy?

Section 5.3 discussed policy actors' use of the three frames in isolation, and how they emphasised particular elements of each frame. In light of their subsequent discussions about deportees and responsibility, it is worth reflecting on how interviewees drew on the three frames in combination to set out their worldviews on deportation. Analysing these three framing devices helps us to structure our understanding of how policy actors understood deportation and subsequently will use these perceptions to contribute to deportation policy, practice and discourse. This also enables comparisons of policy actors' views with deportees and supporters as other deportation stakeholders.

As a whole, the common usage of multiple frames paints a picture of policy actors whose views on the complex issue of deportation are shaped by many different considerations. One might have expected implementers to favour a bureaucracy frame, and interest groups to favour a human frame, based on our own prejudices and common discourse about charities being inherently virtuous (Kelly 2007, pp.3–4) but this was not the case for interviewees. Whether parliamentarian, implementer or interest group, policy actors used all three frames at different times and in different combinations; they did not favour particular frames consistently.

The analysis suggests that for policy actors, the three frames do not carry equal weight but take precedence at different moments. Interviewees demonstrated an overall tendency to employ bureaucracy and international interdependence frames at different temporal and spatial points in the deportation corridor. A bureaucracy frame was used to discuss the structures in the earlier stages of the asylum system and an international interdependence frame was used to debate post-deportation issues. Policy actors interspersed these relatively fixed framings with more unpredictable or ubiquitous uses of a human frame. They drew on real or hypothetical examples of individuals to suggest difficulties in the application of the asylum system at different points along the entire deportation corridor. Thus in the earlier realm of the deportation corridor, while still in the UK, policy actors tended to prioritise a bureaucracy frame, but in the post-deportation context an international interdependence frame was the dominant priority, but in neither context did policy actors prioritise a human

frame. In effect, policy actors used different frames to tell the story of structure and agency in deportation, by setting out the structured elements of the system (the structures inherent in bureaucracy and international interdependence frames) that were then challenged by the individual experience of that system (a human frame).

Exploration of policy actors' conceptualisation of moral responsibility towards deportees in the preceding analysis reveals a context where they struggled to balance the priorities of the three frames in practice. The ways in which responsibility was framed in a post-deportation context showed the difficulties for policy actors of understanding deportation through a number of frames simultaneously. This positioning between the three frames was encapsulated by P10 and P5. They show how the debate about responsibility towards deportees consisted of three main concerns reflecting the three frames.

*'Legally what you can do is very limited and it does depend on what kind of arrangements you've got with another country. Whether morally there's any kind of obligation is more questionable.'*

(P10, implementer, 03.12.12)

*'In the UK they [children leaving care] will continue to be supported by ... the local authority until they're 21 or ... 24, so we actually agree in our country that you're not ready to be on your own when you're 18. Yet, in the international context we're like "Yeah you can go back, not just to a different country, a country where you may not have been for five, six years, but one where bombings are everyday life and there may be no social services or hospitals." ... Let's not forget who we're talking about, we're talking about children.'*

(P5, interest group, 06.11.12)

P10 asserted that humanitarian concerns are contentious, they are more *'questionable'*, below what can be done *'legally'* (a bureaucracy frame) and *'arrangements you've got with another country'* (an international interdependence frame). For him, the human frame was the least compelling and held the least power. Likewise, P5 pointed out the inconsistency between what *'we actually agree in our country'* (a bureaucracy frame) and *'in the international context'* (an international interdependence frame) in relation to former asylum-seeking children. She concluded by pointing out these children's humanity: *'we're talking about children'* (a human frame). For P5, the inconsistency when applying different frames to questions of responsibility in the deportation context was problematic.

Given the small sample size, it is difficult to draw definitive conclusions about policy actors' uses of different frames. However, given the available evidence, on balance I suggest that an international interdependence frame is the stronger and more powerful frame used by policy actors, despite a bureaucracy frame being far more commonly employed. This is for several reasons.

We know that policy actors spoke more deferentially using this frame in comparison to a bureaucracy frame, about which they launched a plethora of criticisms. In particular, interviewees held the UNHCR in high regard, an international organisation and key actor in an international interdependence frame.

Most compellingly, international relations norms (key components of an international interdependence frame) did not warrant an explanation by interviewees, but were treated unquestioningly as absolute presuppositions (Collingwood 1940). A bureaucracy frame was not accorded equivalent treatment. In fact, the larger volume of time accorded by interviewees to a bureaucracy frame in their interviews suggested that this frame was more disputable, while an international interdependence frame was relatively without debate. Policy actors made many suggestions about amending or modifying asylum and deportation rules in order to make them more palatable.

Where contentious post-deportation intervention was brought up in interviews, policy actors selected the more authoritative, international interdependence frame to defend their position. Even where interviewees wanted to suggest post-deportation intervention, they quashed their own proposals in light of the international interdependence perspective, suggesting that international norms were unchallengeable, most powerful, and occupied the highest priority in a framing hierarchy.

## 5.7 Conclusion

This chapter has considered what knowledge policy actors in the sample drew on to inform their views on deportation, and the areas in which this knowledge was incomplete. The chapter then explored how policy actors used different frames when drawing on their knowledge to discuss deportation. It explored the ways in which policy actors discussed deportees, portrayed them as lacking agency, and debated the

potential moral responsibilities owed to deportees in light of the UK's relationship with them. These practical discussions enabled analysis of the way in which frames were used in combination and the difficulties that arose when they collided.

In some ways, policy actors presented a more coherent deportation 'policy community' (Somerville & Goodman 2010, p.951) than expected, despite looking for differences between them as parliamentarians, implementers and interest groups. They valued sources of information similarly (according to authorship and political influence, as well as their own personal knowledge). They generally saw the deportation world through the same frames at the same time (a bureaucracy frame for earlier stages of the deportation corridor, and an international interdependence frame during later stages). They largely concurred regarding the relative positions of those frames in application to contentious deportation issues such as post-deportation intervention. They also agreed that there are moral responsibilities owed to deportees, although what these responsibilities might consist of differed, and in practice might be left unfulfilled.

Some variation between policy actors was apparent. Implementers were particularly reluctant to hypothesise about post-deportation circumstances; parliamentarians were more likely to consider contentious proposals; while interest groups were less likely to offer international-level solutions to contentious problems of post-deportation intervention and international actors' roles. These intra-group conclusions are tentative and would require a larger sample group to examine their differences more rigorously. This is perhaps an avenue for further research in the future.

## CHAPTER 6: DEPORTEES' PERSPECTIVES ON THE UK

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*'Morad had been thrown out three times, so that ... he'd been awarded the noble title of European Deportee. A richly deserved honorific ... "Morad the European Deportee!" he'd shout. "Yes, sir, say it loud and savour every single syllable! Deported three times, from France and from Europe!" ... We were fascinated by all his different stories, his fabulous escapades and amorous exploits. ... Memories that were as illicit as he was.'*

(Binebine 1999, pp.17–18)

*'Those cold years are frozen inside me. The African girl [Little Bee] they locked up in the immigration detention centre, poor child, she never really escaped. In my soul she is still locked up in there, forever, under the fluorescent lights, curled up on the green linoleum floor with her knees tucked up under her chin. And this woman they released ... this creature that I am, she is a new breed of human. There is nothing natural about me. I was born – no, I was reborn – in captivity. I learned my language from your newspapers, my clothes are your cast-offs, and it is your pound that makes my pockets ache with its absence.'*

(Cleave 2009, p.11)

This chapter analyses deportees' perspectives in the context of their experiences along the early stages of the deportation corridor, and the evolving nature of their relationships with the UK state and UK society. This chapter directly relates to the second research question (RQ2) that concerns how deportees reflect on their own experiences of deportation and portray others involved in that process. The following questions are answered by this chapter in relation to the deportee sample:

- How do deportees discuss the process of deportation from the UK?
- How does deportation affect deportee views of the UK in retrospect?

The themes of discourse, agency and relationships continue to be present in the analysis. Migrants are the authority on their own experiences (Stone-Mediatore 2009). There is a wide literature confirming the value of listening to subaltern voices (O'Neill & Harindranath 2006; MacCabe 1988; Spivak 1988). In the context of South Asian studies, subaltern voices counter 'official,' elite narratives by presenting the position of those who are being represented or even caricatured (Dhareshwar & Srivatsan 1997, p.204) and present their everyday resistance to the state (Ludden 2002, p.11). However, the deportee voice is rarely unheard in public and political

discussions of deportation in the UK. Deportees are equated with the negative discourse on 'illegal' or undocumented migrants. But more than simply being misrepresented, deportees at times are forgotten rather than subdued, and unknown rather than misrepresented (Anderson et al. 2012a). As shown in Chapter 5, policy actors did not know what terminology to use to describe deportees and so their more official discourse was rather limited and inconsistent at times. They presented deportees as lacking agency, or lacking UK citizenship and thus not belonging.

It is important to make room for the deportee voice to interrogate and challenge any hostility themes in emerging official discourse on deportation, or any conceptual borrowing from the predominant 'illegal migrants' discourse, adopted in part because of an absence of appropriate terminology. This chapter provides an insight into the deportation experience from the perspective of deportees, creating a space for their agency. This chapter contributes to the presentation of the deportee narrative within the existing deportation literature, that includes Brotherton and Barrios (2011), Headley and Milovanovic (2016), Lecadet (2012), Peutz (2010) and Schuster and Majidi (2013). It extends their work by introducing ideas and concepts used by deportees in the fieldwork, such as: the symbolic value of 'papers', (dis)respect, and states that either collude or 'pass the buck' for dealing with asylum seekers between one another.

A grounded theory approach has already ensured that the three cognitive frames presented in Chapter 4 ('bureaucracy', 'international interdependence' and 'human') were derived from analysis of empirical data from all the research participants. They are applied in this chapter to empirical material from deportees, in order to assess how they articulate the core of deportee experiences. Deportees emphasised concepts of 'persistence' within a bureaucracy frame, and '(dis)respect' in a human frame to make sense of deportation. These were subtly different understandings of the deportation frames compared with the more institutionalised voices in the UK, that is, policy actors.

This chapter also explores the theme of deportees' evolving relationships with the UK state from deportees' perspectives. The deportation experience provided points at which deportees directly encountered the UK state and its representatives or 'implementers' of the deportation system. These were 'sites of connection', and

potentially moments of ‘meaningful contact’ between two very different social groups (Valentine 2008, p.323) that might influence deportees’ views of the UK in the longer term. Valentine used these concepts in relation to prejudicial contexts where different social groups may then develop more positive respect for one another. This chapter draws on Valentine’s ideas, to explore whether deportees’ contacts with the UK deportation system, and the individuals within that system, were sufficiently ‘meaningful’ or powerful to shape their attitudes to the UK state and society. I introduce the phrase ‘hostile encounters’ in relation to deportees whose experiences were particularly negative.

Deportees used their experiences of any hostile encounters to develop their migratory cultural capital. Positive and negative meaningful encounters during deportation might affect deportees’ sense of attachment and belonging in the UK, and could minimise their future associations with the UK as a response to negative encounters, as reactive transnationals (Itzigsohn & Saucedo 2002). Ultimately, migratory cultural capital will affect deportees’ future migration choices (Vertovec 2013, p.3), in combination with any social capital they built up in the UK effectively as transnational insurance (Van Hear 1998, p.198).

## 6.1 The deportee sample

Seven deportees were interviewed for this research study and form the basis for the findings of this chapter. Given the small sample size, I also drew on some primary evidence concerning a further four individuals deported from the UK. This latter group were not interviewed and the volume of their primary data was much smaller than for interviewees. Their empirical material was provided primarily through personal correspondence and audio recordings.

These eleven deportees do not constitute a representative sample of deportees from the UK. However, through in-depth qualitative interviews, they provide an insight into the deportee experience, enable deportees to have a voice as deportation stakeholders in this thesis, and suggest avenues for future research. Deportee sampling and characteristics were outlined in Chapter 4 (section 4.3.5) and deportee characteristics are also provided in table format at Appendices B3 and B4.

### 6.1.1 Interviewed deportees

The seven interviewed deportees all lived in the EU at the time of their interviews, conducted between 2011 and 2013. Five lived in Italy and two lived in the UK. All but one were male. Three interviewees were Eritrean, two were Albanian, one was from Niger, and the female deportee was from Tanzania (but held Burundian nationality).

The interviewees were all young when they first arrived in the UK. Most (five) had come to the UK in their 20s, but two had arrived as children; one unaccompanied and one in a family. The first arrival was in 1995, while three had returned and were present in the UK at the time of writing. All but one had travelled to the UK via the EU. Interviewees lived in different places around England and Wales. Only one had not lived in a local community at all, spending virtually all of his time in an IRC.

All interviewees were deported from the UK between 2000 and 2010; the period when there was an intensified interest in deportation, known as the 'deportation turn' (Gibney 2008, p.148). Four deportees had been deported from the UK once, while three had been forcibly removed on two occasions. In fact, three deportees had experiences of being deported from other countries (one from Ireland to Italy, one from Libya to the Sudanese border, and one from various EU countries to other EU countries as he sought to return to the UK). The most common experience (for four interviewees) was of being deported back to Italy under the Dublin Convention as it was the country they had first arrived in the EU. Two individuals were deported directly to their countries of birth while one was deported to a neighbouring country from where he had claimed citizenship (he subsequently made his own way back to his country of birth). All interviewees were all deported alone, with one exception who was removed with her mother and sister.

Almost all (six of seven) interviewees had re-migrated at least once to an EU country since their first UK deportation. Five were living in Italy at the time of their interview, four of whom were undocumented and one had a work permit. The remaining two interviewees were living in the UK, both with temporary legal status. Since the time of interview, at least two interviewees had re-migrated again; one to Germany where he had sought refugee status, and one had returned to the UK where his legal status is unknown, but he is thought to be undocumented.

### 6.1.2 Non-interviewed deportees

The stories of four deportees from non-interview sources provided important, although minor, additions to the interview material. These deportees had fairly different circumstances to those in the interviewee sample. Three were male and one was female and. All of these individuals had been deported to their countries of birth rather than the EU, and were from different countries to the interviewee group: Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Iraq and Uganda. At least two are known to have re-migrated, but neither re-migrated to an EU country, unlike interviewees.

Further background details were not consistently available for the whole of this group, because of the opportunistic way in which their information was gathered (further methodology details are provided in Chapter 4).

## 6.2 How do deportees discuss the process of deportation from the UK?

### 6.2.1 A bureaucracy frame

A bureaucracy frame was used across the entire research participant group in this study as a way of locating deportation within a fairly fixed set of (inter)national rules and processes comprising the UK asylum and deportation system. On the surface, a bureaucracy frame seems to minimise scope for agency to change rules and structures, unlike the more common academic understanding of a dynamic structure-agency relationship (McAnulla 2002, p.271). However, a bureaucracy frame is not wholly internally consistent, because it was developed on the basis of how different research participants conceptualised deportation. For example, policy actors (in Chapter 5) debated within this frame how far that the asylum and deportation systems might be subject to minor adjustments and improvements. Here deportees' particular use of a bureaucracy frame is examined in the way they talked about deportation.

Certain aspects of the immigration process permeated deportees' stories, and key themes that emerged for them were: inconsistency, luck and persistence. Deportees in the study told their stories using a bureaucracy frame to explain why they had been deported, and for some it also helped to explain the circumstances in which they were later allowed to remain in the UK.

*Persistence, inconsistency and luck*

Deportees tended to describe unchallengeable immigration procedures and inflexible rules to explain why they couldn't stay in the UK, rather than discussing the details and strength of their asylum claim. Fingerprinting was a symbol of the deportation system for some of them. This biometric surveillance had resulted in these deportees being locked into an inflexible system constraining how, where and when they could claim asylum within the EU. The result of such practices of exclusion in Europe under the Dublin Regulation has been described both as 'torturous and circular pathways' (Mountz et al. 2013, p.532) and 'immobilization' (Alberti 2010, p.142), but both describe the way in which deportees are expected to remain in the one country where they entered the EU. In practice, many end up making repetitious journeys, resulting in shifting populations of migrants around Europe (such as Afghans in Paris described by Schuster 2011, p.408). Three interviewees with similar characteristics (all Eritrean males in their 20s deported under the Dublin Regulation) made a causal link between their deportation and having been fingerprinted in Italy prior to arrival in the UK, their experiences suggesting the system was fixed and unchallengeable.

*They [UK] can't accept me because of my fingerprints. I ask asylum in 2008, January 2008 when they find my fingerprints they deport me on March 2008. Again I turn back to England ... but when I ask asylum again all that I thought was, [pause] I have fingerprints in Italy. ... They call me for interview. ... They send me [to] Croydon, London. Then in Croydon they send me on Hastings. ... After that they deported [me] to Italy.'*

(Demsas, Eritrean male, deported alone to Italy during his 20s)

Demsas attributed his two deportations from the UK to Italy to the fact that he had been fingerprinted in Italy upon his entry to the EU. He explained his first deportation was prompt, within two months of arrival in the UK '*because of my fingerprints*'. While Demsas felt there was an automatic link between being identified by his fingerprints and his deportations to Italy, nonetheless he experienced inconsistency as one was fairly immediate after claiming asylum, but the other took over a year to implement. Like many other migrants, Demsas' understanding of fingerprinting and the immigration system was only partial (Schuster 2011a, pp.408–409). He did not seem to realise that the UK had a choice whether or not to deport him under the Dublin Regulation. Demsas' initial deportation added to his migratory cultural capital in

understanding the implications of fingerprinting. Remarkably, however, this knowledge did not dissuade him from making a second attempt to claim asylum in the UK. It did give him reason to doubt that his claim would be successful, explaining after a long pause: *'I have fingerprints in Italy'*, but it did not deter him.

A second fingerprinting example reveals Luwam's experience of an inconsistent system. Crucially, while Luwam was fingerprinted in Italy, he was not given the opportunity to claim asylum either there or in the UK.

*'Before they let me go into the detention centre [in the UK], I sat in front of one officer, she explain [why he was being deported], "Because you have asked asylum in Italy." I say "I didn't ask asylum I didn't even get chance to ask." She explained "Because we have your fingerprint in the database."'*

(Luwam, Eritrean male, deported alone to Italy during his 20s)

Significantly, Luwam was led to understand that the refusal to consider his asylum case in both countries was not legally challengeable. He was given the opportunity to have legal representation to challenge his deportation from the UK, but felt there was *'no point.'* This was because the information he received about the Dublin Regulation from the Home Office had led him to believe that *'there's no way'* that he could have been permitted to make a claim in the UK. In fact, Luwam believed that the UK had a *'good'* system as he was provided with this kind of information at different stages.

Demsas and Luwam both made second attempts to claim asylum in the UK, despite having been deported previously. Their accumulated migratory cultural capital about *'fingerprints'* and the inevitable link with deportation did not deter them from these repeated attempts. This echoes Schuster's research where Afghans were prepared to risk travel from Paris to the UK to work illegally despite the risk of deportation. Their risk-taking was based on information supplied by their peers, and the prospect of support from their community in the UK (Schuster 2011a, p.412). Demsas and Luwam's experiences had taught them that asylum systems were inconsistent. Demsas' deportations from the UK took very different lengths of time to effect, with the second taking months longer than the first, while Luwam had been given no opportunity to claim asylum by the systems in place in the UK or in Italy. It appears that these inconsistencies invited a reaction to persist rather than to give up. Persistence is important in these deportees' conceptualisations of a bureaucracy frame.

Several deportees used phrases that suggested they saw no rational explanation for what happened to them, referring to fate or luck. Deportees' references to luck confirmed Demsas and Luwam's stories: that inconsistency is an important quality of seemingly standardised immigration processes. Taking advantage of an inconsistency in the system could enable deportees to succeed in a particular aim. For example, Dhimiter described himself as *'lucky'* when he temporarily re-entered the UK after deportation on a false passport, to reclaim his invested capital in a local garage where he had worked. Conversely, Birhan said that it was *'bad chance'* that he had been fingerprinted in Italy, compared with people he knew had now got citizenship in the UK. Tamasha felt she had been *'a bit lucky'* having had a *'chance'* to return to the UK after deportation, compared to stories she had heard about other deportees.

*'I'm grateful for coming back and them still accepting me, but I still feel like it's unfair for other people. I haven't heard a lot of people had the same chance as me. I feel a bit lucky because I don't know anyone who's had the same chance. Everyone, when I ever tell someone about me [says] "No-one does that! Nobody has ever done that! How did you do that?" It's like they are so shocked.'*

(Tamasha, Burundian female, deported with her family to Tanzania during her teens)

These (un)lucky incidents contributed to deportees' knowledge of migration, again building their migratory cultural capital. They reinforced deportees' perceptions of states having internally inconsistent bureaucratic systems for claiming asylum, which they experienced in different countries. For deportees, an ethics of justice perspective was an incomplete worldview, as it assumes the existence of fully-functioning, rule-based systems of rights and justice throughout the world. As Tamasha understood, *'it's unfair for other people'* that she was able to return to the UK. For Luwam, his experiences in several countries reinforced his understanding of inconsistent asylum systems, despite them being signatories to the 1951 Refugee Convention.

*'[In Sudan] they're not reliable, they're not predictable [national systems to claim asylum]. There's no rule says they should be this and that. ... It depends on the police officer, what he wants to do. And there is no clear policy says that and this. ... It's very hard for someone who lives in this country of rule [the UK] to explain what happens there. ... There's no system. ... The conventional way [to get refugee status in Sudan] is to get so UNHCR comes [to a refugee camp].'*

(Luwam, Eritrean male, deported alone to Italy during his 20s)

Luwam's statement is interesting in a number of other ways. First, before coming to the UK, his experiences in Sudan had taught him that there were various means of seeking (but not necessarily securing) of refugee status. His experience was that Sudan was '*not predictable*,' so gaining refugee status from the state '*depends on the police officer*.' He understood that the '*conventional way*' of getting refugee status in Sudan was through UNHCR at a refugee camp near to the border with Eritrea. However this was not an option for him. As a defector from the army, he was vulnerable to extradition practiced by the Eritrean army at the refugee camp. These experiences in Sudan taught him to persist in his search for sanctuary. Second, Luwam's expanded migratory cultural capital enabled him to see the UK's perspective, that is, why people in the UK are not able to understand why he could not seek asylum in Sudan. He knew that many people in the UK assume every country will value ethics of justice, manifest in a bureaucratic asylum system like in the UK. Third, one can understand why UNHCR was well-regarded by deportees as it could provide a procedural means to finding sanctuary when some state systems do not.

Thus inconsistency in asylum systems, persistence and luck are key attributes of a bureaucracy frame for deportees. Deportees might need to find times or spaces of structural weakness to succeed in gaining refugee status. They can take advantage of inconsistencies in officials' choices, and thus the strategy of persistence can succeed.

### *The language of deportation*

Interviewed deportees imbued certain terms associated with the immigration process with great meaning; we have already seen how '*fingerprints*' was a meaningful term to the three male Eritrean deportees who had been deported under the Dublin Regulation, as it has been reported for other migrants in Europe (Schuster 2011a, p.409). All interviewees used the terms '*paper(s)*,' '*passport*' and '*document(s)*' repeatedly. Interviewees Luwam and Ilir, in particular, used these terms tens of times. Luwam used the term '*paper(s)*' 39 times during his interview, while Ilir used it 33 times. Ilir also used '*passport*' 24 times (Luwam only once). Both used '*document(s)*' five times. The term '*papers*' is used hereon to refer to these terms collectively.

These terms were an important part of deportees' language of deportation. Deportees used them in a reductionist way to refer to complex (and at times unfair) immigration processes. Interviewees used 'papers' as a shortcut for alluding to the bureaucratic processes they encountered during their migratory journeys in the UK, the EU or a non-EU country. Getting or having '*papers*' referred to the process of applying for immigration permission to stay, either temporarily or permanently. '*Fingerprints*' referred to the process of having their fingerprints taken in Italy as their first point of entry into the EU, or the process undertaken in the UK of checking an individual's asylum history in the EU. They are unlikely to have understood these processes accurately or fully, as Schuster found among Afghans in Paris (Schuster 2011a, p.409). Absorption into their everyday vocabulary might reflect how such terms became repeatedly present and increasingly important in their lives. Borders have become part of migrants' everyday lives in ordinary contexts through technology of fingerprinting for example (Mountz et al. 2013, p.531). In this vein, deportees in this study continued to reproduce European borders and systems of control even *after* deportation.

This kind of language reinforces the importance of immigration structures and how they affect deportees' lives. More than simply a shortcut to explaining lengthy and complicated legal processes, deportees also used these terms as metaphors for the freedoms to which they aspired, and to which the immigration system would provide or deny access. Interviewees used these terms to signify the positive and negative *consequences* of having been through these processes. 'Papers' was a shorthand term for opportunity. It symbolised interviewees' aspirations to obtaining formal permission to stay in the UK or another EU country, the opportunity perhaps to later apply for citizenship, and the hope of finding a place to belong permanently. Luwam described his joy at being given refugee status in the UK and what this represented for him.

*'I got my paper. It was really, really, really amazing. My life changed like, I don't know I can't, I never imagined to be like that. ... I could be in Italy! Clandestine, struggling. I was really lucky... You don't want to ask [why they granted refugee status] just say thank you very much!'* [he laughs]

(Luwam, Eritrean male, deported alone to Italy during his 20s)

Having already been deported from the UK and now granted refugee status by the UK, the inconsistency of the immigration system had been apparent to Luwam, but his

persistence had paid off. His life was now *'changed'* and the alternative would have been to be *'clandestine, struggling'* in Italy. Similarly for Dhimiter, after his deportation from the UK obtaining papers in Italy were a key to travel, work and freedom.

*'After I put the documents to work here [in Italy], I find a job here. ... I am more easy, I am more liberal. ... I'm more free because I have a passport. If I want to go Albania, I go [to] Albania, I am more free to moving.'*

(Dhimiter, Albanian male, deported alone to Kosovo during his 20s)

These terms were sometimes used as negative symbols, demonstrating perceived unfairness and injustice of the system. Birhan linked *'fingerprints'* to his immediate detention, both in the UK and Italy. Demsas, Ilir, Dhimiter and Birhan all made comparisons between themselves and their peers who had secured *'papers'* in the UK, who now had the associated opportunities of security, belonging and being able to apply for citizenship in the future. Demsas, Didier and Luwam were frustrated by the *'papers'* they were issued by the Italian authorities, because they were only valid for five days' leave in the country, did not enable access to any form of support and were not comprehensible. Papers were also negatively symbolic for those deported outside of the EU. While not getting the right *'papers'* had resulted in her family being deported from the UK, Tamasha was surprised that a *lack* of passports did not prevent them from re-entering Tanzania when they were deported.

*I didn't even know how we managed to get into a country [Tanzania] without a passport or anything, they [escorts] just handed us there [to the Tanzanian authorities at the border] and then they let us outside and that was it.*

(Tamasha, Burundian female, deported with her family to Tanzania during her teens)

Similarly, *'papers'* symbolised dashed opportunities and fear for Kaikara and his wife following his deportation from the UK.

*We went to UNHCR Nairobi and we were given movement passes to go to Kakuma refuge [sic] camp, but without any provision of transport. I tried all ways to get transport for 2 people but I failed. ... At the beginning of November, some unknown individuals came several times asking for me. They had my passport photograph which they showed the security guards at the place where we were staying. ... This forced me and my wife to leave town and we went to stay in the Kabira slums. ... [Then] I failed to be able to cross the border [to a neighbouring country] because I lacked the proper documentation.'*

(Kaikara, Ugandan male, deported alone to Uganda, age unknown)

First, they were provided with 'papers' ('movement passes') that would have provided shelter for them at a refugee camp in Kenya, but without resources to pay for transport, this opportunity was lost. Later, strangers produced Kaikara's passport photograph, presumably obtained from official sources. This posed such a threat to his safety that he and his wife moved residence. Kaikara was unable to subsequently flee the country to a further host country because of a lack of 'papers.'

Interestingly, literal 'papers' became particularly meaningful objects of resistance, a refreshing although minor antidote to our understanding of the constraining technologies of control associated with modern borders. As tangible objects imbued with symbolic meaning, they became important in deportees' individualised acts of resistance to the EU-wide system. Interviewees discussed appropriating and using false documentation in order to cross borders, for temporary visits, to be able to work, to claim asylum and to pursue their aspirations to return to the UK. While they still saw the immigration process as fixed and immutable, false documentation enabled them to temporarily achieve some goals, to get around the system for a while. For example, Didier used another refugee's work permit to be able to work in Italy, while Ilir and Dhimiter used false documentation to try to return to the UK; Dhimiter was successful, but Ilir was not as he tried to cross from France.

*I had this Greece [sic] passport again. I went to the border, there was a French border and English border. ... I went to the French border, they saw the passport and they said "Ok go." I said oh thank god, you know? I went to the English border, the guy said "This is not your passport" without not looking in the passport, yeah? I said "What? Of course this is my passport." And he said "Ok, read it." Now I speak a bit of Greece [sic] yeah, so I read it. ... He said "No, you are not Greece [sic]." I said "What do you mean I'm not Greece? [sic] Look at the passport." And he brought the translator, and he said "No he's not Greece [sic]." ... They took me back to France, the English border put me back to Paris!*

(Ilir, Albanian male, deported alone to Albania during his teens)

In Ilir's case, the weighty symbolism of his 'papers' actually overemphasised the extent of their real power. While he had hoped that his falsified 'papers' would have sufficient weight to subvert his deportation and return to the UK, he was thwarted due to other ways in which identification is tested at the border, this time through his command of Greek, the language of his false passport.

### 6.2.2 An international interdependence frame

An international interdependence frame is an outward-facing frame, concerning interactions with state and non-state institutions at the international, supra-national and global levels, in relation to migration, asylum and deportation. Deportees did not use this frame extensively, perhaps reflecting a perception of international structures as fixed and unchallengeable, or a lack of knowledge about structures and institutions intended to protect them as deportees, such as the non-refoulement principle.

The concept of 'burden-sharing' was something deportees understood in practice, even if they did not possess the institutional language to articulate it in this way. Burden-sharing refers to the assumption that states should fairly distribute unwanted migrants, often asylum-seekers and refugees, in order to avoid certain hosting states from becoming overwhelmed purely as a result of their geographical location. This is an underpinning principle of practices such as resettlement of refugees and the Dublin Regulation, as well as the 1951 Refugee Convention itself.

Burden-sharing is of course, not as unambiguous, equitable or effective as it suggests. Indeed it is based on the premise that refugees are a problem (Noll 2003, p.237) that was borne out in deportees' observations of the deportation system. Deportees had interactions with institutions, and witnessed interactions *between* institutions that occurred during their deportation that related to burden-sharing. Their observations are explored in this section as moments of either collusion or 'passing the buck'. These are parts of what Noll describes as the burden-sharing 'game' for hosting states (2003, p.240). As some of the deportation literature asserts that deportation effectively reinforces citizenship locations as an expression of state power (Walters 2010), deportation also presupposes where in the world deportees 'belong'. Where this perspective is adopted by actors in the immigration system, it could partly account for hostility that deportees experienced in hosting states.

#### *UK interdependence as collusion*

Some deportees observed the UK working with other states to ensure that they were deported. They saw the UK effectively conspiring to deport them to the country in

which the states deemed they 'ought' to be, whether the country of birth or the first country they entered within the EU, reflecting Walters' understanding of deportation as the 'global population police' (2010, p.71). Kaikara observed payments between state representatives in a country of transit (Ethiopia) and destination (Uganda) to effect his deportation from the UK.

*'On several occasions I ... witnessed the UK immigration escorts bribing Ethiopians and Ugandans Immigrations in order to let me through their borders.'* [sic]

(Kaikara, Ugandan male, deported alone to Uganda, age unknown)

Kaikara saw those involved as representatives of the state conspiring to return him to a dangerous place.

Other deportees described the UK working at a European level in order to effect the Dublin Regulation. Luwam described how in UK detention he was given information about his removal that was received by fax from Italy, suggesting the two countries were coordinating over where he 'belonged' in terms of processing his asylum application. Demsas also perceived cooperation between EU countries regarding where he should have been deported.

*'When I was in England ... [the] European High Court they decide everyone go back to Italy. That's why Home Office they send, they deport us.'*

(Demsas, Eritrean male, deported alone to Italy during his 20s)

More than this, Demsas inferred a power relationship between these actors. He described how the Home Office decision to remove him to Italy was determined by the European courts. His observation suggested that international interdependence does not mean that power relationships between institutions are even. This was confirmed in other contexts by Kaikara and Luwam who both discussed the role of UNHCR, in Kenya and Sudan respectively (as outlined in section 6.3.1). Kaikara had expected that at the UNHCR refugee camp in Kenya he and his wife would be protected from Ugandan state agents, while Luwam had calculated that UNHCR was *unable* to protect asylum seekers in Sudan from the forces of the Eritrean state. In Luwam's example, the consequence of this imbalance of power between institutions was that he felt compelled to re-migrate and seek asylum in Europe, while for Demsas the

consequence of an imbalance in legal authority between the European court and the UK was his deportation to Italy.

*UK interdependence with other EU states: 'passing the buck'*

Rather than collusion, some deportees described the interactions between the UK and other states as fragmented and self-interested. States not wanting to process an asylum seeker in their own territory 'passed the buck' to another state.

Interdependence in this context meant relying on another country to respond to the deportee in question; effectively as Noll asserts, 'to shift a part of the costs' (2003, p.240). Ilir offered supporting accounts of his own multiple deportations around the EU as state officials did not want him on their territory, and did not seem to be too concerned with where he was sent (explored further in section 7.3.1). An example from the UK comes from Tamasha. During deportation to East Africa, rather than witnessing collaboration and bribery as Kaikara did (above), she was surprised at the *lack* of interaction between her family's UK escorts and the immigration authorities.

*'They handed us to the migration people there and that was it, they just left! ... They just went. ... The officials from the Home Office just left, yeah, they just left us to it. ... When you get there they just pretty much leave you, upped and left. ... They just hand you over to the officials and they just leave. ... You're left to it.'*

(Tamasha, Burundian female, deported with her family to Tanzania during her teens)

She had no doubt about the escorts' apparent eagerness to minimise their involvement with the country of return as they *'just left ... upped and left'*. The repetition in her story indicates a degree of surprise. The difference in deportation handover stories between Tamasha and Kaikara could have occurred for a number of reasons, particularly as Tamasha was a child deported with her mother and sister while Kaikara was a single male. She may have been shielded from witnessing certain incidents by her mother, or unaware of the meaning of interactions between UK and Tanzanian officials due to her age. Nonetheless, her own experience stands and was a lucid memory for her.

### 6.2.3 A human frame

A human frame has been established as an anthropocentric, non-institutional frame that attributes value to individuals and their personal narratives, experiences or participation in the deportation system. It demands an empathetic response to vulnerable or suffering deportees, regardless of what rights are accorded to them by virtue of their (lack of) citizenship (following McThomas 2015, p.180). Those taking an ethics of care perspective evaluate immigration policy in terms of individuals' needs irrespective of national borders or immigration status, and will result in different understandings of obligations towards migrants, although even those with an ethics of care approach to their work might construct certain social groups as a threat to their in-group preferences (McThomas 2015, p.180).

Deportees' stories of their experiences did not fall into a human frame automatically; this would be tautological. Instead, this section concerns how deportees discussed the way in which they were treated during deportation, and how far they demanded or demonstrated empathy themselves. Deportees told their own 'moral stories' about their meaningful contacts or hostile encounters with individuals along the deportation corridor; their own deportation discourse. To deportees, officials involved in their deportation journeys had choices about the measures and language they used, as one would expect with practitioners or street-level bureaucrats who have scope for discretion in how they deliver policy. The extensive geographical literature on detention problematises the policy and practice of detention around the world, including the UK (Mountz et al. 2013) but links it to the way in which space and borders intersect, rather than the way that individual staff have discretion in their interaction with deportees. Deportees in this study discussed four areas of disrespectful treatment that they prioritised for attention: excessive compliance measures, insulting staff attitudes, humiliating treatment and mental distress.

#### *Excessive compliance measures*

Deportees expressed surprise and felt insulted by some measures selected by UK officials to ensure their compliance with removal. Two deportees gave the time of the 'dawn raid' on their homes, suggesting it was remarkable or significant. Tamasha said

it was at 5 or 6am, while it was 7am for Ilir. Tamasha also remarked on how escorts had physically separated her from her mother and sister as a means of securing compliance from each family member, at first during their transport to detention and then on the deportation flight (this separation did not apply to other deportees in the sample as they were all deported alone). She mentioned three times during the interview that her mother had been handcuffed during their deportation, despite having been on suicide watch in immigration detention.

Deportees also wanted to draw attention to the number of officials involved in dawn raids or escorting them during their transportation to or from detention. For example, there were five escorts for Dhimiter, and three for Abel.

*'Let me tell you the officers who throw [deported] me. Christina; Collin and the teem [sic] leader Dareen ... For a single person. can you imagine. I am not criminal; I am not a terrorist; I didn't attempt any forged or Unlawful things.'*

(Abel, Ethiopian male, deported to Ethiopia, age and household unknown)

Abel felt the escort-to-deportee ratio implied that he was as a *'criminal'* or *'terrorist'*. This language, borrowed from public discourse on 'illegal' migration, seemed more devastating to Abel than the fact of his removal, as this was the main issue he raised in his email correspondence for this study. Dhimiter was also keen to discuss his security escorts rather than the act of deportation. He felt he had been subjected to excessive physical restraint and injury. Unable to protect himself from bodily harm, Dhimiter was enraged, feeling mocked and taunted about his return *'home'*.

*[He hurt] my hand... and on ... [gestures to his lower back] the kidney. ... He beat me up. ... I tried to resist but what can I do, five people on one? And he beat me up - this hand ... The finger is coming out. ... The moment they put me there [on the aeroplane, they applied] the metal straps [handcuffs] ... [I said] "Listen, open this because it's ... too tight." "No, no, no" they say, "You can leave [the handcuffs] like this when you feel you are going back home". I am being very upset after that, I am speaking my language, speaking English, too many things.'*

(Dhimiter, Albanian male, deported alone to Kosovo during his 20s)

Similarly to Abel, Dhimiter felt powerless because of the number of escorts accompanying him, and because he was restrained in handcuffs that were too tight. The combination of these excessive physical compliance measures with escorts' verbal taunts made him *'very upset.'*

### *Insulting staff attitudes*

Several deportees accused officials of being uncaring. Dhimiter declared: *'He don't care nothing. ... They don't care. ... The officer immigrant [sic] said "I don't care, you going inside the airplane and you going back."'* Similarly, Ilir recounted officials' words: *"It's my work to send you back ... I take orders. ... Oh we can't do nothing."* Luwam felt that some officials chose not to help him, instead using their job description as an excuse: *'One officer, she explain ... "My job is to send you to Italy, I'm sorry I can't help you with anything."'* These experiences are reflective of the way that IRCs have been widely critiqued for the way in which staff treat detainees (Hall 2010) and for reinforcing detainees' isolation (Gill 2009a).

Further than simply being uncaring, deportees complained about the insulting attitudes of staff involved in detention or escorting. Kaikara, for example, recounted his escorts giving false information about his background to passengers on the plane.

*'I heard some people sitting at the back of the plane who were asking the officers "How long did this deportee stay in UK?". One of the officers replied quite wrongly that I have been in the UK for just one year. Another passenger asked whether I was a terrorist. The officer replied "No, he was trying to rob a bank". Of course neither of the statements was true. I felt too weak by this time to talk or object.'*

(Kaikara, Ugandan male, deported alone to Uganda, age unknown)

Similarly to Abel (above), Kaikara was angered by negative public discourse equating deportation with criminality, as people on his flight suggested he might be a *'terrorist'* or *'trying to rob a bank'*. Dhimiter, too, was angry that detention and escort officials had been deceptive. They had acknowledged his pending appeal as a reason not to deport him, but this turned out to be simply a tactic for ensuring his compliance in detention. These are examples of what Khosravi calls *'hostile hospitality'* in the detention environment (2009, p.44). They include moments of the kind of deception that Dhimiter recounted, as staff believe they are ultimately helping detainees by persuading them to comply with removal through *'social conversation'* that gains their trust (Khosravi 2009, p.45).

Like those outnumbered by the escort-to-deportee ratio, there was a physical powerlessness apparent in some examples where deportees felt unable to challenge

such incidents. Kaikara had felt *'too weak'* to challenge the false statements about his character and conduct. Tamasha was not believed when she was suffering an asthma attack en route to the IRC, having been separated from her family.

*'I remember having an asthma attack and the woman in the car [escort or police] she was acting like I was pretending, I was like "I actually have an asthma attack." I didn't have an inhaler. ... I was like "I'm not being dramatic, it's actually not a nice experience." ... I was sat in the middle and ... you can't easily defend yourself, and I was actually having an asthma attack like I'm being a dramatic teenager or something, when it wasn't like that. It was quite terrible.'*

(Tamasha, Burundian female, deported with her family to Tanzania during her teens)

Tamasha was angered by the assumption that she was *'pretending'* or acting like *'a dramatic teenager'* but felt unable to challenge the official with her.

Deportees occasionally also discussed their own resistance to these incidents, their own minor moments of agency. In some of these stories presented here, deportees also admitted to hostile behaviour. Tamasha confessed to being rude, while Dhimiter was verbally aggressive to staff involved in restraining him. Likewise, Kaikara challenged his escorts about their treatment. He queried why they removed his handcuffs only moments before he was presented to border authorities in a transit country, instead of hours earlier in the deportation process which would have been more comfortable for him.

### *Humiliating treatment*

Tamasha was the only interviewee to describe being humiliated by officials during their deportation from the UK. She was indignant at ways in which she and her family were treated during their dawn raid and in detention, beyond excessive compliance measures or staff attitudes.

*'These people come knocking, literally just drag you out of the house, you couldn't take anything, we just had to pack a few clothes and that's it. ... They don't let you do anything, they stand there while you're getting changed so you don't escape. ... It's just so horrible, the way they treat you like prisoners and ... when you get to the deportation centre, it's like, pretty much like prison. You get like an allowance for calls. You just sit in your room. It gets to a time you can't come out of your room.'*

(Tamasha, Burundian female, deported with her family to Tanzania during her teens)

She objected that officials *'drag you out of the house'*, denied them privacy to dress, and later was confined to her room. They also received an *'allowance'*. Similarly to other deportees, Tamasha objected to being treated like criminals, like *'prisoners'* in an IRC that was *'pretty much like prison.'*

Tamasha's family was composed of three females while the other six interviewees were male, yet she was the only one to describe issues relating to privacy. In the absence of further female deportees as interviewees, it is notable that at least two supporters described similar incidents involving female deportees, although these stories were not confirmed by deportees themselves. In one case, a female detainee had been denied food in detention, while two others reiterated Tamasha's experience of being undressed in the presence of strangers. In the case of deportee E, Nancy explained that she was partially undressed, photographed and mocked in public, while supporter Sara described how C was forced to dress in the open air outside the IRC.

*'They [the escorts] tried to pull her down into the [plane] seat and in the process pulled her trousers down and they took photographs. They got their mobile phones out, then showed her the photographs and said "This is what you look like".'*

[supporter Nancy, faith group link to a deported family of 3, Tees Valley, 19.10.10]

*'She was in the shower and they [detention staff] just took her out of the shower. ... They put a sheet around her and took her clothes out with her, and she had to get dressed outside the centre.'*

[supporter Sara, IRC befriender to four deportees, London, 04.11.10]

Supporters also reported female deportees being physically humiliated in the country of birth, either pre-flight or post-deportation.

A lack of women in the deportee sample precludes further investigation here, but is consistent with literature on the gendered-related practices of detention. It is possible that humiliation is a gender-related practice in the deportation environment, a reflection of discourse that presents women as powerless (and men as threatening) and becomes embodied in detention practices (Mountz et al. 2013, p.531). The literature on gendered detention practices highlights 'exceptional measures' that have been presented by the authorities as 'gentler' to apparently intrinsically vulnerable women (Alberti 2010, p.141). The UK's family removals process is one example.

However, in this study, examples of gender-related treatment suggest practices towards women can be equally if not *more* degrading than those facing men.

### *Mental distress*

Deportees made only occasional references to their mental wellbeing. They, understandably, did not often routinely volunteer information about their mental health status, nor were they asked directly about their mental health.<sup>41</sup> However, a solid evidence base in the medical science literature confirms the deleterious impacts of asylum systems upon asylum seekers and refugees, specifically highlighting the impact of lengthy asylum processes on the risk of psychiatric and other health problems (Laban 2009), the impact of immigration detention on mental health (Robjant et al. 2009; Steel et al. 2006) and psychological and social difficulties in the long-term (Coffey et al. 2010).

Some examples here suggest that deportees' experiences in the UK may have had a negative impact on their mental wellbeing after forced removal. When Tamasha described her asthma attack (above), she added that this was something she did not want to recall because it was so traumatic, as was the experience of being separated from her family during deportation. Some deportees had found waiting for their asylum cases to be resolved unbearable, rather than the deportation itself. Of course, 'waiting' is not a benign, neutral activity (Olson 2015, p.518). Demsas, for example, knew from past experience that deportation to Italy would probably result in his destitution and undocumented status (which it did), but he could no longer endure waiting in the UK with an unresolved asylum claim. Despite even requesting removal himself, he was kept in the UK for a total of three years. He felt that the time to progress his case was '*unjust*' and had made him feel '*crazy*'.

While this chapter focuses on deportees' own words, supporter accounts also help to provide mediated stories of deportees who were unable to relate their stories in an interview. For example, toddler M (aged four) and infant J (aged 18 months) were affected by stays in immigration detention and their subsequent deportation

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<sup>41</sup> This was a decision taken for obvious ethical reasons as described in my methodological approach (presented in Chapter 4). In the event of deportees becoming distressed further by their disclosures, I would have been unable to offer or signpost professional mental health support.

experience, according to their supporter Nancy. The family had lived in Nancy's home for four months in the UK. Nancy visited the family within a fortnight of their deportation to Uganda and reported on the changes she observed in the children in a written account from October 2009.

*'M has lost weight. During the journey from the airport ... she spoke two words. ... Her nails are bitten right down. During the days that followed she was very subdued and wanted to stay close to me. She ... was not her "chatterbox" self. M will not look at or respond to unfamiliar adults. One afternoon ... E [the mother] had to try the door handle to my room several times as it was difficult to open. When M heard the door handle being rattled she covered her face with her hands, kicked her legs and began crying. It took a few minutes for her to recover. ... M ... hid behind E or me if someone was wearing a uniform.'*

(supporter Nancy, faith group link to a deported family of 3, Tees Valley, 19.10.10)

Nancy attributed M's newly-developed fear of rattling door handles and people in uniform to the UK detention environment, and M's newly-developed separation anxiety to the family having been separated during transportation to and from detention. Nancy also reported that J had lost weight, lost confidence and stopped relating to her, despite her constant presence in his life until deportation. Supporters related many similar incidents to those detailed in this section, such as family separation and the impact of detention on children, but deportees' first-hand accounts have been privileged here to be clear about presenting their views and experiences as deportation stakeholders themselves.

### **6.3 How does deportation affect deportee views of the UK in retrospect?**

Dhimiter and Ilir had fairly similar backgrounds within the interviewee group for this study. They were both Albanians who travelled across Europe the early 2000s to reach the UK, then lived in Luton for around six years as asylum seekers. They were both refused asylum and deported from the UK as young adults. They both had close social bonds with parents back in Albania, and had contact with their supporter Iris (but did not know one another) in the UK. Dhimiter also had a younger brother in the UK, and Ilir had important social relationships with, for example, his foster mother. Both men re-migrated back to the EU and at their time of interview lived in Tuscany, Italy. As deportees, however, they reflected on the UK in quite different ways. Ilir yearned to settle back in the UK, while Dhimiter had no intention of returning permanently.

*'I said [to my father] if I die in England I will be happy ... because I grew up here, all my friends all this school, I used to know people. People used to ask me sometimes "Oh where is this street?" - I used to tell them! I grew strong. I felt so nice to be in England. ... I said I'd be happy if I die and I said I want the English people to cover me with the flag when I die.'*

(Ilir, Albanian male, deported alone to Albania during his teens)

*'I am happy now because ... I find [sic] my way. It's not likely to be in England now. ... England is beautiful but it's hard, hard to stay. ... I think to be honest English [people] is more cold, cold, no[t] bad people but it's cold. ... I like England because it's more free life. ... And England is beautiful because anyone have anythings, but is more separation. ... [I have] many friends [in the UK]! English, Pakistan! I have so many. I like one day to come just for visit.'*

(Dhimiter, Albanian male, deported alone to Kosovo during his 20s)

Other deportees in this study were not as unequivocally patriotic as Ilir about the UK, but many did discuss the communities and people they had strong connections to, where they had developed friendships during their time as an asylum seeker. Some interviewees like Dhimiter had mixed assessments of the UK. Some shared fewer memories perhaps because they had spent little time in the UK, had been in detention or hadn't found commonalities with the people with whom they came into contact.

The preceding section explored some of the negative encounters that deportees had with representatives of the UK state. They usually separated these and their experiences of the asylum system from their overall reflections about the UK.

Deportees generally held positive views of life in the UK or of UK nationals, despite a context where there is a pervasive, hostile hegemonic discourse about asylum seekers and other types of unwanted migrants (Crawley 2009; Leudar & Hayes 2008; Mulvey 2010; Polson & Kahle 2010; McLaren & Johnson 2004). Perhaps deportees encountered socio-economic sections of society who are more tolerant of immigration, such as the young and the educated (Katwala & Somerville 2016, pp.5–6; Page 2009, p.19) or anti-deportation activists. Didier and Birhan made broader positive commentaries on society in general, although Dhimiter (above) felt that people could be a little emotionally distant. Those deported under the Dublin Regulation, like Demsas, Birhan, and Luwam, compared the UK favourably to other EU countries in terms of their asylum systems and associated support structures.

*'England ... it's quite better than Italy. Like asylum seeker[s] we have support. I have had a home and I have had benefits - to eat. ... I came to Italy ... I don't have [any]where to sleep, I*

*don't have food, even I don't have any money. ... They don't care about us, everybody in Italy. From airport they sent me away, they said they don't care where you go.'*

(Demas, Eritrean male, deported alone to Italy during his 20s)

In the UK, Demas' basic human needs around shelter and food were met, but in Italy he summed up society's attitude, saying: *'They don't care about us'*.

Mostly, deportees expressed an affinity to the country or the local community in which they lived in the UK and all interviewees had maintained friendships with some UK ties. Deportees Tamasha and Ilir had the stronger associations with the UK, with Ilir declaring (above) that he would be happy if he died as long as he was in England.

*'I feel like most of my life I've been here instead of any other, even though I've been to Tanzania, I've been to Burundi, but most of my life I remember it here.'*

(Tamasha, Burundian female, deported with her family to Tanzania during her teens)

They had a clear sense of belonging in the UK, very possibly because of the time they had spent here during childhood which was a large proportion of their lives so far.

Deportees very occasionally proffered some relatively positive aspects of the deportation process. Tamasha, for example, described how detention staff checked on the safety of her mother who was at risk of self-harm, while Luwam reflected that the UK system overall treated him with dignity and explained what was happening to him.

Deportees did express some frustrations about the UK asylum system. Most were fairly generic (implied by the term 'fingerprints' for example). They directed negativity at particular individuals who had behaved without kindness, without ethics of care, in an interaction where the power difference between them was palpable. Tamasha and Kaikara, both deported to East Africa, were a little more specific about aspects of their asylum claim that they were unhappy about. Kaikara believed his case was not *'considered correctly'*, that he suffered a *'miscarriage of justice'*, *'unfair removal'* and deportation to an unsafe place. Tamasha explained a Home Office official had given an inaccurate statement about her family's asylum history, suggesting they had not returned to their country of birth after their first asylum claim.

On several occasions deportees mentioned the time that they had spent while seeking asylum in the UK, which was effectively lost. This concurs with the literature on the

long-term impacts of lengthy asylum procedures and detention; Coffey et al. found depression, demoralisation and persistent anxiety and low quality of life among former asylum-seeking detainees several years after release (2010, p.2070). For Luwam, despite eventually being granted refugee status in the UK, he was worried that being older than his peers on his engineering degree might hinder his employment prospects. Both Demsas and Didier were deterred from returning to the UK because of the time they had already spent trying to settle there. Demsas mourned: *'I lost my time: one year, two year[s]'*, while Didier had attempted to return to the UK after his deportation but had been unsuccessful and felt that it wasted his time.

Interviewer: *'So you think you will have to stay here [in Italy]?'*

Didier: *'What can I do, because I [already did] try [to return to the UK]. No. Time's serious, time is my life. No.'*

(Didier, Nigerien male, deported alone to Italy during his 20s)

This was, perhaps, another lesson absorbed within deportees' migratory cultural capital: that the risk of a strategy of persistence was feeling they had wasted significant time in their lives by continuing to try to find sanctuary.

#### **6.4 Discussion: how deportees move on using UK-derived resources**

Deportees did not start their post-deportation lives from scratch, as though deportation had erased the time they had spent in the UK. Instead, deportees developed resources during their time in the UK which they had not had before, and which they could draw upon in their futures. The resources they described in their deportation stories fell into the broad categories of social capital and migratory cultural capital (discussed in Chapter 3).

Deportees developed ties with people who were voluntarily part of their lives in the UK, people in their host community who invested in them and vice versa. Chapter 8 will explore these relationships in detail. Deportees learned or improved their English, took qualifications or developed work skills. All of these things formed deportees' social capital, which could be mobilised as resources in the post-deportation environment.

Deportees also accumulated knowledge and experiences from their migration journeys within the UK end of the deportation corridor. These included encounters with officials during the asylum and deportation processes, as well as lessons about persistence and the risk of losing time from their lives. These experiences informed their future decisions and behaviours, teaching them certain things to do or avoid, which events might affect their immigration status and which are less important and so on. This is their migratory cultural capital. Deportees absorbed different combinations of these lessons and acted on them differently.

Deportees had opportunities through asylum-seeking and deportation to develop and mobilise these resources at different times. In combination, deportees' migratory cultural capital and social capital developed in the UK had some bearing on their post-deportation conditions, their choices and actions, in addition to their resources that were external to the UK, such as family and friends from the country of birth, connections made, experiences and skills developed before they arrived. Interviewees had a common experience of asylum seeking in and deportation from the UK, but their relationships with the UK and intentions to return were different. Ilir, Luwam and Tamasha persisted in their attempts to return to the UK and all were successful in doing so. Dhimiter returned temporarily to the UK but did not plan to try to stay in the long-term. Demsas, Birhan and Didier did not return to the UK.

*Box 6.1* provides an illustration of three deportees based on their different post-deportation relationships they described with the UK and the different types of resources upon which they drew. These stories suggest how deportees had different combinations of resources, including those developed in the UK, which influenced their perceptions of their own relationship with the UK after deportation. These accounts do not, of course, include the influence of resources and relationships that existed independently of their time in the UK, such as their backgrounds, education, family and friends in the country of origin.

*Box 6.1: Examples of deportees' resources developed in the UK*

**Tamasha: a tale of social capital**

Tamasha seemed to have little migratory cultural capital, as she had been with her mother on previous journeys and had not negotiated many borders as a lone adult. She had experienced fairly intimidating encounters with border officials (or implementers) during deportation from the UK. These factors did not stop her from persisting in her attempt to return. She relied on her bonded social capital to be able to come back to Leicester. Her local community, including supporter, imam and headteacher, made formal arrangements and provided financial support that enabled her to return to the community. She continued to be anxious in her subsequent contact with immigration officials.

(Tamasha, Burundian female, deported with her family to Tanzania during her teens)

**Birhan: migratory cultural capital**

In contrast, Birhan did not appear to have much social capital in the UK, apart from occasional contact with his supporter, perhaps because he had been in immigration detention for most of his short stay in the UK. He had accumulated some migratory cultural capital during his journey to and from the UK and around Europe and in fact made favourable comparisons between detention conditions in the UK and other EU countries. Birhan did not return to the UK after his deportation.

(Birhan, Eritrean male, deported alone to Italy during his 20s)

**Dhimiter: a balance of resources**

Dhimiter enjoyed a greater balance of his resources. He had migratory cultural capital from journeys across Europe, and did persist in making various journeys between Albania, Italy and the UK after his deportation. He also had developed significant bonded social capital in these places around Europe and thus various places in which he might feel he 'belonged.' His younger brother lived in the UK, his family lived in Albania, and his uncle lived in Italy. However, Dhimiter experienced significantly hostile encounters with implementers during his deportation, about which he still seemed angry several years later. While this did not prevent him from returning to the UK, he did not wish to try to settle there. Instead, he re-migrated and settled in Italy. This is perhaps an example of reactive transnationalism, as he did not seem to consider a life for him in the UK in the future.

(Dhimiter, Albanian male, deported alone to Kosovo during his 20s)

*Source: devised by the author*

## 6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has presented an analysis of the ways in which deportees framed their deportation experiences, and how these experiences contributed to their views about the UK. It has provided a deportee-centred perspective in the deportation debate, particularly with regards to the relationship between deportees and deporting states.

Deportees in the sample emphasised different aspects of the cognitive frame-set developed in this thesis compared with policy actors. They valued dignity in a human frame, appealing for an ethics of care approach rather than hostile encounters and being subjected to excessive or humiliating treatment. They emphasised inconsistency, luck and persistence in a bureaucracy frame, and burden-sharing in an international interdependence frame. The persistence of deportees in seeking sanctuary and a place to live permanently, in spite of multiple rejections by states (by the country of origin and the UK), could provide a way of describing deportees in a constructive way that is derived from their own descriptions and experiences. The phrase 'persistent refugees' could provide an alternative to 'deportees' or 'refused' or 'failed asylum seekers', which are fairly passive and reflect the decisions and actions of states rather than the agency of individuals. Instead, 'persistent refugees' reflects the multiple times which these individuals have sought sanctuary, sometimes in a circular migratory pattern.

Deportees' have established their own language of deportation and a narrative that upsets the dominant discourse, which focuses on disrespectful representatives of the state who have acted without integrity. By their persistence, some deportees have challenged their portrayal as passive. Others have challenged their exclusion on the grounds of non-citizenship by maintaining some kind of link to the UK, through a sense of belonging or social relationships, rather than 'papers'.

All deportees have new resources derived from their time in the UK that they did not have previously. They have developed their migratory cultural capital and their social capital. These are some of the influences on their post-deportation relationships with the UK. Their influence will of course vary for each individual, according to their exact composition and combination with longstanding resources from their social bonds with family and friends in other countries including the country of origin. In the next

chapter, a wider base of empirical material derived from both deportees and their supporters in the UK provides scope for considering the circumstances and actions of deportees in the longer-term post-deportation environment.

It is important to acknowledge that the findings in this chapter were derived from a small sample of interviewed deportees. Within this small sample, the perspectives of deportees removed to another EU country have been explored in some detail. This provides an insight into deportee experiences rarely explored in the deportation or return literature, and will be extended in the following chapter. Despite providing some rich detail and drawing on other source material where possible from opportunistic sources, they are inevitably limited in their application to the wider deportee population. The ideas and themes suggested by this interviewees group could provide a basis for future research with deportees.

Another limitation of the small deportee sample is that variations among deportee perspectives along the axes of age, gender and household size are only indicative at this stage. However, they seem common-sense and are suggested by other related areas of the forced migration literature. For example, the attachment of some deportees to the UK seems related in part to having spent formative childhood years in the UK. It is clear from the literature that local places are important in the attachment, identity and security of young asylum-seekers and refugees and their feelings of membership (Valentine et al. 2009, p.247). The nature of the differential treatment of women in the deportation process seems likely to be gender-related since it is prevalent certainly in practices of detention (Alberti 2010). Finally, deportees featuring in this study who were removed in family groups seemed to experience greater stresses during and after deportation than those who were removed alone. This is surprising, suggesting the tendency of policy to present 'gentler detention' practices towards women and children (Alberti 2010, p.139) and the legal moves to embed this in Home Office practice (such as the statutory duty on the Home Office to take into account the best interests of the child in section 55, Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009, and the family returns process). The intersections between these axes and deportee reflections about the UK are areas worthy of further exploration with a larger sample group.



## CHAPTER 7: PORTRAYALS OF DEPORTEES' AGENCY

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*'You won't have your names when you ride the big airplane,  
All they will call you will be "deportees."*

(Lyrics to: Deportee (also known as "Plane Wreck at Los Gatos"), Guthrie 1961)

*'[On the plane] they did not show us the position to adopt in case we were deported to a country where it was likely that we would be killed because of events we had witnessed ... I felt that my own life was already over. ... They opened the aeroplane doors, and heat and memory rolled in... In the terminal building my guard signed me over to the authorities. ... The military police were waiting for me in a small room ... the military police followed our taxi from the airport. I was very frightened ... I am still trying to feel that it [this country] is mine. ... I do not know how things are in my country. Until I was fourteen years old my country was three cassava fields and a limba tree. And after that, I was in yours. So do not ask me how my country works.'*

(Cleave 2009, pp.350–356)

What can we know about deportees' options and choices in the post-deportation world? What do deportees do if, like Cleave's fictional deportee, they are free to leave the airport but are under surveillance by the authorities or unfamiliar with the country of return? How do they regain control over their lives and futures and maintain identities beyond simply being 'deportees', in contrast to Guthrie's Mexicans (being deported from the USA)? We know from the literature what can happen to deportees immediately after they have arrived in their country of return, as outlined in Chapter 3. That literature focuses on what has been done *to* deportees, whether ostracised, stigmatised or rejected by the receiving country and local community (Headley & Milovanovic 2016; Reynolds 2010; Schuster & Majidi 2015), or how they are constrained in the post-deportation environment (Lecadet 2012).

Chapter 7 focuses upon supporters and deportees portrayals of deportee agency in the post-deportation environment, building on the preceding chapter that provided deportees' reflections on their deportations, the UK and the resources that they had developed whilst in the UK. This chapter considers the ways in which deportees portrayed themselves or were portrayed by supporters, as having the capacity to exercise agency in circumstances that were often extremely limiting in the post-deportation environment. 'Agency' describes the ability of individuals to shape and

control their own lives, social relationships and social structures (Bakewell 2010, p.1694; McAnulla 2002, p.271), rather than simply their intentions (Giddens 1984, p.9). However, deportees' actions will be constrained by the structures in their lives in a structure/agency dialectic that was described in Chapter 3 (section 3.2.2).

Chapter 7 answers the following questions based on the perspectives of deportees and supporters in the research sample:

- When can deportees regain their agency after deportation?
- What strategies do deportees use to survive?
- How has the UK experience affected deportees' agency?
- How do deportees conceive of their futures?

This chapter contributes to answering research questions 2 and 3 of the thesis in terms of how deportees understand their own agency (RQ2) and how supporters as actors in these stories describe the agency of other deportation stakeholders, including deportees and state officials as well as themselves (RQ3). It is important to emphasise that supporter accounts describe stories of deportees which were not told directly by deportees themselves for this research; supporters were presenting their *own* accounts, not speaking on behalf of deportees. The findings, then, concern how both deportees and supporters as deportation stakeholders understood the interplay of agency and structure in the post-deportation context.

By utilising both deportees' and supporters' accounts, this chapter provides a large and varied sample of stories about post-deportation circumstances and the ways that deportees are understood to exercise agency. This provides for an analysis of variation in opportunities for agency across a range of deportation accounts.

This chapter provides a unique insight into the post-deportation world in terms of understood deportee choices and behaviour in the longer-term and how this interplayed with the choices of other actors in deportation stories. The chapter also suggests how deportees' agency could be shaped, enabled and compromised by their time and experiences in the UK, drawing on their social capital and migratory cultural capital that they had accumulated there (as outlined in Chapter 6).

## 7.1 The sample of deportation stories

Chapter 4 (*Table 4.1*) presented a total potential sample population of 83 deportees. While only 11 of these 83 deportees participated directly in this research, this chapter uses all 83 stories told about deportation. This includes the 11 interviewed deportees and the remaining 72 stories that were told by supporters (plus an additional three).<sup>42</sup> The final sample of deportation stories is broken down in *Tables 7.1* and *7.2* for transparency and clarity.

*Table 7.1: The sample of deportation stories, by source and deportation destination*

Source	Deportation destination			Total individuals (25 countries)
	Outside Europe (21 countries)	Europe (non-EU) (Albania, Kosovo)	EU (Italy, France)	
Deportation stories from deportees at interview	1(+3)	2	4	7(+3)
Deportation stories from deportees from other sources	4	0	0	4
Deportation stories from supporters	71	2	2	72
<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>86</b>

*Table 7.2: The sample of deportation stories, by source and family unit*

Source	Individuals deported alone	Individuals deported in families	No. families	Total individuals
Deportation stories from deportees at interview	6	1(+3)	1	7(+3)
Deportation stories from deportees from other sources	4	0	0	4
Deportation stories from supporters	47	25	11	72
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>86</b>

<sup>42</sup> The additional three individuals featuring in *Tables 7.1* and *7.2* were only discovered after sampling took place. They were revealed during an interview with a deportee. Thus the total of stories retold here is 86. This is three more than the original available sample of 83 discussed in Chapter 4.

The addition of supporters' material provides a way of analysing deportation stories for destinations outside Europe and about families subjected to deportation. This allows for some comparisons within the sample of stories by deportation destination and household size. Further, the sample of deportation stories now more closely resembles the published statistics (see Chapter 2).

There is no suggestion that the deportation stories told by supporters were deportees' own stories as they would have recounted them. Practical difficulties in directly reaching deportees themselves precluded their inclusion in the study in any other way, as outlined in Chapter 4. For example, it was neither possible nor ethical to reach deportees in hiding or deportees who were unresponsive to written questions. This approach was a worthwhile compromise in order to allow post-deportation circumstances outside of Europe to be better known and represented.

Deportees described by supporters in the text of this chapter are referred to by their initials, in order to focus on the supporter as the owner of the story, and to distinguish these deportees from first-hand deportee voices in interviews (with pseudonyms).

## 7.2 When can deportees regain their agency after deportation?

### 7.2.1 Constraining structures and opportunities for agency

*Figures 7.1* and *7.2* provide a reference tool for this chapter. They outline a range of possible opportunities for deportee agency thought to be available in the post-deportation context, amid a variety of structural constraints manifest in the actions of state officials and also mediated by supporters and other individuals. They are based on deportation stories of both deportees and supporters.

Reflecting the differences emerging from my analysis, *Figure 7.1* describes the structure/agency context in non-European countries (largely based on supporter accounts) while *Figure 7.2* is based on European countries (predominantly based on deportee accounts). Each figure also distinguishes between constraints (marked as row 1) and opportunities for deportee agency (marked as row 2) immediately upon arrival (the upper section of each figure), and those in deportees' everyday lives after return

(marked as rows 3 and 4 respectively in the lower section of each figure). The more heavily shaded areas highlight more common pathways for deportees described by research participants.

Personal security was a pervading concern for both supporters and deportees who described a multitude of uncertain circumstances facing deportees, clear from the more common post-deportation pathways (in heavier shading). The figures are based on stories of imprisonment, violence, harassment (as described by supporters about non-EU contexts) and precarious living (as described by deportees in Europe). The concept of personal security is thus an important element of a human frame for both deportees and supporters who were relating these stories. Supporters' perceptions of insecurity outside the EU (instrumental in compiling *Figure 7.1*) may also have influenced the ways in which they intervened as actors in the post-deportation context. Their roles in this vein will be explored further in Chapter 8.

There are important differences in the nature of safety described in the post-deportation environment, according to *Figures 7.1* and *7.2*. Deportees returned to their country of birth were understood to have faced possible detention and bribery before they were at liberty. If they faced further intimidation by persecutors, then they were faced with the dilemma of whether to stay, relocate or re-migrate to secure their safety. In contrast, those returned to an EU country hoped to have their asylum case resolved and granted. If this did not happen, they faced a precarious life and a continued quest for a place in Europe to settle. The distinction between these deportation destination regions is important. There was a tendency to understand that the non-EU context involved interrogation and threats to deportee survival. In contrast, it was likely that deportees within Europe would be released, only to become destitute and continue to circulate around the EU in search of a home.

Figure 7.1: The structure/agency dynamic after deportation to countries of origin

		Possible outcomes or choices for deportees		
<b>On arrival</b>	<b>1. Structural constraints on arrival in country of return</b>	1a. No problem experienced at airport	1b. Questioned at border by airport officials	
			Allowed to leave (possibly paying bribes or with restrictions imposed)	Detained or imprisoned (may be interrogated, suffer violence, or not heard from again)
			Released (possible bribes required or restrictions imposed)	Escape (opportunity for agency)
↓ leading to ↓				
	<b>2. Deportee choices once free</b>	2a. Go 'home' and live openly (temporarily or long-term)	2b. Internally relocate, living openly or in hiding	2c. Leave the country, living openly or in hiding
<b>Everyday life</b>	<b>3. Structural constraints on everyday life</b>	3a. Not fearful of harassment	3b. Fearful of harassment by officials for routine reason (e.g. roadblock checks) or deliberately apprehended by persecutor (interrogated, intimidated, bribe way out, suffer violence, imprisoned)	
			↓ influencing ↓	
		<b>4. Continuous choices available to deportees</b>	4a. Go 'home' and live openly (temporarily or long-term)	4b. Internally relocate, living openly or in hiding

Source: devised by the author

Figure 7.2: The structure/agency dynamic after deportation to European countries

		Possible outcomes or choices for deportees			
<b>On arrival</b>	<b>1. Structural constraints on arrival in country of return</b>	1a. No problem experienced at airport	1b. Questioned or detained at border by airport officials		
			Allowed to leave		Detained
		Asylum case granted	Asylum case refused or not processed (restrictions on residency, work and travel)	Removal to country of origin	
↓ leading to ↓					
	<b>2. Deportee choices once free</b>	2a. Re-migrate to country of birth	2b. Re-migrate to another EU state	2c. Live precariously	2d. Settle if granted some form of refugee or other immigration status
<b>Everyday life</b>	<b>3. Structural constraints on everyday life</b>	3a. Not harassed	3b. Deliberately sought out by officials (attempt to intimidate, make them leave, detained, removed)		3c. Regular checks by officials for routine reason (e.g. homelessness, identity check, right to work check)
		↓ leading to ↓			
	<b>4. Continuous choices available to deportees</b>	4a. Re-migrate to country of birth	4b. Re-migrate to another country	4c. Live precariously	4d. Settle if granted some form of refugee or other immigration status

Source: devised by the author

### 7.2.2 Non-EU European cases: an anomaly

Two deportee cases did not quite fit neatly into either of these pathways. While the interviewed deportee group did contain three cases of country of birth returns, two Albanian deportees (Ilir and Dhimiter) at times seemed to mimic the experiences of deportees removed to an EU country under the Dublin Regulation rather than the cases of return to their country of birth. For example, both Ilir and Dhimiter returned without being detained or harmed and were able to live openly, without fear of harassment, unlike most of their counterparts returning to their countries of birth. Ilir and Dhimiter also both returned fairly quickly to the EU after deportation. Dhimiter was unusually successful in gaining permission to work in Italy, but Ilir fell into a pattern more commonly experienced by deportees returned to an EU country. Without valid immigration status, Ilir lived precariously. He was unwilling to return to Albania permanently, but while travelling around the EU in search of somewhere to settle legally, he was frequently identified by officials as undocumented.

Both Ilir and Dhimiter came from Albania, a European country that became an EU candidate country only recently, in 2014. It is not yet an EU member state. Their post-deportation circumstances differed from most country of birth returns because the reason for their original migration was bound up in the aftermath of civil instability and insecurity in Albania in the mid-1990s, which had largely abated by the time of their return in the mid-2000s. However, both were fairly young (in their 20s when they were deported) and their ties to the UK were significant. Ilir had strong ties to the community where he went to school and was fostered in the UK, while Dhimiter was the guardian for his younger brother. Albania's physical proximity to the EU and historical links with Italy meant it was easier and more realistic for them to return to the EU than for other deportees in sub-Saharan Africa or Asia. Ilir tried several routes to return clandestinely to the EU, while Dhimiter managed to obtain a work permit as others in his family had done.

Ilir and Dhimiter provided an interesting anomaly to the geographical division between EU and non-EU deportation destinations which were apparent in the other deportees' stories. These two deportees contributed to the diversity of voices and stories in the analysis. Therefore regional destinations in this analysis are described as 'European

states' (meaning both EU states and non-EU European states like Albania) or 'non-European' states, the latter covering stories that largely came from African and Asian countries.

### 7.2.3 Immediate reception by the state

*Figures 7.1 and 7.2* suggest the structure-agency dynamic at play between deportees and states. Each actor wielded power and control over deportee lives at different points. For example, countries of return held authority over deportees' liberty at the airport, while agency returned to deportees once they left the airport and were able to move freely. It has been suggested that 'lucky' deportees will find their country of return does not have any interest in them (Trueman 2009, p.48). Only occasionally no hindrance for deportees at the airport was reported. They were expected to be questioned at the airport in order to enter the country, but the length and nature of this questioning varied according to whether their deportation destination was in Europe or not.

#### *Deportees returned to a non-European country*

Many stories of deportees deported beyond Europe related a sinister reception by the state. Some deportees in their countries of birth needed protection from a persecutor, as outlined in *Figure 7.1*. During fieldwork, deportees outside of Europe, understandably, did not respond fully to my direct requests for their stories. Accounts sourced directly from some deportees gave details only sparingly, such as Yusuf who emailed the following description of his post-deportation reception.

*'When i arrived in the airport the iraqi policemen take me to the jail and i spent around 3 weeks and they treated me very bad and they take all what i have of money , Accuse me that I Baathist ,and then they threw me on the street.'*

(Yusuf, Iraqi male, deported to Iraq, age and household unknown)

These brief lines encapsulate the fears and ill-treatment that faced Yusuf. He made clear use of a human frame, emphasising the personal security element as he discussed his physical vulnerability in prison and on the streets. His recounting of his immediate post-deportation experiences fit the pattern of other deportee stories that were retold by supporters: of being detained, possessions taken, and being left

destitute. Yusuf also used a bureaucracy frame to tell a story about disrespectfulness, indignant at the violent treatment and robbery he experienced at the hands of the police who were acting on behalf of the state.

Supporters were able and willing to share more detailed information about the responses of non-EU states immediately after deportations. In over 20 cases they reported violence, with descriptions of deportee imprisonment, deportees needing to pay bribes and (upon release) deportees relocating, hiding or fleeing the country in order to evade their persecutor or the state. Two reports provided details about reception conditions in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC):

*'Whoever escorted her all the way to Kinshasa went right up to Congolese immigration with her, handed over all the documents that they had about her. ... So she gets taken off to a room and she said that she was harassed by them.'*

[supporter Will, voluntary sector link to deportee Marie, Leeds, 26.11.10]

*'When they had got to the airport, they [the deported family] said there were white people there from embassies so they ... were simply questioned. But they had to give an address. ... His wife gave the address of where they were going. In the early hours of the morning the Presidential guard came, shot at the door to get in because they didn't open, and took him. ... Beat up other people in the house and assaulted his wife. ... They had a photograph of him ... so they could see who they were looking for. He was blind-folded and taken to ... where the secret service is. And he was tortured. ... He was left for dead. ... We had pictures of his wounds. We spoke to him on the phone. ... You could hear the shock in his voice. He could hardly speak about it.'*

[supporter Su, voluntary sector link to 5 deportees, Tees Valley, 14.10.10]

Supporters' statements revealed their own place in these stories; both Will and Su were in contact with these deportees and talked to them after these violent incidents. Supporters also confirmed the kinds of threatening incidents described in the literature for deportees, in contrast to the experiences of deportees living in Europe. They reveal a different power dynamic between different countries of return and deportees. Non-European states exercised physical control over most deportees. They drew deportees close immediately after deportation, and exercised their dominance by restricting deportees' agency, albeit temporarily in many cases. In contrast, we will now see that European countries distanced themselves from deportees and 'passed

the buck' to other EU countries by re-deporting deportees or creating conditions such that deportees might leave of their own accord.

### *Deportees returned to the EU*

All the 11 interviewed deportees, plus nine other deportees identified by supporters, were living in the EU following their deportation from the UK. Some had been deported under the Dublin Regulation (including interviewees Demsas, Didier, Birhan, Luwam and deportee S known to supporter Eamonn). Others had re-migrated from their country of birth, including Dhimiter, Ilir and Tamasha, as well as eight other deportees known to supporters.

Post-deportation accounts suggest that deportees trying to find a way of legalising their stay in the EU and building a life there was a Groundhog Day scenario. Deportees in the post-UK context continued to apply a strategy of persistence, as identified in Chapter 6, through re-migration and further applications for types of leave for work, study and asylum purposes. This became a source of frustration for many deportees, and resulted in destitution and a sense of wasting time in their lives navigating or evading the bureaucratic processes and constraining structures that barred their path to settlement. Didier, for example, was detained after his deportation from the UK to Italy, and expressed his frustration at an apparent lack of progress on his case.

*'I come through Roma [Rome]. I told them my stories and ... I was in detention centre [near] to Foggia like, four months and they are asking me nothing. Nothing, nothing. They are just keeping me like that. ... I keep asking them they have to do something because I can't be here [for] four months – nothing! ... After one week [after release from detention] I come back, I ask in the police station. ... They give it to me like this paper, you see this paper, they give it to me saying me I leave the country.'*

(Didier, Nigerien male, deported alone to Italy during his 20s)

Luwam further confirmed deportees' willingness to be processed through the Italian asylum system rather than evade it. However, unclear directions resulted in much frustration and again, awareness of the time passing during these fruitless procedures:

*'They gave me paper [at the airport] ... and with this paper go to Foggia. I went to Foggia. ... It's a building, it's like Home Office. ... Then I found out you have to line [queue]. ... You get in line, you have to come by four o'clock in the morning, stay in the line. They will get maybe 20% of the queue will manage to get in. ... It's the most frustrating system ever. ... It took me one week there to get in. ... [At] the gate [they] either refuse you or let you in. He refuses me so I had to insist. ... When I got in, they took my paper and I had to wait til ...*

*four o'clock in the morning maybe after, I was the last person. Then a woman came. ... "We don't know this paper and we don't know what to do with this paper, it's simply telling you that ... this will help you only if the police arrest you they will show you where you come from, otherwise there's nothing we can do here." I was like very furious!"*

(Luwam, Eritrean male, deported alone to Italy during his 20s)

Deportees persisted for as long as it took to gain some form of immigration status in an EU country. None of the interviewed deportees expressed concern they would be deported by non-UK EU states back to their country of birth. While some were successful fairly within a matter of months (Dhimiter, Luwam and Tamasha), others were wearied by their repetitious quest for permission to stay within an EU country. These EU states effectively pushed deportees out of sight by issuing documents requiring them to leave, or deporting deportees a further time within the EU.

### **7.3 What strategies do deportees use to survive?**

We know from the literature that strategies employed by some deportees include settling, hiding or re-migrating to seek refugee status or to join family in Europe (Schuster & Majidi 2015). Two predominant strategies used by deportees in this study emerged from accounts by supporters and deportees themselves. These strategies of relocation (internally, as well as re-migration across political boundaries) and hiding (literally or in plain sight) were often used in combination to maximise survival chances. These explanations demonstrate supporter and deportees understandings of exercising agency amid significant structural constraints in deportees' lives.

#### **7.3.1 Relocation**

Deportees were understood to rarely opt to return 'home' to their families and localities once they had freedom and genuine choice after being released by the authorities. That is, they did not return to the specific places where they had spent a significant part of their lives, among the people closest to them and where they may have felt they belonged and had an emotional connection. Just six (7%) of the 86 deportation stories involved deportees going 'home' to live. Even within this small group going home, at least two were fearful of doing so (both in sub-Saharan Africa) and at least three did not stay permanently (all Albanian). This confirms the

conclusions of the literature in Chapter 3 which suggested that return would not be a return to the same conditions that were originally left behind, due to changes to the deportee as well as to the people and the context back in the country they left.

Deportees' relocation options included internal relocation, to another place within the country of return, and re-migration, outside the political borders of the country of return). *Figures 7.1 and 7.2* suggested these choices could have been available to deportees upon release from the airport, or perhaps following harassment by officials in their everyday lives. Deportees almost universally chose one or both of these options at some point after their deportation, for reasons explored in the previous section around fear, unfamiliarity and lack of social capital.

#### *Re-migration across political borders*

Re-migration was a common expression of agency among deportees. The last known location of 32 of the 86 deportees (37%) was a different country to their country of return.<sup>43</sup> Their re-migration patterns are illustrated in *Figure 7.3*.

The mapping in *Figure 7.3* provides an indication of the extent of re-migration among deportees. However, it does not capture the *multiple* re-migrations undertaken by a subset of deportees. Some deportees were known to have re-migrated many times over the course of their post-deportation lives. Two detailed stories of this circular re-migration follow, as recounted by deportee interviewees. Didier was deported under the Dublin Regulation, while Ilir was deported to his country of birth, Albania. Both spent several years subsequently circling the EU to try to return to the UK.

Didier's migration patterns in the EU are depicted in *Figure 7.4*. Born in Niger, he entered the EU through Italy. The map illustrates his multiple journeys around the EU seeking sanctuary: from Italy to France and the UK, from where he was deported to Italy; he returned to France after his deportation from the UK then managed to return to the UK, only to be deported a second time to Italy. He again travelled to France, but finally returned to Italy and has remained there for several years, seeming to have given up and resigned to living an undocumented life there.

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<sup>43</sup> Re-migration rates were even higher using different measures. For example, some deportees had re-migrated since their deportation, but were not included in the re-migration total here since they had subsequently returned to the county of deportation as their last known residence.



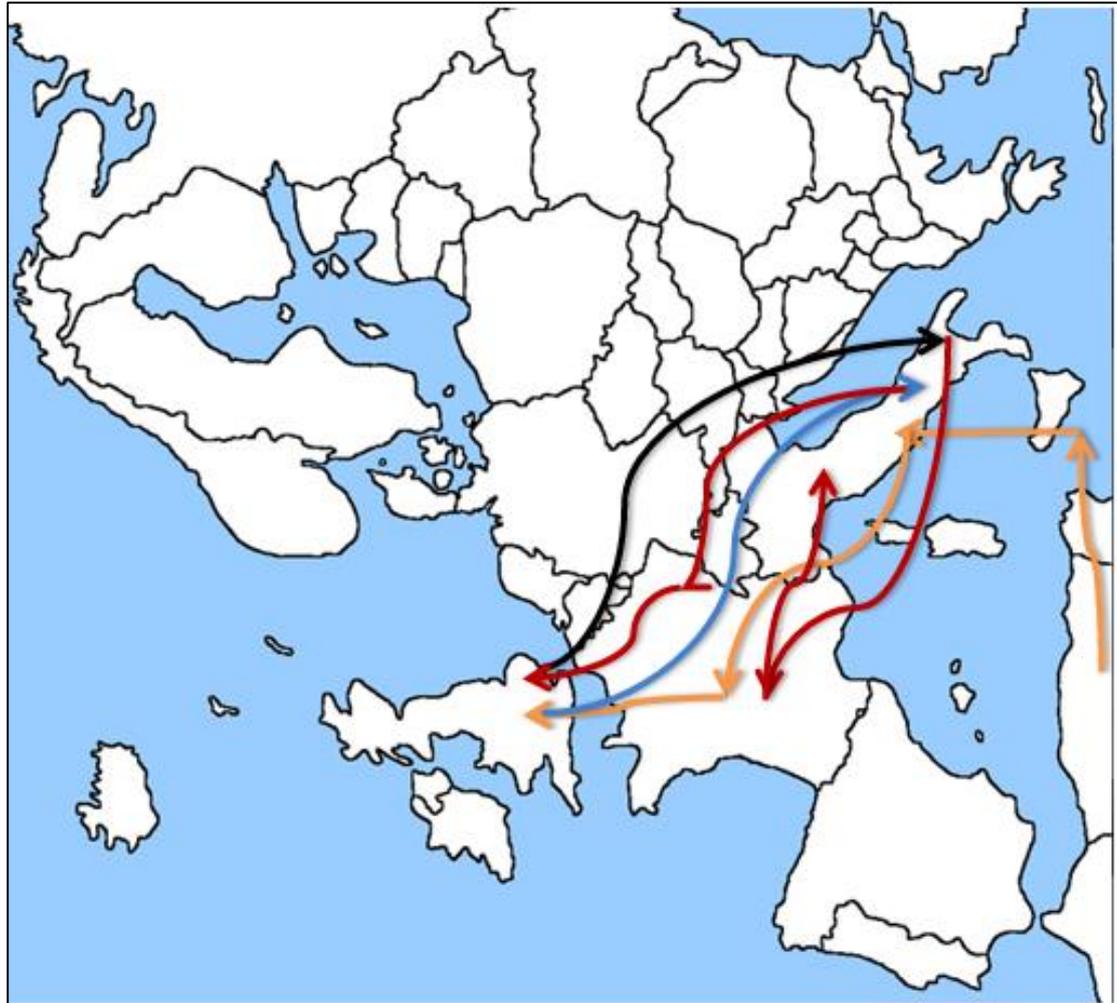


Figure 7.4: Didier's migratory journeys to settle in the UK

**Key**



Original journey from country of birth Niger to the UK  
(map omits first part to Niger to Libya)



First deportation from UK



Post-deportation journeys chosen by deportee



Subsequent deportations

Note the arrows show only the country travelled to/through, rather than exact locations or journey path

Source: Created by the author.

Base map reproduced from:

[http://twcp.conroeid.net/World%20Geography-Level/blank\\_europe\\_map.gif](http://twcp.conroeid.net/World%20Geography-Level/blank_europe_map.gif)

Figure 7.5: *Ilir's migratory journeys to settle in the UK*

**Key**

Original journey from country of birth Albania to the UK

First deportation from UK

Post-deportation journeys chosen by deportee

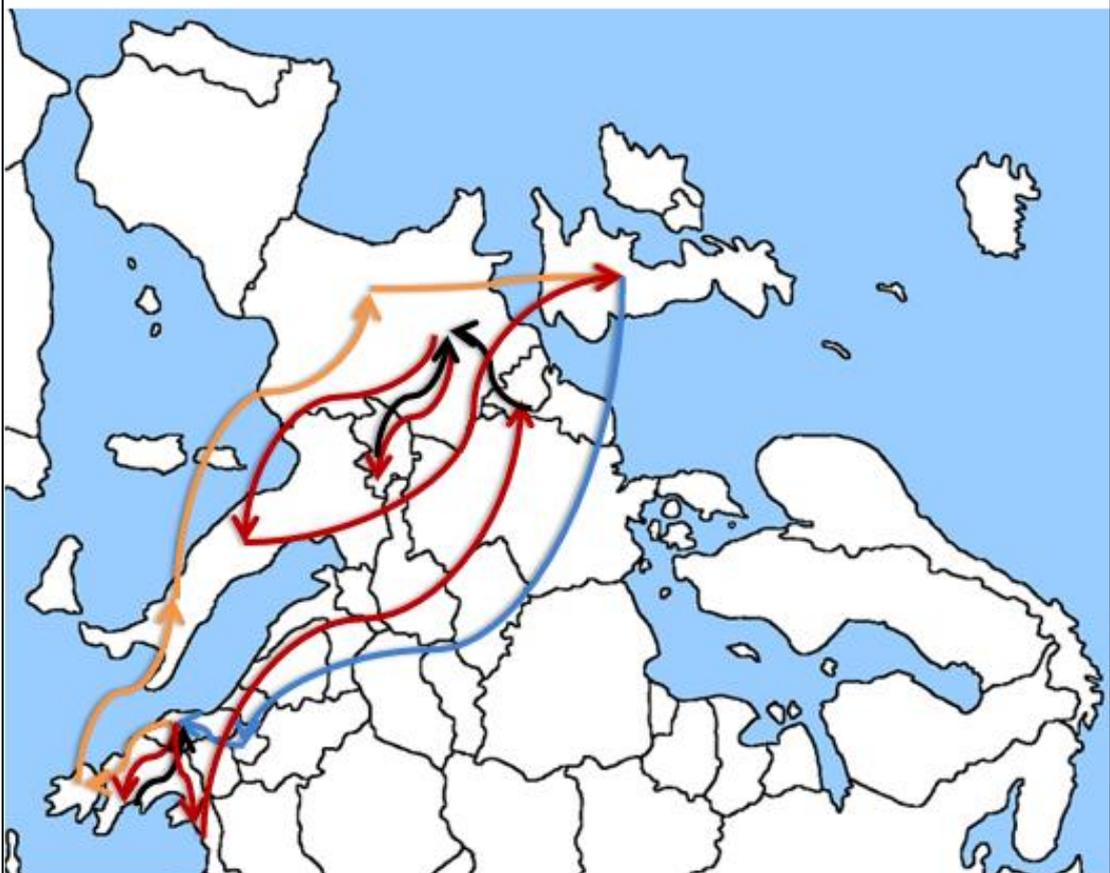
Subsequent deportations

Note the arrows show only the country travelled to/through, rather than exact locations or journey path

Source: Created by the author.

Base map reproduced from:

[http://twinkl.com/World%20Geography-Level/blank\\_europe\\_map.gif](http://twinkl.com/World%20Geography-Level/blank_europe_map.gif)



Ilir had an even more complex story of circular migration, depicted in *Figure 7.5*, that he discussed using an international interdependence frame. He was deported four times by different EU states. As an active player in the 'multi-actor, multi-level game' (Noll 2003, p.251) of burden-sharing between himself and EU states, he refused to adhere to states' expectations about where he was expected to settle, but persisted in multiple attempts to reach the UK. He witnessed both collusion and 'passing the buck' as types of interaction between EU states. Following his first deportation from the UK to Albania, he was later deported by Greece back to Albania, from Belgium to France, and from Switzerland back to France. On two further occasions, he was considered for deportation from France, but instead was told to leave the country within seven days.

On three of these six occasions, officials in the deporting state seemed keen to ensure he was returned to the most appropriate state. This slightly adjusts Walters' (2010) understanding of deportation reflecting citizenship. In Ilir's case the most appropriate state might not have been his country of birth, but the country that should process his asylum claim. Further, one French judge considered deporting Ilir to the UK, if he could prove his residence there (which Ilir could not, much to his despair).

The judge's motives are not clear from the story told by Ilir. He might have simply considered this as a technical, legal question of residence. Alternatively, he might understand himself as an actor in the burden-sharing 'game', representing France's interests or engaging in a 'criss-cross alliance' (Noll 2003, p.252) by securing cooperation with Ilir about where he really wanted to be and thus minimise the risk of him returning to France. Finally, the judge might have seen himself as a benevolent public servant with an ethics of care approach, taking into account where Ilir felt he belonged. Whatever his true motives, to Ilir the judge seemed unconcerned with citizenship as the determining factor in his deportation.

On the three other occasions where Ilir was considered for deportation, he interpreted state officials as unconcerned with his citizenship or where his 'home' might be. He was removed from Belgium to France, instructed by French authorities simply to leave France within a week, and removed from Switzerland back to France. Officials' priorities appeared to be removing him as quickly as possible, possibly

subverting the intentions of immigration policy in their own countries or the terms of the EU directive.

*'Belgium send me to Paris, France. ... I don't know why. I said "I'm not from France."... They said "That's the way you came."... I said "I didn't come from there, look on the visa yeah? I came from Greece."... The guy that told me they can't send me to Greece is because the plane is expensive. ... They won't waste money to send you Greece. It was easier to ... put us on the train ... [to] France. ... [In France] they said "Where you come from?" I said "Greece". He said "No, we can't send you to Greece." – like I said about the money. ...*

*They gave me papers for 7 days again. ... I thought to myself, I thought my brother is in Italy, let's go and live with my brother. ... The police caught us in Switzerland. I was sleeping at the train yeah, the police guy came on the train, he said ... "Passport." I said "I haven't got a passport, I've only got a ticket."... They send us back to Paris!' [groans]*

(Ilir, Albanian male, deported alone to Albania during his teens)

Both Belgian and French officials refused to deport Ilir to Greece on the grounds of expense, despite his only identity document being a Greek passport. Instead Belgian officials put him on a train to France; there was no clear rationale for selecting this destination except for proximity to Belgium. French officials left Ilir to leave the country voluntarily. Finally, Swiss officials returned Ilir to France as he had begun his train journey there.

Ilir developed migratory cultural capital through these experiences of states 'passing the buck', to the effect that he persisted in his attempts to find a place to settle within the EU. He built on these experiences to persist in re-migration attempts, but was cautious about seeking new routes he heard about from other migrants as he did not know enough about them. He made these multiple migratory journeys rather than to go 'home' to his country of origin, and accept the place in the world conferred on him by virtue of his citizenship. He pursued alternative places where he felt he might belong: either in the UK where he had spent his teenage years, or in Italy where his brother lived.

#### *Internal relocation within the country of return*

Some deportees were understood by supporters to have relocated within the country of return because they felt unable to cross borders, with countries of origin exerting control over deportees through their documentation. Some examples illustrate the ongoing dialectical struggle between (deportee) agency and structure (in the form of

state controls and anticipation actions). Deportees E in Uganda (according to supporter Nancy), JP in Cameroon (according to supporter Patrick) and J also in Cameroon (according to supporter Eve) were thought to be unable to pass through the border for fear of being detected by officials. While it was established earlier that some deportees used their own 'papers' as a form of resistance to their hosting state (Section 6.2.1), a *lack* of documentation caused a range of difficulties in the country of origin.

Some deportees relocated within the country of return if their persecutor(s) was confined to a particular area, and tried to live inconspicuously. For example according to his supporter Rick, deportee A relocated to northern Nigeria after his deportation, away from the south east region of Nigeria from where he had originally fled. However, internal relocation is not always successful. In this example, A eventually was forced to leave northern Nigeria. He felt unsafe anywhere in the country and eventually re-migrated to Ireland.

A potential pattern in relation to internal relocation emerging from the data combined gender and parental responsibility. The data for this study suggested that mothers were more likely to internally relocate in the long-term, compared with fathers.

- At least eight of ten deported *mothers* in the study were reported to have *internally relocated* in the long-term while just one re-migrated (the ninth mother remained in-country but it is not known whether she went 'home' or internally relocated).
- Five of the seven known *fathers* in the study *re-migrated*, while two remained in the country of return.
- Four couples with children were deported from the UK. In two cases, the family stayed together in the country of return. In the other two cases, the partners took different migratory paths after their deportation; the husbands re-migrated while the wives internally relocated with their children. This appeared to be because the husbands were the targets of persecution, while the wives were targeted by association.

This is an interesting trend which could be investigated in future with a larger sample of parents using their own accounts to explore and analyse such differences.

### 7.3.2 Keeping a low profile or going into hiding

Supporters gave many accounts about deportations beyond Europe where the supporters feared for deportees' safety immediately upon return. Deportees' strategies reported in these cases reflected a spectrum of possibilities and timescales, from keeping a low profile and frequently relocating, to effectively going into solitary confinement (as per possibilities 2b and 2c in *Figure 7.1*).

Among the retold stories of 86 deportees for this chapter, two families in non-European countries were described by supporters as keeping a very low profile in the country in order to not draw attention to themselves, while 14 deportees who perceived a serious threat to their lives were known to have gone into hiding as soon as they were released from the airport. They include deportee, L, went into hiding *after* immediate re-migration, where he was also under threat (described by supporter Anne).

Examples of what 'hiding' meant in practice included L and her children who moved residence several times around a city in DRC after her husband fled the country, according to supporter Su. B hid in friend's homes in Azerbaijan for a month before he could find a way of leaving the country (according to Patrick). Marie in DRC (according to supporter Will) and A in Cameroon (according to supporter Su) almost never left the building in which they were hiding. A hid for at least four months, while Marie wrote in April 2013 of her despair over being in long-term hiding for over three and a half years to her supporter, Will.

*'Since I last wrote to you the situation has even worsened. ... I'm very desperate. ... I'm really down. ... I don't have much support. ... I cry day and night in hope to leave this place.'*

(Marie, Congolese female, deported to DRC alone, age unknown)

Su described how a hiding strategy prolonged deportee A's fear and anxiety about being found by his persecutors. A went into hiding immediately after deportation to Cameroon, and stayed there for four months. She also described how other supporters witnessed the effects of his living situation when they visited him.

*'He was moved at night I don't know, about 36 hours, 48 hours later [after deportation] to this other place where he stayed for four months. ... He was still in that city and he stayed*

*in his room for four months. He did go into ... the church once ... because this was a residence where perhaps westerners went. ... He went to the church and realised it was full of Africans – left, he could not afford to be seen, have contact with anybody, and he stayed in his room and had food taken to him. ... [Visiting supporters] could see the dreadful effect of four months of virtual solitary confinement, the fear, you know physically, psychologically, you know, the depression. ... He was horrified, he was so frightened.'*

[supporter Su, voluntary sector link to 5 deportees, Tees Valley, 14.10.10]

The hiding strategy challenged my initial assumption that there may be distinguishable short-term and long-term post-deportation phases. Supporter accounts suggested that deportees in hiding for months or years adopted a long-term approach to mere *survival*. A and J's months and years of hiding (respectively) greatly contrasted with reports of other deportees who fairly quickly developed a post-deportation life, even if it was not a comfortable one. Likewise, those who re-migrated at any point, even years after their deportation, faced the same issues on arrival in a new country: to secure physical safety before considering other basic needs.

The data led me to reconceptualise the post-deportation period, which may be more accurately separated into two different phases of '*survival*' and '*settling*'. Until their physical security is ensured, deportees seem to exist in a '*survival*' mode. They cannot yet '*settle*', that is, seek a place to live and to belong permanently.

### *Hiding in plain sight*

While deportees in this study who were located outside of Europe may have needed to go into hiding to secure their safety, deportees within Europe did not face this level of physical risk. However, they developed a strikingly parallel strategy to hide in plain sight. By appearing to not be living precariously and by not drawing attention to themselves, they minimised harassment by police or other officials. Some deportees dressed smartly, did not travel far or unnecessarily, and carried false documents. It was observable during fieldwork that undocumented deportee interviewees who were living precariously in Italy without any form of income (Demsas, Didier, Ilir and Birhan) were exceptionally smartly dressed, with pressed shirts, starched collars and clean clothes. This seemed to be a deliberate strategy to minimise attracting attention from the police or other authorities. Luwam reflected on this, having been in that

situation himself previously. Elements of a bureaucracy frame are evident in his explanation.

*'In Italy when I was there, to find a job, to be considered as a normal person ... you have to dress smart. It's not like here [in the UK] - people won't judge you, but in Italy it is very important. If you dress like a clandestine you will never get a job, you will never ever get a chance to speak to anyone. So what they [undocumented migrants] do there: ... [you] have to borrow some money, but you don't get like new clothes. ... That's the point of survival. ... Even the first day you come, everyone give the advice: "dress well." ... You have to act as if you are coming ... [with] a visa, not that place.'*

(Luwam, Eritrean male, deported alone to Italy during his 20s)

The revelation of this invisibility strategy, to be treated respectfully, like a *'normal person'*, was reinforced by other fieldwork moments. Didier, for example, carried a refugee status document that belonged to another migrant, in case he was questioned by the police. Two other potential deportee interviewees in the UK, known to supporter Iris and deportee Luwam, were reportedly too afraid to participate in this study due to their undocumented immigration status. These actions reflect deportees' desire to follow the rules of society in order to be treated as members. They suggest a socio-cultural angle to a bureaucracy frame, which requires people to adhere to unwritten cross-cultural (rather than immigration) rules in order to be treated as an insider. By using false 'papers' or a metaphorical passport by dressing smartly, these provide everyday ways in which deportees resisted their further exclusion from society.

## 7.4 How has the UK experience affected deportees' agency?

### 7.4.1 Continuing fear and insecurity

Deportation in some cases threatened to (re-)expose deportees to insecure environments. One reported reason why deportees chose not to return to their 'home' community was the undiminished fear from which they had originally fled. There were many examples from deportation stories on this matter of security, told by both deportees and supporters. They included the following.

- Supporter Simon explained that U had been afraid to return to his province in Afghanistan as he had previously been forced to work for the Taliban before

fleeing the country. After deportation, U eventually travelled covertly in an attempt to visit his dying mother, but unfortunately did not reach her in time.

- Supporter Arnold described how C had not returned to her community in Kenya where her children lived, for fear of her violent husband and his sect. She hid at her mother's house in order to be able to covertly see her children who still lived with their father.
- Supporter Nancy described how E could not return to her village in Uganda because her community would have rejected her. The local residents were afraid of suffering retribution from her persecutors, who would have accused them of harbouring E in the village.

Therefore the first choice available to deportees after being released by the authorities in non-EU countries concerns how to avoid the source of their fear that the UK may have re-exposed them to, and how visible to appear in the country of return.

Many deportees outside the EU had to deal with personal security concerns before they could consider trying to meet their other basic needs. These deportees used their agency as soon as possible after deportation by drawing on their social capital, including any 'weak' social ties they had. This provided an opportunity for supporters and strangers to become actors in post-deportation stories. Supporter Nancy for example, found someone working in a local NGO to collect E and her children at the airport in Uganda, who waited while she was questioned by the airport authorities. Deportee A, according to supporter Su, was so fearful of his persecutor that he found a contact of a different nationality to meet him at the airport in Cameroon in case local people were looking for him. In Marie's case she knew nobody in DRC. She was only able to leave the airport and find a place to stay due to the intervention of a stranger who worked for an INGO and had seen her in distress (according to supporter Will).

Even deportees with valid immigration status and the ability to travel freely continued to have fears about the state restricting their freedom again. Two interviewed deportees felt uneasy about renewing documentation and risking travel, even though they had legal permission to stay in the UK and are probably the deportees least expected to be concerned about their immigration status. Tamasha, first, described her experience of renewing her student visa at the Home Office building in Croydon.

*'Oh my god, it was the same place, and the same room [as during her asylum case]. ... I was like oh my god a few years ago I was sat on that chair. ... It's not so nice. ... I know you go to offices and stuff all the time, but it's a whole different feeling when you're in that building, it's so scary, so nervous, I feel nervous every time. As soon as you get down on the security bit downstairs, I get so nervous because it's like airport security as well, so it's quite scary.'*

(Tamasha, Burundian female, deported with her family to Tanzania during her teens)

For Tamasha, her memories of the asylum system overshadowed her subsequent experiences. Her continuing insecurity derived from not having permanent residency or citizenship status. Likewise, Luwam was fearful of leaving the UK despite having refugee status with five years' leave to remain. He unsuccessfully tried to persuade his family members to visit him in the UK, rather than meet in Italy where his brother lived. He paid for an additional visa in order to strengthen his grounds to be allowed to return to the UK.

*'I had to go back to Italy again [after getting status in the UK] to see my family because my family came to Italy. ... I stayed there for 2 weeks. ... It was weird ... because how can you go back? I thought about it again and again because I was asking my brother if they can come here ... but my family can't. They came from Eritrea, they had 3 month tourist visa. So they can't. ... I asked for visa, I got one month's visa. ... I have travel document already but I have to have visa to make sure everything is ok. Normally with that travel document you wouldn't need to ... [but I was being] careful. I had to pay about £80.'*

(Luwam, Eritrean male, deported alone to Italy during his 20s)

These vignettes indicate a longer-term effect of the UK's decision to deport upon some deportees. Deportation (re-)exposed some deportees to the fears and insecurities in their lives, or created new anxieties about losing their current valid immigration status. These fears and anxieties impacted upon deportees' subsequent actions and their decisions to involve supporters or strangers to improve their prospects of safety.

#### **7.4.2 Unfamiliarity with the deportation destination**

Unfamiliarity was a further reason that emerged from post-deportation accounts for deportees not returning to the place that might be considered 'home'. This was the case particularly for deportees returned to an EU state, and for those returned to a non-EU country who had spent a significant proportion of their childhoods in the UK. Both groups were inevitably unfamiliar with the countries to which they were

deported, they did not have a sense of belonging there and had few, if any, emotional attachments to local people. This unfamiliarity also meant that deportees had little localised social capital upon which to draw in order to meet their immediate basic needs. Thus they had little incentive to return 'home.' Rather, they sought to survive without this social capital. Unaccompanied young people were particularly vulnerable at this point, with little knowledge of how to survive in unfamiliar places, nor any trusted adults to help them to adapt.

Tamasha described the difficulty she and her sister experienced in adjusting emotionally to Tanzania; a place that she had left at the age of ten, and that her UK-born sister had never seen. Neither sister felt a connection to the place that the UK had considered their 'home' and where they belonged on the basis of their mother's citizenship.

*'After I got there [to Tanzania] I got depressed, I couldn't eat, I couldn't sleep. ... Just suddenly you're in a whole different circumstance and a whole different surrounding, I couldn't cope. ... I couldn't cope at all. ... My little sister[s was] ... quite young at the time. ... I could understand what was going on so it was quite hard for me. ... [Now back in the UK] my sister is quite like "It's so unfair that you got to leave and we're still here".'*

(Tamasha, Burundian female, deported with her family to Tanzania during her teens)

Neither sister recognised the country of return, and their mother was afraid to return to the 'home' community with few friends or family to rely on. Tamasha left Tanzania shortly afterwards, returning to her familiar UK community which her sister found unjust.

Other brief examples demonstrate the fear and unfamiliarity experienced by deportees outside the EU who chose not to go 'home'. Four deportees were former unaccompanied children from Afghanistan who were young adults when deported. Their stories were related by supporters Amy, Iris, Hannah and Leanne, using a human frame to illuminate the limited agency exercised by deportees who were particularly vulnerable. All four deportees were unable or unwilling to return to their 'home' communities upon their deportation. One tried to find casual work in the capital away from his village, two fled Afghanistan immediately and the final deportee moved within and outside of the country for some time.

Amy confided her fears for S's safety who had fled Afghanistan immediately after his deportation, and his lack of resources upon which to draw for his survival. These encapsulate the combination of fear, insecurity, unfamiliarity and a lack of social capital for this young deportee.

*'Within two weeks he [S] had got out of Afghanistan and he phoned me from Pakistan. ... I might still have the text messages – things like "I'm really scared, I can't live here but I can't live here, please help". ... He would phone me and say "I haven't got any food, I haven't got any money." ... He was clearly struggling, mental health not good. He ... managed to get out and go to Greece, so then it was "Can you find me a restaurant to work in where they speak English so that I can survive?" ... He would have been 19 when this was all happening to him, to work out how to get across all these borders, and then live. ... He was ... working for somebody who wasn't paying him properly and then he borrowed money from some people to live and they were demanding it back from him and he was very, very scared. ... He was all on his own, no family, no nothing. ... He's stuck there! He's got no papers to go anywhere. He's got no family back in Afghanistan. ... To be put in that position at that young age and to fall back on yourself and still be so stuck.'*

(supporter Amy, statutory sector link to 4 deportees, Leicester, 05.07.11)

S returned from the UK with few resources to rebuild his life. He was fearful upon return and did not have family back in Afghanistan. He tried to use his limited migratory cultural capital by finding work in an English-speaking environment. He tried to mobilise his social capital by seeking help from people like Amy, but they were unable to provide practical solutions to his problems. He then felt forced to live and work in an environment where he was vulnerable to exploitation.

This section has explored why deportees rarely returned 'home' or to the locality where they were born. Safety fears, unfamiliarity and a lack of social capital were important contributing factors. At the moment of regaining their agency after release by the authorities, deportees who were fearful, unfamiliar with the post-deportation environment or without social networks struggled to reintegrate and chose to keep searching for somewhere to live permanently. This predicament seemed particularly acute for deportees who had spent some of their childhoods in the UK.

### **7.4.3 Diminished resources**

The literature describes many difficulties upon return for returned migrants, some psychological and some practical (as described in Chapter 3). Similar experiences were reported about and by the specific group of deportees in this study. Deportees had

practical problems relating to destitution, a lack of cash and regular income, as well as few support networks locally to facilitate reintegration. Deportees often had nobody in the vicinity whom they could trust to help them. Tamasha recalled her worries:

*'I was terrified, I was so scared, I was thinking where are we going to stay? Are we just going to live in the street? We don't know anybody.'*

(Tamasha, Burundian female, deported with her family to Tanzania during her teens)

For deportees in the EU, these everyday practical problems were a predominant concern. Combined with their immigration status and problems with the state, they engendered a feeling of helplessness about their futures (that I will return to in Section 7.5). After being released from detention in Italy, Didier explained how his lack of resources upon his deportation from the UK meant that he had sold his only possessions, relied upon a charity for food and lived in an abandoned farm building with other immigrants.

*'I have no money, I have no money, seriously. ... Clothes my everything, I sell them. ... I sold all my stuff, I sell it. ... Sometimes I go to Caritas I eat something. ... The place I live in ... that is, oh man, very bad. ... It's like [a] broken house, something like that. ... It should be like about half hour [on the bus to the nearest village].'*

(Didier, Nigerien male, deported alone to Italy during his 20s)

This dearth of resources on his return to Italy meant that Didier was unable to exercise significant agency with his post-deportation liberty. The most significant choice he exercised was to evade the authorities (as he described in his interview) by living in a very remote location, and thus minimised everyday harassment (shown as possibilities 3b and 3c in *Figure 7.2*) to preserve his freedom.

Similarly, Demsas was without material or social resources upon his return to Italy. In contrast, his impression of the authorities was that they did not want anything to do with their asylum-seeking population.

*'It's so difficult for me because [on arrival] I don't have friends, I don't have where to sleep, I don't have food, even I don't have any money. That was a very, very difficult situation. ... They don't care about us, everybody in Italy. From airport they sent me away, they said they don't care where you go. ... I don't [didn't] know where the Caritas place [was] ... I meet some Eritrean people and they told me all how they survive in Italy.'*

(Demsas, Eritrean male, deported alone to Italy during his 20s)

For both Demsas and Didier, their survival was partially enabled through the solidarity of other migrants living in similarly precarious situations. Both discussed how they were surviving in Italy despite their unauthorised status with limited help from others who had had the same experiences. For these EU deportees, freedom and the opportunity for agency upon release by the authorities led to their lonely destitution.

This section has demonstrated that when deportees first had the opportunity to exercise agency post-deportation, they were often facing conditions of immediate insecurity, isolation and destitution that were arguably induced by the deporting state. Some were still fearful and felt physically unsafe in the country of return. Those deported to an unfamiliar place had weakened or severed social ties upon which they may have otherwise drawn. Most deportees returned without any financial resources that could have, for example, enabled them to travel to a place they considered to be relatively safe. In all of these situations, the deporting state had some influence on the factors that exacerbated these difficulties. The deporting state had determined the place of removal regardless of suitability. It had often undertaken excessive time to resolve asylum claims which had weakened social ties and exacerbated deportees' unfamiliarity with the place of return. Finally, the deporting state deported people who had no financial resources that could have ensured basic safety upon their immediate arrival.

## **7.5 How do deportees conceive of their futures?**

This section suggests how deportees felt that their immigration status influenced their ability to exercise control over their own futures. There was a clear division among deportees between those who had a relatively secure immigration status and those who did not. Even the audible tone of their responses during interview set them apart from one another. Here, the analysis uses only deportees' own words (rather than those of their supporters) since plans and aspirations are highly subjective. These deportees tended to raise similar themes in relation to their futures: work, money, a desire to reunite with family, and possible re-migration. When discussing their futures, often deportees were conscious of the time they considered to be 'lost' that was spent seeking asylum, as discussed earlier (in section 6.3.1).

### 7.5.1 Deportees with insecure immigration status

Those without secure immigration status (Demsas, Didier, Ilir and Birhan) were generally despondent, brief and lacked hope when the question of their future was raised in interview. They were unable to respond in any detail or beyond their immediate predicament, to which they could not envisage a resolution. Several deportees became exasperated by the question, with Birhan asserting *'I said we have no hope'* when asked more than once about his future. Further than this, Abel expressed extreme hopelessness and insecurity, saying that he expected to die *'at any moment'* in his current location in Iraq. Similarly, when asked to articulate why he was unable to plan for his future, Demsas explained:

*'Really at that [this] time I can't answer that question because ... really I [am] demoralise[d] because [of] my future. I'm looking to my future, I have to do something but at that [this] time I can't do nothing, I can't even go to my school. So how am looking for my future?'*

(Demsas, Eritrean male, deported alone to Italy during his 20s)

Demsas went on to critique the gulf between the ideas of universal human rights prized by liberal democracies, and his reality that these opportunities were not available to non-EU citizens.

*'I left my country to look in my future, there must be something for me and my family and save my life. But when it came I can't, I didn't see anything, any there is no human right, there is no democracy, there is no nothing. I can't say that - there is democracy there is human right ... [In] Italy there is democracy and human right [but it] is not for me, even Italy, that's right, even in Italy I was scared of my life.'*

(Demsas, Eritrean male, deported alone to Italy during his 20s)

For Demsas, opportunities for his agency were constrained by nationality, country of birth and immigration status.

Undocumented deportees described the impact of the lack of security on their lives and how this completely constrained their opportunities to exercise agency. Until they had minimum assurances of security and resources in order to be able to make choices in their own lives, these undocumented deportees were simply unable to hope, dream or speculate, let alone plan for positive events in their futures.

### 7.5.2 Deportees with secure immigration status

In contrast to undocumented deportees, those who had secured some form of immigration status in Europe (Dhimiter, Tamasha and Luwam) were happier, brighter and could talk with enthusiasm about their plans, from the short-term to even their retirement. Dhimiter found a future outside of the UK in Italy, and seemed very content with his life as it stood.

*'I [will] find my way. It's not likely to be in England now but I am happy here [in Italy] because I have my wife, my life, my job, everything, my family is happy. ... No for moment [we will stay] here, we can stay here. It's too difficult again in Albania, it's no job nothing. I have my profession, she [my wife] have her [job]. The money we take in Albania it's no – very hard to live, maybe we stay a little bit here and after, we see. ... For the moment we are living here. ... To retire I just go back!'*

(Dhimiter, Albanian male, deported alone to Kosovo during his 20s)

Deportees Luwam and Tamasha, who had returned to the UK, were haunted by an underlying fear that their immigration status could be revoked in the future (as discussed in section 7.4.1). However, even in that eventuality, these deportees seemed able to contemplate that possibility with optimism. Tamasha for example was able to envisage a return to Tanzania since she now had the qualifications, skills and experience to secure a good job and, by extension, a good future for herself and her family.

*'If I'm going to have to renew my visa or ... apply for citizenship, I hope I get to stay because I feel like I'm going to get to support my mum more. By then if I do have to leave, I guess, I don't know, I wouldn't want to but I guess it's going to have to be ok because I've got my mum there [in Tanzania], it's not like I'm going to a place that I've got no-one. ... I feel like it's probably not going to be the best job that I'm gonna get, but at least I'll get a job. ... It'd be like starting your life all over again.'*

(Tamasha, Burundian female, deported with her family to Tanzania during her teens)

These now UK-residing former-deportees with a settled status had maintained sufficient contact with their families that they were now able to conduct a transnational life between the UK and their countries of birth. They were investing in social capital in their countries of origin, which might provide 'transnational insurance' against future difficulties in the UK (Van Hear 1998, p.198). Tamasha financially supported her mother and sisters and has visited them in person, while Luwam was becoming an activist, supporting opposition politics in his home country of Eritrea

from the security of his home in the UK, through social media and demonstrations until the time he could return to rebuild his country.

*'Obviously after I finish this degree, I'm looking for a job I guess. ... I'm actually participating in opposition groups, but I'm trying to build change in my country. ... It might be able to be successful in a few years time. ... We do demonstration in London, I went once. And we raised some money. ... There's big organisation that I was member of, it was founded in United States of America in 2006, so they have quite a lot of people all over the world. ... It's quite good, it's working. You know the Arab Spring was initiated from here by Facebook, so it works. ... I'm also thinking if say get a chance to work in a profession I'm doing, chemical engineer, to do something that helps me and my country. ... But until then – that's going to be a very, very long time from now.*

(Luwam, Eritrean male, deported alone to Italy during his 20s)

This section has suggested that in the long-term, deportees who found security were able to exercise agency to become assets to their local and transnational communities, and would be more resilient in the face of future uncertainty. Deportees who secured valid immigration status were even more likely and willing to consider leaving the host country in the future if necessary.

In contrast, deportees who had not found security or membership in a state felt they had a bleak future. For undocumented deportees in the EU, their problems could eventually become the problems of the state that was unwillingly hosting them. These include public health issues, criminality and a missed opportunity to benefit from the untapped potential that these individuals could contribute to the economy and society, if only given the opportunity to belong. For deportees outside the EU, their futures were less clear, but likely to be dependent on the constraints applied by the state in which they live. We know that deportees were returned to an often unfamiliar context, with problems of destitution and reduced social networks to help them establish a future for themselves. They were likely to re-migrate. In this context, deportees needed a state that will allow them to settle, feel secure and to thrive in the long-term. In this endeavour, they may well turn to social contacts for support wherever they exist. The next chapter will look at the relationship between deportees and their UK ties in this post-deportation context.

## 7.6 Conclusion

This chapter concludes the examination of opportunities perceived by deportees and supporters for deportee agency after removal from the UK. The chapter has answered questions concerning when there are thought to be possibilities for deportees to exercise agency in the post-deportation environment, what strategies they employ, and how far their UK experiences might constrain their post-deportation agency. It also considered how deportees might be able to exercise agency in the longer-term, beyond their immediate experiences.

After deportation, supporters and deportees described an insecure environment where deportees attempt to regain control over their lives in an ongoing tussle with the state in which they reside. The chapter presented a tool in *Figures 7.1* and *7.2* that identifies the points at which deportees might have opportunities to regain some agency after deportation, and what structural constraints they need to navigate. A number of important variations were apparent from the analysis of structure and opportunities for agency.

- Deportation destination: that is, whether deportees were removed to a European or non-European country was a significant factor in the way they were thought to have the opportunity to exercise agency. A small number of Albanian deportees blurred this geographical division, at times having similar experiences to deportees who were deported back to the EU under the Dublin Regulation, despite coming from a non-EU state.
- The intersection of gender and parenthood. There seemed to be a gendered outcome for deportee parents, with mothers tending to internally relocate while fathers more commonly re-migrated. The small numbers of empirical cases in these categories suggest an avenue for future research here.
- Levels of insecurity. Deportees' post-deportation lives fell into two phases: ensuring *survival*, and *settling* somewhere that they could belong. This division often reflected deportees' immigration status wherever they lived.

Several factors were thought to hinder deportees' re-integration in the country of return, directly related to deportees' time seeking asylum in the UK: being returned to a place in which they felt unsafe; being returned to an unfamiliar place; and, being returned without resources. These constraining factors relate to issue of the UK's relationship with deportees, and its corresponding responsibility towards them. The

chapter went on to consider the strategies that deportees used to survive in the context of being unable to re-integrate, namely, relocating or hiding.

Where supporters understood that threats existed to deportees' security, this provided opportunities for them (and others) to become active in the deportation story themselves, either to provide interceding support or as an influence over the choice of remigration location. Supporter concerns about deportees' lack of security and possibilities for agency in non-European destinations (outlined in *Figure 7.1*, based largely on supporter accounts) suggests in what circumstances they might have felt prompted to actively intervene in the post-deportation lives of deportees. Again, supporters' roles will be explored further in Chapter 8.

For deportees who had fled fear and violence, the UK's rejection did not appear to preclude their future decisions to migrate to seek safety. The frequency of remigration as a deportee strategy, as depicted in *Figure 7.3*, counters policy assumptions about return migration as the end point of the migratory process. Re-migration among deportees described by themselves and supporters in this study confirms the migration literature (section 3.2.3). It also tests the boundaries of the 'deportation corridor', since multiple remigrations show deportees' lives continue to be affected by deportation beyond the temporal and spatial limits of such a 'deportation corridor'.

Throughout deportees' efforts to establish their lives, the agency of the state remained prominent in interviewees' accounts. At times, by withholding documentation or refusing to grant permission to stay, the state thwarted deportees or hindered their efforts to such a degree that some deportees felt hopeless and their futures were unimaginable. Even for those deportees with more secure immigration status, their past experiences taught them to prize this status. This was a new element of their migratory cultural capital.

The deportation stories related in this chapter suggested that not only did the UK actively reduce deportees' resource capacity to return and reintegrate, but, by doing so, it inadvertently encouraged their re-migration. Thus deportation seems unlikely to discourage other potential migrants from considering migration, counter to the aims of deportation policy (Noll 1999, p.4). The irony of potentially encouraging deportees'

re-migration to the UK is explored in Chapter 8, as the thesis considers the new transnational ties between deportees and their UK supporters, brought about by the acts of refusing asylum and conducting deportations.

## CHAPTER 8: SUPPORTERS

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*'We still haven't done enough to save her, Charlie. I thought we had, but we need to do more. And we will do more, darling. We will. We won't ever give up on Little Bee. Because she is part of our family now. And until she is happy and safe, then I don't think we will be either.'*

(Cleave 2009, pp.366–367)

This chapter considers the role of UK-based contacts of deportees, described here as 'supporters', in the post-deportation context. As ordinary citizens in the host country who provide some kind of direct support for deportees, UK supporters are not well-known actors in the deportation literature. We might assume supporters come from the same groups of people who support migrants, (refused) asylum seekers, refugees or undocumented migrants in their communities.

Citizens and those working in public services are now considered stakeholders rather than mere observers or objects of national policy outcomes, with some level of responsibility in ensuring them (Barnes & Prior 2009). Any activity to help deportees could be interpreted as a form of subversive activity against the state. Supporters may be a contemporary form of street-level bureaucrat with the potential to undermine policy implementation. We know that supporters of undocumented migrants have the potential to act across borders. The 'republican godfathers' in France, for example, support undocumented migrants in defiance of national immigration policy and have used their networks to attempt to regularise migrants' status in Italy (Chauvin & Garces-Mascareñas, 2012; Guiraudon, 2001). However, this example took place in a context where the undocumented migrants were present; we do not know if this type of cross-border support would occur without their presence.

Support provided to deportees could be manifest as a form of everyday resistance to deportation policy and the intentions of government, such as providing money to deportees or calling them during their transport to/from the airport to offer moral support. It could take the form of direct confrontation with the authorities, such as calling airlines to protest against them taking deportees on a specified flight, or contacting the Home Office to make a complaint on behalf of a deportee. If UK

citizens are genuinely considered as stakeholders in national policy, then supporters may pose a political challenge to immigration and deportation policy.

The chapter explores how supporters are participants in deportation policy and practice. The chapter contributes to answering the final research question (RQ3) about the self-perceived role and agency of supporters, their views of and relationships to other deportation stakeholders. It examines the following questions using the empirical data:

- What is the nature of the social relationships between supporters and deportees?
- How do supporters frame deportation and describe deportees?
- How do supporters see their own role in the deportation corridor?

The chapter demonstrates that the act of deportation can include a wider group of stakeholders beyond deportees and deportation officials. Deportation by the UK can have an impact upon its own residents and citizens, and they can play an independent role in it. The chapter will establish that supporters are actors and agents in the deportation corridor, so justifying their inclusion in this thesis as one of the key groups of deportation stakeholders under scrutiny.

The chapter also reveals that the act of deportation can inadvertently spur the creation of *transnational* relationships between supporters and deportees, at times extending to other contacts in one another's lives and across other borders to become networks. These transnational relationships enabled deportees' survival after deportation, in what I term 'panicky' transnational behaviour, as a form of 'small-scale' and 'reactive' transnationalism, following Burrell (2003) and Itzigsohn and Saucedo (2002) respectively.

Agency continues to be an important theme in this chapter, alongside its structural counterpart. Supporters saw the complexities and subtleties of the deportation context through a bureaucracy frame in terms of actors, laws, processes and power at different scales and in different locations. Within this context they also observed the struggle of deportees to assert themselves against state restrictions and intimidation, this time largely through a human frame. Supporters encouraged and enabled

deportees to take control over their own lives as much as possible as well as challenging states themselves. In doing so, their interventions changed the post-deportation context. This is important to recognise, because policy objectives around deportation focus on deportees and, to some extent, potential migrants in the country of return that this action may deter (as outlined in Chapter 2), while the chapter shows that supporters also have agency here. Thus supporters became agents in their own right in the deportation corridor, and justified their position as deportation stakeholders in this thesis.

The empirical examples in this chapter provide evidence for the more developed and intense relationships between supporters and deportees in order to show not what is common but the *potential* power of such ties. Of course most deportees will be neither sufficiently lucky nor strategic to have developed ties in the UK who will act as supporters post-deportation. The majority of deportees are most likely to suffer the consequences of having been refused asylum seekers in the UK, as outlined in Chapter 7 (section 7.4) and therefore could become more isolated and vulnerable in the country of return than before they travelled to the UK. We can also infer an expression of responsibility for deportees from supporters' resistance and their use of a human frame in their discussions, in lieu of what states failed to bear.

## 8.1 The supporter sample

23 supporters were interviewed for this study. Most supporters were women (17 female, 6 male) and all were UK residents, living in one of six English regions (Yorkshire, the South East and the Midlands predominated). Supporter sample details are provided in table format in Appendix B2.

Most supporters in the sample had known deportees as asylum seekers while they were in the UK. They often had met because of the supporter's voluntary or paid work. Common examples included befriending people held in immigration detention, and through work in third sector organisations whose client group included asylum seekers. Faith was another common link for some supporters and deportees, which at times had influenced their choice of voluntary activities and led to their meeting one another. Less common associations arose because of statutory work or being a

member of the community or ethnic group of the deportee. More unusually, three supporters (Sara, Anne and Eve) had never met some of the deportees they discussed. In these cases, the supporters had initiated post-deportation contact themselves, hearing through other friends and contacts that these deportees were in need.

Between them, the supporters related stories of 78 individual deportees. It was common for supporters to describe only one meaningful relationship with a deportee or deportee household. Around half of the sample knew only one person or one household who had been deported but had invested in this relationship and thus the link was often strong and persisting. The remainder of the sample often knew several deportees, with varying strengths of association between them. One supporter (Eve), for example, knew at least seven deportee households, but did not pursue those relationships where the deportee had another supporter, in order to preserve her own resources. All of the supporters knew a deportee who had been removed to a country outside of the EU, which was usually the country of birth. Four supporters knew a mix of EU and non-EU cases. None solely knew of EU (Dublin Regulation) returns. The deportees discussed by these supporters are referred to in this thesis by their initial, to minimise confusion with deportees directly participating in the research who in the preceding chapters who were referred to using pseudonyms.

## **8.2 What is the nature of the social relationships between supporters and deportees?**

Ongoing relationships between deportees and supporters are rather surprising and intriguing, given the unusual and brief circumstances in which they arose and the different backgrounds and characteristics of the participants who had potentially little in common. This section explores how such relationships in the sample originated and were sustained after deportation. Three main issues are considered: how asylum seekers fitted within the social world of their UK supporters *before* deportation, the emotions experienced by supporters immediately *after* deportation, and how those relationships evolved and were shaped by the deportation act into transnational ties.

### 8.2.1 Deportees as household members or friends

No single term adequately captures the relationships between supporters and deportees. From the supporter perspective, the intensity and value of these relationships varied: deportees were described as former clients, acquaintances, friends, members of their churches or communities.

Some deportees were considered pseudo family members (as Little Bee was for Sarah and Charlie in the opening quotation). Supporters reported that deportees used familial titles for them: for example, A called Rick 'Dad', A called Su 'Mum', deportees and their children called Nancy and Ruth both 'Mum' and 'Grandma', and S's children asked Yvonne to adopt them. The ease with which these terms can be utilised, and the norm of large extended families in some cultures, may be a bearing on this use. Therefore it was particularly revealing when supporters themselves described these relationships in familial terms. Nancy in particular assigned a prominent place to E and her children (M and J) within her family:

*'They became so much a part of our lives, our hearts really, that we were one family. Yes, there's no other way to describe it really. You know, she was the daughter that I haven't got ... the grandchildren that I hope I will have in the future, but they certainly were while they were with us. ... They were just very much a part of our lives and in our extended family. ... During that time I had never been so loved and it was a wonderful experience. ... They're still part of our lives, they're still part of our family, and I'll see them next year. I just would've liked to have watched them grow up.'*

(supporter Nancy, faith group link to a deported family of 3, Tees Valley, 19.10.10)

Nancy not only described a familial relationship between herself and E's family as a 'daughter' and 'grandchildren' to her. She also drew broader household parallels in terms of E's place in her extended family, embraced by others in the family and her social world. Broader household relationships were also apparent for other supporters. For example, Gemma and deportee G called one another 'sister', Iris considered her own daughter to also be a key contact for Ilir, while Yvonne described the children in S's family being like her little brothers and sister. Several supporters including Su, Iris, Simon and Eve referred to their own children in comparison with deportees, with Su and Simon even referring to deportees' own rooms in their homes, and friends asked about the deportee as though enquiring after a child who had gone abroad. Some supporters involved their family members in overseas trips, thus

merging the social world of the supporter's family with the supporter-deportee relationship. Iris for example, took her husband and daughter to meet deportees' families on holiday in Albania, while Simon and his wife visited U in Ukraine together. These examples illustrate the way in which deportees became and continued to be part of the extended family of the supporter, even after removal from the UK. Notably, they are not simply the preserve of the supporter alone, but family members have developed friendships with these individuals on their own terms. These descriptions suggest a dependent relationship between supporters and deportees, with supporters (and some of their family members) acting as a pseudo parents of deportees.

A small number of mutually reciprocal supporter-deportee relationships persisted based on common interests, spending time together and good rapport, with no apparent dependency or social hierarchy. These were described by supporters as friendships, which appeared to mutually benefit both supporters and deportees. Patrick, for example, described his deported friend B in relation to other deportees he knew (JP and C), revealing his different social relations with each:

Patrick: *'I probably saw B more than most people [asylum seekers he knew in the UK] and not because of his situation, just because of like it was nice sharing the world with him. ... I like, I love spending time with him, he's hyperactive. ... We've kept up a friendship for sure. ... I go to see B [overseas] and he won't let me spend money. ... I get a text off him at least once a week, more than that, emails. You know he's a complete Facebook junkie. ... But both of those I've sent money to [deportees JP and C] ... it becomes much more a supporting role than a friendship I think.'*

Interviewer: *'But for B it isn't?'*

Patrick: *'No. Definitely no.'*

(supporter Patrick, activist link to 2 deportees,<sup>44</sup> Cardiff, 18.11.10)

For Patrick the hallmarks of this friendship – spending time together, B's personality, generosity and active contact without requests for support – contrasted with the more benevolent relationships he had with JP and C. These aspects of mutual friendship were less prevalent in supporter descriptions of dependent deportees.

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<sup>44</sup> Patrick gave a detailed account of his relationships with B and JP during his interview, and thus he is recorded in the sample as having discussed 2 deportees. However, as in the above quotation he did fleetingly refer to C, but with so little detail that C was not recorded as a deportation example.

For some supporters, their relationships with deportees did not exist at all post-deportation. Some waned, while others were not intense while in the UK and so were not pursued. Even those supporters with close relationships knew other deportees whom they were less close to (as Patrick demonstrated in relation to JP and C). There were no clear reasons why some relationships persisted while others did not.

In spite of the odds, it seems that in a relatively short timescale some deportees had developed a place and social group in the UK to which they could partially belong. Further, despite deportees' physical absence, these supporter-deportee relationships were being sustained through transnational means. Perhaps it was not difficult for supporters to consider an overseas deportee as part of the household, extended family or as a close friend, since the transnational phenomenon means that overseas ties are increasingly easily maintained in the long-term. This was not necessarily problematic and was sustainable, since traditional family relations are a web of related dependencies and hierarchies. In sum, the fieldwork suggests that there were two key ways for deportees (at least partially) to belong in the UK through supporter-deportee relationships: more commonly, like a dependant member of the household or extended family, but also as a reciprocal friend. Of course, some deportees do not develop relationships beyond client-like ones. This chapter focuses on what the supporter-deportee relationship *can* become, what is the *potential* of these ties.

### 8.2.2 Emotional responses to deportation

Worry, guilt and grief were three commonly expressed emotional responses to deportation by supporters in this study. Other emotions, such as anger, tended to be expressed in relation to the broader asylum and deportation system, and were often aimed at politicians for their apparent indifference or inaction.

Worry was the most commonly expressed. Many supporters described their worry or anxiety about deportee safety in the immediate post-deportation stage, when they had not heard anything from a deportee or knew that they were afraid. Su spent time working out where A would be at different times during his removal, anticipating when he would be changing planes and his arrival times in different places. While deportees sometimes were able to contact their supporter en route (even using

security escorts' phones), others did not hear from deportees for several weeks, prolonging the anxiety they felt. Many deportees known to supporters, but not included in this study, were never heard from again despite assurances they would get in touch with their supporter.

Supporters frequently coupled such worries with guilt that they could have influenced what happened for a better outcome. Nancy said *'I feel like I'd let them down'* while Will described his sense of guilt despite having no control over what happened to J: *'What else could I have done? Is it because I didn't try hard enough? Is it because I wasn't savvy, didn't know what I was doing enough?'*

Grief tended to be expressed by those who enjoyed a particularly close relationship to the deportee. This was a confusing and strange time because while deportees were not dead, they were no longer present in the daily life of the supporter. Some described physical symptoms: *'You get that terrible feeling in your chest and that fear in your stomach'* (Su), Nancy said it took her a week to physically recover *'I cried more in those weeks than I cried for years'*, and several even shed tears during the fieldwork interview. Patrick explained in some detail his reaction to the deportation of his close friend B, in terms of his own loss, the time it took for him to stop being overwhelmed by it and how B remained a part of his everyday in their shared memories of local places:

*'I was like not in the best of states, still not when I think about it actually, when he got deported it was ... quite an emotional upheaval, and ... still is. ... At least for the first two weeks, three weeks was ... heart wrenching, like you've lost someone, someone's been taken away from you. ... If I go to Splott market its still ... completely embedded in my head I wander around it and he's just there. ... It's not like a scar, it's hard to explain it. ... I don't think it will ever go away in terms of that that wrenching someone out of your life. ... It's weird how he's still alive but a lot of the time I find myself talking in the past tense. It's weird, it's like, hang on he's still alive, but it is that same thing that you do when you lose someone, when someone's died.'*

(supporter Patrick, activist link to 2 deportees, Cardiff, 18.11.10)

These descriptions mirror the stages of the grief cycle: shock, denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Some supporters still lacked peace or acceptance for years after the deportation event; both Patrick and Yvonne suggested they felt ongoing loss over two years after the deportation. Yvonne described her

worry and grief in relation to the deportation of S's children and some detrimental impact upon her own social relationships due to the inability of others to empathise:

*It's not worse than grief, like someone dying, but it's like a really confusing feeling, because they are not dead but you don't know what on earth is happening to them ... At least you think death is kind of peace, but you don't know what's going to happen to that person. ... These people were in my house, having dinner with me, I was playing with the kids, they were in my world, and then they were taken away ... I remember one friend said everything would be ok and I said "You can't say it will be ok, these people, I will never see these people again!" ... It's the sort of thing you can't really bring it up in a conversation because ... people feel so uncomfortable about it. ... It's not something you really end up talking about.'*

(supporter Yvonne, voluntary sector link to deported family of 4, Swansea, 17.11.10)

Some supporters eventually lessened their involvement with other asylum seekers as a coping mechanism. In contrast, Eve was able to continue her involvement with deportees without experiencing excessive worry or overwhelming guilt about them but her reconciliation with loss seemed unusual. This may be partly due to her experiences of knowing many deportees rather than having an emotional investment in one sole individual, as well as having 'successes', for example, asylum seekers granted refugee status or deportees who had found security and somewhere to belong. Supporters' widespread emotional responses to deportation further confirm the depth and value of many supporter-deportee relationships to supporters, who could have easily severed such relationships after deportation had they not been mutually beneficial.

### **8.2.3 The morphology of supporter-deportee transnational ties**

In Chapter 3 it was anticipated that post-deportation relationships might have transnational characteristics but would not be classic examples of transnational behaviour (that arise when a planned move incorporates ways for migrants to keep in touch with 'home'); in fact they would be a variant or distorted form of transnationalism because of likely constraints around physical freedom and resources available to deportees. Contact between supporters and deportees varied in fieldwork examples, but supporters described persisting relationships with 78 individual deportees, as outlined in the sample details. This contact was transnational in many cases due to the regularity and frequency of contact across borders post-removal,

although more punctuated in others, with periods of no contact at all due to deportees' lack of freedom and resources. Where supporters described a period of regular contact with deportees restored post-deportation, they participated in two distinct phases of transnational contact which I call 'panicky' transnationalism and 'skewed' transnationalism.

### *Panicky transnationalism*

First and most commonly described by the supporter sample, was activity that I call 'panicky transnationalism' (after Guiraudon, 2001).<sup>45</sup> This was a period of the most intense but irregular contact between supporters and deportees, characterised by urgency and a purpose to confirm or enable physical safety, and often manifest in short phone calls at any time of day or night. Moments of panicky transnationalism occurred at a number of moments in time, such as during deportation, immediately upon arrival, or during a later emergency. Examples include supporters providing moral support on the phone to deportees during a changeover of planes, trying to find contacts in the country of return to meet deportees at the airport, and phone calls upon arrival to confirm deportee safety.

Panicky transnational contact occurred for almost all supporters in the fieldwork, regardless of whether deportees were considered to be clients, family members or friends. For example, Su explained she would be available at any time to help deportee A in a difficult situation, explaining their understood signals due to A's lack of resources: *'I know he would give me a missed call if there was a problem and I'd call him back immediately'*. Eve described her anticipation of such a call: *'I might at times do like 14 hours on a day when somebody is going to be removed say, or when L was at Nairobi airport it was wake up at four in the morning suddenly having to go into action.'* Other panicky actions by supporters frequently included sending money quickly to pay for healthcare emergencies (Yvonne, Ruth and Anne) and bribes (Eve), or searching for and working with contacts who could assist with meeting at the airport, travel or securing accommodation in a safe place (Su, Anne and Eve).

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<sup>45</sup> Guiraudon reports an activist using 'panic transnationalism' in relation to French 'godfathers' who travelled to Italy to take advantage of a regularisation programme on behalf of migrants they supported.

Ultimately supporters felt deportee lives were at stake and they needed to respond as quickly as possible. Supporters saw these situations as security concerns of major significance and a security theme was clear in their descriptions, focusing on deportees' physical safety upon arrival (including getting through the airport and avoiding detention) but also securing accommodation and treating injuries. Several supporters (including Nancy and Ruth) expressed fears about what would have happened to deportees without their intervention, such as living in unsafe areas or earning an income through prostitution.

This period of urgent back-and-forth contact persisted for weeks, months and even years in some cases, with the burden on the supporter continuing until security was assured or if the deportee halted contact. After the urgency abated many supporter-deportee relationships dwindled or were put on hold, particularly for those with less close relationships. This intense supporter-deportee relationship seemed to be dormant, ready to be revived if an emergency struck again. Supporters implied they had made an indefinite commitment to respond to life-threatening crises facing deportees they knew. Su suggested (above) that if A called her she would be available, and several supporters (including Eamonn and Will) circulated fundraising appeals for deportees facing severe hunger and destitution at a particular moment, rather than providing ongoing income.

So while many supporters experienced panicky transnational relationships, once that urgent insecure period was over the supporter-deportee relationship could change again, according to the type of relationship that they enjoyed in the UK. Even for those less close relationships that appeared to have been terminated, it is likely that many of these were dormant, with the potential to be revived in case of future emergencies.

### *Skewed transnationalism*

A second phase of transnational behaviour occurred between supporters and deportees in non-urgent periods after deportation in order to continue relationships for their own sake. Inevitably, this was most successful among the closer supporter-deportee relationships where the deportee had a family-like or reciprocal friendship with their supporter. For a friendship or dependent relationship to continue,

participants had to act transnationally to sustain contact, and frequent contact between supporters and deportees in the study used expected methods of communication (email, phone, text, social media etc.).

While supporter-deportee relationships became more conventionally transnational, the geography of this transnational behaviour was somewhat asymmetrical or unbalanced between participants. Their behaviour could be described as 'skewed' because it was not a balanced back-and-forth connection between participants. Attempts at contact did not always succeed and they were not evenly initiated by both supporters and deportees. This asymmetry seemed to occur because of constraints upon deportees imposed by deportation, as well as dependency at times *enhancing* transnational contact. Fieldwork examples show difficulties in accessing communications, difficulties in meeting physically and commitments made by supporters which all affected the balance of transnational contact.

Supporters frequently complained about the cost of international calls and the measures they took to minimise them (reducing frequency of calls or buying phone cards), suggesting that they usually absorbed the costs of contact. It is easy to understand why deportees struggled to initiate and maintain regular contact with supporters. They were likely to have few resources to pay for phone bills, and could have been living in an area with a poor or unreliable phone signal or connection (mentioned by Danielle, Patrick and Anne). Even finding internet access or charging a phone might have been problematic: Su reported that W had to walk for hours to reach a computer, and Didier himself explained he had no electricity where he lived so could not easily charge his mobile. These difficulties were exacerbated when deportees were in hiding or afraid to travel to overcome some of these barriers, while detained or imprisoned deportees were likely to have no contact with the outside world. These conditions minimised contact that could have been initiated by deportees, and so skewed the relationship.

Where contact was possible, supporters described some difficulty in communicating meaningfully with deportees. Will for example had to communicate with deportee J in a language that was not a first language for either of them, a difficulty exacerbated by delays on the phone line and her deteriorating mental health; he had to persuade

the stranger she was staying with to contact him over email to get precise details to be able to transfer money to J. Supporters gave examples of how stress had adversely affected English language skills among some deportees, while Danielle explained that she had difficulty understanding deportee A's English when not seeing her face to face:

*'We've been in contact a few times but it's not been as regular, I have problems with my computer I can't get skype to work, she's texts me as well from time to time to see how I am. ... I didn't realise how much I relied on lip reading with her until I was left with the phone. ... You can really understand someone when you see them. ... She would get stressed that I didn't really understand ... but I couldn't understand and sometimes the connection line was so bad. ... Now time's gone on and I've now seen the relationship change between myself and A, I think I underestimated how difficult it would be.'*

(supporter Danielle, IRC befriender link to a deported family of 3, London, 26.10.10)

The face-to-face contact that Danielle mourned was valued so highly that many supporters and deportees have reunited in person. A number of supporters (Su, Nancy, Iris, Rick, Patrick, Simon and Eve) had reunited with deportees at least once, with several other supporters having contemplated such a journey. Inevitably meetings have tended to take place at the initiative and expense of supporters who have been able to travel relatively freely, unlike deportees who might not have a valid passport, might be prohibited from leaving the country, might fear detention at an airport, and had a ban on returning to the UK for five years. Supporters accepted this situation as beyond the control of both themselves and the deportees; Nancy for example recognised that the only option for physically seeing E required her to travel to Uganda:

*'She [E] has to accept that she'll never be able to either come back here or move around [Uganda], she won't be given a passport or anything. ... I think I would like to go every year there's no doubt about it, I mean they're our family, if we can afford it we will be going out each year.'*

(supporter Nancy, faith group link to a deported family of 3, Tees Valley, 19.10.10)

Supporter travel was not possible or embraced in all cases. Arnold, for example, could not visit C in Kenya because of concerns for his own safety as a refugee and being of the same ethnic background as her. For him there could have been repercussions in the country of origin for assisting her in the UK, so their relationship could only be maintained remotely. Similarly, Ruth felt that visiting G in Nigeria might unfairly raise

her hopes about returning to the UK, and instead arranged for a less close contact to visit instead.

Finally, a further element that skewed supporter-deportee relationships was where contact persisted more than might naturally occur, because of precedents set earlier in the deportation corridor. Rick described how on a visit to A, he incurred heavy additional expenses, as though it were a foregone conclusion:

*'A wanted him [his son] over in [city in Republic of Ireland] with him so he could get [medical] treatment. ... I paid for that I think, paid for them to come. ... When I was over there I was always giving him money to top up the petrol. [laughs] ... I think he feels a bit guilty that he says he keeps borrowing money from me – well he keeps borrowing money but he never pays anything back.'*

(supporter Rick, IRC befriender to one deportee, Gatwick, 03.11.10)

Since Rick had established a dependent relationship with A while in the UK, it was difficult to break that pattern in the long-term and perhaps had led to expectations by A about what he could reasonably expect of Rick.

Other supporters had provided support during the immediate post-deportation period when deportees were in the survival phase. Examples included sending money, initial support to find appropriate accommodation or work, storing deportees' belongings left behind in the UK, and the payment of rent or school fees, all of which were offered in the early post-deportation stages. Supporters struggled to know how and when to end these activities. Danielle admitted *'Now that I have sent money well, well what does that mean for next time?'* Like Rick, setting a precedent meant some supporters felt uneasy about the possibly limitless nature of their commitment; several expressed concern about the heavy financial implications they faced indefinitely.

For supporters identified earlier as having friendships with deportees rather than dependent relationships, their relationships seemed more balanced. The longer-term problematic impacts of a skewed transnational relationship were not as apparent. In the cases of both Sara and Patrick, they felt that offering money to their deported friends could be patronising. Sara explained *'I think she could definitely do with the money but ... our relationship was a lot closer and I don't want her to think I see her*

*like some sort of charity.'* Similarly, while Patrick incurred the travel costs to visit B, he never spent money on him directly because B would not let him. While these relationships still involved imbalances in terms of resources, they seemed to result in fewer difficulties for supporters.

## 8.3 How do supporters frame deportation and describe deportees?

### 8.3.1 Framing deportation

It was clear in the preceding section on 'panicky' transnationalism that supporters in the sample had human security concerns about deportees. Supporters went beyond this human frame when discussing deportation, often employing different frames in rapid succession. This reflects how they comprehended and navigated a broad range of circumstances at different scales: from individuals to the state and international organisations, empathising with both deportees and policy actors, absorbing detail on national, EU and international policy processes and finding contacts across the world who might be able to assist particular deportees. Anne provided a good example of multiple frame use, where she worked with Eve to find an institutional way of establishing safety for L, a deportee who had fled to a neighbouring country from the country of return:

*'She [Eve] forwarded quite quickly an application to the European court, but she and I set about trying to get in touch with the UNHCR to see if they could do something about giving him [L] status. ... My first thought was the Canadian embassy. ... They are more responsive to refugee issues. So that was my idea. Eve's idea was UNHCR. ... In June he was actually awarded refugee status by UNHCR ... Not long after he got it, there was a police raid on the house ... He showed them [his refugee status documentation] and they tore it up in front of him. ... They don't recognise asylum, this is a country that doesn't recognise asylum, which was horrifying for us to hear because we felt that this gave him some measure of security. ... UNHCR ... said "Right we're sending a representative." ... Just hope that UNHCR for all their huge bureaucracy will actually deliver the goods.'*

(supporter Anne, voluntary sector link to one deportee, Hull, 16.12.10)

Not only did Anne readily employ a bureaucracy frame by discussing the institutional world (the European Court and UNHCR), she simultaneously used an international interdependence frame in referencing the role of the international community (the Canadian embassy were 'responsive', but the host country did not recognise the 1951 Refugee Convention), while driven by the goal of ensuring safety at the individual level

for L (a human frame). She demonstrated how supporters used a range of framing devices to make sense of this complex world and presented a more rounded, cosmopolitan worldview than the other two interview groups.

Supporters understood the complicated UK asylum and deportation processes and the bureaucratic processes that accompany it, enabling them to make sense of the world partially using a bureaucracy frame. However, their world view was not overwhelmed by this inward-facing viewpoint but was instead much broader. Supporters occupied a space in this complex web, at a juxtaposition of scales where they at times professed a cosmopolitan worldview and simultaneously focused attention at the state level (both UK and country of return) and performed resistance as an individual or as part of an international network to protect individuals.

This section argues that supporters held fairly cosmopolitan outlooks, seeing responsibilities of a range of powerful actors (host state, country of return, international organisations and faith networks) in relation to deportees. They also acted at an individual level, motivated often by humanitarian concerns (using a human frame) and countering state power where deemed necessary and possible. In doing so, they introduced a 'resistance' concept within a bureaucracy frame through which to understand deportation. These different ideas appear throughout this chapter. It is worth exploring how supporters used an international interdependence frame, because supporters saw international relations differently to policy actors, and the resistance concept is a new aspect of a bureaucracy frame that requires explication.

#### *An international interdependence frame*

In contrast to policy actors, who discussed international norms and actors prohibiting intervention in deportee circumstances, supporters used an international interdependence frame in relation to institutions with whom they engaged hoping to positively influence deportee outcomes and deportation practices. Supporters mentioned a range of international actors actively involved in deportee cases, including churches, EU bodies, UN agencies, international NGOs and the media. For Su, her church's global network was concerned about A's imminent deportation, and was later drawn on to raise post-deportation financial and practical support for him:

*'The weekend before his removal there were 150 churches just emailing him and saying we are praying for him. That was two in America, ... little villages in Norfolk and Suffolk ... Scotland. ... I've got two letters from Canada ... people asking "What can we do?" ... Someone in Malta. So you know people are interested in what happened to him.'*

(supporter Su, voluntary sector link to 5 deportees, Tees Valley, 14.10.10)

For some supporters, states were ambiguous international actors, including the country of return as well as various embassies. Several supporters mentioned other EU states providing different outcomes for deportees, granting asylum to some cases while others remained undocumented. Eamonn shows this understanding of contradictory EU states' roles and positions on deportation:

*'You know how Britain has been at the centre of trying to get a European Common Policy on immigrants and asylum seekers. And yet manifestly the treatment of them in Greece and Italy compared with France and Britain, [is] very different. ... I think sadly that British policy has actually made other countries policies less sympathetic to asylum seekers so we may have led them further down the hard line attitude. But we do know people like S who sent back to France, had a much more sympathetic hearing and got status in the end.'*

(supporter Eamonn, IRC befriender to 7 deportees, Gatwick, 27.10.10)

Non-EU states also have had an influence on the deportation of individuals from the UK and at times, more inadvertently, acted in ways leading to the outcome sought by the supporter. The country of return, for example, can thwart the UK intention to deport by refusing admission to their territory. In at least three instances (described by Eamonn, Sara, and Rhoda) this not only prevented feared ill-treatment of deportees upon return, but also led to the UK ultimately granting refugee status to the individuals concerned.

Supporters tended to use an international interdependence frame to highlight where there had been opportunities to intervene positively in post-deportation contexts, rather than inhibiting action. This was a marked difference from policy actors who cited sovereignty and inter-state relations as reasons for the UK not to get involved in post-deportation events. This is not to say that international actors always acted as supporters desired. For example, some supporters liaised directly with individuals within international organisations, developing rapport and trying to hold them to account for their (lack of) action in relation to a particular deportee. Eve and Anne, for example, made repeated contact with INGOs in relation to L's case. This echoes the

emphasis that deportees (as described in chapter 6) placed on how individuals within or representing organisations acted, rather than the formal institutions per se.

### *Resistance as a new concept within a bureaucracy frame*

Resistance is a somewhat surprising concept to emerge and introduce at this stage, since it was not a key theme for deportees. Resistance was a key discursive element of supporter narratives. Perhaps this was because deportees had faced an array of difficulties of which deportation from the UK was just one example, their time in the UK had passed and they were focused on controlling their present circumstances. In contrast, deportation may be a more significant, ongoing event for supporters, as the void left by deportees was ever-present and thus they continued to attend to it.

Resistance is both a discursive concept within a frame and an activity. This section addresses the former, exploring how supporters used resistance as a concept within a bureaucracy frame of reference (a later section in this chapter considers the detail of specific resistance activities of supporters themselves and their consequences). This section explores whom supporters saw as actors of resistance, resistance across the domains of time and space, and the types of resistance activity they identified.

By 'resistance', I mean whatever individuals did that consequently countered the intentions or actions of a state to control deportee behaviour. Resistance might involve taking action to prevent a deportation, enabling deportees to evade the authorities in the country of return or behaviour that demonstrates loyalty to or prioritises the deportee over their allegiance to the UK (such as empathising with deportees or helping them to make plans to return to Europe). I also consider resistance to encompass broader actions beyond assisting individual deportees, which challenge deportation policy and practice with a view to influencing deportations in the future.

Supporters used the resistance concept to describe the actions of a range of actors, principally themselves and at times, deportees. While they only used the word 'resist' itself occasionally, they used a range of related verbs including 'confront', 'challenge', 'ask', 'complain', 'push', and 'support', and used vaguer phrases suggesting they did not accept the situation and intended to act: '*Something needs to be done*' (Sara) and

*'I'll have to do something myself'* (Eve). Deportee actions were described as less confrontational, evasive rather than challenging; verbs such as *'pretend'* and *'escape'* were used by several supporters.

Omissions and silences in supporter accounts were also important. Notably, supporters almost always referred to resistance by deportees *outside* of Europe, rather than those deported to or living *in* Europe, as though they faced different types of threat. This omission suggests that supporters considered deportees in Europe to not require or benefit from resistance intervention. At times supporters were a little frustrated that deportees did not resist themselves: Patrick explained that B was compliant because he had a *'major fear of authority'*, while Ruth thought G didn't resist because she was trusting in God to stop her removal. However, supporters mostly reserved their frustration for outsiders with some potential to intervene in preventing a deportation but chose not to: Anne had hoped to appeal to certain Conservative politicians on the basis of their interests in civil rights or Catholicism for example, and Eve was frustrated that a prominent NGO would not intervene in certain cases.

The geography of resistance differed across time and space. Resistance activity is not necessarily even or consistent, and may not mirror the geography of domination (Pile 2009). Resistance activity in this study had a geography that did not simply mirror those exerting authority over asylum seekers and deportees (the UK, EU countries of return under the Dublin Regulation and the deportee's persecutor in the country of origin). Fieldwork suggests resistance was more overt in the UK and during deportation than after arrival, and that there was more resistance activity in relation to deportees in non-European countries than European countries.

Supporters described resistance in the early end of the deportation corridor, during the deportation process and immediately after it (the urgent *'survival'* phase). They described undertaking challenging activities while those being deported were still under the authority of the UK, while resistance *after* deportation had to be more careful, since deportees faced direct threats to their safety at this time. So for example, several deportees physically resisted their security escorts on the plane (Eve reported P clung onto the plane door, Su reported A shouting to other passengers)

and supporters Sue and Eve appealed to MPs or airlines to prevent flights from taking off. After deportation, resistance activity was more covert, with deportees acting furtively to escape or hide from their persecutors/the state, and supporters were more tentative in their actions that involved contact with the country of return, fearful of endangering the deportee.

The volume and spread of resistance also did not match patterns of domination. While the authorities in the country of return focused their attention on controlling individual deportees, those resisting in relation to a deportee were often more numerous and acted transnationally. Resistance at times involved different numbers of supporters acting in collaboration. From the UK, Anne and Eve worked together for deportee L, and Yvonne and Sophie worked together for deportee S's family.

Supporters also worked with others in the country of return, like Su who coordinated with human rights activists in DRC when A was deported, to monitor his safety.

Resistance also involved others located in other countries around the world, like Nancy demonstrated through her global church network to support A, and Eve who liaised with C's uncle Evan in Italy to support C in Cameroon.

These emerging networks could be described as transnational networks of resistance, comprising supporters in the UK, their own overseas networks and the deportee's other contacts around the world. Transnational activism is usually understood to describe self-organised migrants in a host country choosing to maintain their links back 'home' (Tarrow 2006), but in the case of deportees and their supporters, their transnational activism involved non-movers or non-migrants in the host country acting across borders in the interests of deportees in the country of return. The unpredictable and dynamic (or footloose) nature of these networks provided some advantage for deportees resisting their less numerous, possibly less well-resourced and geographically limited oppressors.

Finally, supporters described activities that challenged the state on deportation. They described deportee actions during deportation to delay being transported. For example, Rhoda told of how '*resourceful*' S hid with her daughter in an IRC delaying removal to a later flight, while Nancy described how E did not fully dress during a dawn raid, in order to buy time to pack their belongings. Back in the country of return,

deportees unable to directly resist the authorities resorted to pretence, escape or hiding to hinder their intentions. Nancy, Sara and Simon all described ways in which deportees denied their backgrounds in order to remain safe, while Eamonn described two deportees who escaped from prison after return. Some supporters described how deportees also wanted to participate in resistance activity that would benefit other potential deportees. Su stated that deportees wanted her to retell their stories to help others, Gemma thought that G would have wanted her to participate in this study to raise awareness, and Eve described how despite his fears of being identified by his persecutors, E consented to a phone interview in English with a UK magazine.

Supporters did not consider all resistance activity as effective or desirable. For example, Hannah was despondent that her efforts to prevent a particular deportation had not succeeded, declaring *'I might as well have just stayed at home and washed my hair for all the good that that did.'* Su and Patrick feared that their actions could make deportee circumstances worse. There were also different views on the tone of effective resistance activity in the UK: several supporters such as Leanne, Yvonne and Anne felt that providing evidence, documenting deportations and engendering discussion would be effective ways to try to end unjust deportations, and Anne and Eve favoured non-antagonistic approaches to discussions with the Home Office. In contrast, Sara felt that some activities were collusive, preferring direct advocacy as an approach to challenging deportations.

### 8.3.2 Describing deportees

Another new perspective that supporters brought to the discussion of deportation is the way in which they described deportees. We saw earlier that supporters used a range of terms to describe their relationships with deportees, from *'client'* and *'friend'* to more dependent relationships. Supporters talked about individual cases, and did not tend to generalise and discuss *'deportees'* in general (if at all, they talked about deportees as *'people'* or *'they'*). Supporters thus successfully avoided creating deportee labels or stereotypes, while ensuring that deportees were known to exist and were remembered, not *'unpersons'* or having no value, as feared by some scholars (Cohen 2006; Anderson et al. 2012a).

Supporters in this study spoke about deportees they knew with reference to structure and agency. They intervened to facilitate deportees' agency, provided examples of both agency and constraint in individual deportees' post-deportation lives, and tended to emphasise either restrictedness or the dialectical struggle of deportees (against the state or in the abstract) to pursue their lives on their own terms.

Constraints mentioned by supporters included that deportees couldn't travel, had to hide, couldn't find work, were unwell or had to see their children covertly. The reasons behind these constraints related to states preventing further travel, their persecutor being at large, and being returned without resources. Ruth explained the difficulty G faced as a single mother securing a regular income to support her children:

*'She has been desperate, she's tried all sorts of things, she tried selling some cosmetic-y things and wanted us all to buy them but they were outrageously expensive and none of us are highly into makeup [laughs] ... she probably lost money on that. She got a job teaching in a school as a teaching assistant but she did that for two full terms and wasn't paid a penny, because if the children don't pay the fees so she didn't get paid for that. She worked sporadically on a building site ... back breaking work and ... very little money ... [She] says you know you either have to have contacts or you have to sleep with men if you are going to get anywhere. ... She didn't have family connections ... so all that she's had is what we've sent her every month or so really. ... She didn't have enough money at the right time for [her son] J to go to university, so he's just at home.'*

(supporter Ruth, faith group link to deported family of 3, Leeds, 14.12.10)

Ruth told a story about G not as a passive character, but thwarted at each turn she made in attempts to provide for her family. This story partly reflects the role that Ruth played in terms of identifying and providing missing support where possible; as she explained that her church group provided a regular, predictable income that eluded G in Nigeria, although they have not filled every gap, such as university fees for G's son.

In an interesting example of presenting agency, Yvonne described the constraints upon S's family after deportation, and others' interventions to support them and fill gaps. However in this case, Yvonne admitted how S's agency trumped advice from herself and international organisations:

*'They had been dumped in Islamabad, they had absolutely no money. ... So they sat on the street and begged for over 36 hours. ... Managed to get enough money to get on a bus to Karachi. The bus ride was 24 hours journey and R was being sick the whole time and by the time they got to Karachi, Sh had picked up whatever infection and they were both incredibly weak. So the first thing we had to do was wire loads of money to get them to a*

*doctor because they couldn't even talk. They were just desperate. [We] managed to get in contact with Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch in Pakistan and they found us a safe house. But when we explained that to S she said she didn't want to go to the safe house because afterwards the shame on a woman if you had been in a safehouse was really immense. ... So they now live in a one bedroom flat in a really dangerous area. ... They are not living in hiding but at the same time they don't go out because they are scared, because a member of the family has been killed.'*

(supporter Yvonne, voluntary sector link to deported family of 4, Swansea, 17.11.10)

Note that like other supporters, Yvonne drew on a range of concepts and frames to present this family's situation. She used a human frame, emphasising personal security with regard to their health, lack of resources and personal safety. She also used an international interdependence frame in relation to the potential role of international organisations in protecting them. Ultimately in this story however, Yvonne ceded agency to the head of the family S, who ultimately made the decision around their accommodation, rejecting the safehouse offered to them. Similarly, Gemma provided information to deportee G about support organisations in her country of return but G rejected them as *'run by bad people'*.

There is modesty in supporter stories like this, respecting deportees' decisions and an awareness of how their own agency could be harmful or against deportees' preferences. Su explained:

*'You are always frightened you will do something which will harm somebody. You are trying to help people here, you have to stop and think. ... Always ask them: what do you want us to do?'*

(supporter Su, voluntary sector link to 5 deportees, Tees Valley, 14.10.10)

Supporters often used a dialectical technique, describing the tension between agency and limitations in deportees' pursuits, depicting their struggle to rebuild their lives. Deportees were presented at times as lone individuals fighting for their own survival amid a plethora of constraints. For example, Rick summarised the continual barriers facing A post-deportation as he was trying to rebuild his life in Nigeria:

*'He managed somehow to get to the north to Kuno. ... He seemed to be alright there for a while until the dictatorship collapsed and then the Hausa people were not too kind to any Yoruba people from the south – and he's a Yoruba. ... He had to escape down south again. ... Next thing I know is he's at ... [city in the Republic of Ireland] to a firm. ... He was transferred to [Northern Irish city] ... after being made redundant. ... He couldn't get any benefits or anything so he went back to [Republic of Ireland city]. ... Then he did a bus*

*driving training and he passed that. ... By that time they were saying well we'll have to give jobs to Irish people. ... So then he ended up as a security guard. ... [summarising] First of all having to hide [in Nigeria], stay in hiding for a while, then to go up north, and then to come back again south, then to come ... [to the Republic of Ireland] get a job, and made redundant.'*

(supporter Rick, IRC befriender to one deportee, Gatwick, 03.11.10)

Rick presented A's story as to-and-fro-ing between places to survive, another reference to security concerns in a human frame, but without intervening himself. Instead, supporters like Rick described deportees' lives as an uneven power battle between themselves and more intangible forces (for A, political instability, ethnic tensions, discrimination, and insecure employment).

Supporters resisted essentialising deportees as vulnerable or passive victims, but portrayed them as agents with ongoing struggles to establish secure and thriving lives. Their respectfulness for deportee agency chimes with the importance that deportees attributed to being treated with dignity (in Chapter 6). Supporters' modest, deportee-centred storytelling, though, perhaps minimised the impact of their own efforts and the way in which their roles and actions took a toll; an issue to which we now turn.

#### **8.4 How do supporters see their own role in the deportation corridor?**

Supporters saw their primary role in the deportation context as being to facilitate deportee survival (through 'panicky transnationalism') along with other supporters and strangers in deportees' lives, through a moral compulsion to act. When driven by friendship or moral commitment, supporters also chose to support deportees' settlement somewhere to safely belong and thrive (through 'skewed' transnationalism). In helping refused asylum seekers to delay, prevent or hinder their deportation, assisting deportees to survive then settle after their deportation, and challenging immigration policy, this section argues that supporters were actors in deportation stories themselves, subverted state intentions towards deportees, and thus practiced forms of resistance to the deporting and receiving states. This chapter has already outlined how supporters used deportees' resistance as a key element of a bureaucracy frame. This section considers how supporters themselves practiced resistance, their motivations for doing so, and other implications of their resistance activity.

#### 8.4.1 Providing support in the survival phase

Supporters reported that they were called upon immediately post deportation, in the deportee's survival phase, to perform a number of tasks that required their time, money and effort to secure deportees' safety. These interventions made significant demands from supporters, and often with little warning.

- Almost all supporters in the sample provided money or paid for certain costs, including Patrick who sent money for bribes when JP decided to try to leave the country of return, and Eve who paid doctors' bills for C who suffered injuries during his deportation flight. Other types of material support included when Iris tried to get copies of school certificates for K to help with his search for employment, and when Eve tried to track down C's passport sent him a mobile phone after his was stolen.
- Others made practical arrangements, such as Arnold who liaised with C's mother so she could meet her at the airport without C's abusive husband knowing, while Simon sold U's car and sent him the money from the sale.
- Supporters also provided moral support to deportees: Will explained that he would always speak to J when she called but was conscious of the cost, it could be at inconvenient times and he admitted he didn't really know what to say to her, and Hannah felt that phoning S enabled him to 'let off steam' and know he wasn't forgotten.

In a particularly demanding and urgent example of 'panicky' transnationalism, Eve paid a last minute 'supplement' demanded by airport officials, in order for S to be permitted to leave the country of return:

*'Because he [S] was so in danger and so scared ... I paid his fare ... to leave the country again. ... Getting out wasn't simple either, we got it all set up you know and knew what plane he was getting, and he was just about to get on and he was pulled out of the queue and this police person or whoever said "You're not going." So he rang me up and said "Look I can, he says I can pay something?" and so then he had to pay something and we had to rebook the ticket you know, pay another supplement, but eventually you know he did go.'*

(supporter Eve, activist, link to ten deportees, North Yorkshire, 03.02.11)

Some of this intensive support was sustained over long periods, as supporters felt that deportees continued to face extreme dangers over a prolonged time. Anne explained her commitment to L, even though it remained demanding as he was in the survival phase for several years, as a moral choice:

*'You can't enter into an engagement with an individual, with a person who has been through the trauma and have a real sense of who this person is and just suddenly say "I can't do this anymore." ... You enter into a relationship ... because that's what you have to do, that's what you do.'*

(supporter Anne, voluntary sector link to one deportee, Hull, 16.12.10)

Given the prolonged timescale of some survival phases for deportees and the concomitant demands upon them to keep deportees physically safe, supporters also saw themselves as being responsible for coordinating or encouraging other supporters to get involved. We already know Su coordinated fundraising efforts across her church network to secure accommodation and subsistence costs for deportee A in hiding, in addition to regular phone calls to boost his morale. These costs were regular and mounting and required her to raise funds with others. She explained:

*'We sent the money out for four months to keep him [A] in that place. And to be honest it was such a, it was a worry, you know because we had to find you know well over 1000, it was £1500, 1600, and it was just how long do we keep him there? We were nearly at the end of the money, people were very generous but we were at the end. ... At first you know you try to phone every day just to see he's alive you know, but then the cost! So you know it might be twice a week.'*

(supporter Su, voluntary sector link to 5 deportees, Tees Valley, 14.10.10)

These urgent expenses were not infinite and supporters did impose limits on their financial gifts; in the example above, Eve later added that deportee S lived 'hand to mouth' for a year once his immediate safety was assured.

Supporters' activities inevitably impacted upon other people in supporters' lives, who might resent the attention received by deportees or became involved themselves. Examples include Iris's husband and daughter who visited deportees' families while on holiday in Albania, while Anne's husband shared the cost of international phone calls his wife made to translate deportee accounts of their situation for legal appeals:

*'You want to know about our phone bill? You don't! No, that's been something else. I have the most extraordinary husband, but I think I've tested [him] [laughs] anyway!'*

(supporter Anne, voluntary sector link to one deportee, Hull, 16.12.10)

Supporters also liaised with other people in deportees' own networks, in order to ensure the deportees' survival. Some supporters related stories of strangers in the country of return who helped deportees in distress, or were approached by a mutual contact to help (for example, deportee K's UK school friend contacted his father in

Kabul who looked after K so that he wasn't homeless). At times these individuals put themselves and their families in danger to keep deportees safe. For example, a UN worker took pity on J when she had trouble at the airport and despite being fearful of retribution himself, allowed J to stay at his home for several years. Deportee L was hidden by a couple who had to fend off the military police many times to keep L safe.

Some of these strangers developed contact with UK supporters in an attempt to support deportees. In so doing they joined or even created small but growing, fluid, global, transnational resistance networks, like Hannah was connected to K in Afghanistan, and by extension, K's school friend in Leicester and his father in Kabul, or how Will was connected to J in DRC and by extension, the UN worker sheltering her in Kinshasa. Similarly, Anne and Eve were connected to L, the couple who were his protectors in the host country he fled post-deportation, and individuals from international agencies who have been involved in securing L's refugee status and protection in a further country.

#### **8.4.2 Providing support in the settling phase**

Supporters who pursued a long-term relationship with deportees in their 'settling' period (after the 'survival' phase) faced decisions about the support they were prepared to offer further in their 'skewed' transnational relationships. This became a decision for supporters to determine the nature and extent of that support.

Supporters in this position had to decide what to do with stored belongings; for example, Simon still had some of U's books, while Sophie kept belongings for at least three deportee households with no immediate plans to remove them. Some decided to provide significant, regular financial support for healthcare, education or accommodation (occurring here for deportees G, S and E's families, all of whom had re-settled in the country of origin). Others chose to make the trip to visit in person (seven supporters had done so by the time of their interview).

At this point some supporters were not needed, were happy for contact to diminish, and even at times were relieved because it meant that deportees were safe or they could pursue their own everyday lives. For some supporters (such as Gemma and Danielle) relationship dynamics with deportees then changed, becoming slightly

awkward. This seemed to be because they perceived deportees hoped for a continuation of the level and duration of support provided thus far, which then impacted on supporters' willingness to initiate or respond to contact.

Those supporters who incurred significant financial costs in the long-term implied that they had made a moral commitment to particular deportees. Yvonne along with Sophie and another friend paid school fees for three deported children for several years, and she worried about financing tertiary education for the eldest boy in a few years' time:

*'We said we can't bring them back, but what we can do is pay for your education. ... So we've been doing that now for the last two and half years. ... I am getting a bit nervous now that S is already 14 and is going to be 18 soon and he could come to uni here but how on earth are we going to pay for that? ... Obviously we really, really care about them, it's not like they are just like a political ... relationship, it's like having a family and you'd do anything for your family right? If you could.'*

(supporter Yvonne, voluntary sector link to deported family of 4, Swansea, 17.11.10)

The family-like relationship meant that support was maintained despite supporter difficulties or reluctance. Similarly, Ruth coordinated support in Leeds for a large family where the mother had been unable to secure a permanent, paying job. She explained the tensions inherent in this significant obligation:

*'It's an open-ended commitment I think we would accept that. ... She's actually still technically a member of our church so we feel a commitment in that in that sort of way. ... With five people [in the family] you need a reasonable amount to live on so I mean people are giving very generously. ... It is hard when you get texts [from G] you know that "We've just had nothing to eat" and we are living in all this luxury and so on, and we could probably give more, ... but in a sense it's more sensible to send it regularly.'*

(supporter Ruth, faith group link to deported family of 3, Leeds, 14.12.10)

Ruth was heavily aware of the financial commitment she had made to G on the basis of her membership of their church while she was an asylum seeker in the UK, and did not seem entirely comfortable with its indeterminate length. She did not romanticise their relationship, well aware of her (in)ability to meet G's hopes and expectations, yet persisted with this skewed, dependent transnational relationship based on a moral obligation she and others felt committed to keep, and in light of the clear disparity in their respective living standards. These moral bases for Ruth and Yvonne's long-term commitments to deportees, despite them involving a significant financial burden,

imply a responsibility towards these deportees that otherwise would not have been met.

### 8.4.3 Practicing resistance

#### *Manifestations of supporter resistance*

Resistance by supporters took different forms. Common to most supporters in the sample was practical assistance to refused asylum seekers and deportees before, during and after their removal. This included, for example, attending and speaking at appeal hearings (Rick, Eve), participating in anti-deportation campaigns (Su, Patrick, Will, Ruth), advising deportees to resist during their flight (Eve), and providing money (Danielle, Nicola, Eve) or other items (Nicola). The support provided in the post-deportation survival and settling periods were also more subtle forms of resistance. These activities indirectly challenged the (deporting and receiving) states' treatment of deportees. They are examples of 'everyday resistance' practices (Scott 1985, p.29) within a bureaucracy frame in the deportation context, actions to undermine the intentions and processes of the deporting state and the receiving state.

Another form of resistance practiced by supporters was overtly challenging the UK asylum and deportation system as citizens, without any prospect of changing outcomes for individuals already deported. This was less common behaviour, but significant as it involved supporters transitioning from simply helping individual clients or friends to challenging their own state as citizens. Examples included making official complaints (Sara, Eve), writing to prominent individuals to challenge deportation practice (Anne wrote to several MPs as well as the Home Affairs Committee, Nancy wrote a report to the Children's Commissioner for England and Sara wrote to journalists) and participating in related campaigns (Rhoda was involved in a campaign about statelessness). Su went on to organise a range of community events to create awareness and solidarity with other UK community members who had also experienced deportation of friends, neighbours, clients or pseudo family members. She contrasted this with the reluctance of local politicians to act when she had sought their support to prevent deportations, making her '*very angry*'.

On one level, more prosaic activities can also be understood as challenging the asylum and deportation system, including volunteering at drop-ins for asylum seekers and visiting detainees in immigration detention. Patrick explains how he saw these activities:

*'A solicitor is willing to go in and see them [a detainee], [the authorities decide] "Oh we'll move you now", and he was moved around the detention [estate]. We got him someone else [solicitor], he was moved to another detention centre. It's not coincidental any of that. ... There's lots of these welcome [groups] ... out of those emerges now a lot of those people want to help people with anti-deportation campaigns so if someone gets taken, those friendships that come from [the group], so they become really important. ... They are not overtly political groups, but what they do then becomes something that can really help someone. ... It's changed my views in terms of like, "That's political, that isn't" for sure.'*

(supporter Patrick, activist link to 2 deportees, Cardiff, 18.11.10)

These activities might indeed help an individual, but for Patrick, befriending detainees was also a means of challenging a lack of consistent legal representation in the detention system, while local support groups enabled asylum seekers to develop links with the local community who might then later challenge detention and deportation practices.

By their actions, supporters defied or undermined plans meant for deportees by the UK as deporting state, by the country of return and/or the persecutor from whom the deportee originally fled. Supporter resistance serves to maintain deportee ties to the UK that the government had intended to sever, and could counter the deterrent effect upon deportees and other potential migrants that deportation is intended to signal. In addition, not only have supporter actions countered the intention of persecutors in the country of return to persist in their punishing treatment of the deportee, they indirectly challenged the lack of action on the UK's part in relation to ensuring deportee safety; their actions imply a recognition of duty to provide security for the deportee.

#### *Supporter motivation to participate in resistance activity*

It is difficult to say precisely how far supporters were consciously resisting the state and whether they saw it as their role. In earlier sections, it was clear that some supporters felt some kind of moral obligation to provide support to deportees.

Beyond their existing relationships and loyalties to individuals subject to deportation,

some supporters alluded to other reasons why they participated in resistance activities, and particularly activities that challenged the state. Often this was expressed fairly vaguely, with expressions like *'Something needs to be done'* (Sara) or *'I'll have to do something myself'* (Eve). There is a hint of concern about injustice here, and a need to act upon their perception of injustice.

At times, this decision to involve themselves in asylum issues was rather reluctant, as they were heavily aware of the time, effort and resources that they may need to provide once committed to action. For Anne, getting involved with asylum seekers and, subsequently, deportees was a choice she knew would consume her because of her existing political view of the asylum system as flawed.

*'I've been aware for a long time that the asylum system was unfair. ... I knew there were things that were wrong [pause], but I hadn't had the time, hadn't made it my business to get involved. And so it began if you like in a personal way, and as soon as it becomes personal it becomes political, and it can't help but be that.'*

(supporter Anne, voluntary sector link to one deportee, Hull, 16.12.10)

Similarly for Yvonne, her ongoing financial support to ensure three deportee children's education in the country of return was a difficult financial commitment, but had a wider impact. She saw it as part of mounting political pressure to change the asylum system in the UK, and she drew parallels with the change to the process of detaining children in 2010 under the Coalition government:

*'It's obviously an ongoing thing for me supporting these people and I don't see an end to that. The effect of deportation is still with me in my life, I have to find £600 a year or whatever as well as supporting my own family. ... I'm hoping that somewhere along the way it will make a difference, it's the only way things are going to change. That's what happened with detention.'*

(supporter Yvonne, voluntary sector link to deported family of 4, Swansea, 17.11.10)

Some supporters seemed to feel that injustice reflected upon them as citizens, complaining about what was done *'in my name'* (Anne and Eve both used this phrase). Their sense of injustice again suggested they felt a personal, citizens' stake in UK policy, as Barnes & Prior claim (2009), and a duty to challenge when they disagreed with a particular policy. Rather than *'everyday resistance'*, supporters' more political reaction and activity might be better conceptualised with reference to Lipsky's *'street-level bureaucrats'*. Since citizens are understood to have a stake in national policy,

their actions to object and counter deportation policy and practice could be described as 'street-level resistance'. Their remarks suggested an omission of responsibility on the part of the UK state, which meant they felt compelled to act and provide support that was not being provided by the state.

## 8.5 Discussion: unintended consequences of supporter resistance

### 8.5.1 Peer support

Unintended consequences of resistance activity were also reported by supporters. These included new friendships and acquaintances within resistance networks, which provided information, moral support and further enabled resistance for later deportees. It turned out that several supporters interviewed for the study knew one another (Su, Nicola, Anne and Eve referred to one another, as did Nicola and Sara, and Yvonne and Sophie) despite being recruited separately. Their links seem to develop organically; indeed participation in this study served to link two further supporters (Su and Will) who knew deportees in the same country of return, while two supporters (Iris and Will) met on holiday and discovered they were both study participants. Eve explained how such networks can function:

*Interviewer: Are you actively sort of trying to almost start up a network of supporting people who've gone back?*

*Eve: No ... it's just happened. Yes, the only way that I can ... feel hopeful is that a network develops ... one person might help another person or something you find out for somebody else will come in useful, or a contact... But the downside of that is that you feel even more obliged to help because you do know that you have got quite a lot of information! ... It is really positive being able to work with sort of different groupings of people ... as the people [deportees] themselves. ... I'm one in a chain that's tried to help him and if I don't do my bit, then all their bits will have been not worthwhile. ... Even if you've got one other person that's working with you, you know on behalf of someone else, it can be quite amazing ... It's just really comforting to know you're not the only one that's ... actually going through it in a very sort of intense way.'*

(supporter Eve, activist, link to ten deportees, North Yorkshire, 03.02.11)

So these networks at times operated in a positive feedback loop, as Eve suggested that participating can lead to undertaking more tasks such as providing information to new contacts. Some supporters were surprised to have developed expertise about

deportation or particular countries of return (Su and Eve mentioning their accumulating knowledge of DRC and Cameroon respectively. In some cases supporters were able to use their new knowledge to influence others: Sophie published an article about deportees she had known, Su's monitoring work influenced a country of origin report used by Home Office case owners when assessing asylum claims through her post-deportation monitoring, while Nancy was asked by the Office of the Children's Commissioner to report on deportee children she had visited. A further potential outcome of resistance activity relates to MPs who, alerted by supporters to imminent deportations and in some cases post-deportation stories, have become more aware of the practical issues surrounding deportation.

### 8.5.2 Maintaining deportees' ties to the UK

Supporter-deportee ties have had a further impact related to resistance: in some cases, 'skewed' supporter-deportee ties maintained a positive link for deportees to the UK and to their UK community. Their relationships may consolidate deportees' relatively positive views of the UK, as demonstrated in Chapter 6. On some occasions deportees expressed desire, intention or told of attempts to return to the UK that were partly motivated or facilitated by their association with their local community. In Tamasha's case her return to the UK was directly brought about by her UK community. She attributed her success in returning to her supporter Amy, her school, local authority and community centre who between them sponsored her visa and enabled her to return to complete her education, take a degree course and ultimately settle here. Tamasha explained how this came about:

*'I still kept in contact with [Amy] and she suggested, she went back to my school, college, ... talked to my tutor ... and also talked to my headteacher. ... They agreed with the council that I could come back and it was as if I hadn't been anywhere. I still have to have a visa, but my whole A levels would be paid for as if I was still here, there was no difference. ... The chairman of the Swahili community centre ... was like "Oh we're going to do a fundraising thing to see if we can raise up some money for your ticket." ... £500 it would have taken me months and months. ... I am so grateful, so grateful. ... I know if I'd not come back here there was no way I could have finished uni, I know that for sure. ... [Amy] helped a lot with the talking to people in my college and arranging it for me for it to be paid as if I was a home student. And even though she hadn't even met me, all she had was heard about this story and talked to me on the phone.'*

(Tamasha, Burundian female, deported with her family to Tanzania during her teens)

Tamasha subsequently undertook voluntary work in her community in gratitude for their intervention. While this was an isolated case in fieldwork for this study, it clearly demonstrates the potential of the supporter role in defying the UK state to such an extent that deportation has not deterred or prevented deportees from returning to the UK to rebuild their lives. Tamasha was not the only deportee in this study to want to return to the UK. Others hoped to do so, Ilir even citing his wish to remain anonymous in this study so that it couldn't be used against him if he tried to re-enter the UK. He explained at the time of the interview: *'In my heart there is a place I want to go and that's England. Otherwise I don't care. I have friends, I have [Iris], I have my foster family: I have everything there.'* Ilir has since managed to return to the UK, living in the community in which he spent his teenage years and with whom he formed an emotional connection.

These examples illustrate the potential of transnational networks of resistance in the longer term; supporters may knowingly or unknowingly enable deportees to maintain an emotional connection to the UK and sustain their wish to return. Because it involves individuals acting in an unpredictable transnational network of resistance, it is virtually impossible for authorities to prevent.

## 8.6 Conclusion

This chapter has thrown new light on the deportation debate by identifying a group of actors, UK-based supporters, who have agency in the post-deportation context. They have the potential to make significant differences to the lives and futures of certain deportees. Supporters also are affected by deportation themselves in a variety of ways: financially, emotionally, materially and politically.

The chapter outlined how supporters described the nature of their social relationships with deportees, how deportation affected them personally, and how their relationships evolved after deportation into transnational relationships. Supporters saw their own roles involving the provision of support in both the survival and settling periods for deportees, but seemed most involved in the former. This was reflected in a panicky transnational relationship with deportees whom supporters understood to be facing great danger or threat to their personal security. This marries with supporters'

portrayal of the post-deportation context outside the EU often as dangerous and offering fewer opportunities for deportees to exert agency (as outlined in Chapter 7) and thus they saw a role for themselves in enabling deportees to regain control over their lives.

Deportees who drew on supporters for post-deportation support, despite having very few interests in common, can be understood in the context of migrants who wish to be accepted as members of the UK state and thus emulate natives (Guiraudon, 2001) rather than kinship groups. Supporters were, in effect, 'fictive kin' for deportees (Ebaugh & Curry 2000, p.191), providing bonding and bridging social capital (Strang & Ager 2010; Ager & Strang 2008). Persisting supporter-deportee relationships also make sense given that deportees highly value being treated respectfully, and supporters described deportees in these terms. This chapter has shown how the most enduring supporter-deportee relationships are those where there is an accepted dependent relationship with the supporter viewing the deportee as a member of the extended household, or where there is a genuine friendship between the two participants.

Many deportees will not have the luxury of reliable, committed supporters since many new migrants in the UK are isolated and frustrated by their difficulties in establishing a British social circle (Eaves 2015; Ahmed et al. 2015). In this light, it is not surprising that deportees in this study maximised their UK social capital where possible, even at times relying on people they had never even met face to face, effectively 'weak ties' (after Granovetter, 1973) who perform powerful networking functions and provided social capital that deportees have been deprived of, due to the time spent in the UK. They provided this support through distorted forms of transnational behaviour that relate to the literature on 'small-scale', 'limited' and 'reactive' transnationalism (Burrell 2003; Itzigsohn & Saucedo 2002). I have labelled these forms 'panicky' and 'skewed' transnationalism. The former was more widespread, occurring in emergency situations where supporters feared for the security of deportees immediately post-deportation and, for some, remaining dormant for similar instances in the future. 'Skewed' transnationalism is a longer-term form of post-deportation contact and was

more variable in practice, according to the strength of supporter-deportee relationships.

Supporters brought new perspectives to the deportation debate, consistently emphasising security but framing their discussions across all three cognitive frames, perhaps less narrowly than other groups in this study. They introduced a new 'resistance' theme to a bureaucracy frame, and depicted deportees as agents struggling against constraints which may be alleviated through their own interventions. Supporter stories showed the potential of 'weak ties' in a new context, an ironic counter to UK policies that have arguably had a hand in mobilising these resources through deportation policy and practice, to which UK citizens object and react against as stakeholders in domestic policymaking through 'street-level resistance'.

The long-term commitment of supporters to deportees, which skewed their relationships, meant that some deportees maintained long-term bonds with their UK communities, deportees who will continue to seek sanctuary and a place to belong. Not only did supporters express dissatisfaction with their own government and policies, but their continued provision of assistance to deportees at times of urgency (in survival phases) strongly implied that they perceived the UK to owe a responsibility towards the people it had rejected; an assurance of safety and security in the place to which they are returned.

# CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION

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This thesis sought to shed some light on the way in which a range of actors saw their position in the deportation corridor and the degree to which they exerted agency in this context. The core research question of this thesis was: *How do different 'deportation stakeholders' discuss and perceive their respective places within deportation structures and environments?*

This question has been explored extensively through fieldwork and analysis in relation to data collected from a set of deportation stakeholders, each with a personal or professional interest in deportation. Three groups were scrutinised: policy actors, deportees and supporters. These individuals presented their views and understanding of deportation through three dominant cognitive frames: a 'bureaucracy' frame; an 'international interdependence' frame; and, a 'human' frame.

The research study was designed around three research sub-questions:

- RQ1. How do policy actors perceive their own roles, agency and relationships in relation to deportation, and those of other deportation stakeholders?*
- RQ2. How do deportees understand their own roles, agency and relationships in relation to deportation, and those of other deportation stakeholders?*
- RQ3. How do supporters describe their own roles, agency and relationships in relation to deportation, and those of other deportation stakeholders?*

The thesis investigated each stakeholder group in relation to the key themes within the research sub-questions: participants' discourse in terms of how they discussed deportation and deportees, how they perceived their own agency and that of other stakeholders in the deportation corridor, and the relationships that existed and evolved between different stakeholders over time.

This chapter draws together the answers to the research questions about each stakeholder group individually. It then offers some comparison between the three groups to provide an overview of the deportation stakeholder group as a whole in

terms of how they frame deportation, see opportunities for agency and how they relate to one another.

The chapter concludes by reflecting on the key contributions of the thesis to the academic literature on deportation. It considers the opportunities for future research that could build on this analysis, but in a policy context that has subsequently developed since fieldwork took place and presents new challenges in the field of deportation discourse, policy and practice.

## 9.1 Methodology

42 deportation stakeholders were interviewed for the research, supplemented by information gathered from a range of other sources. The participants in this research were divided into three groups as follows.

- **Policy actors;** professionals with some influence or role in discussions of deportation policy and practice. These were named as ‘policy actors’ since they do not form a recognisable ‘policy community’ in relation to deportation (Somerville & Goodman 2010, p.951). They were divided into functional subgroups of parliamentarians; implementers; and, interest groups.
- **Deportees;** former asylum seekers who had experienced deportation themselves. Important characteristics of deportee backgrounds include their deportation destination (within the EU, Europe or outside of Europe), their current immigration status, as well as standard demographic variables such as age, gender and household size.
- **Supporters;** UK residents who were part of the host community for asylum seekers. These were differentiated in several ways, according to how they had originally met the deportees they discussed, and the type of social relationship they had, as ‘fictive kin’ (Ebaugh & Curry 2000) or ‘bridging’ social capital (Strang & Ager 2010; Ager & Strang 2008).

Having explored the perspectives of these stakeholders in relation to deportation, important themes were identified inductively as ‘frames’ (after Goffman 1986). These frames were developed through building, comparing and testing findings from one group against another, using a grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Gibson & Hartman 2014). A set of three conceptual frames can now be used to understand and analyse deportation debates among deportation stakeholders: a

bureaucracy frame; an international interdependence frame; and, a human frame. Detailed content of these frames was provided in Chapter 4 (section 4.6.3).

Participants in the research conceptualised deportation using a mix of these three frames, emphasising different constituent elements and interpreting each frame differently. This was clear from the way in which the internal concepts were identified at different points in the analysis. The frames act similarly to ‘essentially contested concepts’ (Gallie 1956), with each frame being interpreted subjectively by different research participants, who emphasised different aspects of the frames or attributed more value to some elements over others. The way in which actors in the study drew on these three frames differently was visualised using Michael Freedden’s model of ideological morphology (Freedden 1996) in *Figure 4.3*. This provided a means of hierarchically classifying the concepts within each frame, which can shift for each actor according to their own subjective conceptualisation of the overall meaning and importance of the frame.

The development of the set of three cognitive frames used by deportation stakeholders in their discussions of deportation is the central contribution of this thesis. It enables us to understand how research participants used frames to demonstrate their understandings of deportation, their respective roles, opportunities for agency and conceptions of responsibility. In doing so, the frames provide a means of answering the overall research question about stakeholder perceptions of deportation.

## **9.2 RQ1: How do policy actors perceive their own roles, agency and relationships in relation to deportation, and those of other deportation stakeholders?**

Each policy actor understood the deportation process through their own, personal version of a ‘hierarchy of limited knowledge’. This was based on the information and experiences available to them about deportation, the value, reliability and influence they accorded to each source. To some extent, policy actors legitimised their own roles and demonstrated their agency by drawing on their own hierarchy of knowledge with examples of how they felt they had influenced the deportation process in

meaningful ways (such as using evidence from their casework to influence decision-making). Using Boswell's (2009) work on the political uses of different types of knowledge, it was clear that policy actors' views were influenced not only by information that served an instrumental or enlightening function, but also to legitimise or substantiate their own pre-existing views on deportation.

Policy actors expressed some common views about the deportation system. Policy actors saw deportation through a bureaucracy frame as an outcome in a zero-sum game: a way of resolving asylum cases (claimants are either granted asylum and stay in the UK, or are refused and, according to the rules, should be deported) that brought asylum policy to a neat conclusion. For policy actors the asylum system was a fixed point of reference, necessary to their understanding of deportation, despite being flawed in minor ways. Therefore they implied that opportunities for agency were rightly limited in order to maintain integrity and faith in that system.

Policy actors differed in the ways that they interpreted opportunities for agency through a bureaucracy frame. Parliamentarians and interest groups tended to see systemic flaws as opportunities for them to influence minor improvements to the system. In contrast, implementers did not see themselves as 'street-level bureaucrats' but felt that their own roles required them to uphold and maintain the system, and they had limited opportunities to exert any subjective influence over their tasks which were restricted by the rules of the asylum system (and, by implication, absolved them of responsibility towards deportees).

Policy actors referred to other deportation stakeholders in ways that suggested a complex community with different scope for agency and different relationships, from mutual admiration, some empathy or sympathy, or a degree of mistrust of one another. For example, policy actors attributed flaws in the asylum and deportation systems to other policy actors, such as Home Office staff and the judiciary. They considered international actors to be relevant only at the later stages of the deportation corridor, when they employed an international interdependence frame.

Policy actors adopted a different vocabulary within each frame to describe deportees. The terms they used to describe deportees through a bureaucracy frame often reinforced dualistic stereotypes of deportees as effectively 'good' or 'bad' people and

could easily dehumanise them, reinforcing hostile public discourse. Terms they used under an international interdependence frame reinforced their (lack of) belonging and (lack of) citizenship which is key to the policy and practice of deportation, following (Walters 2010). Terms used under a human frame reinforced deportees' lack of agency and made their vulnerability apparent, echoing criticisms of the forced migration literature (Bakewell 2010, p.1690), although then justified ideas of states' having responsibilities towards deportees.

Policy actors' terminology also related to the theme of relationships. Deportees were largely discussed by policy actors as a collection of lone individuals, rather than acknowledging their encounters with people in different sites along the deportation corridor and their social relationships external to the asylum system. However, deportees' relationships with states were part of the discussion, from references to asylum seekers as '*participants*' in the asylum system in a bureaucracy frame, to the responsibilities of different states in the post-deportation environment.

Policy actors acknowledged that in principle, some moral responsibility exists by the deporting state towards deportees. They expressed this with reference to deportees' potential vulnerability, using a human frame of reference. They accepted that some deportees might face risks upon return (including children, those with physical health needs and those without social capital in the country of return). While policy actors might view deportees as lacking agency, in light of this vulnerability they also considered that there may be a concomitant responsibility upon the UK to adjust (rather than overrule) the asylum rules to support these deportees in exceptional circumstances. In an admission of responsibility towards deportees, policy actors considered a number of ways in which risks to deportees could be minimised. Solutions conforming to the priorities of a bureaucracy frame and an international interdependence frame were favoured by policy actors (preventative improvements to the asylum system, choosing not to deport, or engaging in dialogue with countries of return) while the option of post-deportation intervention by the UK, falling within a human frame, was largely dismissed.

When it comes to the question of being able and willing to act on that responsibility, policy actors were divided. On balance, they deferred to maintaining the integrity of

the asylum system and constructive international relations with other states. They effectively promoted the status quo. This was evident, for example, in their preferred ways of resolving questions of risk and responsibility. They advocated improving the asylum and deportation process for future potential deportees, a responsibility on the part of the country of return instead, or the alternative non-action of choosing not to deport. Preventative options relating to the asylum system are too late for deportees in the study, and thousands like them who have already been subjected to the deportation act. Only occasionally did policy actors propose some form of post-deportation intervention in the country of return, such as monitoring their safety until they reach some place of sanctuary.

The framing analysis unveiled that other types of responsibility had a bearing on state actions in the deportation context, not exclusively concerning deportees. Interviewees considered other influential responsibilities of the state in relation to the deporting nation. For example, policy actors felt that there was a responsibility to maintain the existing asylum system and its credibility, framing this argument in terms of bureaucratic adherence to universal rules and processes. Policy actors used an international interdependence frame to highlight the responsibilities of the UK towards the British population. This responsibility required maintaining the UK's reputation and position of power in the international system of states. This exemplifies Walters' understanding of deportation as the 'international population police' (2010, p.90).

For policy actors, a hierarchy between the three frames determined their personal position on deportation. Despite having empathy and taking an ethics of care approach to individual cases (a human frame), policy actors privileged the international interdependence frame, followed by the bureaucracy frame. With this near-consensus, I posit that they do form a type of policy community or 'issue network' (Somerville & Goodman 2010, p.951). These perspectives on roles, agency and relationships between different deportation stakeholders suggest a way in which policy actors might act as a relatively coherent policy community in discussions about the deportation system.

### 9.3 RQ2: How do deportees understand their own roles, agency and relationships in relation to deportation, and those of other deportation stakeholders?

*'Papers', 'passports', 'documents' and 'fingerprints'* were an important part of deportees' language of their own deportation stories. Deportees used these terms not only in a reductionist way to refer to complex immigration processes, but also as metaphors and symbols that told us about deportees' understandings of the consequences of immigration processes, and their perceived unfairness and injustices. They depicted deportees' experiences and hopes in relation to freedom and opportunity. These items used subversively, false passports for example, became imbued with meaning when they were used literally as objects of resistance to oppressive systems.

Deportees' descriptions of their experiences at the UK end of the deportation corridor did not focus so much on asylum rules and processes, as might be found in other accounts of deportation. Instead deportees used a bureaucracy frame to describe what they experienced as inconsistent asylum and deportation practices. This experience at times encouraged their persistence in seeking sanctuary in the UK or elsewhere, even after being refused asylum. However, the strategy of persistence was weighted against the risks involved for deportees. A common concern among deportees was the time that they were spending, losing and even wasting in pursuing a place in which they could be legally permitted to remain.

Deportees used a human frame used to expose deficiencies in immigration systems in terms of their interactions with immigration officials during the deportation process. In this way, the thesis built on Valentine's concept of 'meaningful moments' (2008, p.323) to describe deportees' hostile encounters with officials, both in the UK and in the country of return. These hostile encounters were often meaningful in Valentine's sense, because they were strong memories for deportees and were emotionally retold. For some deportees, stories of hostile encounters seemed to matter more than the story of their deportation itself, as some deportees chose to focus on their treatment by individuals during their interviews. Thus respectfulness and dignity were crucial elements of a human framing of deportation for deportees, and for them

would be 'core concepts' in a morphological model of the human frame (Freeden 1996).

As deportees told 'moral' stories about other deportation stakeholders, their own discourse on deportation turned the tables on dominant narratives that problematize migrants and legitimise state actions. Deportees talked about people they encountered during the deportation process, including both officials and supporters. They set the terms of their own discourse this way about disrespectful individuals in the system, rather than about the underlying structures of the asylum system. In deportee discourse, the problematized group were, primarily, people charged with implementing the asylum and deportation systems who abused their relatively powerful positions. Deportees wanted to hold these individuals accountable for their attitudes, actions and behaviour, particularly where they impacted on deportees' own dignity, rights or personal security. Deportees did not see all officials as inherently 'bad', did not essentialise them, or suggest a binary division between respectful and disrespectful people. Instead, they targeted individuals who acted without integrity, without ethics of care.

States evaded much blame in deportees' discourse, and perhaps implementers were in some ways their scapegoats, given how much influence states have over public discourse, in the othering and criminalisation of unwanted migrants. States *were* judged by deportees through an international interdependence frame as self-interested and collusive, working with other states when it suited them in order to enforce 'burden-sharing'. Deportee discourse challenged states to be responsible, but not in the way that policy actors interpreted responsibility. Instead, deportees expected states to ensure that refused asylum seekers in the process of removal were treated with respect and dignity, rather than being subjected to excessive compliance measures, humiliating treatment, or mental distress.

Deportees evidently had limited opportunities to express agency while they were in the process of being deported. However, agency was not totally absent, as policy actors implied in their assessment of deportees as passive (in Chapter 5).

Interviewees' own everyday resistance manifested as non-compliance with deportation or the use of false 'papers' to return to the UK. They seemed a little

ashamed in retrospect if they were aggressive towards their escorts, perhaps failing to live up to the respect that they valued so deeply. It seems likely that deportees underreported humiliating treatment or mental distress during the deportation process. Perhaps this was a means of preserving their own dignity in a rare moment where they did have power - in the narration of their own stories - and thus avoid presenting themselves as passive victims.

Deportees also asserted their agency in their re-migrations, in repeated searches for a place to belong and settle permanently, whether by relocating in the country of return or re-migrating across political borders and even back to the EU. In relation to the UK specifically, deportees applied the migratory cultural capital that they developed in the UK to their onward steps, in particular, the lesson of persistence learned through experience of the asylum system. Indeed, the deportees who succeed in returning to the UK and gaining legal status here were victorious, vindicated through their persistence, although many paid a high price in terms of time spent pursuing this avenue. For some deportees this time lost was not redeemed, as their lack of valid immigration status and a lack of resources thwarted their plans and stifled the hopes they had held for the future.

Deportees' relationships with the UK state were shaken by deportation, but not severed in the way that policy actors assumed. Deportees maintained a fairly affirming view of the UK, a psychological link, and were unanimously positive about their relationships at a local level with their supporters. Deportees' relatively positive views of the UK were understandable not only because of the enriching personal and social relationships they enjoyed in the UK. Negative experiences in the UK, including hostile discourse and encounters with officials, were likely to be far less brutal than those from which deportees originally fled in their countries of birth.

In some cases deportees maintained a sense of belonging in the UK partly through their relationships with supporters. This was particularly notable for deportees who had spent their teenage years in the UK and built meaningful social relationships during that time. Even if the material aspects of being 'at home' were made physically impossible by deportation, the social and emotional elements of belonging were not significantly affected for many deportees. This is consistent with what is known in the

literature about 'belonging' being enabled by personal and social relationships (Yuval-Davis 2006; Wood & Waite 2011; Ralph & Staeheli 2011). For deportees, belonging was not only about having 'papers' that enabled them to be present on a legal basis, a symbol of their belonging as it is understood by states (Walters 2010) but was also rooted in their relationships at the local level.

Of course, not all deportees developed this degree of belonging in the UK, evident from the fact that some interviewees did not have any intentions about returning to the UK to settle there for the long-term. These deportees were more inclined to try to develop relationships in other places, partly in response to their experience of and rejection by the UK. However, the interviewed deportees in this study were not pushed back into the arms of their countries of origin as 'reactive transnationals' in the way that Itzigsohn and Saucedo (2002) suggest, but onwards to explore a different context, perhaps as 'persistent refugees' who continue to seek sanctuary.

#### **9.4 RQ3: How do supporters describe their own roles, agency and relationships in relation to deportation, and those of other deportation stakeholders?**

Supporters were most inclined of the three interview groups to discuss deportation clearly in terms of structure and agency and their interrelationships. They told stories about deportation through a human frame, with deportees trying to exert control over their lives against a series of structural constraints. Crucially, this style of storytelling provided space for supporters' own roles in these deportation narratives, where they had opportunities to intervene and facilitate deportees' agency and help to overcome some of the difficulties they faced particularly in relation to their personal security. While remaining respectful of deportees' own choices and conscious of deportees' independence, supporters tended to see their own roles in enabling deportees to be able to make those choices themselves.

Supporters tended to describe the post-deportation context in terms of the urgent security issues facing deportees, still within a human frame. They described these in some detail in the non-EU context in particular, and in relation to deportees facing questions of physical survival (hence the 'survival' post-deportation phase in the

analysis). Supporters interpreted these situations as emergencies, and consequently felt compelled to act in order to ensure deportees' safety.

The post-emergency context (the 'settling' phase in the analysis) then demonstrated differences among supporters, primarily according to the types of social relationships they had established with deportees. Enduring relationships were often fairly unbalanced, with supporters playing a parent-like role towards deportees, although some were more reciprocal friendships. Even those relationships that had less foundation, such as those grounded in more formal arrangements while deportees had been asylum seekers in the UK, were effectively dormant in the 'settling' phase, and could be rejuvenated if deportees faced emergency situations in the future.

Supporters perhaps had the most rounded views of deportation. By this I mean that they used the three frames at once, highlighting the roles of different actors at different scales, and understanding their perspectives. They did not restrict themselves to using certain frames for specific contexts, as perhaps the policy actors did. They had a detailed knowledge of the asylum system, deportees' circumstances in the UK and in the country of origin, and also maximised international contacts that might assist deportees. The interrelationships between deportees, states and supporters and their different attempts to exert agency at different times and locations were clear contributions of supporter narratives.

This broad knowledge and understanding enabled supporters to exercise agency in the deportation context, particularly where they felt that there was some kind of unfulfilled moral obligation towards deportees – such as where deportees were returned to countries they were unfamiliar with, faced fears about their security and had few economic and social resources upon which to draw. Supporters were able to act to hinder deportations from the UK, and were able to mobilise assistance in countries of return. In effect, they acted as 'weak ties' able to draw on a range of information and contacts that were able to support deportees when stripped of agency themselves.

Supporters were less conscious that their actions and interventions in deportation stories were also forms of everyday resistance to states – both the deporting state and the country of return. They acted as subversive citizens in the former context, and

perhaps even subversive cosmopolitans in the latter. Some supporters did consciously perform resistance activities as citizens in their own right, independent of individual deportation cases, in order to challenge the UK state about what was being undertaken 'in their name'. In this sense, resistance became an important element of a bureaucracy frame for supporters, as they sought to challenge existing systems through their everyday actions.

## **9.5 How do different 'deportation stakeholders' discuss and perceive their respective places within deportation structures and environments?**

The thesis has revealed a multiplicity of ways in which deportation stakeholders in the UK context think about and discuss deportation. Policy actors, deportees and supporters saw opportunities for agency and relationships to develop for different stakeholders over time, throughout and beyond the spaces of the deportation corridor, and through three dominant frames, as described in the preceding answers to the three sub-research questions about each stakeholder group in this thesis.

### **9.5.1 Comparing stakeholder perspectives**

#### *The asylum and deportation system*

Policy actors tended to express a narrower view of the deportation system than other stakeholders, being fairly deferential towards the existing system and seeking few opportunities themselves to exert individual agency in significant ways that might fundamentally challenge the system. Policy actors, supporters and deportees tended to judge the UK asylum system to be superior to equivalents in other countries, but there was also a general acceptance among stakeholders that the system was imperfect and contained flaws. Policy actors and some supporters saw this inconsistency as problematic and could lead to inaccurate decision-making, while deportees and some supporters felt that it offered hope and opportunities for individuals genuinely seeking sanctuary to be granted permission to remain in the UK.

### *Opportunities for and understandings of agency*

Stakeholders saw opportunities for agency that varied across time and space, as well as being dependent on available diplomatic or material resources. Policy actors generally saw relatively little room for agency by any deportation stakeholder (including themselves). They saw capacity for stakeholder agency ranging from causing temporary delays and incremental adjustments to deportations within the UK, but only a theoretical opportunity for the state to intervene in the country of return. This was in line with policy actors' overall views that suggested they favoured maintaining the status quo.

Deportees and supporters seemed to feel more empowered, with opportunities to take advantage of the 'structural holes' in the asylum system as well as less predictable circumstances in countries of return. Supporters saw the option to exert agency in their everyday resistance strategies which delayed deportations and, from a distance, enabled deportees to survive perilous post-deportation environments. From the perspective of both deportees and supporters, deportees' agency was clear by their non-compliance with the terms of their deportation and persistence in seeking sanctuary – for many through re-migration and, for some, the use of false documents. Deportees discussed facing a dilemma about how long they would choose to adopt a strategy of persistence in the UK or elsewhere, mindful of the cost they might pay in terms of time in their lives that could be effectively 'wasted' if they were unsuccessful. Those deportees who were successful in their persistence (by gaining some form of immigration status wherever they were) differed in their outlook and future aspirations compared to those without valid immigration status.

These portrayals of agency in stakeholder accounts are revealing of their attitudes towards structure and agency. Policy actors reified domestic and international structures and processes, while deportees almost saw everything in terms of agency, as they almost personified structural constraints as the choices and behaviour of officials in 'hostile encounters' during the deportation corridor. Supporters, in contrast, told more balanced and interactive deportation stories that pitted deportee agency against structural constraints within the deportation corridor and in the (particularly the non-EU) post-deportation context, such as generalised violence or

opportunities to gain employment or travel. These supporter stories also made room for their own roles and agency in these stories, as well as other characters such as implementers, state officials in the country of return, hospitable and generous strangers, and potentially helpful representatives of international organisations.

### *Relationships between stakeholders*

All stakeholders were conscious of the relationships between departing and receiving states, and how that tangibly affected deportees' lives; deportees saw collusion or evasion of their responsibilities, policy actors emphasised the need to maintain good international relations, and supporters looked to the international community for ways in which to resolve problematic post-deportation circumstances for some deportees.

In terms of the relations between the state and deportees, deportees were less focused on the principle of deportation and their expulsion. Rather, they concentrated on the individuals they could relate to as human beings: problematic officials as well as their supporters and other individuals in their host communities. On balance, many deportees ultimately displayed a positive view of the UK based on their experiences and positive connections there.

Deportees were the only interviewee group to offer a more radical challenge to existing discourse, by suggesting deportation officials who acted without integrity were problematic. Policy actors tended to see deportees as fairly irrelevant to the UK, many falling into longstanding traps of binary and hostile discourse about immigration. This discourse shifted if deportees were understood to be notably vulnerable in some way, and were then described in the language of passivity and victimhood.

In the instance of vulnerability, however, policy actors did entertain the notion of the UK bearing some form of responsibility towards deportees. They demonstrated intra-group differences in their understanding of these potential vulnerabilities and corresponding responsibilities. However, other responsibilities of the state (in terms of maintaining integrity of the asylum system and maintaining its reputation in the world system of states) far outweighed what was for them a virtually optional

responsibility, with which they seemed to want to confirm their own moral qualities in acknowledging and considering the notion.

There was a subtle difference between policy actor and supporter perceptions of responsibility towards deportees in negative post-deportation circumstances. Both saw potential responsibility towards deportees who were in circumstances beyond their control, but policy actors were concerned about what traits made deportees vulnerable (age, gender, resources etc.) while supporters were concerned with external threats being presented to deportee safety because of the situation in which the UK had placed them. Supporters, then, seemed to feel a moral compulsion to act because of the failure of states to protect deportees, and thus states were responsible but not acting as such.

Supporters' social relationships with deportees generally changed after the deportation event in order to provide assistance particularly when they understood deportees to be facing these personal security threats. The emergence of transnational ties between supporters and deportees was a direct consequence of the deportation act, but their depth and endurance after the 'survival' period for deportees generally reflected the strength of the relationships they had developed in the UK. The notion of security was key for supporters, who reacted quickly when they perceived threats to deportees' safety, and even the weaker relationships remained dormant with the potential to be reignited in emergencies.

### **9.5.2 Understanding variation within and across stakeholder groups using frames**

Despite their variety of views, stakeholders commonly expressed themselves through the same medium of three key frames or lenses on the deportation world. The set of three cognitive frames, forming the central analytical device developed in this thesis, enables us to understand and structure the similarities and differences in these perspectives, both within and across stakeholder groups. It may be helpful to refer back to *Table 4.4* and *Figure 4.3* as a reminder of the contents and dominant concepts within each frame.

All interviewed groups used a bureaucracy frame, but in different ways. As *Figure 4.3* demonstrates, most stakeholders understood this frame in terms of an asylum and

deportation system that was based on (theoretically) *universal processes* that can only be subject to *gradual change*, that that provide the same legal *rights* to all asylum seekers: these are the 'core concepts' of a bureaucracy frame about which most stakeholders seem to concur. The concepts that were less uniformly important or present for different stakeholders in a bureaucracy frame are contained in the surrounding rings of the model, as 'adjacent' or 'peripheral' concepts. The concepts of *inconsistency* and *persistence*, for example, were key for deportees employing this frame, while *quality* was important to policy actors, and *resistance* was crucial for supporters. If a bureaucracy frame was presented from the perspective of just one stakeholder group, it could be reconfigured so that some of these concepts would be moved from their current positions to better reflect the values and priorities of the of that group.

Likewise, an international interdependence frame was understood by stakeholders to incorporate the principles of *sovereignty* and *non-interference*, as well as reflecting ideas on *citizenship*. More contestable elements of this frame included the principle of *non-refoulement* that was valued particularly by supporters, and key ideas for deportees of state *collusion* and *passing the buck*.

Finally, stakeholders used a human frame to provide a more *holistic* understanding of deportation, based on *moral stories*, highlighting *agency* of different actors in deportation stories and providing a *humanising* function. Note that even these core concepts were used differently by each group, with *moral stories* being not only recounted by supporters about deportees, but also told by policy actors about themselves and by deportees about deportation officials. Beyond these generally agreed core traits, deportees also introduced the concept of *dignity* and *meaningful contact* (as hostile encounters in particular) to this frame, while supporters were fixated on *personal security* (particularly in relation to deportees outside Europe) and policy actors were concerned with *vulnerability* of certain deportees.

The fact that the entire stakeholder group shared these frames, despite their individual subjectivity about the detail of each frame, is a strong indicator that these frames might exist for other deportation stakeholders beyond those in this sample group, and could be applied in other research studies. It demonstrates that the

deportation stakeholders in the UK in this study collectively thought about deportation in terms of the rules and processes of the asylum system, but were also conscious of the international context and the constraints and opportunities it presented in the post-deportation environment. Further, they were generally unable to conceive of deportation without reference to deportees themselves and their experiences, although this addition at times made it difficult to hold a consistent view on deportation.

#### *Frame co-existence, interaction and collision*

Deportation stakeholders at times experienced a degree of cognitive dissonance when multiple frames were evident in their storytelling. This was particularly apparent when they attempted to reconcile negative deportation stories of individual deportees (using a human frame) within respected domestic and international structures (bureaucracy and international interdependence frames respectively). Stakeholders tried to resolve or evade such conflict in different ways. Some policy actors and supporters fixated on incremental adjustments to improve the asylum process for future cases, even though this did not affect or compensate the present deportee population. Some supporters tried ways of resisting that system. Some policy actors looked to the global scale to justify non-action in the post-deportation context, while supporters sought ways for international organisations to intervene to improve deportee outcomes.

By their reactions to this collision of frames, interviewees suggested that they prioritised different frames, sometimes in different contexts, in order to be able to come to a point of view. Policy actors generally deferred to a bureaucracy frame and insisted on the importance of preserving the integrity of the asylum system when discussing the UK end of the deportation corridor. They transferred their worldview to an international interdependence frame for scenarios involving the later part of the deportation corridor in the country of return, insisting now on ensuring the stability of world affairs. In both scenarios, a human frame was relegated.

When faced with colliding frames, deportees did not seem to be as distressed by dissonance. For some deportees who had endured years without valid immigration

status, they appeared to have surrendered to the power of a bureaucracy frame in practice, which had stifled their attempts to persist and overcome the inconsistent asylum system. Other deportees were more hopeful, and overlaid a human frame across even their deportation stories that had elements of a bureaucracy or international interdependence frame. Their key to understanding deportation was through the actions and behaviour of individuals, whether they represented the 'system' in the UK, UK society or the countries of origin and return. For deportees, the battle between structure and agency was largely instead a struggle between different expressions of agency: themselves as deportees, supporters as members of the host community, implementers as representatives of the state, each choosing to act in ways that either assisted or hindered one another and the deportee choice to persist or give up.

Finally, for supporters their dynamic structure/agency stories incorporated the frames simultaneously, better than the other actors managed. However, their overriding concern was that of ensuring deportee security. This human frame shaped their own actions and behaviour during the deportation story in the context of deportees outside of Europe, and was readily prioritised over the other frames. Supporters provided fewer examples of deportation stories about deportees still in Europe, but in these cases seemed to align more with those deportees who surrendered to the rules and processes encapsulated within a bureaucracy frame, and without the urgency of safety issues for deportees, tended to withdraw from these stories.

## 9.6 Originality and contribution of the thesis

The thesis makes a number of claims to originality. First, it has developed a new set of conceptual tools to support analysis of deportation discussions and perspectives. The principal contribution of the thesis was to present the set of three cognitive frames ('bureaucracy', 'international interdependence', and 'human' frames) through which deportation stakeholders in the study expressed their understanding of deportation and the opportunities for agency within that context. This makes a small contribution to furthering academic understanding the interplay of agency and structure in migration studies, as Bakewell has called for (2010, pp.1691–1692).

Other proposed concepts in the thesis included 'survival' and 'settling' phases in the post-deportation context (derived mainly from supporter accounts), 'persistent refugees' and 'hostile encounters' between deportees and officials (based on deportees' descriptions), in addition to the ideas of 'deportation stakeholders', 'implementers' and 'supporters'. Together, these frames and concepts make a contribution to the theoretical vocabulary that has developed in the deportation studies literature.

Second, the thesis introduced UK residents as 'supporters' of deportees as deportation stakeholders. This is a group of individuals who have not previously been considered in the deportation literature in their own right in great detail, although deportation studies are increasingly examining the roles of different individuals in the earlier stages of the deportation corridor, such as passengers and pilots on deportation flights, public sector workers and 'subversive citizens' (Barnes & Prior 2009) resisting deportations (Walters 2010; Kelley & Meldgaard 2005; Doppler 2015; Chauvin & Garces-Mascarenas 2012; Penketh 2015; Darling et al. 2009).

Supporters justifiably warrant inclusion as a key stakeholder group in deportation studies for a number of reasons. Supporters in this study exercised agency in deportation stories, particularly in their 'everyday resistance' activity (Scott 1985) in the post-deportation environment and their domestic 'street-level resistance'. They also uniquely presented a balance between agency and structure in their deportation storytelling. Supporter perspectives were explored in detail in the fieldwork for this thesis, forming the largest interviewee group and thus providing a foundation of knowledge and analysis about their viewpoint and roles which could be built upon in the future.

Third, the thesis has some methodological originality in presenting a unique combination of voices in the deportation debate that are linked by one context: the UK as a deporting state. In doing so, the study contributes to the deportation literature that reflects on the deporting society, as advocated by Coutin (2015) – and, perhaps paradoxically, includes deportees as members of that deporting society. It thus contests the notion of deportation as reinforcing legal citizenship (Walters 2010), instead finding deportation to reveal 'complex, shifting and contested' perspectives

within the deporting society, following Anderson et al. (2011, p. 553). The 42 UK deportation stakeholders in this thesis included parliamentarians, implementers, interest groups, deportees and supporters. Together, they enabled the development of the analytical frame-set by articulating their views and understandings of deportation in overlapping ways. They provide a more holistic and active stakeholder community that the political environment could perhaps consider and engage in deportation debates and policy development.

In addition, the thesis also explored a means of researching a geographically scattered and potentially vulnerable target group of deportees who might be reluctant to participate in research, building on the approaches of other researchers working with other hard-to-reach migrant groups and advocating working through gatekeepers (Bailey et al. 2002; Dahinden & Efonayi-Mader 2009; Lee 1993; Massey 1987). In this research, access was secured through supporters as intermediaries who were able to facilitate introductions to deportees who were unlikely to suffer harm due to their participation. The method had limitations, requiring a relatively large number of contacts with supporters in order to identify a much smaller number of deportees who were able and willing to be research participants. This demanded significant time and persistence in the design and recruitment stages of the research, and careful approaches to potential deportee participants to ensure they could give informed consent. Ultimately this method also meant that findings were tentative and exploratory, given the small deportee sample, and reflected the experiences of deportees who had been able to remain in, or return to, the EU. Nevertheless, their inclusion was crucial in order to be able to include deportee perspectives in the research and include their perceptions in the overall analysis, in light of critiques that some elements of the asylum, refugee and deportation literature avoid presentation of migrant agency (Bakewell 2010, p.1690; Coutin 2015, p.674).

Fourth, the thesis has revealed new relationships between deportees, supporters and states in the post-deportation context. This includes supporters' resistance to the intentions of states (including the UK as the deporting state, countries of return and persecutors in countries of origin) through their assistance to deportees, as mentioned above. Further, an important finding of the research has been to expose

how transnational contact between deportees and their supporters can be created and constrained by the deportation act. The research has defined transnational relationships for supporters as taking the form of 'panicky' and 'skewed' transnational behaviour. This extends the transnationalism literature, the thesis presenting deportees' transnational social networks as forms of 'limited' and 'reactive' transnationalism, after Burrell (2003) and Itzigsohn and Saucedo (2002) respectively. Instead of reacting negatively towards the deporting state and returning 'home' however, in this thesis deportation has been shown to potentially reinforce and strengthen deportees' relationships with the UK, either symbolically through a notion of belonging, or literally through deportees' attempts to return to the UK.

## 9.7 Concluding thoughts

### 9.7.1 Changes in the national, EU and international context

Since the time that the fieldwork for this thesis was conducted in 2010-2013, inevitably the policy and wider political context has evolved. In the international context, refugee flows have increased to new levels, with over 65 million forced migrants around the world (compared with just over 50 million in 2013) (UNHCR 2016), creating more demand for safe places in which refugees can find sanctuary. The 'refugee crisis' in Europe since 2015 has had a significant impact on the awareness and reaction of the public and political elites towards asylum seekers, in many cases evolving from initial sympathy to some hostility. Some changing policy measures will have an impact upon deportees from the UK. For example, the resumption of returns of migrants from EU member states to Greece, the suspension of Schengen borders and the construction of new barriers and walls in some EU countries will make it more difficult for deportees in the EU to travel in a circular pattern around Europe in the quest for sanctuary.

In the UK, government policy has recognised the needs of the most vulnerable refugees particularly those displaced by the Syrian conflict, committing to resettle 20,000 Syrians from camps in nearby countries and bringing a limited number of refugee children in Europe across to the UK, under the Dubs Amendment to the Immigration Act 2016 and under the Dublin III regulation. However, the UK

government's part in the closure of the 'Jungle' migrant camp at Calais in 2016, along with its refusal to participate in the broader refugee relocation programme of the EU (to ensure a fairer distribution across the continent), reflects its position that government policy should not encourage asylum seekers to travel independently to the UK. Again, these measures may make it more difficult for deportees with connections to the UK to make a return journey and seek permission to stay here.

Finally, domestic changes in the UK, from the EU referendum and the likelihood of the UK leaving the EU, along with changes of government in 2015 and 2017, mean that the future of deportation policy and practice is uncertain. Conservative party policy to repeal and replace the 1998 Human Rights Act, for example, will inevitably be replaced with measures to expedite deportations of certain individuals. The impacts of the UK leaving the EU upon relevant policy measures are as yet unknown, but could reduce UK deportation figures if they no longer participate in Dublin removals and joint charter flights. While non-participation in EURAs would require the UK to negotiate all of its own bilateral return agreements, this could delay removals from the UK or increase the risks upon return for those being removed.

These changes in the political landscape mean that deportation stakeholders are faced with some different circumstances, their views will have been shaped accordingly and the possibilities for their agency will have shifted. Future research will need to take these changes into account and could explore their impacts upon deportation stakeholder perspectives.

### **9.7.2 Avenues for future research**

Migration is not an easy subject to study or tackle politically, it is inflammatory and policies are replete with practical difficulties in implementation. However, the past decade has demonstrated that deportation has continued to be a prominent political issue, with a myriad of circumstances and developing strategies and policies. It is a subject that will have to be discussed among policy makers, civil servants and elected representatives, but must include wider perspectives than these. Future avenues for this research should build on the findings of this thesis and the areas that could not be pursued in more depth. I propose two areas for further work.

First, there is scope for work on deportation to countries on the EU's periphery such as Albania, which became a key exception for deportees in this study who had experiences that were neither wholly like those returned to the EU under the Dublin Regulation, nor those returned to countries outside Europe. These peripheral countries are likely to be increasingly pertinent and powerful as the politics of fortress Europe play out in the light of the EU migrant crisis, future EU expansion and political instability resulting from the Arab Spring. How will deportees fare in future in non-EU European countries that have increasingly close relationships with the EU? Will it also become easier for deportees to return to the EU and settle, or will they be subject to 'one in, one out' arrangements like the EU has developed with Turkey?

Second, more could be known about deportees *without* ties or supporters in the UK. This research has barely touched on the post-deportation lives of deportees without UK contacts, since they are so difficult to locate and contact, and having little incentive to participate in research. These lonely individuals form the majority of deportees, yet we barely understand how they manage to survive, whether they find somewhere to settle and eventually to belong. I can describe their desperation no better than Luwam who was (fortunately for me) identified without a tie in the UK; when he managed against the odds to return and was granted refugee status in the UK, he said he had finally been granted the means '*to be a person again*'.

More boldly, this research challenges those involved in deportation policy and practice in the UK to consider how the asylum and deportation systems change the prospects for deportees in terms of their survival and reintegration into the country of return, and whether those changes incur some kind of responsibility towards deportees. Whether it is simply the decision to return asylum seekers back to their claimed persecutors, or more indirect actions such as lengthy decision making and incarceration that reduce deportees' access to social capital upon return, or the provision of support for deportees from (extra)ordinary people in host communities across the UK, there is a case to be answered about the UK's accountability towards deportees and its willingness to act upon that responsibility.

### 9.7.3 Final reflections

The core research question of the thesis asked: *How do different 'deportation stakeholders' discuss and perceive their respective places within deportation structures and environments?* This question has now been fully considered in this chapter by comprehensive cross-referencing between the sub-research questions and the dominant themes of discourse, agency and relationships. They have all been examined in relation to a set of three deportation stakeholder groups (policy actors, deportees and supporters) and using the three inductively-derived bureaucracy, international interdependence and human frames.

It is important to acknowledge that the concept of the 'deportation corridor' (after Coutin 2015, p.674; Drotbohm & Hasselberg 2015, p.553; Nyers 2003, p.1070) has been particularly useful in this research. This thesis has shown that the consequences of deportation affect not only people and places within this metaphorical deportation corridor, but in other spatial and temporal moments, such as places of re-migration and years spent in 'survival' mode. This raises the possibility of new spaces *within* the deportation corridor. Perhaps deportees circling the EU are located in the 'waiting rooms' of the deportation corridor, given their constant deportability. Perhaps supporters are using 'doors and windows' in the corridor as ways of observing and participating in deportation stories.

While the corridor metaphor privileges the deportation event for researchers, it would be an easy but dangerous leap to infer its centrality in deportees' lives. At times during this research, the deportation event seemed more significant to supporters and policy actors than to deportees. In fact, for many deportees it was a past event from which they had moved on. Their reflections and memories concerned people and places in the UK that provided more positive associations than those related to their deportation event. This is not to dismiss the very real impacts of deportation on deportees' lives, but particularly in light of the attention given to agency in this study, the deportation corridor idea must not be unnaturally imposed upon deportees' experiences. Instead, we should be mindful that the deportation corridor reflects our own positions as citizens and researchers in the departing state, and a post-deportation world exists outside of that corridor for deportees and supporters.

# Appendix A. Potential interviewees

## A1 Scoping exercise

*Organisations, networks and individuals approached in May 2010 to complete the scoping survey.*

<p><b>Third sector organisations - general</b></p> <p>West Midlands' small community sector organisations involved in refugee week (17)</p> <p>Afghan Association Paiwand</p> <p>Africatime</p> <p>Amnesty International</p> <p>Asylum Aid</p> <p>Asylum Welcome</p> <p>BID (Bail for Immigration Detainees)</p> <p>Institute of Race Relations</p> <p>International Federation of Iraqi Refugees</p> <p>Medical Foundation</p> <p>Migrant Rights Network</p> <p>Northern Refugee Centre</p> <p>Nottingham Refugee Forum</p> <p>Oxfam</p> <p>Praxis</p> <p>Refed (Refugee Education) email network</p> <p>Refugee Action</p> <p>Refugee Council</p> <p>Refugee Survival Trust</p> <p>Refugee Voice Wales</p> <p>Save the Children (Embrace project)</p> <p>Student Action for Refugees (STAR) (7 branches in different cities)</p> <p>Women Asylum Seekers Together</p>	<p><b>IRC detention visitor / befriender groups</b></p> <p>AVID (Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees)</p> <p>Brighton Voices in Exile</p> <p>Cambridge Oakington Concern</p> <p>DAVID - Doncaster Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees</p> <p>Dover Detainees Visiting Group</p> <p>Enabling Christians In Serving Refugees</p> <p>Gatwick Detainee Welfare Group</p> <p>Haslar Visitors Group</p> <p>Jesuit Refugee Service</p> <p>Lazarus Refugee Concern</p> <p>London Detainee Support Group</p> <p>Manchester Immigration Detainee Support Team</p> <p>Oakington Friends Visiting Group</p> <p>Oakington Friends Visiting Group</p> <p>Refugee Action Detention Subgroup (Belfast)</p> <p>Scottish Detainee Visitors Group</p> <p>The Zimbabwe Association</p> <p>Yarl's Wood Befrienders</p>
<p><b>Anti-deportation organisations</b></p> <p>Barbed Wire Britain</p> <p>Campaign Against Immigration Controls</p> <p>Medical Justice (included a post on their website about the study )</p> <p>National Coalition of Anti Deportation Campaigns (NCADC) (now Right to Remain)</p> <p>No Borders</p> <p>No Deportations</p> <p>Nottingham anti-deportation group</p>	<p><b>Individuals</b></p> <p>26 supporters identified through online deportation reports in the news providing campaigner contacts</p> <hr/> <p><b>Local government organisations</b></p> <p>COSLA (Convention on Scottish Local Authorities)</p> <p>Personal work contacts in local area</p> <p>Yorkshire migrant health subgroup</p>

## A2 Policy actors invited to interview

### A2.1 Parliamentarians

	Party	House	Link / interest in deportation as current or former post
1	Con	Commons	Current/former Home Secretary
2	Con	Commons	Current/former Immigration Minister
3	Con	Commons	(Vice or co-) chair of relevant APPG. Asked relevant PQs.
4	Con	Commons	Has demonstrated interests in immigration through leadership on relevant panels. Asked relevant PQs.
5	Con	Commons	Current/former shadow Home Secretary.
6	Con	Commons	Constituency includes an IRC. Member of relevant select committee.
7	Con	Commons	Constituency includes an IRC
8	Con	Commons	Constituency includes an IRC
9	Con	Commons	Constituency includes an IRC
10	Con	Commons	Constituency includes an IRC
11	Con	Commons	Constituency includes an IRC
12	Con	Commons	Constituency includes an IRC
13	Lab	Commons	Current/former shadow Home Secretary
14	Lab	Commons	Current/former shadow Immigration Minister. Signed relevant EDMs.
15	Lab	Commons	(Vice or co-) chair of relevant APPG, member of relevant APPG. Asked relevant PQs and signed relevant EDMs.
16	Lab	Commons	(Vice or co-) chair of two relevant APPGs. Asked relevant PQs and signed relevant EDMs.
17	Lab	Commons	Immigration caseworker at constituency. Asked relevant PQs.
18	Lab	Commons	Constituency includes 2 IRCs. Has intervened in deportation cases.
19	LD	Commons	Current/former party spokesperson on immigration issues.
20	LD	Commons	Current/former Deputy Prime Minister.
21	LD	Commons	Member of relevant select committee, member of relevant APPG. Asked relevant PQs.
22	LD	Commons	(Vice or co-) chair of relevant APPG. Member of relevant select committee. Asked PQs and signed relevant EDMs
23	LD	Lords	(Vice or co-) chair of one relevant APPG. Asked relevant PQs.
24	LD	Lords	(Vice or co-) chair of relevant APPG. Asked relevant PQs.
25	LD	Lords	Proposed relevant EDM. Has intervened in deportation cases.
26	UKIP	MEP	Has intervened in deportation cases.
27	Crossbench	Lords	Has demonstrated interests in immigration through leadership on relevant panels.

## A2.2 Non-parliamentarians

	Interest group	Invited	Background relevant to deportation
1	Home Office	Civil servant	Implement asylum system.
2	Legal representative	General Secretary	Solicitor involved in cases of return
3	Legal representative	Solicitor	Involved in cases of return
4	Legal representative	Solicitor	Involved in cases of return
5	Migration-related INGO	Country representative	Member of staff accepted invitation.
6	Migration-related INGO	Director	Primary interest in human rights.
7	Migration-related INGO	UK director	Primary interest in human rights.
8	Migration-related NGO	Co-ordinator	Involved in detention.
9	Migration-related NGO	Chief Executive	National migrant NGO
10	Migration-related NGO	Chief Executive	Subcontractor in deportation process.
11	Migration-related NGO	Campaigns Coordinator	Anti-deportation campaigning group.
12	Migration-related NGO	Chief Executive	National migrant NGO
13	Migration-related NGO	Chair	Provided secretariat for relevant APPG.
14	Migration-related NGO	Director	Primary interest in civil liberties.
15	NGO	Chief Executive	Deputy Director interviewed. Subcontractor in deportation process.

# Appendix B. Profile of study participants

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## B1 Overview of sample groups

Type of participant	Initial contact and recruitment path	Of which were interviewed
<b>Supporter</b>	23 survey respondents 5 referred by others	18 5
<b><i>Supporter subtotal</i></b>		<b>23</b>
<b>Family member</b>	1 relative identified through supporter	1
<b><i>Family member subtotal</i></b>		<b>1</b>
<b>Deportee</b>	5 through supporters 2 (1 through researcher's employment, 1 through that deportee contact)	5 2
<b><i>Deportee subtotal</i></b>		<b>7</b>
<b>Policy actor</b>	11 through direct invitation	11
<b><i>Policy actor subtotal</i></b>		<b>11</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>47 participants</b>	<b>42 interviewees</b>

## B2 Supporters interviewed

Code	Interview date	Region of host	Location of host	Gender	Age group	Link to deportee	Deportee households	Deportee individuals
<i>UK supporters</i>								
Iris	26.10.10	East	Luton	Female	Working age	Statutory sector	4	4
Simon	13.01.11	Midlands	Birmingham	Male	Retirement age	Faith group	1	1
Barbara	09.08.11	Midlands	Birmingham	Female	Working age	Neighbour	1	6
Rhoda	13.01.11	Midlands	Coventry	Female	Working age	Voluntary sector	3	3
Hannah	05.07.11	Midlands	Leicester	Female	Working age	Voluntary sector	1	1
Amy	05.07.11	Midlands	Leicester	Female	Working age	Statutory sector	4	4
Su	14.10.10	North East	Tees Valley	Female	Working age	Voluntary sector	2	5
Nancy	19.10.10	North East	Tees Valley	Female	Working age	Faith group	1	3
Leanne	03.11.10	South East	Brighton	Female	Working age	IRC befriender	3	3
Eamonn	27.10.10	South East	Gatwick	Male	Working age	IRC befriender	7	7
Rick	03.11.10	South East	Gatwick	Male	Retirement age	IRC befriender	1	1
Danielle	26.10.10	South East	London	Female	Student	IRC befriender	1	3
Nicola	02.11.10	South East	London	Female	Retirement age	Voluntary sector	4	4
Sara	04.11.10	South East	London	Female	Student	IRC befriender	4	4

Code	Interview date	Region of host	Location of host	Gender	Age group	Link to deportee	Deportee households	Deportee individuals
Patrick	18.11.10	Wales	Cardiff	Male	Student	Activist	2	2
Sophie	17.11.10	Wales	Carmarthen	Female	Working age	Voluntary sector	5	6
Yvonne	17.11.10	Wales	Swansea	Female	Working age	Voluntary sector	1	4
Anne	16.12.10	Yorkshire	Hull	Female	Working age	Voluntary sector	1	1
Will	26.11.10	Yorkshire	Leeds	Male	Working age	Voluntary sector	1	1
Ruth	14.12.10	Yorkshire	Leeds	Female	Working age	Faith group	1	3
Eve	03.02.11	Yorkshire	N Yorkshire	Female	Retirement age	Activist	7	10
Gemma	21.09.10	Yorkshire	Sheffield	Female	Working age	Voluntary sector	1	1
Arnold	21.09.10	Yorkshire	Sheffield	Male	Working age	Voluntary sector	1	1
<b>Totals</b>							<b>57</b>	<b>78</b>
<b><i>Country of origin supporter</i></b>								
Evan	21.10.11	Italy	Milan	Male	Working age	Uncle	1	1

### B3 Deportees interviewed

Interviewee	Interview date	Gender	Family unit in UK	Country of birth	Age in UK	Route to UK	Dates in UK	Hosting area(s)
<b>Demas</b>	08.10.11	Male	Single	Eritrea	20s	Overland EU	2008-2008; 2008-2010	Liverpool; Hastings
<b>Didier</b>	10.10.11	Male	Single	Niger	20s	Overland EU	2006-2008	Swansea
<b>Ilir</b>	12.10.11	Male	Single	Albania	Teens	Overland EU	2000-2006 2013-present	Luton
<b>Dhimiter</b>	13.10.11	Male	Family <sup>46</sup>	Albania	20s	Overland EU	1998-2004	Luton
<b>Birhan</b>	19.10.11	Male	Single	Eritrea	20s? <sup>47</sup>	Overland EU	2000 - 2000? <sup>48</sup>	None
<b>Tamasha</b>	26.02.13	Female	Family <sup>49</sup>	Tanzania <sup>50</sup>	Child to teens	Direct flight to UK	1995-1997; 2000-2007; 2007-present	London, Leicester
<b>Luwam</b>	20.03.13	Male	Single	Eritrea	20s	Overland EU	2006-2007; 2010-present	Manchester; Wakefield

*(continued overleaf)*

<sup>46</sup> Dhimiter was the formal guardian for his younger brother in the UK. His brother was not deported.

<sup>47</sup> ? means estimated where not known, based on interview material.

<sup>48</sup> Birhan stopped briefly in Leeds and London. His time in the UK seemed very brief. He spent one month in detention.

<sup>49</sup> Tamasha was deported with her mother and younger sister from the UK. Only Tamasha returned to the UK.

<sup>50</sup> Tamasha was born in Tanzania but spent most of her childhood in Burundi and the UK. She has Burundian nationality.

*Deportees interviewed (continued)*

Interviewee	Recruitment through whom?	No. UK removals <sup>51</sup>	Deported to	Re-migrated <sup>52</sup> since?	Interview site and date	Immigration status at time of interview	Last known location
<b>Demas</b>	Luwam (deportee)	2	Italy	Yes (Germany)	Rome, Italy	Undocumented	Germany
<b>Didier</b>	Sophie (supporter)	2	Italy	Yes (France)	Foggia, Italy	Undocumented	Italy
<b>Ilir</b>	Iris (supporter)	1	Kosovo then Albania <sup>53</sup>	Yes (Greece, Belgium, France, Italy, UK)	Tuscany, Italy	Undocumented	UK
<b>Dhimiter</b>	Iris (supporter)	1	Kosovo	Yes (Albania, Italy)	Tuscany, Italy	Temporary permission (Work permit)	Italy
<b>Birhan</b>	Eamonn (supporter)	1	Italy	No	Turin, Italy	Undocumented	Italy
<b>Tamasha</b>	Amy (supporter)	2? <sup>54</sup>	Tanzania	Yes (UK)	London, UK	Post-study visa (Limited leave to remain)	UK
<b>Luwam</b>	Author	1	Italy	Yes (France, UK)	Sheffield, UK	Refugee status (Limited leave to remain)	Sheffield, UK

<sup>51</sup> The number of times an individual has been deported from the UK. At least three deportees had also experienced deportation from another country. Demas and Luwam were deported prior to seeking asylum in the UK: Demas from Ireland to Italy, Luwam from Libya to the Sudanese border. Ilir was deported from/between several EU countries as he tried to return to the UK.

<sup>52</sup> This means crossing an international border in order to seek asylum or change residence, including transit countries. This does not include travel for leisure purposes or to visit family.

<sup>53</sup> Ilir and Dhimiter had originally claimed that they were Kosovan; many Kosovans were granted sanctuary in the UK around that time. Ilir was deported to Kosovo then, upon admitting he was from Albania, was then taken to Albania. Dhimiter was deported to Kosovo and he made his own way back to Albania.

<sup>54</sup> Tamasha was unsure about the circumstances of their first asylum claim in the UK. She was unsure if they were deported the first time, but knew her mother had not wanted to leave the UK.

#### B4 Supplementary primary data from deportees (not interviewed)

Code	Gender	Information source	Type of contact, date, material provided	Country of birth	Year deported from UK	Deported to	Last known location
<b>Abel</b>	Male	Author's professional link to NGO	Direct email correspondence with author 19.03.13	Ethiopia	Not provided	Ethiopia	Ethiopia
<b>Yusuf</b>	Male	Author's professional link to NGO	Direct email correspondence with author 17.03.13	Iraq	Not provided	Iraq	Iraq
<b>Marie</b>	Female	Supporter Will	<p>10 recordings of short phone conversation with supporter Will and other NGO staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 from Nov 2009 (provided to author on 26.11.10)</li> <li>• 4 in early 2011 (provided to author in Feb 2011).</li> </ul> <p>Direct email correspondence to supporter Feb 2011 and 31.03.11 (forwarded to author on same date).</p>	Democratic Republic of Congo	2009	Democratic Republic of Congo	South Africa
<b>Kaikara</b>	Male	Supporter Amy's friend	Direct email correspondence from deportee with supporter Amy (undated, mentions events in March 2007), forwarded to author 27.02.08	Uganda	2005	Uganda	Kenya

## B5 Policy actors interviewed

Code	Date	Relevant interests
<b>Parliamentarians</b>		
<b>P2</b>	05.11.12	Crossbench Lord. Has demonstrated interests in immigration through leadership on relevant panels.
<b>P4</b>	06.11.12	Labour MP and (vice or co-) chair of two relevant APPGs. Asked relevant PQs and signed relevant EDMs.
<b>P6</b>	06.11.12	Liberal Democrat Lord and (vice or co-) chair of relevant APPG. Asked relevant PQs.
<b>P8</b>	19.11.12	Liberal Democrat MP and current/former party spokesperson on immigration issues.
<b>Implementers</b>		
<b>P1a</b>	17.07.12	Home Office civil servants working in the asylum system: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deputy Director</li> <li>• Manager of caseworking teams</li> </ul>
<b>P1b</b>	17.07.12	
<b>P10</b>	03.12.12	Deputy Director, NGO subcontractor in the deportation process.
<b>Interest groups</b>		
<b>P3</b>	06.11.12	Country representative, migration-related INGO
<b>P5</b>	06.11.12	Legal representative, solicitor's firm involved in cases of return
<b>P7</b>	07.11.12	Campaigns Coordinator, migration-related NGO
<b>P9</b>	21.11.12	Chief Executive, national migration-related NGO.

# Appendix C. Information provided to participants

## C1 Supporters' invitation to interview



[Add Name]

[Add Title]

[Add address line 1]

[Add address line 2]

[Add address line 3]

[Add Post code]

[date Month Year]

Reference number:

Mrs Pip Tyler  
PhD research student

~~Elmfield~~  
Northumberland Road  
Sheffield  
S10 2TU

Pip's telephone: +44 (0) 7764 984 911  
Email: [ptyler@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:ptyler@sheffield.ac.uk)  
Department telephone: +44 (0) 114 2221640  
Department fax: +44 (0) 114 2221717  
Department website <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/~pol>

Dear □

**Invitation to participate in a research study on deportation**

Thank you for expressing interest in being part of my research study about the effects of deporting refused asylum seekers from the UK, and for the information you have already shared about your link to somebody who was deported from the UK.

I would really like to interview you in more detail. I am planning on visiting your region of the UK to carry out interviews during the following dates: [add dates]. Attached to this letter you will find:

- An information sheet
- Interview questions
- A consent form.

Please read these carefully. If you are still happy to participate, please let me know your availability during these dates and whether you can suggest a suitable venue that is quiet and appropriate (e.g. the office of an organisation or group you belong to).

Thank you for your time and willingness to make my research possible. I look forward to hearing from you! Best wishes

Pip Tyler |

## C2 Supporters' information sheet

Research on the effects of deporting refused asylum seekers from the UK

### INFORMATION SHEET for UK host community participants



You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully and ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

#### What is this research project about?

The research project is investigating the range of effects of deporting refused asylum seekers from the UK. It is exploring the impact upon the person who was deported (the 'deportee'), but also on their friends, family and communities in the UK and in their country of origin.

This research is important because we know very little about what happens to people after they have been deported, and what the effect of that action is. This research is directly related to government policy, and therefore the research findings will be sent to both the Home Office and organisations who work with refugees. The research is also important in order to develop our understanding of migration in the modern world.

#### Who is doing the research?

The research is being undertaken as part of a PhD thesis by Pip Tyler at the University of Sheffield. Ethical approval from this project has been granted through the Department of Politics' ethics review procedure. You should know that Pip is also employed by Leeds City Council, but this research is completely separate to her job. The research is not being sponsored or funded by any organisation.

#### Why have I been chosen? Do I have to take part?

You are a crucial part of this story, as you have maintained a link between someone who has been deported from the UK. You were identified either because you (or someone you know) saw initial information about the research that was emailed to a range of projects, or because you are known to be involved in anti-deportation campaigning and Pip contacted you directly.

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. Whilst there are no direct benefits for those people participating in the project, it is hoped that this work will highlight any problems with the policy and practice of deportation. You can withdraw from the study at any time and you do not have to give a reason.

#### What will happen if I take part?

Along with this information sheet, you have already received a copy of the interview questions and a consent form. If you decide to take part you will be asked to sign the consent form at the interview. As this is the first stage of the research project, you may be contacted at a future date and be invited to participate further. You do not have to agree to future participation at this stage.

Research on the effects of deporting refused asylum seekers from the UK

You will be interviewed about your friendship with the person who has been deported, which should take between 1 hour and 1 hour 30 minutes. This will be an informal chat that will contain a mixture of questions about the deportee's time in the UK, what has happened to them since and how you are involved. Travel expenses are available if required.

#### Will my taking part be kept confidential?

All the information about both you and the deportee that you give during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. Your interview will be recorded; the audio recording of your interview will be used only for analysis and for illustration in conference presentations and lectures. The written copy of your interview will only be directly available to Pip, her supervisors and the person who writes up the transcript. No other use will be made of them without your written permission.

No individuals will be identified in any reports or publications. Pip may quote you directly in her thesis and related publications, but will describe you and the deported person in the way that you are happy with e.g. a pseudonym, the type of organisation that you know the deportee through (e.g. charity, faith group etc) or the place that you live.

#### What do I have to do next?

Since the subject of asylum and deportation can be sensitive and personal, if possible please discuss your participation with the deportee, and ask if they have any objection to you taking part. They may prefer to be given a different name when you are being interviewed to protect their identity.

If you agree to take part in the research you will need to agree a date, time and venue for the interview that is convenient for you, as outlined in the covering letter. It is preferable that the interview takes place during office hours in a quiet, community or professional setting such as your organisation's office.

Before the interview takes place, you should let Pip know if you have any particular requirements (such as a larger font size on any written information or any interpreting support).

#### What will happen to the results of the research?

The research is due to conclude by 2014. The results will be published in a thesis, and later in other formats (e.g. book or journal article). You can receive a copy of a summary of the findings from Pip when they are available.

#### Contact details for further information

Pip Tyler, Department of Politics, Sheffield University  
Email: [p.h.tyler@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:p.h.tyler@sheffield.ac.uk)  
Mobile: 07764 984611

This research is being supervised by:

- Professor Andrew Geddes, Department of Politics [andrew.geddes@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:andrew.geddes@sheffield.ac.uk)
- Dr Deborah Spotton, Department of Geography [d.spotton@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:d.spotton@sheffield.ac.uk)

You are welcome to contact them for more information or if you have any concerns.

Thank you for reading this information sheet.

Please contact Pip if you decide to take part or if you have any questions.

Pip Tyler, Department of Politics, University of Sheffield, Autumn 2010

Pip Tyler, Department of Politics, University of Sheffield, Autumn 2010



## C3 Supporters' consent form

Research on the effects of deporting refused asylum seekers from the UK

**CONSENT FORM**  
**for UK host community participants**

- **Title of research project:** What are the effects of deporting refused asylum seekers from the UK?
- **Name of Researcher:** Pip Tyler
- **Participant identification reference:**

Please initial the boxes below

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the 'Information sheet for UK host community participants' dated Autumn 2010 explaining the above research project, and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, if I do not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.
3. I agree for my interview to be recorded and that the audio recording of my interview to be used only for analysis and for illustration in conference presentations and lectures.
4. I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that neither my name, nor that of the deported person I am in touch with, will be linked with the research materials, and neither of us will be identified or identifiable in the report or reports that result from the research.
5. I agree to take part in the above research project.

_____ Name of Participant	_____ Date	_____ Signature
_____ Researcher	_____ Date	_____ Signature

*To be signed and dated in presence of the participant*

Copies:  
*Once this has been signed by all parties the participant should receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form. A copy of the signed and dated consent form should be placed in the project's main record (e.g. a site file), which must be kept in a secure location.*

Pip Tyler, Department of Politics, University of Sheffield, Autumn 2010

## C4 Deportees' information sheet

Research on the effects of deporting refused asylum seekers from the UK

### INFORMATION SHEET for people who have been deported from the UK

**Have you claimed asylum in the UK but were refused and removed from the UK against your wishes?**  
You are being invited to take part in a research project. Please read the following information carefully. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

#### What is this research project about?

The research project is looking at what happens to people who claimed asylum in the UK but were not successful and were removed from the UK against their wishes.

This study is looking at the impact upon the person who was deported, but also on their friends, family and communities in the UK and in their country of origin. This research is important because we don't know much about what happens to people after they have been deported.

#### Who is doing the research?

Pip Tyler is doing a PhD in Politics at the University of Sheffield. Pip is also working part time for a City Council, but the research is completely separate to her job. The research is not being sponsored or funded by any organisation.

#### Why have I been chosen?

Someone you know in the UK has been in touch with Pip. They thought you may want to tell your story through this research.

#### What will happen if I take part?

Pip will contact you and either meet up with you, or interview you another way (on email, facebook or on the phone). She will ask you to sign a consent form before answering any questions.

Pip will want to speak to you about your experiences:

- When you first travelled from your home to Europe
- What happened to you in the UK
- What has happened since you were removed from the UK.

You do not have to answer every question if you don't want to.

#### Will everything I say be kept confidential?

Yes, anything you tell Pip will be kept confidential. Your interview will be recorded so that your exact words will be remembered (although Pip can just take notes if you prefer) but she will change your name and other details so you won't be identified in any reports.

Research on the effects of deporting refused asylum seekers from the UK

#### Do I have to take part?

No, you do not have to take part – it is your choice.

Unfortunately Pip can't pay you, but your story will be part of research that will be sent to both the Home Office and organisations in the UK who work with refugees. The research is due to finish in 2014, when Pip can send you a summary of the findings.

#### What do I have to do next?

Please let your friend in the UK know that you are happy for Pip to contact you to arrange an interview – or you can contact Pip directly yourself.

Pip will get in touch with you to introduce herself – either on email, facebook, text or phone/skype. You can discuss arrangements for the best way to meet her at a time and place that is best for you.

#### Contact details for further information

Pip Tyler, Department of Politics, Sheffield University

Email: [p.tyler@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:p.tyler@sheffield.ac.uk)

Skype: pip.tyler78

Mobiles: +44 (0) 7764 984911

This research is being supervised by:

- Dr Janine Clark / Professor Andrew Geddes, Department of Politics [janine.clark@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:janine.clark@sheffield.ac.uk), [a.geddes@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:a.geddes@sheffield.ac.uk)
  - Dr Deborah Spotton, Department of Geography [d.spotton@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:d.spotton@sheffield.ac.uk)
- You are welcome to contact them for more information or if you have any concerns.

Thank you for reading this information sheet.  
Please contact Pip if you have any questions.

Pip Tyler, Department of Politics, University of Sheffield, June 2012

Pip Tyler, Department of Politics, University of Sheffield, June 2012

## C5 Deportees' consent form

Research on the effects of deporting refused asylum seekers from the UK

### CONSENT FORM for people who have been deported from the UK

- **Title of research project:** What are the effects of deporting refused asylum seekers from the UK?
- **Name of Researcher:** Pip Tyler
- **Participant identification reference:**

Please initial the boxes below

1. I have read and understand the 'Information sheet for people who have been deported from the UK' explaining the research project, and I have been able to ask questions about the project.
2. I know that I can withdraw from the study without giving a reason. I know that I do not have to answer all of the questions that I am asked.
3. I agree for the interview to be recorded but this will only be used in the study, and some parts may be used in related presentations.
4. I understand that the information I give will be kept confidential. I understand that neither my name, nor the name of the person in the UK I am in touch with, will be used in the research.
5. I agree to take part in the above research project.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Participant                      Date                      Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher                      Date                      Signature  
*To be signed and dated in presence of the participant*

**Copies:**

*Once this has been signed the participant should receive a copy of the signed and dated consent form. A copy should be placed in the project's main record, which must be kept in a secure location.*

Pip Tyler, Department of Politics, University of Sheffield, August 2011



## C7 Policy actors' information sheet

The effects of enforcing the return of refused asylum seekers from the UK

### Information sheet for UK policy and practice interviewees

You have been invited to take part in this PhD research project. Please read the following information carefully. Your participation is very much appreciated.

#### What is this research project about?

The research project is investigating what has happened to failed asylum seekers who have been administratively removed – that is, whose removal from the UK was enforced by or on behalf of UKBA – during the last ten years. The research also looks at the impact of removal on friends, family and communities. It is a very practical, policy-related study.

Enforcement activity should be rooted in the principle of non-**re-embarkment** – that countries should not force an individual to return to a place where (s)he would face a threat to his/her life, as emphasised by several international agreements. However, we know very little about what happens to people immediately after they have been administratively removed – whether individuals face immediate danger and what are the wider or long-term impacts of that action. Many reports claiming that re-embarkment has occurred are anecdotal media stories or relate to removal from other countries. In contrast, this research study will provide a more systematic exploration of post-removal experiences and has already gathered empirical data regarding the removal event and wider circumstances of over 30 'deportees' through fieldwork interviews with their UK contacts.

The research is also important in order to develop our understanding of contemporary migration patterns. Migration research describes the complexity of migratory journeys, rather than a simple linear 'A to B' journey with a single purpose. It also understands migration as a decision involving more than the individual migrant, and the role of his/her transnational networks in facilitating and shaping migration choices. This study will apply such ideas to the very specific circumstance of a deportee, considering any subsequent migration after removal from the UK and the influences upon that decision.

Fieldwork is centred upon the migrant experience after forced removal from the UK, exploring the deportees perspective and the choices available to him/her at this point. The early stages of fieldwork suggested deportees seldom remain in their country of origin. The research now focuses on removed individuals who now live in Europe either because of enforced return under the Dublin II regulation, or because here they was removed to the country of origin and subsequently re-migrated back to Europe. Fieldwork has involved interviews with individuals in the UK who have maintained contact with a deportee and with deportees themselves in Italy. Further interviews with deportees are planned for other locations including the UK and France.

<sup>1</sup> The term 'deportee' is used for convenience here. It is understood that the term 'administrative removal' is the technical phrase employed by UKBA to describe the enforced return of failed asylum seekers.

Pip Tyler, Department of Politics, University of Sheffield, June 2012

The effects of enforcing the return of refused asylum seekers from the UK

#### Who is doing the research?

The research is being undertaken as part of a PhD thesis by Pip Tyler at the University of Sheffield. Ethical approval from this project has been granted through the Department of Politics' ethics review procedure. Pip is also employed by 'Migration Yorkshire' at Leeds City Council, but this research is completely separate to her job. The research is not being sponsored or funded by any organisation.

The research is due to conclude by 2014. Anticipated publications include the thesis itself online, and other formats such as a book or journal articles in both academic journals such as the Journal of Refugee Studies, and practitioner journals such as Forced Migration Review. A summary of the findings will be available from Pip.

#### Why should I participate?

This area of enforcement can be sensitive and provocative. To better understand and situate the experiences of deportees in context, a selection of people with a professional link to the policy and practice of enforced removal are being interviewed for the research. It is crucial to include these perspectives through fieldwork interviews to give a picture of administrative removal from different viewpoints. You can withdraw from the study at any time without a reason.

#### Will my participation be kept confidential?

It is preferable to record your interview in order to ensure your exact words are captured. This audio recording will be destroyed once the interview has been transcribed; you will have the opportunity to review the transcript if you wish.

The transcript, thesis and related publications will not include your name, but will need to refer to your organisation to confirm your expertise and authority in this area. However, some individuals may still be identifiable due to the limited number of people with similar roles. You can clarify with Pip how you would like to be described in any written work.

#### What do I need to do next?

Pip will arrange a date and time for the interview that is convenient for you. The interview should take no more than an hour, during office hours in a quiet, professional setting. You should have received a copy of the interview themes and a consent form, alongside this information sheet. You will be asked to sign the consent form at the interview.

#### Contact details for further information

This research is being supervised by:

- Dr Janine Clark / Professor Andrew Geddes, Department of Politics [janine.clark@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:janine.clark@sheffield.ac.uk), [a.geddes@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:a.geddes@sheffield.ac.uk)
- Dr Deborah Spotton, Department of Geography [d.spotton@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:d.spotton@sheffield.ac.uk)

You are welcome to contact them for more information or if you have any concerns.

Thank you for reading this information sheet.  
Contact Pip if you have any questions:

Pip Tyler, Department of Politics, Sheffield University  
[pi.tyler@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:pi.tyler@sheffield.ac.uk) 07764 964911

Pip Tyler, Department of Politics, University of Sheffield, June 2012

## C8 Policy actors' consent form

The effects of enforcing the return of refused asylum seekers from the UK

### CONSENT FORM

- **Title of research project:** What are the effects of enforcing the return of refused asylum seekers from the UK?
- **Name of Researcher:** Pip Tyler
- **Participant Identification reference:**

Please initial the boxes below

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the 'information sheet' explaining the above research project, and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, if I do not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.
3. I agree for my interview to be recorded. The audio recording of my interview will be destroyed once the interview has been transcribed.
4. I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential. I understand that my name will not be used on the research outputs, although the name of my organisation will be used.
5. I agree to take part in the above research project.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*To be signed and dated in presence of the participant*

**Copies:**

*Once this has been signed by all parties the participant should receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form. A copy of the signed and dated consent form should be placed in the project's main record (e.g. a site file), which must be kept in a secure location.*

Pip Tyler, Department of Politics, University of Sheffield, June 2012

# Appendix D: Survey and interview schedules

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## D1 Scoping survey questions

*Example of email content, spring 2010:*

**\*\* Are you in touch with someone who has been deported? \*\***

I'm a mature PhD student at Sheffield University looking at the effects of deporting refused asylum seekers from the UK. I hope to produce research that highlights weaknesses in asylum decision-making, describes what happens to people who have been deported and the effects on their communities in the UK and in the country of origin.

I'm looking for examples of where people in the UK have managed to stay in touch with a deported asylum seeker (enforced/administrative removal – not voluntary return). If you can help, please contact me at [p.tyler@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:p.tyler@sheffield.ac.uk) with:

1. The nationality of the deported asylum seeker
2. The city/town they were living in the UK
3. The approximate date of removal (month and year)
4. Are you still in touch with them? Where do they live now?
5. Would you be willing to take part in further research about this?

Any future research that would take place would be subject to the ethics approval of the university, ensuring anonymity and confidentiality of all participants. At this stage, I am simply identifying examples of possible fieldwork sites. I may come back to individuals in the early summer to request an interview, but would of course send relevant information in advance.

If you have any queries, please do contact me

Many thanks for your assistance

Pip Tyler

[p.tyler@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:p.tyler@sheffield.ac.uk)

## D2 Supporters' interview questions

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS for UK host community participants

This sheet tells you the themes and guiding questions you will be asked in your interview so that you are prepared in advance. There may be some questions that are not relevant to you or that you would prefer not to answer.

The interview itself will be an informal discussion with Pip. When answering questions, you should give as much information as possible (either then one word answers) and raise any relevant issues that are not covered by these questions.

Before the interview begins, you should have:

- read the 'Information sheet'
- discussed any questions you have with Pip, and
- signed the 'Consent' form.

#### Your relationship with the 'deportee'

1. What name should we use to discuss the person who has been deported? Have you been able to tell him/her about this interview?
2. How did you meet the deportee (when and where)?
3. Do you have a background of political activism/campaigning, or working with refugees? Do you know other people who have been deported?
4. What was the basis of your friendship – what did you have in common? How often would you meet when they lived in the UK? What did you get out of the friendship?

#### The deportee's story in the UK

5. You have already told me some basic information about the deported person. What else can you tell me about their background (e.g. age, family, former occupation, level of English)?
6. What caused them to flee their home? How did they get out of their country, what route did they take to UK?
7. What happened when they arrived in the UK – did they claim asylum immediately, were they detained or dispersed to regional accommodation? What friendships did they develop, what groups and activities did they take part in? What constraints did they face?
8. What was their daily life in the UK like – how did they fill their time? For example, what friendships did they develop, what groups and activities did they take part in? What constraints did they face?
9. Can you take me through the approximate timeline of their asylum claim from arrival in the UK to deportation – this may include dates of:
  - initial asylum claim
  - substantive interview
  - refusal letter
  - deportation order(s)
  - detention and removal attempts
10. How did the person feel about the asylum claim process – did they think it was fair, that they had the opportunity to present their case?
11. How did (s)he react when it became clear they were probably going to be deported? Did (s)he make any preparations or plans?
12. Were you involved in any anti-deportation campaigns related to this person?

#### The deportation

Do you know details of the following events related to the deportation itself?

13. Was the person detained? Did they have visitors in detention?
14. Were they given appropriate medical care prior to departure e.g. anti-malaria, immunisations?
15. What happened during the deportation itself – did they get on the plane willingly, were there any incidents during the flight?
16. What happened when they landed at the airport and immediately upon arrival – was there any involvement of the authorities and how safe was it for them?
17. Did the deportee then return to their 'home'? If so, how did their family and friends react to their return?
18. Where does the deportee live now? Why did they choose to stay/move on? What are his/her future plans?
19. How would you describe his/her state of mind? What kind of support does the deportee have now – are there friends or family to rely on?

#### Your relationship with deportees post-return

20. How do you keep in touch? How easy is it to communicate, are you in contact often?
21. How has your relationship changed since they were deported?
22. Have you met up with them since – is it safe for you to visit?
23. What do you get from the friendship?
24. Do you know if other people in the UK have stayed in touch with them?

#### Effects of deportation on you

25. How has your involvement with your deported friend (or your work with asylum seekers and refugees in general) affected you? For example:
  - Have you gained new friends or lost any? What do your family and friends think about it?
  - Have you been supporting your friend financially?
  - Have your political views changed? Do you feel any tension between your friendship with the deportee and the migration policies that the UK government carries out on your behalf as a UK citizen?
  - Has your understanding or views on asylum and migration changed?
26. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about relating to deportation or your friend?
27. What made you volunteer to take part in this study?

#### The deportee's perspective

The research is ongoing to develop more detailed case studies involving the deported person and other friends and family they may have. Do you think your friend would consider being in touch with Pip and participating in the study themselves e.g. through email, or would an actual visit be possible?

Pip will now cover any questions you want to ask and tell you what happens next.

## D3 Deportees' interview questions

Research on the effects of deporting refused asylum seekers from the UK

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS for people who have been deported from the UK



Your friend in the UK has already told me some basic information about you. I would like you to tell me in your own words.

This sheet tells you the main questions you will be asked in the interview. There may be some questions that are not relevant to you or that you would prefer not to answer.

Before the interview begins, you should have:

- read the 'Information sheet'
- discussed any questions you have with Pip, and
- signed the 'Consent form'.

**What name should Pip use to write about you, to keep your story anonymous?**

The interview questions will be about the following areas:

1. Tell me about when you first left your country to go abroad and the places you have been to since
2. Where does the UK fit into your story?  
Tell me about your time there.
3. What happened when you were deported from the UK?
4. What happened to you after you left the UK?
5. What is life like here?
6. What are your hopes for the future?

Thank you for taking part.

Pip would like to keep in touch with you in case your situation changes and so you can receive a summary of the research report - please let her know if your contact details change.

## D4 Detailed deportee interview questions (memorised)

### **Tell me about when you first left your country and the places you have been to since then.**

Prompts:

1. What can you tell me about your life before you left home? (e.g. family, job)
2. What does your culture teach about travelling and exploring other places? (Is it normal? Encouraged? Only if no other option?)
3. When did you leave home? What year was it? How old were you?
4. What made you leave your home? Put your reasons in order of importance.
5. When you decided to leave, was it sudden or did you take time to make the decision?
6. How did you get out of the country?
7. Where did you plan to go? Did your journey go as planned?
8. Tell me about where you've been since you left home
9. Have you travelled alone or with other people?
10. Have you claimed asylum in any other countries?
11. What did your home community hope would happen to you? What did they expect from you? (send money, be successful, pave the way for others etc)
12. With all journeys, different people are involved in making decisions about where you travel. For each journey you made, who had the final choice about where you went?
  - You
  - Your family
  - Someone you paid to help you
  - The authorities/police

### **Where does the UK fit into your story? Tell me about your time there**

Prompts:

1. What did you know about the UK before you went there?
2. What happened when you arrived in the UK? Did you know anybody there already? Did you claim asylum immediately, were you detained or sent to where they had housing for you?
3. What was your daily life in the UK like – how did you fill your time? (groups/activities/work) Was your life in the UK what you expected?
4. Can you take me through the approximate dates of your asylum claim from arrival in the UK to deportation e.g. when you arrived, initial asylum claim, detention and removal attempts
5. Did you understand the system and what was happening?
6. Why was your asylum claim not accepted? Have you got any paperwork about your asylum claim?
7. Did you have a solicitor?
8. Did you have evidence to prove your case?
9. Did you have a fair chance to tell your story?
10. Do you know other people from your country who have also tried to stay in the UK? What happened to them?
11. Would you have done things differently in the UK if you had known what you know now?
12. If you could say one thing to the UK government / Home Office, what would it be?

### **What happened when you were deported from the UK?**

Prompts:

1. When were you detained? How many times were you detained? Did you have an anti-deportation campaign? Who got involved in that?
2. Did you have visitors in detention?
3. How did you feel when you realised you were going to be deported? Did you make any plans for what would happen next?
4. Did you think about going home voluntarily?
5. Did you need medical care before you left the UK e.g. any medication you were on, anti-malarials, immunisations?

6. What happened during the deportation itself – did you resist or did you get on the plane willingly? How many people escorted you?

### **What happened to you after you left the UK?**

Prompts:

1. What happened when you landed at the airport and immediately after? Did the escorts give information to the police/immigration at the airport? What did the police/immigration do? How safe was it for you?
2. Where did you stay that night?
3. What happened next?
4. Was going back how you thought it would be?
5. What did you tell your family and friends about what happened?
6. Has their view of the UK changed because you were deported?
7. Have you learnt anything from your experience in the UK? What advice do you give to other people thinking about going to the UK?

### **What is life like here?**

Prompts:

1. How did you come to live here after you were deported? Why did you choose to stay/move on?
2. What is your life like now - where do you live? Do you work?
3. Do you feel settled? Do you feel safe?
4. Who are the most important people in your life at the moment? (Use target task)
  - How do you communicate with those outside the country? (email, phone, texts, facebook etc)
  - Which friends in the UK are you in touch with? (Where are they? How do you know them? Could I contact them?)
  - Who is left back home? Do you keep in touch with them?
  - How have your friends been able to help you? (e.g. through friendship, financial support, information or work on your asylum case?)

### **What are your hopes for the future?**

Prompts:

1. Where do you think of as home?
2. Where do you feel that you belong - in a certain country or with certain people?
3. What will happen to you if you go back to your country?
4. Will you try to go back to the UK one day?
5. When will you stop travelling? How do you decide whether to stay here or move somewhere else?
6. What are your future hopes and plans?
  - Is there anything else you want to tell me about your deportation or your story?
  - What made you agree to take part in this study?

Thank you for taking part.

Pip would like to keep in touch with you in case your situation changes and so you can receive a summary of the research report  
- please let her know if your contact details change.

## D5 Policy actors' interview questions (sample)

### Enforced removals of failed asylum seekers from the UK

1. Can you briefly describe how you are involved in asylum removal issues?
2. UKBA removes over 6000 failed asylum seekers each year. Some people will see this as an indicator of government success in removing people without permission to be here, some will see it as a failure to remove all refused asylum seekers, while others will see any removal as undesirable. What message do you think it gives?
3. Do you agree with the principle that government should remove people who do not have permission to be in the UK?
4. What do you believe are our responsibilities towards asylum seekers who are forcibly removed?
5. Should the UK's responsibilities to individuals they are removing vary, according to particular circumstances? For example, the deportee may be:
  - A child or an adult
  - Ill or healthy
  - Compliant with the law or convicted of a crime
  - Returned to another EU state or returned to their country of origin?
6. There are some concerns (including among the media, NGOs, the Foreign Affairs Committee and from my own research) about the safety of deportees - either during the flight, on arrival or further down the line. To what extent do you feel that these concerns are justified?
7. At the handover point in the country of return, escorts may tell the receiving authorities that the reason for an individual's deportation is their failed asylum claim. Without this information receiving authorities may not accept the deportee into their territory, but it could potentially expose the deportee to difficulties or danger with their authorities. Do you think it is an acceptable practice?
8. There is much frustration among deported asylum seekers and their supporters who feel that their case was not heard fairly and that justice has not been done. Do you think this frustration is caused by a problem in the asylum process (such as the quality of decision-making, of legal representation, the difficulty of proving fear, or the limits of the Refugee Convention) or something else?
9. Asylum seekers who have already been fingerprinted in another EU country can be removed to that country under the Dublin II regulation. However they do not always seem to have their asylum claim processed in that EU country and are told to leave again. Other asylum seekers returned to their country of origin outside the EU appear to often re-migrate again. Do you think it is an acceptable use of public money to remove people if these are the outcomes?
10. Do you think it is appropriate to subcontract out the detention and escorting of deportees out of the UK or should it be done by statutory officials?
11. Enforced removals have become much more a priority for UKBA over the past decade. Do you think this emphasis will continue in future?
12. What would be your preferred, or alternative approach to current returns practice?



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