MIGRATION MANAGEMENT, GLOBAL MIGRATION GOVERNMENT, AND
THE CASE OF THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION’S
ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMING

by

Michael Todd Smith

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science and International Relations

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by

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DEDICATION

For Era, as always
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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the increasingly important role of migration management programming for migration governance. The dissertation applies the concepts of power and authority to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) as a key organization involved in migration management programming and, more importantly, as an actor actively participating in the structuring and altering of migrant flows. Through a careful analysis of one migration management program type, that of IOM-managed assisted voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR), this dissertation explores both the rapid rise in the popularity of that type of programming in states in Europe and, increasingly, North Africa, as well as the nature of IOM management of AVRR in states which have authorized the programming type. In-depth interviews with IOM officials in offices in Geneva as well as in local IOM offices reveal an intra-organizational cohesion which contributes to the power and authority of the organization as related to AVRR programming, and this in turn is linked in the dissertation to the pursuit of wider organizational goals. The IOM has become a key source of power and authority in the pursuit of global forms of migration governance, and this is discussed with the aim of bringing the study of migration management programming into closer contact with global governance and global migration governance literatures.

This dissertation fills gaps in the existing literature by discussing in more explicit ways the links between power and authority and migration management; by discussing with
more empirical detail the rise of assisted voluntary return and reintegration programming
EU states; and by demonstrating intra-organizational messaging consistency on AVRR and
migration governance more generally. The dissertation also contributes new empirical data
with regard to IOM-managed AVRR programming in Cyprus, Malta, and Greece.
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is a study of human migration governance. More specifically, I seek to describe how the relationships and interests shared by and between a number of global actors have overlapped to produce a set of related migration management programs implemented and operated within an increasing number of states, programs which operate primarily to provide assistance to individual migrants that wish to or otherwise must return to their country of origin. Migration governance is, for the purposes of this dissertation, viewed through a lens which does not obscure nor preclude the power structures and processes said to be involved in the global governance of other issue areas; rather, migration governance, it will be argued, can and is being shaped and altered by actors other than and beyond the state, and this has important implications for how we understand the migration question (or really, set of questions) which has become in recent years one of the most hot-button and divisive issues of our time. A global governance perspective is vitally important for an issue like migration, which is by its very definition a transnational process. Far more than simply an exchange of individual persons between sovereign states, migration is a human process that transcends the borders that also help define it, and for which the governance is typically understood as varied, fractured, and woefully unfair for many individuals with the ‘migrant’ label.
International relations theory does not typically do a good job accounting for migration or its governance. Although this dissertation contains and is in part motivated by a number of valuable insights gathered from international relations theory, state-centric theories often miss out on much of what is truly interesting (and not well understood) about migration and the relationships between the migrants, the state, and other actors in global politics. In a 2014 article in the journal Global Governance, Thomas Weiss and Rorden Wilkinson suggest that the global governance approach to world politics has the potential to save international relations, which they see as situated “on the edge of an abyss of irrelevance.”¹ A global governance perspective, properly formulated, challenges us “to ask questions about how the world is organized, how power and authority are exercised, and how adjustments (incremental, wholesale, or otherwise) can be made to make the world a better place.”² Weiss and Wilkinson encourage scholars in the field to challenge the way that both IR and global governance have ‘been done’ in the past, in an effort to allow for new ways of answering the questions that global governance forces us to ask about the world. As a conscious attempt to shake up the strictures of international relations and other forms of political science when interacting with the migration issue area, in this dissertation I take Weiss and Wilkinson’s advice and transform it into a pointed evaluation of migration governance, arguing how the concept of ‘migration management’ can be understood as a global form of governance, how the International Organization for Migration is increasingly involved in the construction of transnational authority over certain types of

² Weiss and Wilkinson. 2014: 31
migration-related programming which effectively governs some migration dynamics, and how one of these migrant management programming types known as assisted voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR) has rapidly expanded in terms of its impact on the lives of hundreds of thousands of individual migrants over the past decade.

In recent years an increased amount of attention has indeed been given in international relations and, primarily, international migration literature to the sources of governance over the migration issue area writ large, and whether any of those sources can be found at the global or transnational level. While some conceptions of migration governance seek to place the increasingly diverse range of actors and organizations thought to impact governance over state management of migration and over migrating peoples into a solid global governance theoretical framework (albeit one that has not yet come fully to fruition)\(^3\), others have sought to assert that migration governance, in its disparate forms, is actually more akin to a set of distinct regimes governing different types of human mobility.\(^4\)

In either case, the movement of peoples across state borders for whatever length of time clearly represents an important subject of investigation for scholars. Migration as a subject for IR scholars has been made more salient in recent years due to the degree of attention given to issues like forced migration following acts of international terrorism and civil wars, and the European migration ‘crisis’ that continues to play itself out in European capitals and at the borders long after the actual numbers of those crossing borders have fallen sharply. The problem is, most approaches to migration governance, in my opinion,


eventually devolve into a defeatist throwing-up-of-the-hands when considering how authority and power beyond the state might be involved in forming whatever migration governance might actually be. In looking at the sources of migration governance, scholars have tended to approach the subject either by utilizing the comparative method in order to better understand migration governance in context, or in an institutional manner, having sought out the characteristics of migration governance from a top-down view, as has been done with numerous other issue areas. That is, much effort has been expended in seeking to identify the particular institutional arrangements that might signal to the international community that global governance of particular aspects of life across the world is indeed more than a theoretical construct. We can readily point to, and indeed see a progression in, institutionalist explanations of state cooperation and the empirics undergirding them as movement towards various forms of global governance in many issue areas. Even in the area of migration and human mobility, whether conceived of as nascent formations of a coherent global institutional framework or as more disparate regimes with differing degrees of relevance or power, the arguments for or against an identification of governance beyond the state rests largely on looking towards those institutions that are presumed to be the ones that would have a decisive role in that governance. This, unfortunately perhaps, is quite difficult to locate for the migration governance issue area, and much analytical effort has been dedicated to repeatedly coming to the conclusion that, alas, there is not much truly global migration governance that can be empirically identified.

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This dissertation tries to approach the issue of the global governance of migration in a different way, taking the position that it is insufficient and premature to try to identify the institutions most relevant in a singular global migration governance (which certainly does not yet exist) without understanding how those institutions interact with migration itself, and how state practices (states being the traditional standard-bearer on migration policy) are actually impacted by those institutions. Especially in the area of migration, in which there is much doubt about the willingness (and in some cases, ability) of nation states to relinquish their traditional juridical control over migration to and through their territories, it would appear necessary to begin developing useful analytical constructs based on how other actors, types of authority and effects of power relevant to a global governance perspective may be impacting governance of migration beyond the juridical. This dissertation is intended to be a contribution in this direction.

Rather than (rather absurdly) assert that there has been a sudden, yet fundamental juridical change in which states have relinquished substantial levels of control over migration governance to a global authority, this dissertation argues that the practices of migration management, in which the International Organization for Migration and other international organizations are allowed by states to implement and operate migration-related programming, have both created and also been constituted by forms of power and authority which shape the possibilities for migrant governance of certain types, and that we can learn some important lessons about migration management and the IOM itself (as the primary purveyor of migration management services) through the example of assisted voluntary return and reintegration programming.
Much more on the specific nature of migration management will follow in this chapter and in later chapters of this dissertation. However, to approach migration governance in the way I have just outlined, this introduction must reflect on the theoretical and empirical foundations upon which this project is made possible, and the motivating research questions which represent strands of inquiry which will be followed throughout this dissertation and tied together in its conclusion. I take up the latter first, to be followed by a review of the pertinent literature on migration, global governance, and how they have been combined.

This dissertation is loosely structured around the following research questions, all of which are fairly broad, and present a number of potential hazards for the researching when trying to make definitive claims about the subject itself: What is migration governance? Are there global sources of migration governance? How does the governance of migration intersect (or diverge) from the practice of managing migration? Which international institutions, formal or informal, are most significant in the wider migration governance/management picture? Who or what, in the end, is being governed?

As stated, these questions are broad: they are not questions which can be answered to the satisfaction of all whom study global migration in one dissertation alone, nor has there been sufficient intellectual or policy convergence on any of the questions to determine what constitutes a ‘correct’ answer. They also present some hazards: most notably, this subject involves a rapidly changing field which works with rapidly changing data. The various influences on migration governance can dramatically alter how migrant flows are addressed with sudden or major policy decisions, changes in funding levels or funding sources, or the refocusing of priorities that inevitably occur at some levels when new
migrant flows begin and disrupt previously understood and predictable patterns of movement to and through the states of the world. What I will go on to argue about the nature of migration management practices suggests, in essence, that after more than a decade of progressive increases and development of certain types of migration management, I am reasonably sure that there is something interesting to consider about what follows this introduction. However, it is not impossible that major shifts in forms of governance might come with the unpredictable future – that is the nature of what is under consideration here!

What is clear to me, and to many scholars looking at the nature of global governance, is that the institutions and dynamics that a global governance perspective might favor typically have demonstrated that global governance constrains, to one degree or another, state behavior and the state capacity to independently develop, implement and manage policy and enforcement in certain issue areas (more on this below). For migration governance, this dissertation takes the position that migration management practices, in spite of the nature of the budgeting for many of those practices, must operate to constrain the nation state’s own ability to manage the migration issue independent of other actors. The primary location for identifying the ‘effects’ of the development of global migration governance will be, therefore, found in the practices of migration management, which actors control those practices, and to what end - even if those practices occur within the juridical territories of particular nation states, control over those practices is not assumed.

Indeed, one of the major points of this dissertation is to highlight the need in the study of migration governance to separate control over policy implementation, and policy convergence which supports state interests. In this dissertation, I take the position that it
is entirely possible that the institutions of global migration governance may in fact operate to support and reinforce core state interests vis-à-vis the migration issue and its management, despite simultaneously reducing the degree to which states themselves are capable of controlling just how certain types of policies are implemented, on what terms, and with what ultimate normative effects of that implementation in mind. This position, however, should not be overstated. While many global institutions, and especially the International Organization for Migration, ostensibly direct their attention towards migration processes, the nation state does remain the principal unit of sovereignty and authority over individuals in the global community, and is often, though not always, responsible for enacting policies which physically affect (quite literally) migration and mobility. (This is not to suggest that all nation states have functionally similar levels of sovereignty and authority, of course. Numerous states do not have physical control over their borders, and the institutional response to survival migration, for instance, is challenged accordingly.⁶) As a result, this analysis will in the course of considering the ways in which global institutions shape, construct, implement and actively manage migration management necessarily reflect on how it is that the nation state ‘experiences,’ and therefore affects, internationalized migration governance and, in turn, adapts to and seeks to change that governance.

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By taking lessons from several distinct literatures – that on the nature of global governance and its understanding of power and authority, that on international migration, etc. —

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and a small but growing literature on migration management itself - the remainder of this introduction will seek to outline and support a dissertation which demonstrates that even the analysis of a relatively modest migration management program for which responsibility is ‘shared’ between the International Organization for Migration and the state reveals interesting and novel relationships between the actors for the study of international relations and global politics, relationships which do not necessarily conform to the traditional expectations for those types of actors in the literature. Given the degree to which the state is often said to cling most strongly to its sovereignty on the issue of territory, borders and who is considered a ‘citizen,’ the entire project, in a way, represents a hard case for advocates of understanding the current (and near future) international migration institutional arrangement as a form of global governance (indeed, this might be especially so given the case: assisted voluntary return programs have traditionally been thought to be quite beholden to state interests in migrant removal). However, by the end of this dissertation I will have argued and defended the following assertions:

- Migration management programs and practices often reflect the forms of power and authority that are often ascribed to those institutions and processes closely linked to the global governance of other issue areas.

- The International Organization for Migration, as a significant actor in the implementation and operation of migration management programming, is positioned in a wider constellation of actors in such a way that its formerly doubted ability to affect migration governance is now, in contrast, quite well-developed.
- The IOM’s Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration programming in numerous states around the world represents a form of migration management which demonstrates how migration management can take on a ‘global’ form and require convergence among multiple actors beyond the state in order for a certain form of governance to be projected, even if that projection largely serves state interests.

- IOM AVRR programs operating in three small Mediterranean states (Malta, Cyprus and Greece) provide contextual lessons which are valuable not just for the data related to migration dynamics in those places, but also for our understanding of how the IOM engages in migration management at an operational level.

Prior to considering the ways in which I can demonstrate that these claims have merit, however, brief reflection on the foundations on which these arguments sit is in order. To that end, the following sections provide an overview of the literatures most relevant to this study, and an identification of the gaps in those literatures which allow for this dissertation to make claims that are important in the development of greater understanding of global politics today.

**The Meeting of the Global Governance and the Migration Literatures**

This dissertation’s foundations rest in part on the theoretical argument that there may develop a form of global governance that directly interacts with the migration issue area. The idea that there may develop global migration governance in some form rests, however,
on two distinct and somewhat prior literatures within political science: that on global governance, and that on the study of international migration. Joining these two literatures has been done in novel ways, for sure, but the clearest articulations of these two literatures coming together in meaningful ways appears initially in the works of Castles and Miller, and subsequently by Alexander Betts and Rey Koslowski. Castles and Miller very clearly, though briefly, signaled the importance of emerging regional and other transnational organizations in affecting migration governance processes, while Betts laid the groundwork for asserting that there are some forms, however disparate, of global governance that interact with the migration issue area which are relevant for further study, and brought together numerous conversations regarding international migration governance under the global governance framework. However, Betts’ work has its antecedents in the two literatures referenced above, and there have also been more recent discussions of global migration governance which serve to illuminate the contention over its form and existence further. In this brief literature review I seek to 1) explore earlier scholarly identification of the relationship between international migration and governance ‘beyond the state’ 2) look more closely at Betts’ conceptualization and his respondents and 3) gear this review towards an explanation of how and why this proposed project fits in with, and potentially reinforces, the study of global migration governance. Finally, I provide an overview of the small body of literature on migration management, discussed


8 Betts. 2009; Betts. 2011.

9 Koslowski. 2011.
and elaborated upon at greater length in the next chapter. First, however, I look in turn at
the foundational literature of international migration and global governance.

\[
\textit{International Migration}
\]

The study of international migration is inherently an interdisciplinary endeavor, and the
literature that focuses on the governance of migration is but a small part of scholarly
exploration into migrant experiences, the effects on labor markets, cultural contacts and
conflicts, and more. Yet, the subject of migration as approached by political scientists is
well-developed. Moving beyond the work of Castles and Miller\textsuperscript{10}, whose \textit{The Age of
Migration} laid much of the current foundation for the treatment of migration as a global
issue and phenomenon of importance to political scientists as well as to practitioners in
other fields, there have been many volumes which have sought to explore migration in
terms of historical-sociological accounts of the phenomenon, linking the commonness of
the experience to the diversity of its sources and participants\textsuperscript{11}; many, if not most, of these
have approached the ‘issue’ of international migration in a ‘global’ sense, transcending
borders and the juridical considerations of states (even if these clearly impact the
experiences of those constituent members of the migrating classes).

\textsuperscript{10} Castles and Miller. 2009.

\textsuperscript{11} Goldin, Ian, Geoffrey Cameron and Meera Balarajan. 2011. \textit{Exceptional People: How
Migration Shaped Our World and Will Define Our Future}. Princeton: Princeton
Westview Press.
In recent years, there have been a number of approaches which seek to link ‘globalization’ processes with migration more generally. While some seek to explore the ways in which culture and identity are impacted by migrations seen as a result of globalization, and others explore how globalization has caused a norm diffusion of domestic immigration policy systems, there has been a concerted effort on the part of some scholars to tie the governance of international migration to more traditional conceptions of liberal ideas of international cooperation. Within this view, the governance of international migration results from international cooperation where there is a functional need for it; the relatively greater ‘need’ for governance over forced migrations, for example, as opposed to voluntary migrations is highlighted and used to explain why there is greater institutional evidence of cooperation on migration that is considered non-voluntary. In addition, Legomsky writes that international legal norm diffusion, for

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16 Hansen, et. al. 2011: 211-213
which “general human rights law has… begun playing an increasingly important role in the internationalization of migration policy.”¹⁷

Pertinent to this project’s later focus on certain migration dynamics in a particular context (the European Union, and especially small, southern European states), there is also a well-established comparative literature on Southern European migration, that nevertheless touches upon how southern European states deal with one layer of transnational governance, that emanating from the European Union. Numerous volumes look at the intersection between the policymaking of the European Union and the migration issue, and indeed this subject could easily represent its own subfield by itself. Legomsky writes that “the European Union provides the clearest regional example of international regulation of migration,”¹⁸ and it is clearly an important site for the study of transnational governance. While books like Migration and Mobility in the European Union by Andrew Geddes and Christina Boswell¹⁹ look at the European Union as a whole, several authors treat how the European Union impacts the migration policymaking of the Southern European countries, as well as the reverse. In his 2004 book, The Politics of Migration and Immigration in Europe, Andrew Geddes suggests that while it would be tempting to suggest that, in the light of massive and continuing irregular migration, the European Union has had little effect on Southern European migration policy, “this perception would be

¹⁸ Legomsky. 2009: 52

mistaken… the policy frame provided by the EU has had a decisive influence on the ‘repressive’ elements of policy in those countries.”

Yet Geddes also writes that the informal nature and features of Southern Europe differentiate it from the rest of the European Union, and impact the way policy is created and if it is effective (or not), even if modeled on common European standards. Indeed, Peixoto, et. al, note how European Union standards can actually enhance the pathways of irregularity when it comes to common visa policy. As “integration into the EU is an obvious factor directly constraining national immigration policies,” yet simultaneously challenging the ability of Southern European states to deal dynamically with the unique issues they face from particular migrant flows, the European Union holds great import for the Southern European approach to migration. This can be seen quite clearly in the case of the fledgling Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (now the Union for the Mediterranean – an organization ostensibly designed to promote technical and policy cooperation between European Union member states and North African states), in which the Southern European countries took a special interest. As a European Union-led process, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership highlighted that, “only the countries of Southern Europe seem[ed] to show a sustained interest [in migration issues], because they are directly

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22 Ibid.: 140
affected by illegal migrations, illegal workers, competition and free trade in markets… the political situation on southern shores, and the potential increase of demand for asylum…”

The literature available on Southern European migration seems to suggest initial evidence of the effect of one layer of transnational governance on southern European states, but little of the literature reviewed explores closely the relationship of those states with other actors like the International Organization for Migration, which becomes so important for this dissertation in later chapters.

*Global governance*

There has been an abundance of literature concerning potential forms and sources of governance beyond the state, and many of these focus on the concept of global governance. The ties between global governance and international relations theory are somewhat less defined, however. While global governance is undoubtedly a “murky and often poorly defined term,” Betts writes that “it is generally used to refer to regulation that exists over and above the level of the nation-state, whether at the international… supranational… or trans-national… level. In other words, global governance includes but is not reducible to agreements between states such as treaties or conventions.” The literature on global governance varies widely, of course, and touches on almost every conceivable form of

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24 Betts. 2009: 102

25 Betts. 2009: 102
international or transnational contact between peoples and states. Yet global governance is arguably not a ‘theory’ of international relations in any coherent way by itself, but rather, as Hoffmann and Ba write, a phenomenon, project, or worldview\(^\text{26}\) amenable to study from a variety of perspectives. Karns and Mingst note that “liberalism and its middle-level derivatives… form the foundation for much global governance theorizing,”\(^\text{27}\) yet also indicate that a variety of perspectives can be useful in evaluating global governance claims, including constructivism and critical theory.\(^\text{28}\) For this project, both liberal and constructivist approaches to global governance are particularly important, but this should not discount the ways in which critical approaches can enhance and flesh out our understandings of global governance and its relationship with international relations.

With regard to the liberal approaches, regime theory and its variants clearly have a major influence on conceptions of global governance. The study of global governance is certainly not reducible to the study of regimes, but the work of scholars like Oran Young, for example, allow us to understand how regimes are developed “to respond to demands for governance in a society in which states are still essential actors and in which there is no central public authority.”\(^\text{29}\) In addition, Rey Koslowski’s argument for three existing global regimes on migration of various strengths is a powerful one.\(^\text{30}\) Yet it also takes more

\(^{26}\) Hoffmann and Ba. 2005: 4


\(^{28}\) Karns and Mingst. 2004: Chapter 2

\(^{29}\) Young. 2005: 91

\(^{30}\) Koslowski. 2011
constructivist approaches to help us understand that once instilled with legitimate authority over particular issue areas, institutions can develop their own independent effects as a result of bureaucratic formation and overreach, and can often determine the content of governance in particular issue areas.\textsuperscript{31}

Particularly important among these constructivist accounts of global governance is the work of Barnett and Duvall\textsuperscript{32} (in arguments built upon the work of Barnett and Finnemore\textsuperscript{33}), whose \textit{Power in Global Governance} sought to pull out “how global outcomes are produced and how actors are differentially enabled and constrained.”\textsuperscript{34} By explicating four types of power, defined generally as “the production, in and through social relations, of effects that shape the capacities of actors to determine their own circumstances and fate,”\textsuperscript{35} Barnett and Duvall provide a useful framework from which one can not only understand how it is that those ‘governing’ seek particular outcomes, but also how those ‘governed’ are potentially constrained into a limited set of available and acceptable choices. As the ‘governing’ and ‘governed’ are mutually constitutive the constructivist argument that Barnett and Duvall offers allows one possible framework from which to consider both global governance and its subjects. Barnett and Duvall break down the ways in which actors and institutions in the international environment relate to one another. They go on

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{34} Barnett and Duvall. 2005: 3
\textsuperscript{35} Barnett and Duvall. 2005: 3
\end{flushleft}
to hypothesize their four specific power-types that appear most relevant in that environment: compulsory power (in which one actor can compel another to do what it wants through the use of material influence), institutional power (in which institutions of the international environment are seen to shape the preferences and possibilities for action of other actors and institutions), productive power (in which actors and institutions are seen to shape through discourse and other behavior what is perceived as normatively good or not good, acceptable and unacceptable, and even what is knowledge and the lack thereof) and structural power (which largely reflects the influence of the positioning of actors and institutions within the international environment on their possibilities for action).

For this analysis, institutional and productive power are particularly relevant though all will be discussed in relation to migration management in subsequent chapters. In their discussion of institutional power, Barnett and Duvall write, “institutions established at one point in time can have ongoing and unintended effects at a later point… institutional arrangements can shape the agenda-setting process in ways that eliminate those very issues that are points of contention [between actors].”36 As I will demonstrate below, the IOM’s work on AVRR and the associated run-on effects of their competence over that form of migration management fit this quite well. As will also be discussed, the state-centric nature of Barnett and Duvall’s forms of power is challenged when applied to the case of the IOM and its role in international politics, and as a result a more expansive understanding of institutional power and the ways in which it contributes to and is reinforced by productive power is outlined.

36 Barnett and Duvall. 2005: 16
Also important for this dissertation’s attempt to link migration management with the processes of global governance is the concept of authority in global governance, which I borrow here from Barnett and Finnemore. According to Barnett and Finnemore, “authority does two kinds of work in making [international organizations] what they are and shaping their behavior. It provides the social form and behavioral vocabulary of IOs as social actors, and it supplies the social purposes these actors pursue. Authority provides the substance of which IOs are made.”37 For Barnett and Finnemore, there are four major types of authority relevant for international organizations: rational-legal, delegated, moral, and expert. Rational-legal refers primarily to the juridical right to act in certain ways granted an international organization through its charter and the acceptance of that by the international community. Delegated authority is that which understands international organizations as taking up the responsibilities of states which have been passed along to them. According to Barnett and Finnemore, “IOs must be autonomous actors in some ways simply to fulfil their delegated tasks. One important reason states delegate to IOs in the first place is precisely that they want some other actor to take charge of a problem and sort it out.”38 Moral authority is that which is thought to better inhere in an international organization, with its efforts generally centered on discrete issue areas and the promotion of cooperation between states as opposed to the narrow interests of a single state; the notion that IOs are better able to uphold normatively moral behavior in the international environment. Finally, expert authority is that which comes to an organization which can promote itself as the preeminent source on technical expertise in their subject area.

37 Barnett and Finnemore. 2004: 20-21

38 Barnett and Finnemore. 2004: 22
It is often noted that “Global governance is mostly studied as a top-down project,”\(^{39}\) and there is a particular emphasis on studying the perceived institutions thought ‘responsible’ for governance, where institutions are often equated with formal international organizations. As this proposal’s emphasis lies rather on understanding the formation of what we might label migration governance, coming as it does from a variety of sources and actors\(^{40}\), it would be important for any attendant literature review to make it very clear that global governance is a highly contested subject, and often viewed as a liberal ‘project’\(^{41}\) as opposed to the organic phenomenon resulting from increased contacts between peoples around the globe. A more extensive literature review on this subject would necessarily investigate this contestation in greater depth\(^{42}\); however, for the purposes of this dissertation these must be acknowledged, while also stating that it will be the position of this project that both the liberal and constructivist conceptualizations of global governance and its processes are seen to be useful analytical tools, reflective of dynamic social and empirical processes.

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\(^{40}\) As Cali and Ergun. 2005. seek to do in the context of Turkey and Azerbaijan and the influence of human rights organizations


\(^{42}\) As is done in works like Ba and Hoffmann. 2005.
Global Migration Governance

Castles and Miller briefly linked migration to global governance in their 2003 edition of *The Age of Migration*, noting that “an importance manifestation of global governance is the significant expansion of regional consultative processes focusing on international migration.”^43^ This was followed by a series of important and influential works by Alexander Betts which also made a concerted attempt to link the two concepts. First linking migration with the global governance literature in his 2009 work *Forced Migration and Global Politics*, Betts has sought to argue that utilizing global governance perspective in the context of international migration can be analytically rewarding. Identifying the work on power and global governance by Barnett and Duvall, as well as regime complexity literature, Betts notes the relevance of the global governance literature in the context of forced migration, writing that:

“As with any issue-area of global governance, all four forms of power will exist simultaneously in the international politics of forced migration. One of the core power dynamics within the international politics of forced migration is along North-South lines… Barnett and Duvall’s typology is particularly useful because it highlights the multifaceted nature of power relations and the fact that North-South power relations are not reducible simply to an assessment of military or economic strength but are also influenced by factors such as institutions and ideas, which may present both an opportunity or a constraint for actors that are traditionally thought of as “weaker” actors in military or economic terms,”^44^

^43^ Castles and Miller. 2003: 12

^44^ Betts. 2009: 120
This was followed in 2011 by Betts’ edited volume *Global Migration Governance*, in which he notes that while “global migration governance is relatively incoherent,” from the top-down perspective, “there is a rapidly emerging ‘bottom-up’ global migration governance framework. In the absence of coherent multilateral institutions, states are creating ad hoc forms of multi-level governance.” It is this bottom-up, ad hoc, multi-level governance which I contend requires a greater amount of investigation and contestation, especially in specific contexts not abstractly conceived, but empirically evaluated.

Yet Betts’ approach is not the only approach to issues of global migration and its governance, and other more traditional, yet powerful, accounts of this have come to the fore as well. Also in 2011, Rey Koslowski released another volume entitled *Global Mobility Regimes*, which substitutes the notion of ‘migration’ altogether, instead choosing to focus on ‘mobility’ as a term for all movement across international borders, for whatever period of time, and asserting a more classic view of international regimes as the primary source of governance of mobility-related issues: discrete cooperation between states on particular issues, with varying levels of effectiveness. For Koslowski, three regimes, two of which can be said to exist and a third which is presently only a theoretical construct, might better make up conceptions of global mobility: a refugee regime, an international travel regime, and a labor migration regime, which does not yet exist. Koslowski’s attempt pushes the boundaries of the migration literature in a positive direction: in a global world,

45 Betts. 2011: 2
46 Betts. 2011: 2
both long- and short-term stays are relevant when considering the global forms of
governance developed and willingly-accepted by states. Note that assisted voluntary return
might not fall neatly into any of these regimes.

In addition to these book-length approaches to the subject, there have been a variety of
other attempts to address global migration governance in the scholarly literature. Sara
Kalm notes that “the emerging ‘global governance’ of international migration now displays
a complex pattern of agents and forums that operate at and between the national, regional
and global levels, with sometimes overlapping goals and mandates.” A 2011 special
issue of Global Governance was dedicated to global migration governance, with the
contributing authors seeking to identify the state of global migration governance and
prospects for future governance, albeit mostly from a top-down level. From the top-down
perspective, it is not surprising when Koser writes that, “the legal and normative framework
affecting international migrants cannot be found in a single document,” and when
Newland writes, “Global governance of international migration is portrayed
simultaneously as a necessity and an impossibility;” state willingness to officially and
legally relinquish sovereignty over borders and immigration policy remains difficult to
locate, and while generally hopeful for the development of global governance in the

Migration Management,” in Geiger, Martin and Antoine Pecoud. The Politics of

Global Governance: 301

and Institutions,” Global Governance. 16(3): 331
migration issue area, the special issue focused primarily on the ways in which international institutions had addressed migration on an ad-hoc basis (most commonly, the addition of migration-related provisions to international agreements that primarily focused on and addressed other global issues – especially environmental protection - made up these ad-hoc mechanisms. See Susan Martin’s article in the same issue).

Instead of a consolidation of focus on global migration governance on one hand, or global mobility regimes on the other, the study of the intersections between global sources of governance and international migration appears fragmented at the present time, though there are some signs of ‘hope’. Indeed, Susan Martin’s volume, International Migration, does not appear to significantly contribute to the theoretical understanding the global sources of governance for migration, but rather takes a more reserved look at the international organizations and frameworks which states participate in addressing global migration issues, absent a wider discussion about the processes by which states and other actors see particular organizations and frameworks as possessing legitimate authority on particular issues relevant for the study of migration. Yet, Kathleen Newland has struck a more optimistic note on the prospects for global migration governance following the European migrant crisis. In her view as discussed in a policy brief for the Migration Policy Institute, Newland writes that “states turn to international cooperation when unilateral action fails them, as it did spectacularly at the climax of 2015, and they are convinced that their goals are more likely to be reached by collaborating with others. Yet, this top-down perspective must be paired, in my view, with an understanding of how organizations and

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states operate both at a policy level and ‘on the ground’. The top-down, institutional perspective favored by many of those studying global migration governance has not allowed us to see how institutional forms of governance can actually affect the experience of migrants in state contexts in a variety of ways, and how they were doing so even prior to the 2015 crisis. Despite a formal lack of juridically-empowered international bodies responsible for creating a uniform set of policies over migration in all areas of the globe, the International Organization for Migration and other organizations have found themselves in a position of increasing legitimacy, authority and power following the 2015 crisis, which has allowed them build upon preexisting relationships at the state and local level in the context of migration management.

Migration Management

The trepidation over declaring the rise of a global governance of migration might indicate that we are looking at a stage of shifting governance prior to a full global migration governance (whatever that may be), a stage which nevertheless sees the surpassing of the state in terms of being able to place the major effects of the implementation of migration policy in the hands of other entities besides the state. This prior stage, unlike a general focus on regionalism as the next logical ‘level’ of governance above the state (though not necessarily arising nor operating in distinct ways from regionalism), centers on organizations like the IOM which provide services to states without directly creating formal, compulsory international law.\(^{52}\) Modern migration management sees states and

\(^{52}\) Although the IOM receives most of the attention in this regard, other organizations that provide migration management services do exist. The United Nations High Commission
regional organizations willingly contract the services of migration management organizations which operate on an international scale, without conceding to those organizations a formal, juridical role in the independent development of *de jure* migration policy. The next chapter will seek to explore the possibility that the intersection between global governance and international migration literatures may have stopped short of identifying ‘global migration governance,’ but that the expansion of global cooperation on migration management, and the increasing ease of coordination and communication between states, the IOM and other actors like the European Union, has allowed for a form of programming to develop which shifts responsibility for planning, implementation and operation away from the state itself, therefore allowing the state to achieve its policy ends through a dedicated third-party organization without maintaining additional bureaucracy that would itself be dedicated to that task. This is much the argument of the collection of authors writing in Martin Geiger and Antoine Pecoud’s 2010 volume *The Politics of International Migration Management*, which is reviewed in depth in the next chapter, yet I would argue that the link between migration management and global migration governance ought to be conceived of as much stronger. In the case of AVRR at least, the institutional arrangement in which the IOM, EU and member states come together on the issue simultaneously reinforces norms of state sovereignty, what it means to be sent ‘home,’ and the degree to which the state’s removal function proceeds relatively unhindered despite a greater global reluctance to engage in traditional deportation (while leaving responsibility on Refugees is arguably the most visible actor in migration management, though with a very specific target population.)
for these matters, in terms of actor ‘behavior,’ primarily to one international organization which oversees programming in dozens of states).

**Project Design**

This dissertation project is structured as follows: once I have outlined methodological considerations below, I proceed to discuss the concept of migration management, and how we might consider migration management in light of theoretical approaches to the nature of power and authority in global governance. I assert that migration management practices have developed to a point where there is both significant power and significant authority present in the relationships between actors that have come together to produce migration programming that has active and substantial effects on certain migrant flows. The actors relevant for this conversation: namely, the state, the International Organization for Migration, and for many of my examples, the European Union, are all especially so when considering the degree to which cooperation is necessary to get migration management programming going, yet in turn are impacted by the dynamics of migration management upon implementation and operation.

After this I consider the International Organization for Migration in more detail. The IOM has long been held to be a relatively ‘weak’ actor, seen as beholden to state interests with its ability to act in global politics severely constrained by its project-based budgeting system. I argue that the IOM has actually developed a significant degree of power and authority with regard to certain issue areas which lend it influence over the governance of migration in certain ways. Then, I turn to the intra-organizational lessons that might be gleaned from a view from the ‘top’ of the IOM: how do officials at IOM headquarters
conceive of the purpose, design, implementation and operation of the organization’s assisted voluntary return and reintegration programming; then I do the same with a view from ‘below,’ in which how the IOM offices operating AVRR programming in three sites in southern Europe view the programming type and their relationship to headquarters level program managers is carefully considered. Finally, I will argue that the practices of migration management, composed of and projecting forms of power and authority very readily identifiable in a global governance framework, are potentially far closer to ‘global migration governance’ than prior literature has acknowledged, and the possible futures of this dynamic will be explored.

This dissertation is designed in a way to approach over three substantive chapters the nature of migration management and its global elements, from a theoretical level through an institutional and programmatic one. The major assertions of this dissertation, as referenced above, call for carefully considered and largely interpretive explanations; in other words, and as will be repeated in different parts of this dissertation, the answers to the questions I have posed at the beginning of this project do not provide the reader with much in the way of quantitative-level responses.

This is in part because the numbers involved with this project’s primary ‘case’ – IOM-managed Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration – do not dominate or even sit centrally at the heart of the political questions which I and others are asking about the programming type. Of far more concern are the policy and program-level interactions between actors, the relationships that have been developed between actors, and how the IOM specifically can be seen to be both driving, and being driven to, a new role in migration governance through migration management programs which allow it to claim a
significant level of expertise (and through that expertise, authority) over migrant return and reintegration. Quantifying expertise and authority, though likely done elsewhere, is difficult in a policymaking environment in which much information is privileged and there are relatively few ‘cases’ with which to work.

In addition, there are ways in which the descriptive statistics available are actually quite interesting, but not without a significant degree of context which can only be provided through certain interpretive lenses. For example, one version of this which I will return to later in the dissertation is the case of the host states with the highest levels of IOM-managed voluntary returns. There has been a rapid rise in the total amount of voluntary returns managed by the IOM over the past decade, along with some recent leveling off. Simply looking at the numbers, as the graphs below depict, we can see that AVRR hit a peak in 2016, and has subsequently declined. In graph 1, we can see that the three host states in which the returns process was able to be most closely observed in this study and are under consideration later in this dissertation did not have very similar nor significant increases in returns over the past decade (excepting Cyprus, which saw its first returns occur in 2016).
Figure 1\textsuperscript{53}:

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chart.png}
\caption{IOM-Managed Assisted Voluntary Return Data, 2012-2017 - Total Assisted Returns, plus Malta, Cyprus and Greece}
\end{figure}

Figure 2\textsuperscript{54}:

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure2.png}
\end{center}

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid.
Compare the total numbers of voluntary returns with those coming from Germany (Table 2), however, and one might simply (and not necessarily incorrectly) conclude that the increase in AVRR is a byproduct of a recent, possibly temporary German interest in the programming type coming in the way of the European migration ‘crisis’. Yet, the numbers do not tell us what happens to the institutional legitimacy, authority and capacity to enable voluntary returns and other forms of migration management (and engage in efforts at global policy convergence simultaneously) of the IOM even when interest ebbs and flows – the argument here will be that the legitimacy, authority and tacit capacity stick around.

In addition, simply noting how closely Germany’s returns correlate with the total would also provide poor contextualization for the third table (3) in which we see that in recent years, the drop-off in German returns is being met by increases in returns from Niger, which had the second-highest rate of voluntary returns in 2018. This is contextualized for the reader to a greater degree in the final chapter of the dissertation when considering AVRR programming ‘futures’; yet, there is more to this story than the correlations that we might draw from participation numbers and rates.
Figure 3:

IOM-Managed Assisted Voluntary Return Data, 2013-2018
- Total Assisted Returns, plus Germany, Niger, and Greece

Total Returns
Germany Returns
Niger Returns
Greece Returns

2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018
Both qualitative and mainly descriptive quantitative data in this dissertation are therefore used to craft a picture of migration management and its role in the global migration governance debate in order to enable understanding of the changing migration management dynamics, not to explain causation of the rise and fall in total return numbers. To enable this, I have collected data from numerous sources, including elite interviews conducted with IOM officials in Geneva, Valletta (Malta), Heraklion (Greece), and Nicosia (Cyprus); the foregoing works in academia reviewing this subject; reports and publications created by the IOM itself as well as by other organizations with interests in AVRR, news reports, and other primary sources including policymaking documents. This data has then been analyzed thematically in this dissertation, from a more theoretical perspective in earlier chapters to a more policy/practice-oriented one in later chapters.

This dissertation project is not without grounding in wider international relations theory, of course. The global governance perspective that was discussed above is one that rests largely on the intersection between more traditional liberal conceptions of international organization and constructivist insights which allow scholars to move beyond the state and consider the ways power and authority might interact with what we assume to be the form of the institutional environment in which global politics is taking place. As the above review of relevant foregoing literature suggests, efforts at crafting theory about migration management and migration governance are far more detailed than a brief literature review allows. Therefore, the above review is paired with a more detailed investigation of how the most pertinent insights from these literatures can meet to help us understand to a greater degree migration management, migration governance and, possibly, global migration governance in the subsequent chapters.
Strictly-speaking, there is a single ‘case’ in this dissertation, the case of IOM-managed AVRR programming, and for those more concerned with traditional labels, this study is in some sense a critical case study of migration management programming in which AVRR programs take center stage. Numerous other migration management programs exist: those that assist states with border policy, border policing, asylum case processing, and much more. However, the choice of IOM-managed AVRR programs comes due in part to happenstance (I initially viewed an IOM-produced advertisement on Cypriot television detailing the potential benefits of assisted voluntary return and reintegration to viewers. Though my Greek is not very advanced, it was presented in such a way that most with a basic understanding of the language could get the general message), and upon further investigation, the realization that there was something quite interesting about the rapid rise in the level of returns that were occurring at the moment I realized such programs even existed! Therefore, case selection for this dissertation was at the discretion of the author: there is potentially much to learn from the examples discussed here.

However, in addition to the primary case, I had the opportunity to bring in something akin to a secondary layer of case analysis to this project. As will be discussed at much greater length in coming chapters, the International Organization for Migration operates with a budget that is almost entirely dependent on project-based contracts (projectization). This means that its work is usually tied very directly to individual state contexts (even if those projects are, as they often are, funded by other entities than the state engaging with AVRR programming itself – the European Union and the United States especially). The IOM therefore has a presence in most states of the world, and a stronger one in those states in which it has migration management programming which receives funding.
This meant that one way I was able to enhance this project was to explore how local IOM staff viewed their role and AVRR programming, and to provide later a comparison of that perspective with the institutional, ‘headquarters’ perspective. The choice of local IOM offices to contact, listed above, was not random, but rather the result of a combination of accessibility to me (I routinely travel through southern Europe, especially to Cyprus and Greece), and my prior understanding that the three southern European states which hosted the IOM offices I would visit are the states, not just in Europe but also globally, that sit highest on the list of those that most frequently order deportations and least frequently admit foreigners as immigrants. Therefore, I was curious to see if there might be any relationship between this and AVRR programming itself, which works to effectively remove foreign citizens from state territory, yet is effected through the work of an international organization and not a state-level bureaucracy. As the coming chapters discuss, I discovered some commonalities and some significant differences in perspectives offered by the IOM staff in each place. I also had the opportunity to speak directly with IOM staff working on AVRR programming from IOM headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, and the information from that visit is invaluable to this project as later chapters will demonstrate.

**Chapter Outline**

The remainder of the dissertation is broken up into the following substantive chapters. Chapter two takes a closer look at the concept of migration management: how it appears in the literature, how we might think of the providers of migration management (and most relevant among these for this dissertation, the IOM) and the ways in which there is both power and authority vested in migration management itself. The complex of actors that
might impact the processes of migration management are considered with most attention devoted to the IOM itself, and the relationship between migration management and a wider global migration governance is discussed pending a closer inspection of a particular form of migration management, assisted voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR) in the subsequent chapter.

Chapter three examines AVRR programming in much greater detail: what it is, how it works, recent figures relevant for understanding its relatively rapid increase in usage or implementation in recent years, and so forth. In addition, a much closer consideration of those global actors seen to play a significant role in bringing AVRR to the forefront of migration management, fueling its rise and lending to the governance dynamics which it represents is elaborated. I argue that the rise of AVRR comes primarily as the result of converging interests between (as well as balanced restraints on the conduct of) individual states (mostly – but not entirely – member states of the European Union), the European Union, and the IOM. This argument, in part, helps the reader to understand why I also argue that, although the overall number of returns in the past two years has ‘dropped off’ to a degree in the wake of the European migration crisis, AVRR as a form of migration management is likely to play an incredibly significant role in migration governance in the coming years in places outside of Europe.

Chapter four examines IOM-managed AVRR programming from two very specific directions: the intra-organizational view of AVRR programming from the perspective of IOM headquarters in Geneva, and the intra-organizational view of AVRR programming from local IOM offices in the three cities mentioned above. This comparison reveals interesting operational details which have not been previously discussed at length in the
literature, but also important ways to conceive of how the IOM understands its own rise, on what basis it operates in relation the global migration governance discourse, and how this type of conduct actually serves to project its own legitimacy and authority vis-à-vis AVRR to new contexts around the world.

Finally, chapter five considers the possible futures of AVRR programming, and what that might tell us about migration management more generally, before concluding the dissertation. In particular, the recent (and quite interesting) rise in assisted voluntary returns from the African state of Niger paints a new picture as to the possible meaning of migration management in the coming years, and this is reflected upon in greater detail prior to providing closing remarks on what might be learned from this dissertation as to the overall relationship between the migration management literature and the wider, yet fragmented, global migration governance literature. As will be detailed, migration management deserves far closer attention in the global migration governance literature than it has received to date, as it appears to be poised to dramatically shape our conceptions of migration governance in the coming years.
Chapter 2

MIGRATION MANAGEMENT, THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION, AND POWER AND AUTHORITY IN GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

This chapter of the dissertation explores in greater depth the concept of migration management, and argues that it should be tied much more closely to the processes of global governance than it has been in existing literature, and that migration management might in itself represent a nascent form of global migration governance. The existing global migration governance literature can be read to suggest that the most relevant actors implementing migration management can and should be understood better as relatively powerless servicing agencies working at the behest of states rather than actors which exercise various types of independent authority. As it is treated by some of the most prominent authors in the field, global migration governance is a concept that is a hypothetical, elusive, yet somehow strictly top-down enterprise, and global migration management is subordinate to this. However, the growing literature on global migration management suggests otherwise: that there is substantial power and authority exercised by the constellation of states, organizations and other actors engaged with the implementation of migration management programs, that this power and authority has definite effects on the course of migration governance in particular contexts, and that those migration management programs are responsive to states, but in ways which reinforce, rather than
negate, the significance and authority of international organizations involved in migration programming.

This chapter approaches and defends the above assertions via the following: first, what is meant by “migration management” will be reflected upon through a review of some of the more pertinent work on the subject. Second, I discuss the general orientation of the global migration governance literature vis-à-vis actual programmatic developments which are now associated with migration management, and then proceed to detail the general reticence in the global migration governance literature towards conceiving of the subject of that literature as perhaps consisting of a growing, overlapping, piecemeal application of power on migratory flows. Then, as a counter to this approach, the power and authority exerted via migration management programming will be detailed and discussed, especially with regard to the prominence and practices of the International Organization for Migration in certain migration-related policy areas. Finally, the link between the practice of migration management and the various forms of power this entails, and its reinforcement of state interests and sovereignty in both cosmetic and very tangible ways provide a legitimate, theoretically-justifiable way of considering the potential that migration management is a nascent form of global migration governance with deep implications for certain forms of migrant flows prominent in the world today.

As asserted in the introduction to this dissertation, the idea of migration management centers on organizations like the International Organization for Migration, which provide migration-related programmatic services to states, without directly creating formal international law. Migration management occurs when states and regional organizations contract out migration-related responsibilities to other organizations (in this dissertation,
and in most cases, the IOM) which operate on international, regional, national and local scales, without conceding to those organizations the power to craft and impose formal international law on states. As also referenced in the introduction, the expansion of global cooperation on migration, and the increasing ease of coordination and communication between states in general and especially among those with regional ties, has allowed for migration management - in the form of AVRR programs for instance - to develop which shifts responsibility for the removal process of certain migrants away from the state itself. This has therefore allowed the state to achieve its policy ends through a dedicated third-party organization without maintaining additional bureaucracy that would itself be dedicated to that task: assisted voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR), which is the major case study in global migration management that this dissertation evaluates. There are, however, other examples: IOM, UNHCR, and international NGOs all assist states with numerous migration-related activities, with varying levels of formality and programmatic depth, and these activities are not confined to removals/return.

Non-state involvement in removals and other migration-related programs, according to the international migration literature more generally, contravenes the sovereign interests of the state by interrupting an unbroken line between the state’s determination of an individual’s legality or illegality, and their removal from the territory in question. Yet, a substantial portion of global migration management activity touches very directly on this removal function and associated controls over migratory flows, and the argument of this dissertation is in part that it persists precisely because the organizations involved in migration management reinforce state interests in carrying out (though often independently) their form of migration governance. In the case of AVRR at least, the
institutional arrangement undergirding AVRR reinforces understandings of state sovereignty, what it means to be sent ‘home,’ and the degree to which the state’s removal function proceeds unhindered despite critical evaluations of traditional deportation, while leaving responsibility for these matters, in terms of actor ‘behavior,’ primarily to one international organization which oversees programming in dozens of states. This will be discussed at greater length in the next chapter.

The idea of ‘international migration management’ as a term which in some way captures the implementation of migration policy set by states and other actors has been used since at least 1993, yet continues to generate controversy as to its ‘meaning’ for scholars of international relations. According to Geiger and Pecoud, there have been few attempts to actually develop a concrete understanding of international migration management in academic literature, and therefore their volume on the subject in 2010 began to fill a gaping hole. From their perspective, the term ‘migration management’ actually refers to three different things in the studies and organizational reports that make use of it: 1) the use of the term by interested actors, 2) the practices involved in carrying out migration policies of various types, and 3) the discourses generated by attention devoted to the constellation of actors and practices which are involved in policy implementation.¹ In this dissertation and elsewhere, it is actually very difficult to piece apart these three different versions of migration management without explicit descriptions of the processes over which migration management is said to be occurring.

Geiger and Pecoud emphasize the degree to which various intergovernmental actors, including the IOM, represent a form of international migration management, as they vie

¹ Geiger and Pecoud. 2010: 1-2
for the attention of states seeking tailored assistance for certain migration-related programming. The idea that various IGOs have staked out different sets of responsibilities within a larger ‘migration management’ sphere points to what Geiger and Pecoud have linked to Alexander Betts’ assertion that this “fragmentation [relating to migration policy at the international level] is functional as it enables states to selectively decide what issues they wish to address in which institutional context.”2 While this, in part, helps to prevent the emergence of a coherent international regime (or comprehensive top-down global governance) on migration, it also has created (for the purposes of states) at least four highly specialized migration-related agencies which are available to manage the development and implementation of migration policy in those areas over which states are willing to relinquish full control, of which IOM is one. Although states theoretically still determine the degree of management they are willing to relinquish to outside organizations, they must develop a capacity to address policy requirements placed on them by their publics and, increasingly, regional organizations trying to coordinate effective state activity; the specialized capacity of the IOM and other organizations ends of being highly appealing to states which can see their goals achieved (or at least addressed) without investing resources to develop an independent capacity to do so.

Yet, Geiger and Pecoud also point out that migration management is not just about the actors involved in implementing migration policy, but also about the practices they engage in. According to them, “IGOs cannot indeed implement their programmes without the cooperation of domestic actors… this leads to complex relations between local actors and

2 Geiger and Pecoud. 2010: 4
foreign-based and globally-active institutions, and to equally complex interplays between their respective strategies and interests.”

It is not enough to say that states simply contract out migration management services and wipe their hands of the activities of IGOs. The practices involved, especially in a field like migration and migration policy, require constant interaction between actors at various levels of governance over the issue area, and this in turn affects how these practices come to evolve over time.

Finally, Geiger and Pecoud point to how the global discourse surrounding migration and migration management has pushed in a direction which acknowledges migration as its own issue area, which in turn implies that our understandings of what irregular migration, borders, and so forth mean are rightfully changing to accommodate (and legitimate) performed migration management. Kalm argues that the discourse serves to restrain the state’s traditional role in managing migration, as participation in migration management agreements with various organizations often requires “a recognition that migration is an integral part of globalization,” and “cross-border migration as a natural activity,” which is markedly different from traditional state orientation to the migration issue. Migration management affects states and the processes of migration not only through direct and standardized rule-making, but also through discursive power rallied through state acceptance of the linguistic softening of the migration issue. Kalm stresses this point:

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3 Geiger and Pecoud. 2010: 8
4 Geiger and Pecoud. 2010: 9-10
5 Kalm. 2010: 33
6 Kalm. 2010: 33
“migration management is often presented as a contrast to control, as a softer and more liberal alternative.”

This begs a basic question: what are states signing on to when they agree to have migration managed by external actors, namely the IOM? That is, what precise form does global migration management take? Kalm suggests that “migration management implies that migration still needs to be guided in a top-down manner, and it also seems to suggest that such government is possible.” For Kalm, migration governance emanating from global sources (the IOM) never questions the sovereign right of a state to control migrant flows, but rather, “the goal is to preserve this authority in a world of mobile people.” This is echoed by Anne Koch in her own analysis of AVRR programming, writing that IOM practices “contribute to a stabilization of state sovereignty in the governance of migration.” Although the discourse and internal organizational practices of organizations like the IOM in a sense require states that access their services to acknowledge global mobility and its integral part in globalization, and therefore modifies what is preferable with regard to the way in which states carry out migration governance (including, perhaps, the removal function that AVRR seeks to soften), it actually serves to reinforce the state’s

7 Kalm. 2010: 26
8 Kalm. 2010: 36
9 Kalm. 2010: 36
ultimate authority to regulate this mobility in ways that promote the state’s integration into the globalized economy.

Reading Fabian Georgi’s skeptical take on the IOM’s migration management efforts seems to reinforce Kalm’s basic point, though from a more pessimistic angle. Georgi writes that “the organization (IOM) “has its own political aims, strategic priorities and a relative autonomy from its member states.”11 As global migration management in the context of AVRR emanates from the IOM, it is worth considering how the seemingly conflicting goals of state preservation of authority over migration and a softening towards mobility controls comes about: Georgi’s insights give us one possible answer, though this will be addressed at greater length in the coming discussion about the IOM and its role in migration management. However, Georgi’s notation that “Migration is mostly presented as a technical problem, a challenge – not as a political topic associated with power struggles and diverging interests,”12 seems to characterize well the presentation of migration management by the IOM and other interested actors.

Nevertheless, migration management is not generally considered to be part of the wider global migration governance literature because of this close connection with state interests, and because, at least until recently, no basic set of norms around which migration management organizations would work was apparent to the scholars writing about it. James Hollifield’s argument concerning the relative strength of migration management-related regimes is suggestive of the argument against the empirical existence of global

11 Georgi. 2010: 62

12 Georgi. 2010: 63
migration governance, at least as top-down governance, and is also suggestive of why migration management is generally seen as detached from that larger discussion in the literature. His main point of contention with the inclusion of especially labor migration in any global governance framework is that it purportedly lacks a central norm around which governance is directed: that the various relevant organizations (IOM, ILO, etc.) focus on discrete issues within the larger migration governance picture, but that no coordination on a particular norm is found in international multilateralism. Hollifield analyzes international organizations and places them on an axis of institutional strength and the extensiveness of multilateral contacts. Unlike the International Monetary Fund (considered to be a strong institution with high multilateralism), the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (considered to be a relatively weak institution, yet with high multilateralism), and the World Trade Organization (considered to have relatively low levels of multilateralism yet representing a strong institution), the International Organization for Migration is presented as representing a weak institution and a relatively low level of multilateralism. Hollifield reinforces the regime perspectives that can also be seen in Koslowski, where both suggest that although a regime centered on refugees has some substance, the lack of a formalized labor regime is notable and undermines global governance conversations. A logical extension of Hollifield’s argument might state that migration management organizations, the IOM in particular, are underdeveloped as

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14 Koslowski. 2011.
institutions, and its project-based funding sources prevent substantial levels of multilateralism beyond simple membership.

A response to this perspective in particular might center around a few points: first, that the ‘amount’ of state-to-state multilateralism may matter less for determining regime strength or global governance if the organization in question (namely, the IOM) coordinates activity across many states in ways that provide it institutional and productive power along the lines of that described by Barnett and Duvall\textsuperscript{15}, which in turn interacts with local practice and policy responses to change the productive outcomes seen in certain areas (like AVRR) of the migration issue. In plain words, just because the IOM services contracts and receives funding on a case-by-case basis, this does not mean they lose institutional memory or internal procedural approaches to particular migration problems or questions (and towards the states they work with) with each new case that comes along – quite the opposite in fact. Second, multilateralism in the issue area is increasing anyway, and the regional support for IOM activity coming from Europe indicates that the interests of not just individual states, but the EU, and the IOM as an organization have converged in ways that have made meaningful impacts on the governance of migration and the lives of migrants. Third, as an institution, it is also arguable that the IOM in particular has increased in institutional strength in recent years: not necessarily through a greater degree of rulemaking which states are obligated to follow, but rather through the cascading acceptance of its legitimacy with regard to migration management in removal processes, and its accession as an affiliate institution of the United Nations system.

\textsuperscript{15} Barnett and Duvall. 2005; Their various forms of power are described in the introduction and below
To flesh out this argument, the remainder of this chapter attends to the above basic points as follows. First, a brief review of the concepts of power and authority in global governance is in order, and those most significant observations on dynamics of power and authority as relevant to the above conversation will be elaborated upon. Second, the IOM will be discussed at some length, in terms of the form of its organization, and why this may not be so incapacitating vis-à-vis its ability to form an integral part of global migration governance. Third, I will present a structured argument that migration management programming is actually becoming a vital aspect of migration governance, and has a significant role in considering the form and nature of global migration governance. This will then set up a transition to the primary case study of this dissertation to appear in the subsequent chapter: IOM-managed assisted voluntary return and reintegration.

**Connecting Global Governance and Migration Management**

Two now-classic works in the general global governance literature lend terminology that helps us to understand just why global migration management is so relevant to the global migration governance literature, and why the two terms should not have so much distance between them. Barnett and Duvall’s typology of power in global governance\(^{16}\), described in the introduction\(^{17}\), has been utilized and referred to time and time again by scholars of global governance, and for good reason. The movement away from a focus solely on explicit actor-to-actor interactions and an accounting for the variety of ways

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17 Barnett and Duvall. 2005. They describe four types of power: compulsory power, institutional power, productive power and structural power. Refer to discussion in introduction.
actors are changed and constituted by and through other actors, institutions and structures
forces one to consider the rigidity of existing concepts and to evaluate their continuing
utility. The second work in global governance of significance here is that of Barnett and
Finnemore,\textsuperscript{18} which explicitly addresses how international organizations, functioning as
bureaucracies, can exert various forms of power in order to govern particular issue areas
(including voluntary repatriation, which as future chapters will acknowledge, is similar in
programmatic concerns to AVRR).

Bringing out the relevant distinctions in types of power in global governance is
eespecially important when considering how institutional power, for instance, might
undergird arguments vis-à-vis the development of ‘global migration governance’ in general.
With regard to institutional power, Barnett and Duvall write, “institutions established at
one point in time can have ongoing and unintended effects at a later point… institutional
arrangements can shape the agenda-setting process in ways that eliminate those very issues
that are points of contention.’’\textsuperscript{19} Though this statement is sometimes contested for the IOM,
it is suggestive of the need to look at how institutional arrangements do in fact guide
governance, even if formal institutions and clearly identifiable regimes are less than evident.
Importantly for the basic message of this dissertation, Barnett and Duvall write that:

“Global governance involves formal and informal institutional contexts that
dispose that action in directions that advantage some while disadvantaging others.
Understanding power in this way makes it much more difficult to approach global

\textsuperscript{18} Barnett and Finnemore. 2004.

\textsuperscript{19} Barnett and Duvall. 2005: 16
governance purely in terms of cooperation, coordination, consensus, and/or normative progress; governance is also a matter of institutional or systemic bias, privilege, and unequal constraints on action,”\textsuperscript{20}

Institutional power, and the related opportunities for other forms of power to rise to guide the constitution and decisions of migration-related actors created by institutional power, do not need, as their \textit{sole} purpose in global governance literature, to justify the rise of regimes as conceived by neoliberal scholars. Rather, Barnett and Duvall note that institutional power can be linked to governance because it is biased, privileged and places unequal constraints on action. Migration management would appear to fall into this latter conception of global governance quite well.

Migration management occurs when an organization is contracted by a state to carry out migration-related programming. This is typically authorized in local law, and financed by the state itself, or the state in conjunction with other actors (in the case of AVRR in Europe for example, the European Union and member-states co-finance AVRR programming). These organizations are not, however, granted by treaty or through state membership in the organization the capacity to formulate formal policy with which states are expected to comply. Rather, migration management organizations like the IOM provide services designed to increase state capacity in a certain migration-related programmatic areas.

As a first glance at the relationship of migration management to power in global governance, one might suggest that there is institutional power in the organizations contracted by states to carry-out certain migration-related programs and services: without

\textsuperscript{20} Barnett and Duvall. 2005: 17
suggesting the presence or absence of a normative regime on migration writ large, Barnett and Duvall’s straightforward description of institutional power leaves room for organizational relevance in global governance for contributing to ‘unequal constraints on action.’ However, in order to explicate thoroughly how migration management might be related to power in global governance, there is greater utility in bringing in practical, real-world examples, which will be done in the next section on the IOM.

The other major work I reference here is Barnett and Finnemore, who explicitly details the ways in which international organizations function as bureaucracies and how this can lead to a variety of effects that go beyond their original mandates. Barnett and Finnemore also discuss a form of migrant return programming (voluntary repatriation programs as approved and carried out by the United Nations High Commission on Refugees), which contributes useful conceptual and theoretical considerations for the next chapter of dissertation, that on AVRR. However, their basic statement as to the nature of international organizations as bureaucracies strengthens what I believe is one of the major stepping stones in the argument that global migration governance is undertheorized in the face of a lack of a major international norm vis-à-vis migration writ large. The following passage from Barnett and Finnemore neatly directs attention to what is important about their argument for this dissertation:

“Bureaucracies such as the IOs we study are established to accomplish certain tasks. To do this, they develop general consensus around their understandings of their core mission and the functions of their organization; goals to be pursued; basic means to pursue their goals; and some way to measure results. Thus organizations create a shared discourse, symbols and values for their staff. These shared elements,
in turn, generate a group identity for the organization and structure interactions among those within it. They also create a boundary between the organization and the external world… all bureaucracies develop cultures that are distinct from the environment in which they are embedded.”

This dissertation does not purport to be an intensive study of a particular organization as a bureaucracy; plainly written, I do not analyze the IOM strictly as a bureaucracy along the lines provided by Barnett and Finnemore with any analytical precision. To date, my level of access with the organization has been limited to in-person interviews specifically directed towards the development and implementation of AVRR programming. However, the above passage combined with Barnett and Finnemore’s description of the rational-legal, delegated, moral, and expert authority through which organizations as bureaucracies operate are revealing, and useful for analyzing migration management. Their insights are again suggestive that although migration management organizations like the IOM, discussed below, may not be as centralized or thoroughly multilateral to the ‘degree’ that organizations in other issue areas are, this does not mean that migration management organizations are merely confined to carrying out the whims of their state sponsors – even when their funding is on a project-to-project basis. Although this might mean their ‘degree’ of delegated authority might differ in some substantive ways from other organizations, this does not mean that the organization’s moral or expert authority necessarily is hindered from being a force in global governance and the construction of what that term means.

21 Barnett and Finnemore. 2004: 19

22 Barnett and Finnemore. 2004; Defined in greater detail in the introduction to this dissertation.
Both the organization and the states involved in accessing the organization for services are constituted and changed by each other in a variety of ways, and global migration governance is found in the collective output of both.

**International Organization for Migration and Its Role in Migration Management**

Although numerous organizations have been contracted by states for ‘migration management’ over the past several decades, including international organizations, internationals NGOs and local NGOs, the focus here and throughout this dissertation is, as is obvious by now, fairly clearly on the International Organization for Migration. The IOM was only very recently incorporated into the United Nations system, but has for decades assisted states with addressing migration-related policy problems. This section of the dissertation briefly reviews the nature and makeup of the organization before addressing its current activity, its funding mechanisms, and why these contribute to a general assumption that the organization is, due to its close cooperation with state interests, not a particularly meaningful entity in global migration governance.

According to Susan Martin, the International Organization for Migration “has the strongest capabilities to take on the range of activities needed if an international migration regime were to be adopted.”

IOM boasts a membership of 169 member states, and 8 additional observers. The IOM concentrates on addressing issues of migration and development, facilitating and regulating migration, and while not tasked with the responsibility of looking out for migrant human rights, “IOM has come to see protection

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23 Martin. 2014: 124
falling within its mandate,” though many question to what degree this motivates its activities. The IOM originated in its Cold War predecessors: the Provisional Intergovernmental Committee for the Movement of Migrations from Europe (PICMME) established in 1951, which was renamed the Intergovernmental Committee on European Migration in 1952, the Intergovernmental Committee for Migration in 1988 before becoming the IOM in 1989. An organization originally seeking, on a political level, to highlight the tendency of the communist world to restrict the emigration of their citizens, early forms of the organization were designed to exclude the communist states from migration cooperation and to generate cooperation between the Western countries. Article 1 of the Constitution of the IOM notes five major purposes and functions for the organization:

“a. to make arrangements for the organized transfer of migrations, for whom existing facilities are inadequate or who would not otherwise be able to move without special assistance, to countries offering opportunities for orderly migration;

b. to concern itself with the organized transfer of refugees, displaced persons and other individuals in need of international migration services for whom arrangements may be made between the Organization and the States concerned, including those States undertaking to receive them;

c. to provide, at the request of and in agreement with the States concerned, migration services such as recruitment, selection, processing, language training, orientation activities, medical examination, placement, activities facilitating reception and integration, advisory services on migration questions, and other assistance as in accord with the aims of the Organization;

d. to provide similar services as requested by States, or in cooperation with other interested international organizations, for voluntary return migration, including voluntary repatriation;

e. to provide a forum to States as well as international and other organizations for the exchange of views and experiences, and the promotion of cooperation and

24 Martin. 2014: 124
coordination of efforts on international migration issues, including studies on such issues in order to develop practical solutions,\(^{25}\)

These purposes, as the remainder of this dissertation will show, accommodate to some degree the migration management functions of the IOM, including its responsibilities for assisted voluntary return. They do not, however, give weight to any of those functions over any of the others, nor does the Constitution clearly establish the degree to which its concern for State involvement, and indeed, respect for State domestic jurisdiction over migration law,\(^{26}\) is mitigated by its interests in the promotion of cooperation between states.

Since the Cold War, the mission of the IOM has expanded and the organization has sought to clarify its role in facilitating international migration management; this has especially been the case since 2007 when it developed a revised strategy for addressing migration in a globally “holistic” way. Martin reviews the twelve strategic priorities which were laid out by the organization at that point:

1. To provide secure, reliable, flexible and cost-effective services for persons who require international migration assistance.
2. To enhance the human and orderly management of migration and the effective respect for the human rights in accordance with international law.
3. To offer expert advice, research, technical cooperation and operational assistance.
4. To contribute to the economic and social development of States.
5. To support States, migrants and communities in addressing the challenges of irregular migration.
6. To be a primary reference point for migration information, research, best practices, data collection, compatibility and sharing.
7. To promote, facilitate, and support regional and global debate and dialogue on migration, including through the International Dialogue on Migration.
8. To assist States to facilitate the integration of migrants in their new environment and to engage diasporas, including them as development partners.


\(^{26}\) As mentioned in Article 1.3 of the Constitution
9. To participate in coordinated humanitarian responses in the context of inter-agency arrangements in this field.
10. To undertake programs which facilitate the voluntary return and reintegration of refugees, displaced persons, migrants and other individuals.
11. To assist States in the development and delivery of programs, studies and technical expertise on combating migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons.
12. To support the efforts of States in the area of labor migration, in particular short-term movements, and other types of circular migration.27

As a quick look at the strategies demonstrates, the IOM has sought to expand its competencies, and to present itself as the competent authority on a technical, capacity-oriented migration management: an organization capable of enhancing and augmenting state capacity to manage the mobility of persons to and through state territory. Martin cautions, however, that “it remains fundamentally a state-owned institution that is highly dependent on project funding to maintain its operations.”28 This is echoed by Georgi, who writes that IOM’s migration management “became a label for a rather diffuse and less specific direction in migration policy, holding [IOM’s] diverse and often contradictory services together,”29 and that “projectization implied that IOM is conducting those and only those activities that will definitely be financed by guaranteed project contributions from concrete donors.”30 This has directed the IOM’s attention to projects preferred by its donor states, and has largely prevented it from becoming increasingly autonomous with regard to project creation, unlike the UNHCR which possesses the latitude to initiate projects and programs.

27 Martin. 2014: 135-138
28 Martin. 2014: 153
29 Georgi. 2010: 60
30 Georgi. 2010: 63
However, it is important reflect upon the idea advanced by this dissertation that although the IOM may not have the capacity to develop ‘its own’ projects addressing migrant flows, its management of those projects that are created has served to both create a migration governance that both influences states and enables continued state influence over the migration issue, as well as enabling standardization of state practices with regard to certain types of migration management programs (like AVRR). The observation that the IOM has a “strong dependence on major donors [which are] the basis of the censures that depict IOM as a ‘donor-driven agency for which the monetary value of a project tends to supersede ethical or political considerations,’”31 does not necessarily negate the possibility that the IOM is at the heart of global migration management, and/or global migration governance in some crucial ways.

As an organization that purportedly takes the migration issue to be ‘one’ as opposed to addressing simply individual aspects of the issue, the IOM on paper presents a clear indication of international cooperation on the issue at-large. Until the rise of AVRR management, it had made relatively little relevant impact on labor migration or other forms of long-term migration to destination states. Its role in structuring AVRR in numerous states warrants, however, renewed consideration of the notion that the IOM may be becoming a key building block in the global governance of migration. The next section discusses the IOM in the context of Barnett and Finnemore and Barnett and Duvall and

their respective typologies, in an express effort to reorient the discussion on global migration governance and the IOM.

**International Organization for Migration and Power in Migration Management**

As noted above, the framework of power in global governance presented by Barnett and Duvall is useful for considering the various actors and normative environment surrounding migration governance, and I assert that it is useful in providing a more structured argument for understanding migration management as part of processes, increasingly global in nature, that affect migration governance. Applied to global migration management, and the practices of the IOM and the IOM’s relationship with state and other actors in particular, the framework can bring out just how there is global governance over migration, despite the lack of a coherent, cohesive, singular, top-down, organizational entity which has declared the issue area entirely its own. This, combined with the next section on the IOM’s institutional capacity as bureaucracy along the lines of Barnett and Finnemore’s typology, serves to reorient discussion of global migration governance away from the lack of clearly-defined formal rational-legal authority alone, to something much more realistic.

Discussing Barnett and Duvall’s framework in the context of the IOM can be misleading if not justified properly. I am not attempting to suggest that the IOM necessarily ‘wields’ power by looking at the power relations in which it is involved. Barnett and Duvall’s typology accounts for agency but also for the ways in which particular actors affect and are affected by various forms of more diffuse power relations. The IOM is the ‘case,’ so-to-speak, for this chapter, but the neither the IOM nor any agent wields structural power as described by Barnett and Duvall; rather, it is part of a larger picture in which its presence
and practices in the governance of migration create, reinforce, and change meaning with regard to what is the appropriate way to conceive of the subject in the first place. With this in mind, what follows is a brief attempt to relate the IOM to the four basic types of power present in Barnett and Duvall’s framework, much in line with Barnett and Finnemore’s approach to the subject in the same volume, and to highlight the ways in which this might reinforce conclusions regarding its relative importance to the global governance of migration.

The International Organization for Migration and Compulsory Power

Much as the UNHCR “can shape the life chances of refugees and other displaced peoples,” so too can the IOM affect international migrants and internally-displaced persons in a variety of ways. Compulsory power, as Barnett and Duvall explain, is generally taken to be states’ ability to “determine the content and direction of global governance by using their decisive material advantages,” though as Barnett and Duvall note, symbolic and normative resources can also be marshalled in ways that present instances and sustained uses of compulsory power. Barnett and Finnemore note that:

“IOs also can use normative resources to shape the behavior of state and nonstate actors. In this instance of compulsory power, IOs use their normative (and sometimes material) resources to try and get other actors to alter their behavior. IOs are quite candid in their beliefs that one of their principal functions is to try to


33 Barnett and Duvall. 2005: 14

34 Barnett and Duvall. 2005: 14
alter the behavior of states and nonstate actors in order to make sure that they comply with existing normative and legal standards.”

As well as, I should add, to use its resources to work towards new normative and legal standards, which slips into the category of productive power, described below. As will be demonstrated in the coming chapters, the IOM consciously and explicitly uses its administration of AVRR programming to pursue normative changes in states towards a preference for more dignified forms of return than deportation.

Yet, the IOM can be seen to utilize a range of compulsory powers, possessing the material and normative resources that it does. Its staff of over 10,000 civil servants (97% of whom are considered ‘field staff’), working on a budget of over $1.5 billion, have implemented programming that has directly affected individuals in the year 2017 in 204,900 resettlement cases, 163,495 transit assistance cases, 98,403 AVRR cases and 8,646 counter-trafficking cases. Though its budget is dependent on project-to-project funding, its ability to affect, in a coordinated and institutionally-managed way, the lives of individual migrants is difficult to question. Its organizational structure consists of nine regional offices, two administrative centers, two special liaison offices, nine country offices with specialized mobilization and coordination functions, country offices in many other countries around the world and a migration data analysis center, and 169 states are members.

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35 Barnett and Finnemore. 2005: 176


Beyond these material and human resources, however, the IOM is in a position to claim authority on an increasing range of migration-related issues, and to utilize this authority to direct the preferences of states, in the processing of implementing its programming, in certain directions. As the chapter on AVRR will demonstrate, the ways that the IOM can alter state preferences in a more ‘liberal’ direction in a purposeful way suggests that the compulsory side of its normative authority is fairly well-developed.

The International Organization for Migration and Institutional Power

As “IOs often change behavior in ways that are historically and spatially distant,”38 it would be difficult to account for the myriad ways that an organization like the IOM might be actively changing state behavior through its practices. It is true that institutional power is frequently thought of in terms of agenda-setting, both in formal and informal ways. The immediate assumption, due to the project-to-project funding mechanism that provides IOM with most of its material capacity, might be that the IOM is rather limited with regard to agenda-setting, and the attendant effects of this on immediate programmatic output, and the more diffuse changes in actor understandings of what possible and impossible decisions regarding migration might be.

However, there are many reasons to believe the opposite. The IOM has been granted legitimacy with regard to its technical competence over certain areas of the practice of migration management, and this legitimacy extends beyond isolated state cases utilizing IOM expertise for particular, local concerns. Rather, the support of the IOM by the European Union and the United States in carrying out sustained campaigns of migration management activities, albeit technically in a project-to-project capacity, has enabled the

38 Barnett and Finnemore. 2005: 177
IOM to develop not just institutional memory and expertise with regard to past ways of addressing particular migration-related problems, but also has allowed the IOM specifically to treat migration management in certain ways across all contexts in which their assistance is requested. Its production of a Migration Governance Framework (MiGoF)\textsuperscript{39} advocating that all states address certain issue areas related to the good governance of migration, and its accession as an affiliated organization of the United Nations (such that it now styles itself “the UN migration agency” in most of its more recent publications), indicates that the IOM is actively and intentionally seeking to capitalize on its prominence and advancing guidelines that are both technical and normative, backed by the legitimacy of the United Nations system. In addition, the sheer volume of data produced by the IOM with regard to migration - statistics, reports, journals, etc. – serve to indicate to the world what about migration is important and needs the attention of a dedicated organization, and which migration-related issues do not come to the fore.

As the next chapter will discuss, in the context of AVRR programming, the IOM presentation of assisted return (while generally denying the contested nature of its voluntariness) actively seeks to shift state preferences away from deportation to the degree possible, and towards more dignified forms of return. Sara Kalm points out that the IOM pushes an “understanding of cross-border migration as a natural activity [which] also diverges from state system governance”\textsuperscript{40} – in essence, the IOM is actively pushing

\textsuperscript{39} International Organization for Migration. “Migration Governance Framework” Online Resource:  \url{http://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/about-iom/migof_brochure_a4_en.pdf}

\textsuperscript{40} Kalm. 2010: 33
understandings of migration which might differ from the traditional state preferences over migration policy, all while carrying out migration projects at the behest of states themselves.

Here, it is necessary to depart to some degree from Barnett and Duvall’s understanding of institutional power to a more dynamic understanding which involves an ongoing interplay between institutional and productive power (described below). Institutional power was originally conceived as the effects of institutions on the ability to states to interact and behave. In this case, I am ascribing to the IOM itself institutional power which directly affects the practices of migration management and, therefore, the governance of migration in certain instances. Institutional power here must accommodate both the power of an organization to stand between states and, over time, and through its rules and procedures, change the game being played. It also means that organizations themselves are able to do this in a more active way – as actors in global politics – which is derived less so from traditional sources of compulsory power, and much more so from this interplay between the institutional and the productive.

The IOM’s institutional power is at once preserved and advanced despite both challenging and reinforcing notions of state sovereignty. Georgi’s pessimistic conclusion that the IOM “appears to serve the hegemonic forces in industrialized countries in creating the bitter reality of migration controls characterized by thousandfold deaths at Western borders, by the mass illegalization of workers, and a world of detention camps and deportations,” must be balanced therefore against the institutional effects that the IOM may have in orienting state preferences, and eventually state options, away from practices

41 Georgi. 2010: 62
like deportation in favor of safer, more humane versions of the same basic state process (migrant removal). The productive power of the IOM is therefore very important in understanding its institutional power, and vice-versa.

The International Organization for Migration and Productive Power

The IOM’s placement in the wider social community focused on the meaning of migration, migration management, and migration governance is one which has substantial impacts on the options perceived as available to states and migrants in their decision-making. Already, the significance of the IOM’s involvement in migration politics has been captured by those evaluating the discourse of what constitutes voluntariness and involuntariness, home and away, in the context of AVRR.42 Both the active and other, more passive, ways that the IOM’s organizational structure and the discourses it supports maintain a states’ system in fundamental ways has already been noted above. However, the IOM is at the very heart of what we know as “irregular migration,” for example, as well as a whole host of other terminology which structures how we view the migration issue.

As Barnett and Finnemore write, IOs do not only “identify problems, they also help solve problems by crafting particular solutions to them and persuading others to accept them.”43 Although the IOM may have assistance in persuading certain states to engage their assistance (such as when the EU provides financial incentives in the form of co-financing for IOM programming), the IOM quickly helps produce through its institutional memory and practical expertise those options states have with regard to migration and the relationship of this to the wider health of their state and region.

42 Webber. 2010

43 Barnett and Finnemore. 2005: 179
With regard to structural power, the IOM’s position in the wider international environment is one that could be characterized as increasingly attempting to fill a widening hole. The sheer lack of cohesive migration governance at a systemic level does not, however, undermine the degree to which the IOM has come to fill part of the ‘void.’ To the degree that the IOM is the result of a particular structural environment (that is, one where the United States and European Union continue to maintain liberal international organizations, albeit with challenges beginning to rise from other potential world powers, and in recent years, from within), it is also now serving to reinforce the states’ system that created it, and to a secondary degree, some of the liberal values that undergird the system in the first place.

**International Organization for Migration and Authority in Migration Management**

Separately, Barnett and Finnemore break the authority that international organizations can project and represent into four major sub-types: rational-legal, delegated, moral and expert. Unlike Hollifield’s conception of institutional power along axes representing multilateralism and degree of institutionalization, the typology provided by Barnett and Finnemore, enables an analysis of the IOM with the primary goal of uncovering both its particular institutional capacities and effects, and how it constitutes/is constituted by/is situated in the larger migration governance picture. According to Barnett and Finnemore, “authority does two kinds of work in making IOs what they are and shaping their behavior. It provides the social form and behavioral vocabulary of IOs as social actors, and it supplies the social purposes these actors pursue. Authority provides the substance of which IOs are
made.”\textsuperscript{44} The implication here, then, is that for us to understand what has been termed migration management, an analysis of the IOM in accordance with this typology is an important and potentially fruitful exercise.

\textit{Rational-legal Authority}

As “IOs are bureaucracies, and bureaucracy is the embodiment of rational-legal authority,”\textsuperscript{45} the IOM’s rational-legal authority rests on a particular bureaucratic structure. This basic bureaucratic structure has some peculiarities not often represented in international organization form and function, and the most significant of these is the IOM’s funding mechanism. While many international organizations operate on budgets that are drawn from the availability of state ‘dues,’ the IOM functions, as mentioned previously, on a system of projectization. Projectization means that its programming is funded directly by the purported beneficiaries (states and other organizations) on a project-by-project basis, resulting in many of the previously discussed dynamics that are labeled migration management. This is part of what contributes to Hollifield’s evaluation of the IOM’s low institutionalization: relating the IOM more or less exclusively to labor migration, Hollifield writes that labor migrants “are not fundamentally threatening and, therefore, can be handled unilaterally and on an ad hoc basis”; the logic for states may be succinctly described as the pursuit of maintaining sovereign control over migration policy while benefitting from particular institutional capacities that the IOM has to offer.

\textsuperscript{44} Barnett and Finnemore. 2004: 20-21

\textsuperscript{45} Barnett and Finnemore. 2004: 21

\textsuperscript{46} Hollifield. 2012: 193
These institutional capacities, resting on the IOM’s particular bureaucratic structure, are many. In addition to assisted voluntary return and reintegration programs (which have directly affected over 1.5 million migrants), the IOM carries numerous training programs, for both state bureaucratic-level officials and also for migrants themselves, integration programs, border management assistance, and much more, and all of these require dedicated staffs.\(^47\) The IOM presents, through its programming and clearly well-developed capacity in certain migration-related issue areas, an opportunity for states to utilize existing expertise in the development of what are technically new programs for each state that enters into an agreement with the IOM to contract its services.

*Delegated Authority*

As discussed by Barnett and Finnemore, although on the face of things delegation seems to imply that states ultimately hold authority over certain issue areas, they observe that “IOs must be autonomous actors in some ways simply to fulfil their delegated tasks. One important reason states delegate to IOs in the first place is precisely that they want some other actor to take charge of a problem and sort it out.”\(^48\) States have indeed delegated authority to the IOM over a variety of programming areas, some of which are mentioned in the previous section; although these programming areas do not typically produce formal rules and obligations, as might emanate from other IOs, they do produce definite effects on existing governance and new forms of governance itself, and are increasingly accessed by interested states. To the tune of $1.5 billion in the year 2017, the IOM managed 1,710

\(^{47}\) The IOM organizational chart appears in this dissertation’s appendix.

\(^{48}\) Barnett and Finnemore. 2004: 22
active migration management-related projects on behalf of states. Delegation, in terms of the staff utilized (and, therefore, afforded via state and organizational funding) by the IOM, has increased from just 1,100 operational staff members in 1998 to over 10,000 by 2017, signaling not only the size of the operational presence that IOM has ‘somewhere’ around the world today, but also the degree to which this operational presence has increased, rather dramatically, in under two decades. This is, of course, to say nothing of why there has been an increase, and whether it is as extensive as it is intensive, but that is beside the point for the moment: that the IOM as an IO has substantial delegated authority, despite projectization and limitations on its ability to develop formal international law, is hard to dispute.

**Moral authority**

Of the four types of authority exercised by international organizations, it is often suggested that the IOM is most compromised in terms of its moral authority. Again due in part to its projectization, the literature identifies the IOM as having higher incentives to address migration management in ways that are more closely linked with the interests of states than perhaps with the interests of the ‘community’ of migrants for which IOM may also ostensibly be of service to. Barnett and Finnemore write that “the moral authority of IOs is dependent on a contrary discourse of states protecting their own national and particularistic interests”\(^{50}\); the IOM’s reduced capacity to resist state preferences in the

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\(^{49}\) International Organization for Migration. 2018.

\(^{50}\) Barnett and Finnemore. 2004: 23
management of migration (given project-based funding) theoretically reduces the ability of
the IOM to maintain a moral gap between particularistic and communitarian preferences.

A more conflicted picture of the moral authority of the IOM comes into focus when
looking more closely at its activities. On one hand, there is certainly the charge, aptly
described by Beqiraj, that, “IOM activities suffer from a lack of transparency: information
on IOM programmes and performance can be obtained almost exclusively through studies
published or commissioned by the organization itself and there is a lack of internal as well
as independent external assessment of projects.”51 The charge that the IOM operates mostly
in accordance with state preferences with regard to migrant return; also, the charge and fact
that even after its accession as an affiliated institution of the United Nations in September
2016, there is no explicit legal requirement that the IOM adhere strictly to standards of
non-refoulement, as the UNHCR is bound to do in managing refugees and asylum-seekers.

On the other hand, referring back to Kalm’s discussion of the IOM cited earlier in this
chapter, there is recognition that the IOM does serve to provide/promote/regularize a more
liberal, “softer” version of migration management through its practices, despite an
overwhelming focus on state-preferred programming. As the next chapter will reinforce,
the emphasis on voluntary return over deportation, though ultimately achieving the same
basic state goal of migrant removal, conditions states to view voluntariness and the
associated dignity in allowing migrants to avoid explicit categorizations of illegality
(however small a compensation to the migrants themselves). The moral gap between the
IOM and states is smaller, perhaps, but in the face of the other forms of authority
‘exercisable’ by international organizations, this would not seem to undermine an argument

51 Beqiraj. 2016: 153
that the IOM remains capable of exercising other forms of authority in ways that changes the constitution of migration management, and therefore, governance.

*Expert Authority*

The technocratic nature of the IOM is emphasized by the IOM itself in most of the publications it produces: the organization serves to enhance state capacity to carry out certain types of migration management-related programming. Although project-based funding results in the creation of nominally-independent projects in each state context in which the IOM is present, the organization retains a staff of over 10,000 and an institutional structure which directs institutional resources where they are needed. There are strong indications that institutional memory and organizational structure contribute to a centralized, coordinated effort to implement migration governance in consistent ways in line with understood best practices at the organizational level; indeed, field research conducted for this dissertation would appear to confirm that, for at least several states in southern Europe, the development and implementation of AVRR programming was enhanced in each state through the organizational ability to marshal experienced staff members in assisting newly-created local programs quickly set-up and begin implementing programming.52

Each of these types of authority, taken together, present a picture of an international organization that has well-developed rational-legal authority, a significant level of delegated authority and expert authority, and a somewhat conflicted level of moral authority. While the IOM does not write formal international law, nor does the IOM

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52 Author interviews with IOM officials in Heraklion, Greece and Nicosia, Cyprus, June 2017
enforce one particular, central norm on migration, the power it exerts in the international environment and the authority that it represents for states and migrants suggests that simple measures of the degree of multilateralism or formal institutional autonomy do not account for the global migration governance of which the IOM may be an integral piece. As the principal organization involved in migration management (that middle category between state-level governance and global governance), the IOM has power and authority over discrete migration-related issues, and this power and authority is rapidly developing and expanding in intensive and extensive ways.

**Global Migration Management and Global Migration Governance**

In light of the above reflection on the forms of power in global governance their applicability to the overall activity of the IOM, I argue that conceiving of migration management as something that is distinct from migration governance is only appropriate if we disregard the lessons learned from considering wider understandings of power and authority in global governance. Migration management programs, through the practices of management organizations and specifically through the practices of the IOM, exercise and reflect power in global governance in a variety of interesting and important ways. These are increasingly global in nature, as the coming chapters will demonstrate. These programs may not align with liberal scholars’ conceptions of regimes and the degree to which regimes constituted formally through international organizations funded with a regular budget often are thought to equate with a form of global governance. However, there is more than enough scholarship on global governance ‘out there’ to carve out room for the IOM’s relevance for the conversation surrounding the governance of certain types of
migration on a global level. True enough, the IOM is beholden in some respects to its sources of funding, yet this does not negate to any great degree the legitimacy, authority and power it wields and in part produces over certain types of migrant flows; neither does this negate the very real effects it has on migrants’ lives.
Chapter 3

IOM-MANAGED ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION

As the previous chapter endeavored to show, control over the processes of ‘migration management’ is increasingly shared by the state with international (like the IOM) and supranational organizations (like the European Union), and represents in many instances a form of global migration governance – that it, increasingly global control over a certain set of migrant flows, of which there are many. This dissertation makes an effort to evaluate a particular form of migration management, as instituted by a particular collection of actors: Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration programs, hereafter referred to as AVRR, represent a form of migration management, a form which has significant effects on certain migrant flows. Despite recently renewed interest in AVRR programming, it is not a new type of migration programming, though the particular actors involved in its form and function are fundamentally different (indeed, more diverse) than its original form, having first come about in the 1960s and 1970s. It is important to understand the backgrounds and interests of the various actors and organizations that have come to take an interest in cooperation on that type of program, though local dynamics between actors which necessarily vary from context to context will be analyzed in the next chapter with the cases of Malta, Greece and Cyprus.

Beyond simple description of AVRR - what it is, who it involves, and so forth - there are any number of axes on which to analyze the program type as an example of migration
management. The bulk of this chapter is limited to an analysis of IOM-managed AVRR: examples like the United Kingdom, which has considerable engagement in the use of AVRR as an integral component of the state’s return function, lie fundamentally outside the analysis of this chapter, as these examples detract from the dissertation’s overall argument concerning IOM involvement in this type of process. However, non-IOM AVRR programs are just as important to the lives of individual migrants and certain migrant flows as are migrants subject to IOM-managed ones.

There are few academic works that have closely examined AVRR in much substantive detail, but those that have approach the subject from a variety of angles: this dissertation looks specifically at program design, interaction between stakeholders, rates of use and the funding involved, as well as the theoretical difficulties associated with a program that is ostensibly voluntary being taken up with significant enthusiasm and effect by the European Union’s states with the most restrictive migration-related policymaking. Admittedly, this direction does not touch upon, to any significant degree, the valuable research conducted elsewhere which focuses on why migrants may choose to enroll themselves in AVRR and the decision-making process involved in return and reintegration, nor does this dissertation delve more deeply into philosophical positioning on the potential human rights questions involved in the lack of voluntariness (though these are discussed in brief). These are

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important issues which will become increasingly important if the intensiveness and extensiveness of this type of program continues to increase over the next decade.

The current chapter proceeds as follows. First, I will provide a general background on the concept of AVRR: what it is, how the programs generally operate with regard to the treatment of migrants, and a brief summation of the history of AVRR programming after World War II. Second, I will discuss the International Organization for Migration’s specific approach to AVRR – the degree to which it has been utilized by states around the world to this point, the trends in its utilization for its management of the AVRR program and especially the development of its role as the leading outside provider of migration management services to European Union states, a role for which AVRR is the undisputed leading component of an overall migration management strategy. IOM-managed AVRR has generated controversies centered on the program type itself, controversies specifically over the ‘V’ in AVRR and whether the programming can fairly or justly be labeled voluntary, and the degree to which states have and continue to utilize AVRR as a soft form of deportation to countries which would not otherwise be deemed safe enough for other forms of return (repatriation of refugees, for example). Third, I will discuss the European Union’s role in AVRR and how its attempts to streamline migration policy among European Union states may be contributing to a form of global migration governance that reinforces the migration policy norms preferred by the three states under examination in the next chapter. Finally, the chapter will place AVRR in the context of the discussion of power and authority outlined in the previous chapter, with insights specific to IOM-managed AVRR programming highlighted.
**What is Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration?**

Assisted voluntary return (and when managed by the IOM, assisted voluntary return and reintegration), normally AVRR, is a type of migration management program developed and implemented by states and/or international organizations, which seeks to provide logistical, monetary and/or in-kind incentives to (usually irregular) migrants in one country to depart that country for another, usually their country of origin or nationality. They have also been labeled pay-to-go and noncoercive return programs, though this labeling will not be utilized here. The incentives provided to migrants are usually (though not always) minimal in terms of monetary value, and oriented towards assisting the migrants to return to their country of origin when they would otherwise not have the means to do so themselves. Incentives are typically granted in the form of airline tickets, small remuneration for personal expenses during travel, counseling with regard to alternatives to voluntary return (often, deportation) and in rarer cases initial reintegration funding for educational or entrepreneurial opportunities for the migrants in their country of origins.

As noted by Kuschminder, “it is important to not assume that all assisted voluntary returnees receive reintegration packages and support post-arrival as the majority in fact does not.”

Interviews with IOM staff conducted by me have also suggested that the IOM, the EU, and the host state are all involved in the process to determine precisely which

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4 Ibid.
migrants are to be granted reintegration funding when it does occur, at least under IOM-managed AVRR programming.⁵

As stated above, assisted voluntary return is a type of migration management program, but not one that is exclusively tied to a particular state or organization. That is to say, AVRR programming is not conducted only by the IOM, nor is it only European Union member states engaging the services of the IOM to provide programming when the IOM is involved. Although the focus in this dissertation is primarily on the IOM and its work on assisted voluntary return, this type of programming has been initiated in the past by numerous states without coordination with the IOM. Most notably, the United Kingdom’s AVRR programming was managed by a charitable organization, Refugee Action, until the end of the year 2015, at which point the British government reasserted control over AVRR.⁶ For this chapter, I will distinguish between AVRR programs and those managed by the IOM by referring to IOM-managed AVRR when relevant, but it is also important to understand that the IOM now manages most formalized assisted voluntary return and reintegration programs in existence.

IOM-managed AVRR programs generally seek to enroll migrants that are already subject to state-managed removal proceedings (ultimately leading to deportation), or those that could be subject to the same in short order due to apparent violations of state visa and documentation requirements and stipulations. This is in contrast to earlier versions of AVRR during the post-guest worker period in many European countries, in which states

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⁵ Author interviews with IOM staff in Valletta, Malta, Heraklion, Greece, and Nicosia, Cyprus, June and July 2017

⁶ Kuschminder. 2017: 2
explicitly sought to encourage the return of legal migrants to their country of origin. Black, Collyer and Somerville list four primary groups of migrants that are targeted by AVRR: legal migrants, asylum seekers whose claim is under consideration, undetected unauthorized migrants and unauthorized migrants in removal proceedings. In general, AVRR enrollees ultimately are those for whom the alternative is enforced removal through deportation by the state; this has led to academic reflection on the voluntariness of AVRR, in many ways reminiscent of similar academic discussions centered on voluntary repatriation (this is discussed at some length below). Other types of returnees include trafficking victims, and in the cases highlighted in the next chapter, ‘stranded’ students – students that have arrived in a country to study with the promise they are allowed to work their way through school, only to realize there is no connection between their student visa and employment authorization.

History of AVRR

AVRR programs have long been implemented by governments in an effort to encourage the departure of migrants from their territories. There is an extensive history of the use of these programs following those periods in which (primarily European) governments relied on guest workers to supplement their labor forces in the wake of the workforce devastation brought by World War II, only to realize that guest workers often came up against structural conditions over the duration of their stays which either forced or allowed a substantial number to remain in the host country, and either prevented or did not effect their departure.

7 Black, Collyer, and Somerville. 2011: 4

8 Webber, Frances. 2011. “How voluntary are voluntary returns?” Race & Class. 54(2): 98-107

9 This is particularly problematic in the Cyprus case; see the next chapter.
Simply stated, guest workers arrived legally in the host countries, and stayed because of
the significantly greater economic opportunities afforded by the host state in comparison
to the economic opportunities back home. During the guest worker periods, AVRR
programs were, in large measure, administered by the states which created them, and
existed as one of numerous possible solutions to the perceived problem of the long-term
presence of non-citizens, who often faced and presented labor and social challenges which
created perceived friction with those with full citizenship.

According to Frances Webber:

“Voluntary return schemes were common in Europe in the 1970s as a means of
disposing of unwanted ‘guest workers.’ The Dutch government introduced a
scheme in 1974 to ‘reintegrate’ guest workers from Turkey, Tunisia and Morocco
in their home countries, and similar schemes were introduced in France in 1977 and
in Germany in 1983. The schemes all suffered from a very low take-up rate.”

Black, Collyer and Somerville add that the older AVRR programs “persistently failed
to attract substantial numbers of participants… [and that] moreover, the ‘sustainability’ of
returns… is also far from clear.” In the end, early versions of these programs were largely
discontinued in Europe. The low take-up rate, though not formally studied in depth during
that period anywhere I can find, can and has been construed to suggest that the programs

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11 Black, Collyer and Somerville. 2011: 1
typically provided an untenable alternative for the migrants that had come as legal guest workers.\textsuperscript{12} According to Black, Collyer and Somerville:

“the programs assumed that individual migrants would exchange a future in a European country where the economy had historically been buoyant… for a small amount of money and a future in a country where the economy… gave few reasons for optimism, with no possibility of changing their mind.”\textsuperscript{13}

However, in recent years many countries in Europe, with the strong financial backing of the European Union, have renewed the use of this type of program in an attempt to manage migrant flows which have overwhelmed the perceived ability of states to absorb migrants in their societies. Whether to assist failed asylum seekers, trafficking victims, overstayers, long-term migrant workers that find themselves without capacity to depart from the host country, or other migrant types, AVRR programs have reappeared quietly and without much public fanfare, but with definite effect on the processes of migration in Europe. With contract budgets of over 90 million euros dedicated to migration management programming in Europe, the IOM has taken the lead in the region in defining the form of AVRR programming. In addition to IOM-led efforts, the United Kingdom and France have notable AVRR programming efforts of their own, and numerous (primarily European) countries have begun offering in-kind incentives to migrants to depart their territories outside of IOM-managed programming.

IOM-managed AVRR has become a central part of the mission of the IOM. The IOM describes AVRR as:

\textsuperscript{12} Black, Collyer and Somerville. 2011: 1

\textsuperscript{13} Black, Collyer and Somerville. 2011: 9
“an indispensable part of a comprehensive approach to migration management aiming at orderly and humane return and reintegration of migrants who are unable or unwilling to remain in host or transit countries and wish to return voluntarily to their countries of origin.”

This excerpt signals the importance of return without identifying what constitutes an inability to remain in a host country. The IOM has become integrated into the migrant removal function of numerous states as a result of orienting migration management in a way which supports the importance of return.

Indeed, some scholars seek to identify the factors which prompt participation in or the creation of AVRR programs by the state – in other words, what the appeal of such programs is for states which ostensibly seek to maintain their absolute sovereignty over territorial borders and migration policies. One basic appeal in recent years for many European countries is, of course, the European Commission’s insistence that AVRR programming be adopted and promotion of incentives that coordination on the issue is suggested to provide. However, Black, Collyer and Somerville expand on this and write that AVRR programming is also cost effective vis-à-vis traditional removal proceedings (deportation), is much easier than engaging in the bilateral processes necessary to carry out a deportation, and is much more humane than deportation. They indicate that a voluntary return is, on

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16 Black, Collyer, and Somerville. 2011: 5
average, one-tenth of the cost of a traditional deportation (deportations often require the use of privately-chartered aircraft, often require lengthy migrant stays in detention during appeals processes, etc.). It also tends to present fewer bilateral sticking-points, given that returning migrants are provided airfare on commercial aircraft and assistance in acquiring proper identification documents (passports) if they do not have them. Finally, it is again seen as that more liberal alternative to the relatively humiliating process of deportation in which the migrant is often literally chained and in custody until they depart the host state’s soil.

Although the scholarly literature available on the most recent wave of IOM-managed AVRR programs is not very deep, common themes emerge, mostly centered on the questionable voluntariness of returns assisted by the IOM and the ways in which AVRR programming reinforces state prerogatives on migration controls. Academics have voiced repeated and persistent concerns about the nature of the implementation of these programs (reviewed below), especially in Europe, and this has highlighted the degree to which these programs have a contested and ambiguous role in both assisting states with border management, and improving the life chances of the migrants involved.17 This dissertation seeks to link the processes of IOM-managed AVRR programming more broadly to the processes of global governance, as understandable through the exercise and influence of the forms of power and authority reviewed in the previous chapters. However, these processes are not necessarily without controversy, and any documentation of AVRR must

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17 Webber. 2011, 98-107;
include the associated aporias which partially structure the political and civil environment in which they are instituted and contested.

Anne Koch states it most clearly when writing that:

“The question of migrant return constitutes an area of contestation between states’ right to control access to their territory on the one hand, and the human rights discourse that demands equal treatment of aliens and citizens on the other. It therefore offers valuable insights into the ways in which states reassert their sovereignty, balance competing claims, or make concessions to the demands of international norms and legal obligations.”

This dissertation will go on to highlight how the reassertion of state sovereignty and making concessions to the demands of norms and legal obligations are not necessarily mutually exclusive when looking at AVRR in particular. For now, however, Koch’s basic observation clues us in to a basic normative issue that AVRR brings up: to what degree can the state manage migration in a world with the particular norms and legal obligations in which they are enmeshed? Is migration that is managed by the IOM managed in ways that reinforce state-level preferences or undermine state-level preferences? These questions must be addressed in the context of a fuller understanding of AVRR, and therefore this chapter seeks to elaborate upon the rise in the last decade of IOM-managed AVRR and its attendant effects on migration governance, before considering controversies over AVRR that have appeared in the literature, and considering the above questions in light of those controversies.

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18 Koch. 2014: 906
AVRR By the Numbers

In the year 2016, the year for which the IOM reported the highest number of assisted returns in its history, a total of 98,403 migrants were returned to their country of origin with the assistance of the IOM. The IOM takes care to note in published reports\(^\text{19}\) and on its website’s Global Migrant Data Portal\(^\text{20}\) that this number includes only those assisted returns managed directly by the IOM and does not include forced returns (deportations) or assisted returns carried out by countries which do not contract IOM services. This number is striking for a number of reasons. First, it is important to reflect upon the fact that as a proportion of international migrants (roughly 200 million), 98,403 appears quite small. Indeed, even when compared to forced returns from the United States for that same year (240,255)\(^\text{21}\), the number is less than half. However, the goal of this dissertation is not to argue that IOM activity with regard to AVRR has supplanted traditional state-managed removal practices or that it touches an overwhelming share of all migrants worldwide; keeping perspective is important, and as discussed in the previous chapter, it is both the direct activity of the IOM and its legitimate and legitimizing presence in the management of migration programs on behalf of states which may powerfully alter understandings of


the governance of migrant flows more generally. Yet, the numbers are striking in other ways that are nevertheless quite important.

The 2016 total is also interesting precisely because it represents the highest level of IOM-managed AVRR activity yet, which has increased significantly over the past decade. The 2016 total represents a 41% increase in assisted returns over the previous year; the rapid increase in numbers of migrants returned through IOM-managed AVRR indicates continued and generally increasing reliance on the IOM to perform what for some states is a vital removal function. Between 2005 and 2016, IOM-managed AVRR has increased by nearly 400%, up from 24,696 returns in 2005. The chart included in the introduction plots the significant rise in returns in just over a decade.

What the totals indicating the intensiveness of the rise of AVRR do not reveal is the extensiveness of IOM-managed AVRR programming and how to better contextualize its rise with regard to trends in world politics. For the year 2016, 83% of returns were from a country within the European Economic Area, indicating the degree to which Europe is ‘taking the lead’ in utilizing IOM-managed AVRR programming, and therefore structuring expectations with regard to the services the IOM provides. Also among the top ten host countries making use of IOM-managed AVRR programming are Niger (4,788 returns), Yemen (2,594 returns), and Djibouti (1,803 returns). In the years since, there has been a significant shift in return activity towards non-European host countries, especially Niger, a topic which will be taken up in the fifth chapter of this dissertation.

Despite the inclusion of these states in the top ten with regard to the hosts, a quick look at the numbers indicates that the majority of return movement remains from developed nations in the global north to developing states. The top five states of origin for returnees
under IOM-managed programming during the same year include Albania (17,976 returned), Iraq (12,776 returned), Afghanistan (7,102 returned), Serbia (6,978 returned), and Kosovo (5,889 returned). The IOM also notes on its website that it has assisted with returns from 110 countries in total (though the majority come from a smaller collection of primarily European states), and returns to 161 countries.  

IOM-managed AVRR very prominently includes another ‘R’ in the form of reintegration assistance, though this assistance is not provided to all or even most of the migrants that enroll in AVRR programming. Reintegration assistance provides funding for migrants to enroll in training programs, provides start-up capital for small businesses or simply funds to support themselves at first while pursuing alternative forms of income, all while in their country of origin. The IOM manages reintegration by screening potential recipients, recommending individual recipients for reintegration funding, seeking approval from stakeholders and following the migrant for a limited period after their return to see if reintegration funding is being utilized in accordance with the conditions of its distribution. The reintegration system is not without its own particular faults: as a recent article noted, various EU countries provided more or less funding for the IOM’s activity depending on the financial or in-kind ‘options’, decided on locally, which are to be provided to potential voluntary returners.  

As of 2017, some states, like Germany, would offer return and

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reintegration packages of up to 7,000 euros, while others, like the Czech Republic, offer nothing but the pathway for migrant departure outside of state-managed deportation proceedings. The effects of projectization and strength of the argument claiming that state sovereignty still reigns supreme in the area of migration governance are both seen quite clearly through this point.

The next chapter will focus in part on how these programs are instituted locally, and how they go about attracting the attention of potential enrollees when doing so outside of state-managed deportation proceedings. However, the numbers above only indicate part of the story when it comes to the rapid rise and success of IOM-managed AVRR. One part of the success of IOM-managed AVRR lies in its public presentation, and how the organization publicly conceives of AVRR, asserting that it has an important role in migration management for states.

The Discourse of Return

The public presentation of AVRR by the IOM provides insights into how the organization publicly orients discussion about return migration and the boundaries of what IOM programming represents and what it is not. This is presented through a variety of means: policy documents and agreements between states which contract the IOM’s services are not readily available or accessible, and many times this information is kept confidential, as are the documents related to specific returns for reasons of privacy. The following is a brief analysis of the public presentation of AVRR via the IOM’s dedicated website, its television advertisements directed at migrants and brochures used for distribution to potential returners.
As mentioned elsewhere in this dissertation, the IOM very prominently defines assisted voluntary return and reintegration on its website and elsewhere as “an indispensable part of a comprehensive approach to migration management aiming at orderly and humane return and reintegration of migrants who are unable or unwilling to remain in host or transit countries and wish to return voluntarily to their countries of origin.”24 This definition signals that states should have such programming as part of migration management, that AVRR is humane, and that those ‘unable’ are still voluntarily returning to their countries of origin by accessing the programming (the controversies of this positioning will be explored in the next section). IOM policy documents outline the ways that IOM-managed AVRR is conducted both before, in-transit, and after return.25

For academics and policymakers, the IOM AVRR website includes a number of position papers and policy reports, and summaries of AVRR-related statistics. However, the website itself is geared primarily toward the potential migrant: mostly dedicated to stories of successful returns and successful reintegration experiences, the website links users to first-hand accounts of positive return outcomes. This is mirrored in the material available to migrants that I procured during field interviews: although policy statements were readily available, much of the physical sources of information made available by the IOM reinforce the positive experiences of migrants through brochures and so forth. Finally, those Greek-language television advertisements promoting AVRR and created for IOM Cyprus were telling as well. The description provided to and for the hypothetical irregular


25 These to be included in the appendix.
migrant viewer was one in which their time in Cyprus has been an adventure, an adventure for which Cyprus was just one stop along the way, and that AVRR could be utilized to continue that adventure - after, of course, at least a brief stop back in the country of origin. This indicates the degree to which the IOM does pursue some degree of voluntariness in the enrollment process, at least, and the emphasis of the advertisement was on the ability of the IOM to provide a pathway away from the country and the awareness of the migrant of this pathway.

The emphasis on the services provided and individual success stories masks the degree to which we do not know the level of ‘successful’ returns versus unsuccessful ones. Because of privacy concerns, only the IOM and the state by which it is contracted (and in some cases, cooperating NGOs which refer migrants) know the identities of those migrants which access the service; tracking long-term re-migration rates has not been a published priority of the IOM, nor has a full accounting of those migrants that, upon return, face various types of social backlash, discrimination, and outright hostility due to their presence in the country. This masking of the variability of outcomes of AVRR is just one of several controversial elements of the programming that have received treatment by scholars looking at the program type.26 Several others are noted below. Nevertheless, in recent years, the IOM has utilized a discourse of “sustainable return” to advocate for greater funding by states for reintegration efforts, arguing essentially that sustainable return comes with the migrant remaining in the country of origin and being productive such that they do not feel the need to remigrate. This discourse is quite powerful in a productive way: the

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sustainability of return requires increased capacity to monitor in transnational ways the long-term outcomes for individual migrants. Which organization or entity is best placed to do this? Certainly not individual states, especially those that actively seek to send some among their populations overseas for the purpose of work/remittances. Rather, the IOM is best positioned to address sustainable return, and has been in turn quite successful in bringing this discourse to the Global Compact for Migration, where it is found in Objective 21 as ‘sustainable reintegration’.

The Controversy of Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration

The management of AVRR by the IOM has generated a number of controversies, primarily voiced by civil society and in academic circles. These controversies are generally linked to the perceived close relationship between the IOM and the states to which it provides services, the organization’s relatively opaque nature with regard to its operations and budget, and the budgeting practices of the organization itself, which is usually described as ‘projectization,’ as previously discussed. It is important to review these controversies to understand what type of objections might have been (and might be) voiced in opposition to the rise of the practice of IOM-managed AVRR, and how those practices have been made possible despite those objections.

Part of the controversy now centering on IOM-managed AVRR goes back to older discussions within academia about voluntary repatriation, and the discourses used to construct what is ‘voluntary,’ and what is ‘home.’ Although voluntary repatriation and assisted voluntary return are in many ways quite different (in that voluntary repatriation is

27 Though not only these; Kuschminder. 2017. “Interrogating the Relationship…” notes that even policymakers have disputed the voluntariness of AVR programming: 5
typically concerned with the return of internationally-recognized refugees to their country of origin, while assisted voluntary return could potentially involve the return of any non-national from a destination country to a country of origin), many of the same concerns are shared about how these types of return migration interact with human rights. For voluntary repatriation, “human rights standards… have a central role to play in creating any kind of framework for repatriation and in determining when repatriation can rightly be encouraged,”\textsuperscript{28} largely because the migrants in question are refugees whose status as such has been deemed by the international community as of particular concern vis-à-vis human rights. Whether this is the case for participants in AVRR programs depends largely on the context in which those programs are managed, and the ‘type’ of migrant accessing them. The rights claims of internationally-recognized refugees generally fall into a different ‘category’ in the literature than those claims of asylum-seekers, and those that have overstayed on previously valid migrant visas. Nevertheless, even voluntary repatriation of refugees is subject to ‘few standards,’\textsuperscript{29} and even fewer that have to do directly with securing human rights.

The trouble with IOM-managed AVRR in this regard is that the IOM explicitly reinforces a particular definition of voluntariness that seems to differ from the reality that the threat of deportation in many contexts provides little real choice. The IOM defines voluntariness as:

\textsuperscript{28} Takahashi. 1997: 594

\textsuperscript{29} Takahashi. 1997: 594
“a prerequisite to AVRR. It is assumed to exist if a free and informed decision is taken by the returning individual. A voluntary decision encompasses three elements: (a) freedom of choice, which is defined by the absence of any physical or psychological coercion; (b) an informed decision which requires the availability of accurate and objective information upon which to base the decision; and c) the legal capacity on the part of the migrant to make an informed decision…”

Many academics question the validity of this definition in practice, and its connection with IOM decisions as to whether migrants qualify for assistance given the conditions under which they are typically agreeing to participate in AVRR. Anne Koch writes that “voluntariness often does not entail a real choice between return and stay, but instead a choice between different forms of return: either as a free person receiving certain financial benefits… or in shackles without any financial assistance.”

Webber is even more candid, writing that “voluntary return is instead offered as a less painful alternative to continued destitution followed by (inevitable) compulsory return, and it is generally impossible for the returnee to make an informed choice about the country to which they are returning,” and going on to observe that, “for governments and for the IOM, the lack of real choice is seen as a key ingredient to the success of the ‘voluntary’ return programmes they offer.”

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31 Koch. 2014: 911

32 Webber. 2011: 103

33 Webber. 2011: 105
Indeed, a recent article quotes an anonymous European Commission official saying that, “The more migrants that leave voluntarily, the less have to be locked up and deported,” indicating that the emphasis on enrollment in AVRR redistributes the removals ‘workload’.

Given that AVRR makes up a substantial priority for the IOM given its project-based funding, there is a clear disconnect between the voluntariness definition as presented by the IOM and the alignment of practice with that definition. Koch goes even further in her article by referencing the reported perception of international civil servants from other organizations that the IOM may even assist states in ‘voluntarily’ returning migrants directly from detention. The IOM is often described as opaque with regard to its practices as a factor of its project-based interactions with states, though no additional data that I have seen suggests that the agency returns migrants from detention.

In addition to questionable voluntariness, several other controversies are notable when reviewing the literature on AVRR. Kuschminder (2017) reviews several, including the idea that some migrants are returned via IOM-managed AVRR to places where the returnees would be unsafe, and that reintegration assistance does not provide for sustainable return and risks migrants undertaking a long and dangerous journey back to the host state. Of the safety of conditions in the country of origin, Kuschminder writes that “AVRR is only permitted to countries or parts of countries that are officially deemed safe by the host country government,” but that this does not mean that those returned are

35 Koch. 2014: 913
36 Kuschminder. 2017: 5
returned to safety, citing the example of Afghans which European states were returning to Kabul despite highly unstable conditions in Afghanistan at large. With regard to the sustainability of return, those migrants (the majority) for whom reintegration assistance is not provided are generally ‘on their own’, and that “individuals participating in AVRR or AVRR programmes only re-migrate again once they have been returned to their country of origin.” In addition, the same questions with regard to the definition of ‘home’ that have come up in the context of scholarly attention paid to voluntary repatriation are arguably applicable here. AVRR returns are generally to the country of origin, typically that of the passport held by the migrant. This does not mean that the country of origin is home in any tangible or psychological way to the migrant, but AVRR programming generally does not return migrants to third countries.

**IOM-Managed AVRR and Global Cooperation**

What is clear about the recent rise of AVRR programs again in Europe is the degree to which they now represent strong(er) cooperation between state-level governments, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations: the combination of numerous stakeholders in the implementation of programs directly related to the governance of migration flows (in this case, out-flows). The IOM has declared that “the successful implementation of AVRR programmes requires the cooperation and participation of a broad range of actors, including the migrants, civil society and the

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37 Kuschminder. 2017: 5

governments in both host countries and countries of origin.”

This has indeed been the case for the several ‘frontier’ EU states under study in this dissertation in the next chapter. In Cyprus, a pathway to AVRR was legalized by the Cyprus Parliament in 2011 and set into motion only in 2015, though implementation was left initially to the University of Nicosia, CARDET (Center for the Advancement of Research and Development in Educational Technology, a Cyprus-based NGO), Caritas International, with the IOM taking over later that year. The establishment of a center to implement the project was funded in its initial stages by the European Union’s Return Fund and the Republic of Cyprus, but referrals are made to the IOM-managed program through independent referral centers managed by non-affiliated NGOs, and the prominent local NGO KISA. In Greece, “more than 30,000 individuals have safely returned back home with the contribution of IOM Greece,” which is based on a substantial effort by the Greek government, the IOM, and numerous other NGO stakeholders to manage migrant flows in a way that achieves stated state and organizational objectives; this is especially so in the wake of the massive influx of refugees to Greece in 2015. Although many of these refugees were ‘non-returnable’ due to their origins, the increasingly complex network of NGOs operating in the country has been seen to contribute to AVRR referrals. Finally, in Malta, there has

39 Ibid.


been a series of AVRR programs implemented under the general program title “RESTART.” “RESTART VI” was inaugurated in July 2016, and according to the IOM, which provides principle implementation of the project, at least 300 migrants have accessed the program and returned home since its first full implementation under IOM auspices.\textsuperscript{42} Funded by the EU’s Asylum, Migration and Integration fund and the Maltese government, the Maltese program, although much smaller in scope than the Greek program, involves the same dynamic of involving numerous stakeholders from governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental backgrounds, with many referrals emanating from local mental health facilities.

However, substantive additional data and an analysis of such data on AVRR in these places and elsewhere has been less than forthcoming, whether from the IOM or from governments, or from academic sources. The next chapter seeks to begin to remedy this by bringing in a comprehensive analysis of three programs, drawing on available documentation from, IOM, EU and state sources, as well as from elite interviews with IOM representatives in the states in question.

\textbf{The Role of the European Union in the Rise of AVRR Programming}

One major, stable partner of the IOM in the rapid rise of AVRR programming is the European Union. The EU is critical to the development of the IOM’s version of AVRR program management, as it has been the ongoing European projects’ primary financier for most of their respective durations (prominent exceptions include the UK’s return program).

Whether through the former Return Fund or the current Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), the European Union has made voluntary return a core part of its focus on coralling member state migration policy in a meaningful way, which might form the later basis to EU claims towards asserting stronger, unified migration policymaking. Although most program funding (including AVRR programming) supported by AMIF is shared between the EU and the state, the EU typically contributes the lion’s share (75%). Although the European Union does not speak with one voice on migration policy matters (there are prominent tensions between the European Council, European Commission, and the European Parliament on the issue area in general\textsuperscript{43}), the Commission’s clear preference is for asserting the importance of return in an EU view of shared migration policy.\textsuperscript{44}

The 2008 EU Returns Directive built a mandatory ‘voluntary’ return period into state deportation proceedings and emphasized the preference for voluntary returns over deportations. The Directive is seen as foundational for the EU’s current active support for AVRR programming and, in some ways, creating the space or void which the IOM was ready to fill. Although the Commission, Council and Parliament do not tend to agree on matters of migration policy, all have signified approval of AVRR programming in principle, and the EU Returns Directive itself was affirmed in co-decision by both the Council and the Parliament, granting it more institutional credibility than decisions reached on other, more divisive migration-related issues. A quick look at recent figures indicates the degree to which the IOM has become a vital partner for the EU with regard to migration

management and AVRR: a 300% increase in funding for migration management contracts between 2015 and 2016 in the wake of the European migration crisis clearly indicates the degree to which responsibility for managing migration has been devolved to the IOM (the EU and member states combined paid over 500 million euros in contract value to the IOM in 2016, a 28% increase over the previous year).\textsuperscript{45}

The cooperation of member states, the EU and the IOM in the production of AVRR programming can be broken down even further by more closely analyzing just what each entity provides each other through cooperation – a ‘coming together’ in which assisted voluntary return is both produced by, and allows for the production of, identifiable constraints and benefits placed on each entity. Figure 1 below describe in a very basic way what I mean. In the first part of Figure 1, I have created a triangle indicating the relationship between the EU member state, the European Union, and the IOM. On the outer edges of the first triangle, the direction of the arrows depicts how one entity ‘constrains’ the receiver of the arrow in some substantial way in the production of, and cooperation over, AVRR programming. Likewise, for the second triangle, the arrows indicate the ways in which the entity from which the arrow originates provides some substantial benefit to the receiver of the arrow as a result of the production of/cooperation over AVRR programming. To follow this point through to a greater degree, the rest of this section will follow the argument of each arrow from each in detail, looking at both the constraints and benefits present in the three interrelationships described by the Figure. I

start first with the constraints and benefits flowing between the EU member state and the EU itself, then the constraints and benefits between the EU member state and the IOM, and finally, the
Figure 1: Provision of Constraints and Benefits in the Production of IOM-Managed AVRR Programming in EU States

**CONSTRAINTS**

- Demand return programming implementation
- Demand for increased assistance on migration management

**STATE** → **EU**

- Subsidizes Return Programming
- Precedent for sharing authority on migration management

**BENEFITS**

- Effective control over migration of EU states
- Normative influence of UN affiliation; global migration discourse
- Liberal, human rights-conscious return management
- Sets project document constraints on IOM management
- Increase in funding and delegated authority
- Standard implementation of return directive

**STATE** → **EU**

- Subsidizes Return Programming
- Precedent for sharing authority on migration management

**IOM**
constraints and benefits that the IOM and the EU place provide each other as a result of
the production of/cooperation over AVRR.

State and EU

The member state constrains the European Union, in a sense, through its consistent call
for increased assistance on migration management. The discourse of the European
migration crisis, and even prior to the crisis, has been one of inundation on the part of
certain (primarily southern European) member states within the European Union,
especially those that have encountered substantial flows of irregular migration. The basic
demand by EU member states for assistance constrains the EU in the sense that it places a
demand on EU resources (funding, primarily) which might otherwise be directed to other
projects or causes. The European Union, on the other hand, has been able to constrain
member states that demand increased migration assistance by implementing its return
directive and then proceeding to demand in return the implementation of return
programming. The EU provides the ‘benefit’ of financing the majority of these programs
on behalf of member states, yet the state in adopting return programming is ultimately
adopting yet another precedent for shared authority over the migration issue area. The
European Union does not itself manage AVRR, but its important role in financing it in
Europe should not be understated.

STATE and IOM

The state sets important constraints on the IOM in the production of AVRR
programming as the project document that is produced in order to implement AVRR (the
contract between the state and the IOM) is ultimately guided by the preferences of the state
and the degree of migration management authority the IOM is granted. The variations in this authority is discussed below and in the next chapter. However, the state also provides a significant amount of the overall funding for IOM-managed AVRR (typically around 25%), as well contributing to the IOM’s ability to claim an additional state for which it manages AVRR programming. The state’s contractual relationship with the IOM, for its part, constrains the state by implementing AVRR programming in ways that (at least since the inception of its UN affiliation) strictly adhere to the universal declaration on human rights and its associated covenants. States that might have otherwise had no qualms about simply deporting vulnerable migrants back to their country of origin (as was often the case in the southern European sites described in the next chapter) may now find a UN-affiliated organization performing, in a sense, a valuable removal function unwilling to find such migrants eligible for IOM-assisted return, and provided with information for contacting UNHCR, claiming asylum, and so forth. However, its increased technical capacity (in the form of tested procedures, established relationships with partner NGOs and service providers, increased and repetitive contacts with state officials both in the host country and the country of origin, etc.) to provide return programming to states – a situation in which the state pays only about a quarter of the overall cost and does not have to create and manage new bureaucratic offices dedicated to the program itself – has clearly become invaluable to European states over the past decade.

**IOM and EU**

The European Union constrains the IOM to a significant degree, in the sense that it effectively controls the budgeting for such programming for a large number of states from which a large proportion of overall returns have been effected over the past decade.
Although, as will be discussed, the proportion of returns originating in Europe is declining, the European Union (along with the United States) is a significant source of funding for return projects. Yet, as the above statistics demonstrate, the European Union has been delivering: substantial increases in funding, and the funding of new projects in states outside the border of the European Union, demonstrate a solid working relationship between the two entities. For the IOM’s part, its ability to constrain the EU comes in part as a result of its UN affiliation and its increasing voice in the global conversation on migration: although its largest client, in a sense, is the European Union, the IOM has seemed to relish its role as a UN-affiliated organization. This constrains the EU because the IOM ultimately must maintain consistency with UN-level human rights norms when implementing migration management – although this would not seem to be such a significant constraint in the context of Europe, my discussion of IOM activity in West Africa in the fifth chapter of this dissertation serves as an example of how EU interests and established human rights norms might conflict in the context of AVRRR implementation.

In interviews with IOM staff, the IOM’s work on the development of the Global Compact on Migration was referenced repeatedly, and in reflection of its role in assisting the European Union develop its own Return Directive a decade ago. The IOM does provide a major benefit to the EU in the form of its programming, but specifically because of the highly standardized nature of AVRR programming at this point, which has largely been implemented throughout the EU in ways that have produced a success with reference to the Return Directive’s stated preference for voluntary returns one decade on.

46 Author interviews with IOM staff in Valletta, Malta, Heraklion, Greece and Nicosia, Cyprus, June and July 2017
The next section extends some of the basic observations about the nature of AVRR production in the context of EU member states by taking a wider view of AVRR and its relationship to migration management: how AVRR fits into discussions of migration management, in what ways states might see their preferences directly related to migration governance be reinforced as a result of IOM-managed AVRR programming, and how these might be constrained by the same.

**Understanding AVRR as a form of Migration Management**

The above description of the program, its level of use over the last decades, and the controversies surrounding it in policymaking and academic circles must be complemented with greater justification for its inclusion among the ‘global migration management’ paradigm which the previous chapter sought to clarify. Although still maturing, AVRR programming has increased significantly in intensity and extensity. It is clearly among the capacities that the IOM rents to states to increase their overall capacity to remove migrants; despite the low levels of participation in AVRR programs in the guest worker era, that era has passed and AVRR programming is rising with regard to the number of migrants affected. However, to properly incorporate AVRR into the foregoing argument concerning migration management, two discussions of AVRR must take place here: first, the degree to which it is perceived as both reinforcing state preferences on migration while also undermining state sovereign control over migration policy. The second is to match AVRR activity to the foregoing discussion of power in global governance and its relevance for the versions of migration governance that have come to the fore. Both of these will then be reflected upon in the context of the case studies in the next chapter.
How AVRR Reinforces State Preferences

The previous chapter argued that at one level, global migration management reinforces (generally restrictive) state preferences on migration: that the state, assumed to jealously guard its sovereignty on migration policy, is generally inclined to seek the removal of unwanted migrants from its territory. The nature of the unwanted migrants may vary between contexts, but state preferences include the maintenance of the ability to decide as to which migrants may stay and which must go. These preferences are already, of course, heavily circumscribed by international norms (non-refoulement and other human rights norms), and states generally operate somewhere between their preferences and what is deemed acceptable by the international community.

Migration management programs also appear to operate between these two poles and can be seen to contribute to the reinforcement of both. If we suspend discussion of specific historical instances and conceive of some of the possible migration-related preferences of a relatively restrictive state, AVRR programming in particular reinforces numerous restrictive state preferences:

1. **AVRR facilitates the return of migrants deemed undesirable by the state:**

First and foremost, AVRR programming facilitates the physical movement of migrants away from a state’s territory. While returns are not guaranteed to be permanent, the return itself reinforces the state preference for a reduction of the numbers of migrants (and often, particular migrants) within the state’s territory. The undesirability of migrants may vary widely depending on the state in question; however, generally AVRR facilitates the return
of irregular migrants, including those that have crossed borders without authorization and those that have stayed longer than they were otherwise authorized.

2. **AVRR seeks to facilitate reintegration by dispersing funding to increase attachment of migrant to country of origin**: IOM-managed AVRR programs seek to address the permanence issue in point 1 above (labeling this ‘sustainability’ of return) by providing reintegration funding, designed to provide particular migrants with a capacity to build a life in the country of origin, and to therefore deter a preference to re-migrate to the host country.

3. **AVRR seeks to reinforce concept of sustainable return**: Coinciding with point 2 above, AVRR programming is, with regard to its discourse, consistently reinforcing the idea that returns must be sustainable, and reintegration funding is the best course for this.

4. **AVRR seeks to reinforce return as one component of a holistic approach to migration**: In other words, IOM-managed AVRR is explicitly conceived a complementary to state-managed removals processes, in addition to efforts to assist with long-term migrant integration. The IOM asserts its preference for the reduction of deportations in the states with which it works, but fairly openly acknowledges that other forms of return beyond AVRR are necessary.

5. **AVRR is funded by the state and by the European Union, on a pay-as-you-go contractual basis**: For many European states utilizing AVRR programming, the European Union funds 75% of the operational costs of IOM-managed programming, distributing the costs across the organization and limiting the direct strain on member state budgets.
6. **AVRR supports a discourse in which return is seen as an unqualified good:**

In many ways, IOM-managed AVRR is presented by the organization and participating states in a way that suggests that migrant regularity and the legality of migration is more healthy and sustainable than the inevitable disparity in equity and opportunity that a migrant might face in the country of origin as opposed to the host country.

**How AVRR circumscribes a state’s sovereign right to decide what to do with migrants:**

As mentioned, the state’s sovereign right to decide what to do with the migrants on its territory is actually somewhat circumscribed by international human rights norms which have, over the past many decades, explicitly forbidden and made shameful certain state actions vis-à-vis migrant removal (*non-refoulement* is the clearest example, but increasingly the ‘more equal’ treatment of migrants and citizens) However, there are a number of other ways that a state’s initial preferences may be frustrated or altered, both as a result of direct action by the IOM as it managed AVRR programming, and as a result of the discourses which surround IOM’s involvement in the removals process in various states.

1. **AVRR implements programming directly in most cases, once authorized in state law:** Once a state has contracted the IOM to manage its AVRR programming, the IOM tends to take primary responsibility for the returns, from the introduction of the migrant to the program through to the reintegration monitoring conducted by IOM officials

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47 *Non-refoulement*, of course, is a norm of international law appearing in, among other places, the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, which explicitly forbids the return of persons to their country of origin if there is a fear that that person’s “life or freedom would be threatened on account of his [sic] race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion,” United Nations High Commission on Refugees. 1977. “Note on Non-Refoulement,” EC/SCP/2.
in the country of origin. State bureaucracy is largely removed from the picture as, by
definition, the returning migrant has agreed to return assistance and is not being deported
in a juridical sense. Therefore, oversight over this pathway of return migration is largely
left to the IOM to plan, manage, implement, and assess. There are variations in this
(including some notable variations in the case studies that appear in the next chapter), yet
the IOM is by-and-large on its own with regard to migrant returns in terms of deciding the
most appropriate pathway of return for a migrant and at least initial recommendation for
individual migrant reintegration funding. Reintegration funding decisions are another
matter: the stakeholders (EU and state) are generally more involved in deciding which
migrants receive funding and which do not, but defer to the IOM (often times, out of
necessity) when it comes to monitoring the reintegration ‘success’ for individual migrants.

2. AVRR supports a discourse in which IOM-managed return is preferable to
depортation: A number of academics have commented upon the idea that IOM-managed
AVRR supports a discourse which asserts that AVRR represents a healthier, liberal
alternative to deportation.48 In this context the state conducts deportations, which are
demeaning to human dignity and violate human rights in some instances. The IOM, on the
other hand, enables individuals to voluntarily return to their country of origin in dignity,
without handcuffs, and in some cases with substantial levels of financial assistance (even
though these are, ultimately, funded by the EU and state itself). This dichotomous situation
lifts the IOM up as a credible producer of liberal migration management, in contrast to
state-run processes which demean individual migrants. Importantly, nothing about this

48 See: Koch. 2014.
must mean that the state does not see its objective of migrant removal achieved. On the contrary, the IOM is shaping the way in which those objectives are achieved.

3. **Incorporates human rights discourse into processes which are nevertheless questionably voluntary:** Closely associated with point 2 above, academics have also noted the degree to which IOM-managed AVRR, despite engaging migrants in programming which is questionably voluntary in many instances, injects a human rights discourse into return processes which otherwise would not have structured state attitudes on returns. State reliance on the IOM means reliance on an organization which, while having definite capacity to enhance migrant returns, brings with it its now-close association with the United Nations and international discourses centered on human rights, sustainability, and a focus that is migrant-centered.

**How IOM-managed AVRR reorients the state and its preferences towards migration management**

The above sets of relationships between the introduction of IOM-managed AVRR programming and state preferences with regard to migration policy form and enforcement present an initial picture of a situation where the IOM, while described as weakly institutionalized, may actually through its management of AVRR on behalf of states alter what those states see as preferred policy outcomes. At this stage of this dissertation, this assertion remains somewhat conjectural – timelining policy priorities and their change and attributing those changes to the introduction of IOM-managed AVRR would be an exercise in defining a very tenuous causal relationship that may or may not exist. However, the precise point of this exercise is to demonstrate that the introduction of IOM-managed
AVRR, for the simple fact that it allows for a considerable level of internationally-sourced, organizationally-coordinated direct management of a migration-related policy program interacts with, and necessarily alters how these migration-related governance issues were previously conceived prior to the introduction of the program. In addition, the cascading expansion and extensiveness of the use of these programs, indicative of the increasing degree of legitimacy and authority provided the IOM by states in carrying out program-related responsibilities, indicates that many states now view some degree of international management of migration programming as not incompatible with (ever-changing) notions of state sovereignty and the necessity of its preservation.

To explore this further, it is useful to view AVRR from the perspective of power and of authority in global governance, in accordance with those concepts as reviewed in the previous chapter. Reviewing IOM-managed AVRR and the forms of power with which it interacts, and the forms of authority which also interact with the program type, will not go to any greater lengths in establishing a formal causal link between AVRR programming and changes in state preferences on migration policy. This exercise is suggestive of this however, and in the coming years and decades it will be crucial to reflect upon the role of the IOM’s migration management and the rapid rise of state dependence on it in order to accommodate on an academic level the changes in international relations that are to come.

**AVRR, and Power and Authority, in Global Governance**

IOM-managed AVRR is only one of the many types of programming with which the IOM is engaged. As such, considering at a theoretical level the ways in which a particular programmatic effort by one international organization can be seen to have/effect power and authority in global governance borders on narrowing the focus of those constructs to a
greater degree than perhaps it should be narrowed. However, it is a useful exercise, at least, to consider the ways that IOM-managed AVRR affects states, migrants and the international environment (and, in turn, is affected by them), and also defining the degree to which IOM-managed AVRR has attained a certain authority and legitimacy in some areas of migration governance.

**AVRR and Power and Authority in Global Governance**

Barnett and Duvall’s typology of power in global governance⁴⁹, discussed in the previous chapter is used here to demonstrate the ways in which the IOM’s activity directly linked to AVRR interact with power. Each is considered in turn.

**Compulsory Power:** IOM-managed AVRR programming has definite effects on the lives of migrants, independent of the behavior of the nation states which contract the IOM’s services. It manages with little state interference the returns process from the moment potential returnees are identified through to their reintegration monitoring (and has the capacity to monitor migrants in their countries of origin in ways that host states often lack). It also has definite effects on the ability of states to manage migration in the ways they may prefer. First, however, there is a ‘but-for’ argument in which it might be argued that ‘but for’ the funding dedicated to the individual IOM projects in individual states, the IOM would not be able to affect particular groups or flows of migrants and therefore it would lack its primary form of compulsory power. Yet this argument is overcome quite easily by the counterargument that most international organizations have relied on states while developing particular capacities before being able to rely on the legitimacy and authority of their position in global politics to actively defend their

continued existence. Especially through its AVRR programming, the IOM defends its existence by shaping perceptions of the nature of migrant flows and how states must respond to them. The IOM’s authoritative assertion that AVRR is “an indispensable part of a comprehensive approach to migration management,”\textsuperscript{50} carries within the assertion the implicit argument that without such programming, states are managing migration incorrectly, which itself is a form of productive power described below. As the most visible, legitimate and authoritative provider of such services, the ‘indispensability’ of AVRR translates into the indispensability of the IOM in a very tangible way. Making this assertion (that the IOM was indispensable) a decade ago would have been laughable; the rapid increase in the intensiveness and extensiveness of AVRR programming forces us to consider it seriously.

Second, the IOM has considerable material resources with which to effect change on both migrant flows and on states themselves. AVRR programming represents the primary responsibility for in-country IOM offices throughout Europe, where there is the highest concentration of IOM-managed AVRR programming. The 90 million euro migration management operating budget facilitates AVRR programming in nearly forty European countries (and it is important to recall that, by comparison, voluntary return is roughly one-tenth as costly as deportation). Cost effectiveness can be a powerful argument as well.

\textbf{Institutional Power:} The IOM’s technical competence and particular capacity in managing AVRR programming has allowed it to establish through practice how AVRR is a vital and necessary component of state programming, and in cooperation with the

\textsuperscript{50} International Organization for Migration. “Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration” Online resource: http://www.iom.int/assisted-voluntary-return-and-reintegration
European Union’s interest in corralling member states on migration-related issues, has leveraged its technical capacity into institutional power, where institutional power is seen as one part of the institutional-productive cycle that I described in the introduction: the IOM is actively using its institutional processes to both manage migration and develop narratives which represent productive power, which in turn have provided for greater capacity to affect migration. Despite its project-based funding, the IOM maintains institutional knowledge and applies that knowledge in consistent ways in projects which, while funded independently, fill the same basic capacity void. The very specialized knowledge and procedures AVRR programming requires, plus the continued state interest in facilitating the removals of migrants from state territory, have combined to allow to IOM to stake out a particular position in which it is needed by numerous members of the international community. As the discussion of productive power below notes, the IOM has capitalized on its institutional capacity to effect change in the area of AVRR, and this harnessing of the productive power of a discourse which it has had a large role in creating in turn contributes to strengthening institutional power vis-à-vis the governance of return.

In addition, this is likely to be persistent: the cost effectiveness of having a specialized organization contribute to the return of migrants contributes to the organization’s staying power. If there is a trend in the international environment for states to become more restrictive on immigration (as the current populist atmosphere in the developed world suggests might be the case), the IOM has staying power because it can contribute to managing those impulses, while potentially altering over time what is meant by ‘sustainable return’ and reinforcing the notion that the more states invest in reintegration funding and monitoring, the greater the likelihood that migrants will not seek to return to
the host country (and also, the greater the likelihood that a specialized organization like the IOM will continue to be contracted by the state for its cross-border capacity – and authority – to monitor reintegration successes and failures).

**Productive Power:** As other scholars referenced above have pointed out, the IOM, through its AVRR programming, does seem to produce, or at least reinforce, state and policymaker understandings as to what constitutes return, migrants that are eligible for return, the nature of voluntariness and the thin barrier between it and deportation, and so forth. By defining what constitutes sustainable migration practices, the IOM also defines what is irregular or undesirable, both on the part of the state and in the conduct of the migrant – the state must at least tacitly provide an environment in which the migrant is not compelled to leave due to financial or personal insecurity, and the migrant must commit to remaining within their country of origin and establishing a life there if there is sufficient opportunity to do so. With regard to AVRR, the IOM identified a problem and solution (to paraphrase Barnett and Finnemore\(^{51}\)), neither of which were novel or new to states, and brought a particular institutional capacity which has convinced states over the past two decades to utilize this external capacity on a greater and greater level.

The IOM’s involvement in return has defined what is a returnable migrant and which migrants are ineligible for return under IOM protocols. Its involvement has pushed beyond this to produce a second ‘R’ in the form of reintegration, to which it brings a specialized capacity, as it often operates in both the host country and country of origin, and theoretically could provide very close monitoring of returned migrants if reintegration is increasingly accepted by states as a priority. The likelihood that it will be depends on the

\(^{51}\) Barnett and Finnemore. 2005: 179
acceptance of the IOM’s definition of sustainable return, which emphasizes reintegration monitoring. A discourse of sustainable return implies the need for transnational monitoring, something the IOM might be best positioned to provide. As the next chapter describes, although this capacity is in its infancy, the acceptance of sustainable return into the Global Compact for Migration and its frequent appearance in EU policy documents are suggestive of the productive ‘successes’ of the IOM on the issue.

**Structural Power:** The degree to which IOM-managed AVRR alters structural power relations is questionable given the relatively small size of the programming effort in comparison to the sheer number of migrants in the world and the ultimate variability in the conditions they face as they pass through multiple and overlapping layers of migration governance. However, in a certain respect, the European Union’s need and support for IOM-managed AVRR has vaulted the organization and this management type to prominence, arguably lifting its legitimacy as a newer, human rights-sensitive, yet still restrictive, way by which migration can be governed under principles emanating from efforts at institutional coordination and cooperation, rather than disparate preferences of states loosely informed by international society. Structural power is linked to larger questions of the relationships between states, organizations, and other actors, and the fluidity with which the actors involved in migration (especially migrants themselves) both enter and exit the debate forces us to leave this discussion here. There is an argument to be made about the structural forces that are being brought to bear on migrants themselves, and this is perceptible in part through the processes of IOM-managed AVRR, but this sits beyond the scope of this dissertation.
In addition, the types of power involved in, and uncovered through, IOM-managed AVRR programming, it is also useful to reflect upon the types of authority exercised by the IOM specifically in the context of implementing AVRR, based on operational outcomes. The rational-legal authority of the IOM has been presented in the previous chapter. While projectization presents some limitations on the overall ability of the organization to assert independence with regard to policymaking (perhaps even law-making), with regard to AVRR that type of contractual authority may be advantageous: it allows states to assert continued sovereign control over migration policy (as the contractual agreements made with the IOM are often for specific services), while taking advantage of the institutional capacity the state has. This, in turn, has allowed the IOM to become a legitimate source of migration management services in successive countries which also seek the sovereignty/capacity balance, and this succession reinforces the other forms of authority which Barnett and Finnemore address.

With regard to delegated authority, the IOM has essentially filled a void with its AVRR programming. Although AVRR programming does not generally require large numbers of staff, the IOM is rapidly increasing in size and AVRR programs are rapidly increasing with regard to their utilization. States that gave up on AVRR programming in the post-guest worker period did not generally seek to maintain those programs, and those states also do not have the authority to manage the reintegration of returners directly, something that would come right up against the sovereignty norm which IOM-managed AVRR manages to tiptoe around (indeed, while there are concerns about the reach of United States customs enforcement officials and EU Frontex programming into other states’ migrant populations...
from a distance, it is difficult to imagine a general acceptance of intrusive reintegration monitoring on a state-to-state basis).

In one particular way, the moral authority of the IOM as it relates to AVRR is significant: as opposed to the process of deportation, and the degradation of individual dignity that the process necessarily entails (both leading up to, during, and after deportation proceedings themselves), the IOM stakes a strong claim to managing a program type which accomplishes restrictive state objectives through practices that are aligned much more clearly with prevailing human rights norms at the international level. Returned migrants under IOM-managed processes are not arrested, are provided with commercial flights back to their country of origin and provisions for at least the days of travel, and in some cases, reintegration funding which might tie the migrant more closely to the country of origin.

Outside of this, IOM-managed AVRR programming suffers from many of the issues described in the previous chapter, especially with regard to transparency. The simple lack of comprehensive data coming from the IOM about AVRR programming undermines the moral credibility of the organization, when it is already seen to be compromised in some ways because of its project-based funding mechanism.

The IOM also has unparalleled expert authority when it comes to AVRR programming. Although individual programs outside of IOM’s purview, like those managed in the United Kingdom, are relatively large in terms of returns in their own right, the IOM is a single most prominent, most legitimate provider of AVRR services to states, and has staked out a unique position as an international organization which has comprehensive control over a particular type of migrant return process in a rapidly increasing number of countries. The next chapter will describe how in specific cases the IOM has managed to coordinate
between country offices with regard to office-setup and training, and the ways in which the IOM maintains centralized control over AVRR programming in a way that lends it the expert authority that might otherwise be attributed to international organizations which address other issue areas.

Finally, in a category not formally addressed by the framework provided by Barnett and Finnemore, but quite relevant to forms of authority, the democratic nature of the authority that IOM-managed AVRR programming exerts is quite questionable. There is, upon reflection, a significant democratic deficit at work in the form of programming that the IOM undertakes, and this comes out especially clearly in the case of AVRR. As the IOM is supported through project-based funding which allows individual states to see the return of certain migrants from their territories, states are potentially less likely to need to cooperate on readmission of individual migrants: voluntary returns ultimately means that the migrant is legally responsible for their entry into the country of origin, despite organizational assistance. As these processes are coordinated by a single organization but separately in each state in which it operates, certain states have augmented their ability to create return, in effect, return migration without the cooperation necessary to effect deportations.

An objection to this line of thought might state that readmission to the country of origin is one basic, accepted right acknowledged widely in the international community – yet, individual states’ sovereign ‘right’ to delineate the how, where and when of this process is superseded by organizational facilitation of migrant return. More cynically, some sending states are far less likely to ‘want’ their citizens back, but have a reduced capacity to interact on a global level on the basic policy issue at heart when migrants are, technically, simply,
returning themselves to their country of origin – this is ultimately an example of the structural power pressing on some states that is generated in part as a result of the evolving power and authority expressed in the processes of migration management.
Chapter 4

INTRA-ORGANIZATIONAL VIEWS OF ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION AT THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION

Assisted voluntary return and reintegration programs operating across Europe and beyond are generating renewed discussion about the purpose and nature of alternative forms of migrant return and how citizens, leaders, academics and migrants themselves might be able to understand them in the context of migration governance. As referenced in the previous chapter, much of the literature on AVRR programs to date\(^1\) has centered on case studies of particular programs in specific countries, such as the United Kingdom, Belgium, Slovakia, and so on. These case studies have been particularly useful in providing a basis for comparison with regard to programmatic similarities and differences across contexts. However, these case studies have, on the whole, only briefly touched upon, or attempted to link, local realities and how these might be interpreted in the context of a discussion on global governance – especially with regard to how closely and whether local IOM practices correspond to wider organizational expectations.

The goal of this chapter is to move beyond the case study approach which has been, to this point, the primary tool in analyzing the progressive development of AVRR programs. The case study approach coincides to some degree with a prior emphasis on understanding

\(^1\) With the work of Anne Koch and Katie Kuschminder as notable exceptions; see Koch. 2014; Kuschminder. 2017.
the work of the IOM as heavily dependent on the nature of individual contracts with individual states. As the overarching logic of this dissertation suggests that there is coordination on migration management services which sit at a level beyond the state, relying on case studies alone is insufficient. Rather, this chapter seeks to combine observations about AVRR programming from a variety of angles. To do this, the chapter is oriented around comparing the intra-organizational ‘view from above’ to the ‘view from below’: what are the expressed policy goals of the IOM with regard to AVRR programming writ large, and how do local IOM staff in three state-based contexts perceive their role as staff of the IOM in carrying out AVRR programming (in addition to the operational details they can provide about how their local office pursues AVRR programming). Rather than treating the countries of Cyprus, Greece and Malta as merely individual, isolated contexts, each of which having contracted for AVRR-related services, this chapter’s approach is to compare the centralized IOM approach to AVRR to local IOM staff understandings of the approach and the visible ways in which the IOM is organized to carry out that programming as a single organization. This chapter does bring the migration literature up-to-date on the status of AVRR programs in Malta, Cyprus and Greece amid wider and ever-changing migration dynamics, but it also attempts to move the discussion of AVRR programs in global governance literature forward by providing an understanding of the practice of migration management within the IOM by using these contexts as examples.

To do this, I reflect on interviews with IOM staff and publicly available data produced by the IOM and associated organizations in order to generate the ‘view from above’: a picture of what the purpose and processes of IOM-managed AVRR are supposed to look like, how it is seen to play out at the level of headquarters, and how this might be put into
some perspective through the consideration of four thematic topic areas which I pursued in interviews with IOM staff. Then, I turn to three countries about which I have had the chance to interview IOM staff engaged with AVRR programming in local contexts, and for which I have had the opportunity to collect data on the wider migration dynamics in which those states are situated. I describe the general environment and conditions affecting migration processes in each country, and then elaborate on the nature of the IOM-managed AVRR programs operating in each country. Then, I consider how IOM operations in these three states touch upon the four thematic topics referenced above. Finally, a discussion of the program in the context of both local and global constraints will pull together the literature, the data available, and the organizational perspectives.

As argued earlier in this dissertation, the choice of the three countries is not random, but rather quite intentional, and not based strictly on traditional ‘most-similar’ or ‘most-different’ criteria in a comparative fashion. First, some choices have to be made about the feasibility of any study for the researcher involved; I have had more regular access to the three case countries than any others. More significantly, these three countries represent, as others have put it, the “frontier” countries of the European Union, and they also represent the countries that have the highest deportation-to-admittance rates, and among the highest overall deportation rates, in the Western world. One of the expressly-stated reasons throughout the interviews conducted and the documents reviewed as to why the IOM, UNHCR and EU provide strong backing for AVRR programming is a concerted effort to

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3 Wong. 2015.
reduce traditional types of deportations (and all of the attendant difficulties posed to the migrants involved which go along with those deportations). As the following discussions of each country shows, AVRR programs may achieve the objectives of both the group of international organizations backing their expansion, and the states which have (at least among those states in the developed world) been most concerned with irregular migrant removal. Study of these three countries provides a good window not only into how local IOM offices understand their roles in comparison to the organizational perspective on AVRR, but also on how IOM-EU-member state cooperation ‘works’ locally. Together, these provide a good understanding of a form of global migration management which may well provide a template for future forms.

**International Organization for Migration and the “View from Above”**

The following analysis of the IOM’s organizational orientation towards AVRR programming is based primarily on open-source data available on the IOM website, its publications available online and in print, and interviews with IOM staff, including those stationed at IOM headquarters in Geneva with responsibility for and awareness of AVRR programming. As I will strive to demonstrate below, the IOM does not simply serve as, nor does its staff view the organization as, a service provider to states. Indeed, IOM staff and IOM publications acknowledge the degree to which the IOM has been quite active in crafting its own legitimacy through participation in global processes linked to migration policy, through its extensive experience providing increasingly refined and standardized types of programming to states and through its visible and vocal advocacy for increasingly globalized approaches to migration management and policy (the Global Compact for Migration, the Migration Governance Framework, etc.), approaches which would
presumably necessitate the continuing active participation of the IOM itself. That is, through its increasing expert authority, the IOM produces or assists in the production of discourses and governance environments in which their participation is vital. The inclusion of references to voluntary return programming in the Global Compact for Migration are indicative of the degree to which IOM is closely involved in the production of what global consensus on migration-related issues there is.⁴

Throughout the organization, the IOM advocates for sustainable return, emphasizing the degree to which the organization’s long experience with implementing return programming in host states has led to lessons regarding (what is presumed to be) the relatively low success rates of reintegration programming. In interviews with IOM staff,⁵ there is a recurrent, clearly-articulated statement as to the need for the sustainability of migrant return for those states that engage in return, in which case sustainability is intended to mean that migrants, once returned, stay in their country of origin as opposed to re-migrating – there is a coherence to IOM messaging on this point that is highly productive. To this end, the IOM (though emphasizing the decentralized nature of the projects through which the IOM works in any given state) provides significant levels of operational guidance to local and regional offices with responsibility for those projects.

This operational guidance, described in greater detail below and in the case-specific discussions which follow, is accompanied now by the IOM’s recently published “Framework for Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration,” a document which outlines

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⁴ Global Compact for Migration, Objective 21

⁵ Author Interviews with International Organization for Migration officials in Valletta, Malta (June 2017), Nicosia, Cyprus (July 2017), Geneva, Switzerland (June 2018)
six major objectives for AVRR programming and justifies said programming under international law – in some sense, standardizing the case for IOM AVRR management despite the project-based nature of AVRR programming in each state. The IOM purports its Framework to be:

“…a road map to address voluntary return and reintegration in a holistic way – one that responds to the needs of the individual returnees, the needs of the communities to which they return and the priorities of concerned governments, calling for the adoption of coordinated measures, policies, and practices between stakeholders responsible for migration management and development at the international, national and local levels.”

Although the Framework does not delve too deeply into operational details, it does provide an important window into the IOM’s orientation towards AVRR, as one that sees the programming type as significant enough to justify global coordination (and, indeed, to explicitly call for a global funding mechanism) and an application of cross-case standards that the IOM itself is most capable of creating. At the same time, the Framework clearly stakes out a position for AVRR in international law as resting on two normative ‘pillars’ known to conflict at times in other areas of international policymaking: the protection of the rights of migrants as derived from a constellation of human rights agreements and conventions on the one hand, and the norm of state sovereignty on the other.


The Framework also describes the seven principles around which AVRR work must be structured (according to the IOM):

Principle 1: Voluntariness
Principle 2: Migrant-centred response
Principle 3: Safety
Principle 4: Sustainability of reintegration
Principle 5: Confidentiality
Principle 6: Dialogue and Partnerships
Principle 7: Evidence-based programming

While most of the interviews conducted with IOM staff for this dissertation occurred prior to the publication of the Framework in 2018, the Framework’s delineation of these seven guiding principles of AVRR programming provides to some extent a convenient, but lopsided programmatic guidelines for analysis of AVRR programming. Instead, as is reflected below, I organized discussion somewhat differently, though with expressed IOM priorities in mind. Much of the rest of the Framework itself is divided into objectives regarding AVRR that are to be achieved at a global level by the international community, and these are weighted towards efforts at capacity-building for the reintegration aspects of AVRR. Six primary objectives are outlined:

1. Migrants can make an informed decision and take ownership of the voluntary return process
2. Migrants reach their countries of origin in a safe and dignified manner
3. Returnees are able to overcome individual challenges impacting their reintegration
4. Communities have the capacity to provide an enabling environment for reintegration
5. Adequate policies and public services are in place to address the specific needs of returnees and communities alike
6. Migrant vulnerabilities are addressed throughout the voluntary return and reintegration process

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As will be noted below, several of these objectives sit beyond the current capacity of the IOM to achieve, even as the principal organization dedicated to bringing about and then carrying out AVRR programming. However, throughout the Framework, extended descriptions of its objectives, and other IOM publications, there is a clear sense of IOM ‘ownership’ of the advocacy over global AVRR efforts, and consistent reinforcement of the balancing act the IOM must perform vis-à-vis state interest in maintaining sovereign control over “the ultimate say” with regard to migrant removal, and acting in the spirit of global norms surrounding human rights.

In formulating an approach to the IOM as a potential ‘top-down’ force in migration governance, and prior to conducting interviews with IOM staff members, I have crafted a series of categories of inquiry which were thought to better organize and illuminate just how the IOM operates in the absence of detailed public reporting. The nature of IOM headquarters-level operations vis-à-vis its AVRR programming, and its internal justifications for any centralized approach that had been developed, were of greatest interest, and to that end, I have developed the following lines of inquiry, each of which will be visited in turn:

- **Topic 1: AVRR Policymaking**
- **Topic 2: IOM Operational Autonomy on Returns**
- **Topic 3: Reintegration Program Implementation and Monitoring**
- **Topic 4: IOM Organizational Structure**

**Topic 1 - AVRR Policymaking:** First, the degree to which the IOM assists states in crafting actual AVRR policies (crafting the laws necessary to enable AVRR programming themselves) goes largely unmentioned in literature. Although specific laws and sets of laws that have been passed prior to the implementation of returns are referenced, there is little known about the degree to which the IOM actually helps states bring AVRR into
national law. In addition, the distinction between surrogate policymaking, policymaking assistance, and capacity-building with regard to migration policymaking has not received careful treatment in this context. Part of the reason for this is the lack of sources on these issues: as previously mentioned in this dissertation, the agreements and contracts signed between the IOM and states are privileged and are not generally available to the public – this clouds to a great degree to scope of IOM involvement in any one particular context.

However, certain commonalities can be observed across contexts through the case study approach, and in addition, closer observation of headquarters-level information sources (open-sources and interviews) helps to reveal to a greater extent the scope of the IOM-state relationship on policymaking. Interviews indicate that the IOM provides policymaking assistance to states when states request assistance, and this extends to policymaking. Though a significant level of deference is given to the state with regard to the processes of developing laws in organic ways in national legislatures, states that have requested assistance are provided with guidance as to the form and content of those laws. In addition, the IOM maintains a close partnership with the European Union and was, according to its own staff, “very involved” with the development of the EU Return Directive (calling upon states, in part, to develop AVRR policies) which passed through the European Parliament and the Council in 2008\textsuperscript{10}, heavily pushing for an EU-wide standard on return which has led to the implementation of IOM-led AVRR programming in virtually every European member state.\textsuperscript{11}


\textsuperscript{11} Author Interview with International Organization for Migration staff, Geneva, Switzerland, June 2018
Indeed, the AVRR Framework that has been published in recent months provides the basic rationale and standards (though not at an operational level) for the implementation of AVRR programming by states, while simultaneously highlighting the capacity of the IOM to be a central player in making this programming a reality. As the discussions below will note, however, many of the standards that the IOM highlights in the Framework document itself remain a work-in-progress in terms of the IOM’s capacity to provide enough functional assistance to actually bring about the intended policy outcomes. Reintegration sustainability, for example, is an area for which IOM staff at multiple levels indicate there is a lack of institutional knowledge at the statistical level which might justify a determination that there has been ‘success’ with regard to the sustainability of reintegration programming already in effect.¹²

Topic 2 – IOM Operational Autonomy on Returns: In general, once national laws on AVRR have been adopted, the IOM is not required to seek formal approval from the state in which it is operating on an individual basis for returning migrants. When asked about this point, IOM staff in Geneva reported that an individual approval where the state must confirm the eligibility of individual migrants to receive return assistance is the “exception, not the rule.”¹³ While each project-level agreement made with each state ultimately outlines the process for returns, this process is largely managed in the same or similar way across states which have project agreements with the IOM.

¹² Author interview with International Organization for Migration staff, Geneva, Switzerland, June 2018

¹³ Ibid.
Importantly, this autonomy means that the IOM is able to then transfer ‘involvement’ in returns beyond the organization itself through its contracting of a variety of other organizations and service providers which help to enable returns. Formal contracts with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) developed within the scope of the project agreement made with states leads to the provision of services to migrants awaiting return (shelter, for example) that involve third-party organizations. Memoranda of understanding are also developed when NGO or other service-providers are required to provide assistance on individual cases.\textsuperscript{14}

Topic 3 – Reintegration Programming Implementation and Monitoring: By far, one of the topics that IOM staff appeared most concerned about and conflicted over was that of reintegration programming. Although there is a fairly straightforward process involved in enabling voluntary returns, the provision of reintegration assistance necessitates, from the organization’s point of view, the IOM to operate across borders. While in the case of returns, the IOM could theoretically arrange for room and board for departing migrants until their departure, assist with the acquisition of travel documents, purchase airline tickets and escort migrants to their flight, the responsibility for the individual ‘return’ stops upon the migrant’s departure. Coupling return and reintegration, however, implies that the IOM has a transnational responsibility in AVRR: for both seeing to it that the individual migrant is provided return assistance and leaves Country B in dignity, and also has the ability upon arrival in Country A to maintain themselves and have a strong chance to become a successful and contributing member of that society – a much taller order. IOM staff are,

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
indeed, quite aware of the global implications of this responsibility and its link to helping
to address the transnational ‘problem’ of re-emigrating returnees.

The IOM staff that were interviewed for this project view the organization as being far
more dependent on donor countries and the European Union when shaping reintegration
programming than with regard to its return policymaking assistance. While return
policymaking and the implementation of return programming has provided the IOM with
a fairly clear-cut niche from which it has begun to establish a significant presence in global
migration management, the organization remains quite closely tied to the interests of donor
states on reintegration. Although there is a centralized process within the IOM geared
towards determining the eligibility of individual migrants for reintegration assistance, with
case workers evaluating individual cases being managed by IOM Europe, donor states are
more careful with the provision of funds which essentially help individual migrants start
new businesses or to go to school in their country of origin. The European Union, and
specifically the Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development (DG
DevCo), have sought to partner with the IOM on reintegration in pursuit of the creation of
an integrated approach to the issue: the creation and maintenance of a more robust
transnational capacity to track reintegration success indicators. However, “the project
document rules.”

The discourse of reintegration sustainability is one that comes in part due to the interest
at the IOM of developing additional transnational capacity to monitor migrant reintegration
at a greater level of independence from the project documents, and the push for a global,

15 Ibid.
regularly-budgeted source of funding for AVRR coincides with this discourse. However, the discourse also is a call for all interested parties to invest to a greater degree in reintegration funding specifically, it seems, because the IOM simply does not have the organizational capacity to monitor reintegration outcomes to the degree it would like, or to the degree that would match and provide statistical support for the claims which imply a normative good that successful and sustained reintegration might bring to the individual migrant, the society of the country of origin, the state and the global community. IOM staff note that several monitoring and evaluation projects have been in existence for some time, but that the data collected for these was largely relevant at an operational level, and quite poorly maintained for the purposes of developing transnational statistics on the long-term success of reintegration programming. A newer approach, labeled the Migration Management Operational System Application (MIMOSA) project, allows for a closer tracking of specific demographic and other indicators, is a project based at IOM headquarters, and one that sees incoming data and its ready analysis result in the production of internal guidance to reintegration case managers. 16

Topic 4 – IOM Organizational Structure: The fourth topic that was pursued in interviews and in sorting through publicly-available data was greater clarity on the nature of the IOM’s organizational structure and its relevance in AVRR programming. The assumption in much migration literature about the IOM has been that it is essentially hamstrung by its funding mechanism and case-dependent project agreements. Yet, there is power in forms of institutional organization which create both in practice and in discourse standardized approaches across contexts to commonly-defined problems, and the

16 Ibid.
IOM appears to do just this – this is a reflection of both the institutional and productive power of the IOM when implementing AVRR, as discussed in the previous chapter. In addition to its increased visibility and agency in structuring the terms of the migration governance debate playing out at the United Nations and elsewhere, the organizational structure of the IOM provides a clue as to the degree to which the organization really is consolidating an approach to AVRR which represents “the” approach to AVRR.

IOM staff emphasize the decentralized nature of its programming given the funding mechanism but are quick to highlight the fact that a significant number of guidelines and standards are issued by IOM headquarters itself. There is, for instance, a regional thematic specialist in each regional office which seeks to maintain organization-wide standards on AVRR. In addition, IOM headquarters has had a long history of releasing informal guidance notes, and IOM staff note that increasingly these memoranda are taking the form of more concrete standards which regional and local offices are expected to follow while achieving the objectives of the project agreements themselves.\textsuperscript{17} The addition to this dynamic of a unified Framework for AVRR programming is suggestive of an emerging transition at the IOM towards exerting greater and more consistent control over how local offices attend to the requirements of the project agreements which have been signed.

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The view from above, then, is a picture of an organization that understands itself as exerting significant authority over return-related migration. Though it remains conflicted over the projectized budgeting which has long been the source of claims by academics and policymakers that the IOM is essentially a weak international organization, this

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid.
conflict primarily impacts its ability to provide reintegration programming in consistent and extensive ways; it does not, however, prevent the IOM from having considerable normative impacts on the nature of return programming and the ability of the organization to provide clear normative guidance to the global community as to the foundations and basic principles of this type of programming. This being said, it is important to compare the view from above with the understanding of AVRR programming in local IOM offices, which undertake the vast majority of day-to-day contacts with migrants themselves, and which have long been thought to enjoy a significant degree of operational autonomy.

The International Organization for Migration and the “View from Below”

The following sections account for the development, implementation and operation of AVRR programming in Malta, Cyprus and Greece. In each section, a brief look at contextual migration dynamics relevant for the case is provided, followed by a more detailed description of the AVRR programming itself. The review of contextual dynamics is important: though this dissertation is ultimately seeking to build a case for global migration management, this means quite little unless the relevance for global approaches is understood through local lenses, and this requires some degree of understanding of the local pressures faced by states and how they are understood by the IOM itself.

The ‘view from below’ should not be taken to suggest that what is provided is an account from migrants themselves: rather, a heavy emphasis will be an evaluation of IOM practices, operational outcomes and perspectives centered on AVRR programming, and how these may relate to wider organizational dynamics. Given the degree to which the IOM is considered in the literature to be a decentralized organization, an analysis of the
orientation of the outlying offices towards AVRR programming practices and standards is crucial in developing a clearer picture of the IOM’s overall relationship to something that I will characterize as global migration management. I proceed first with an evaluation of each of the three state contexts under consideration, and then follow this with a discussion of how IOM staff in each of the three contexts might compare collectively vis-à-vis perspective and approach to the above listed topic areas to the ‘top-down’ approaches emanating from IOM headquarters in Geneva.

Malta

AVRR programming in Malta predates the involvement of the International Organization for Migration and includes a period during which multiple organizations were involved in the same basic effort: to encourage irregular and vulnerable migrants present on Maltese territory to leave prior to being subject to removal proceedings. Though this was the case for the mid-to-late 2000s, the 2010s have seen the IOM dominate voluntary return in Malta. Although in absolute numbers the volume of returnees from Malta has been quite small, the salience of the migrant issue in Malta, its physical proximity to sending states of the southern Mediterranean, and Malta’s small population has meant that return has played an outsized role in politics, something which has had definitive effects on the form of migration management in that country. In this section, Malta’s overall migration picture is discussed first, followed by a focused look at voluntary return programming in that country.

Malta Migration Picture

For most of the twentieth-century, Malta was considered to be a country of net emigration. Large-scale outflows, especially to Australia, occurred in the period
immediately following World War II, and continued until the late-1990’s.\textsuperscript{18} Although emigration of Maltese citizens continues (with perennial concerns about the departure of highly-skilled workers, especially medical personnel, which have created labor shortages in certain sectors), issues of immigration now instead dominate Maltese domestic politics.\textsuperscript{19}

The accession of Malta to the European Union in 2004 provided pathways to non-Maltese European citizens to come to the island to reside in larger numbers than before. However, it was the “relatively new phenomenon”\textsuperscript{20} of boat migrants coming from North Africa that became “one of the highest-profile public-sphere issues in… Malta.”\textsuperscript{21} The large-scale (several thousands annually, which is large-scale for a country with just over 400,000 residents) migration of primarily sub-Saharan African migrants to Malta began to dominate news cycles there, and by 2015, immigration topped the political concerns of Maltese citizens, following only economic issues in a Eurobarometer survey of political attitudes.\textsuperscript{22} As Pisani and Giustiani write in a report prepared for the European Migration Network, Malta is “seen as a transit point to mainland Europe for most of the migrants”\textsuperscript{23}

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\textsuperscript{18} International Organization for Migration. 2016. “Migration in Malta: Country Profile 2015” (online resource)

\textsuperscript{19} International Organization for Migration. 2016. “Migration in Malta: Country Profile 2015” (online resource)

\textsuperscript{20} Pisani, Maria and Anna Giustiani. 2009. “Programmes and Strategies in Malta Fostering Assisted Return to and Re-integration in Third Countries,” European Migration Network – National Contact Point for Malta. Online resource.


\textsuperscript{22} International Organization for Migration. 2016. “Migration in Malta: Country Profile 2015” Online resource: 13

\textsuperscript{23} Pisani and Giustiani. 2009: 7
\end{flushleft}
arriving in the country and therefore Malta is not perceived as a destination for migrants by either the migrants or the public. Indeed, according to a UNHCR report discussed in the IOM’s annual country profile of Malta in 2015, of the 19,000 boat migrants coming from Libya between 2002 and 2014, only an estimated 30% remained in Malta, with many departing through ‘informal channels,’ or through resettlement programs elsewhere in Europe and in the United States.24

Given the very public awareness of the immigration issue, and the visibility of the rapid change in the nature of migrant flows after accession (Malta is a very small set of islands with, partially as a result, the highest population density in Europe; it also has a number of highly-visible ‘sites’ of migrant activity), numerous scholars have already considered how it is that the Maltese public (and state) have sought to institute and manage migration policy in reaction. Mark-Anthony Falzon writes that “sub-Saharan ‘boat’ immigrants have emerged as the prime unwanted guests,” in Malta, and that their public image as “transients and sojourners rather than as settlers,”25 is something actively produced and reinforced by the Maltese state. There are several practical ways in which the Maltese state is said to do this. The months-long detention period in “prison-like conditions” for all incoming migrants, followed by stays in open centers which are both highly-visible and barely-


regulated, both combine to create an image of the ‘foreign’ boat migrants for the Maltese people, and the “Othering” that occurs as the result of this image alone is identifiable in news media, where the “klandestini” dominate discussion.

However, both Falzon and Cetta Mainwaring, who writes of both Malta and Cyprus, note the ways that the Mediterranean island states themselves are seen to manufacture certain threatening images of migrants and migration, in ways that impact policymaking both at the national and EU level. Falzon writes that the threat in national politics is “based on a set of orthodoxies that posit Malta as small, vulnerable and isolated,”28 with politicians questioning the sustainability of migration for small states generally, and for Malta specifically. At the EU level, Mainwaring writes that Malta (along with Cyprus) has argued that it “(carries) a ‘disproportionate burden’ of asylum applications and irregular immigration in the EU,” and that there is “symbolic capital” in the fact that both states are small.29 Mainwaring points out two structural vulnerabilities for Malta (and Cyprus) in the larger region and European Union which has permitted them to create a restrictive migration policy argument that works both at home and at the EU, and these are reflected by Falzon. Mainwaring refers to the two countries’ status as islands, and their small size,

26 Indeed, Falzon writes that these open centers create a general impression of “impermanence and vulnerability,” (1672), reinforcing the narrative that boat migrants are in transit and that Malta is not their home.

27 Falzon. 2012: 1663

28 Falzon. 2012: 1662

while Falzon’s “islandness” and discussion of sustainability is reflected by these. The argument is that politicians have taken the migration issue and used it to create restrictive migration policies at home, and have had success influencing the development of EU migration policy which reinforces the needs of (especially small) states.

**AVRR in Malta**

It is in the above context that AVRR in Malta was first introduced and this is crucially important for understanding the AVRR program there. Malta’s domestic politics are consumed by the migration issue, and Malta’s politicians have been shown to be quite skilled in placing the ‘responsibility’ for managing the issue at the European level, something reflected, at the very least, by the funding provided AVRR programs initially through the European Return Fund, and more recently through AMIF. While Malta’s position on the return of unwanted migrants has been clear since the migrant flows started, according to Pisani and Giustiani the “IOM was the first organisation to introduce the idea of assisted voluntary return in Malta and has played a crucial role within the setting up and implementation of assisted voluntary return in Malta.”

Pisani and Giustiani write of the numerous initial instantiations of AVRR-type programs in Malta, but write quite clearly that “the desire to return (among Sub-Saharan African migrants in Malta) is rather weak and seems to correlate with the poor conditions in certain African countries of origin.”

Going further, they note that the observation that the island is perceived by both migrants

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30 Pisani and Giustiani. 2009: 8

31 Pisani and Giustiani. 2009: 7
and Maltese citizens as a migration transit point rather than as a destination “plays against assisted voluntary return being perceived as a desirable return option,”\textsuperscript{32} by the migrants.

The Maltese AVRR programs have been managed by the IOM for well over a decade, initially from the regional IOM office in Rome, and beginning in 2007, directly from an office just outside Valletta. Unlike in Cyprus, where IOM activity is limited to AVRR and some resettlements, the IOM is responsible for resettlements of refugees, relocations of asylum-seeking populations to Malta from other EU countries, counter-trafficking initiatives, and the implementation of the USRAP program in Malta.\textsuperscript{33} The current set of Maltese AVRR programs are managed in term programs authorized under Maltese law titled “RESTART,” with RESTART VI having been implemented in July 2016 and scheduled to run through 2019, at which point the program (and the IOM’s services) will be evaluated and renewed by the government in a new project agreement.

Malta’s RESTART AVRR program is quite small by comparison to countries like Greece or Italy, having assisted in the return of just over 300 migrants since the year 2009, and unlike in Cyprus or Greece, the visibility of the program is quite limited. In an interview with the author, IOM staff acknowledged that a migrant information center was never instituted in Malta, and that the primary method of communication about the program and its availability to vulnerable migrants is through the word of mouth, open and closed meetings at local council centers, and the distribution of materials in migrant shelters and

\textsuperscript{32} Pisani and Giustiani. 2009: 7

\textsuperscript{33} Author interview with International Organization for Migration staff in Valletta, Malta, June 2017
centers. Information sessions are held quite frequently according to the IOM Malta website, providing information to migrants directly from IOM Malta headquarters roughly every two months.

Beyond the EU and the Maltese government, other stakeholders in the AVRR program in Malta consist largely of NGOs that participate in returns on a case-by-case basis. Increasingly, cases are referred from local hospitals. IOM Malta staff were also candid in explaining that the office is heavily involved in organizing reintegration funding for certain eligible migrants, though they noted that the donors (the EU and the Maltese government) are extremely strict with what qualifies as an eligible use of reintegration funding; migrants can receive up to EURO3600, but the project must be certified by both the forward office (in the country of origin) and by the donors directly. Indeed, more than in Cyprus and Greece, IOM Malta staff greatly emphasize the degree of oversight projected from IOM coordinating offices in Brussels and elsewhere had over standard operating procedures and maintaining consistency.

Cyprus

In Cyprus, AVRR is a relatively young program, having been legalized by the House of Representatives only in the year 2011, and not actually coming into formal existence until the latter half of the year 2015. As in most other European Union states, the Cyprus AVRR program is co-funded by the European Union and the state itself, at a ratio of 75% to 25%,

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34 Interview with IOM Malta staff, June 2017


36 Interview with IOM Malta staff, June 2017
with the bulk of the funds coming from the EU’s Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), and it has been implemented and managed by the IOM. It is important to view the Cyprus AVRR program, as with AVRR programs in other states, in the context of the wider migration policy picture in the country, and therefore this section will firstly review relevant migration policy issues in the country, before proceeding to detail the AVRR program and its impacts on Cyprus to-date. One should also note that the migration issue in Cyprus, like most political issues there, is significantly complicated by the division of the island of Cyprus into a government-controlled area in the south, a de-facto Turkish Cypriot administration in the north, and two sovereign British base territories on the southern coast. The migration picture in the north of Cyprus is largely unknown in the literature, and the sea-born ‘border’ is thought to be rather porous in several places, especially in recent months and years. This section looks at the AVRR program as instituted in the Republic of Cyprus, which de facto only controls the southern two-thirds of the island despite its widely acknowledged de jure claim to the entire island.

Cyprus Migration Picture

Geographically, Cyprus represents one of the natural eastern borders for the European Union, although its location outside the Schengen zone has meant that it has not been the principle destination for migrants fleeing the Middle East, especially following the intensification of the conflict in Syria in 2015 and the massive flows which proceeded mostly through Turkey and into Schengen-member state Greece. Cyprus does receive several hundred irregular migrants each year that arrive (or, more frequently, are dumped) on its shores by traffickers, but its non-EU migrant population, and the source of its irregular migrant popular, is primarily composed of third country nationals that are or have
been employed in the domestic service, tourism, agriculture and construction industries, and have overstayed their initial visa terms. Although in some EU member states the majority of irregular migrants are failed asylum-seekers, in Cyprus the majority are actually overstays.

As noted by Zachariades and Spaneas, the government of Cyprus “was not prepared to accommodate and manage the unprecedented migration flows into the country,” following its accession to the European Union in 2004. The significant increase of non-Cypriot EU citizens competing with the local labor force after accession led to rapid reductions in foreign (non-EU) worker visa availability; yet as of 2012, a full quarter of the island’s population was composed of foreign nationals (two-thirds EU citizens, and the remainder TCNs), and these demographic trends have been thought to continue through to today, even after the economic crisis of 2013.

This, among other factors, has contributed to Cyprus’ status among the “frontier” states of Europe as one of the most aggressive European states in terms of numbers of deportations and limited TCN opportunity for legal immigration. According to Tom Wong’s detailed investigation of deportation statistics in Western democracies between 2000 and 2009, Cyprus deported an average of 393 people per 100,000 total population, only trailing Greece’s highest rate for Western democracies of 486 people per 100,000; Cyprus’ deportation-to-immigration ratio was 1:5, again trailing only Greece and well

37 Zachariades and Spaneas. 2016: 11
38 Zachariades and Spaneas. 2016: 11
39 Zachariades and Spaneas. 2016: 11
below most other Western democracies.\textsuperscript{40} Between 2008 and 2014, the Republic of Cyprus ordered the removal of an average of 3,300 non-EU TCNs per year, before seeing a reduction in removal orders in the years 2015 and 2016.\textsuperscript{41} Whether the AVRR program instituted in 2015 contributed directly or indirectly to the reduction in removal orders will be discussed in the next section. However, other contributing factors include changeover in the island’s administration in 2013 from a communist, Eurosceptic president to a conservative, pro-EU one, increased EU attention to deportation practices in Cyprus, and possibly the removal in 2014 of the longtime head of the migration division of the Ministry of the Interior, whose tenure was marked by significant allegations of abuse of power, including numerous allegations of arbitrary deportation orders.\textsuperscript{42}

Beginning in late-2017 and early-2018, Cyprus began experiencing an upswing in the number of irregular migrant arrivals in the Republic. Most of those arriving were of Syrian origin, having traveled via Turkey and then onward with migrant smugglers.

\textit{AVRR in Cyprus}

In 2015, a pilot AVRR program co-funded by the European Return Fund and the government of Cyprus instituted a Migrant Information Centre for Assisted Voluntary Returns, with the partnership of national and international NGOs, including the CARDET

\textsuperscript{40} Wong. 2015: 184


\textsuperscript{42} See, for example: Cyprus Mail. 2014 “Removal of Migration Head Brings Down a Personal Fiefdom,” Online resource: \url{http://cyprus-mail.com/2014/07/09/our-view-removal-of-migration-head-brings-down-a-personal-fiefdom/}
Foundation, Caritas International, and the University of Nicosia,⁴³ as a prelude to the formal implementation of the IOM-managed Cyprus Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration program at the very end of the year. Although the original Migrant Information Centre still operates as a resource for migrants seeking information about the program, the IOM now manages AVRR in Cyprus on behalf of the state, while also providing its own information center and services to migrants in Nicosia and elsewhere.

While IOM Cyprus engages in other activities (such as migrant resettlement from Greece and Italy), IOM Cyprus staff make it clear that the AVRR program is the main focus when it comes to internationalized migration management in Cyprus, and is the IOM’s primary responsibility on the island. In an interview with IOM Cyprus staff in July 2017, AVRR program managers quite clearly saw their work as an integration of core elements of the developing Global Compact into migration management, and quite openly linked the work done by the IOM on AVRR programs to the reduction of formal deportations and the maintenance of voluntariness and the human rights of the migrants opting to enroll in the program.⁴⁴ Noting the relative youth of the program in Cyprus, IOM staff viewed 2016 as a ‘setup’ year, with the second full year of the program’s operation providing an opportunity to begin specializing in returns of medical cases, trafficking victims, minors, and so forth.⁴⁵ In addition, the range of reintegration funding types was said to be expanding.

⁴³ Zachariades and Spaneas. 2016: 12
⁴⁴ Author interview with IOM Cyprus staff, Nicosia, Cyprus: July 2017
⁴⁵ Author interview with IOM Cyprus staff, Nicosia, Cyprus: July 2017
Given the relative youth of the IOM Cyprus AVRR program, the statistics available on the program’s progress are quite limited. Published statistics are available from 2016 and 2017. The 2016 statistics reveal a relatively small first ‘class’ of returners: of the 224 individuals which sought information about AVRR, 188 eventually went on to register with the program, and 84 individuals were returned to their country of origin during the calendar year.\(^{46}\) In comparison to the 1,575 individuals ordered deported from Cyprus during the same year, these numbers appear to pale in comparison. However, it is worth noting that a) deportation orders are not the same thing as deportations, and that the EUROSTAT numbers may include some of those which opted to return voluntarily to their country of origin, and b) the AVRR program in Cyprus, by the admission of the IOM Cyprus staff, remains largely confined to the capital of Nicosia in terms of its accessibility to migrants. This last point is important to discuss here, because it points to both current and future capacity of the IOM to provide voluntary return pathways to interested migrants. In the assessment of IOM Cyprus staff, most migrants in Cyprus learn of the AVRR program through word-of-mouth, and secondarily through television and bus advertisements.\(^{47}\) IOM Cyprus staff indicate that an expansion of mobile units, reaching other areas of the country with high migrant populations like the Limassol and Ammochostos (Famagusta) districts, is planned, and a 70% increase in registrations from 2016 to 2017 was anticipated.

Official statistics for 2017 indicate that an additional 164 individuals were returned, of which 32% were women, and 5% children. Most of the returns conducted were for


\(^{47}\) Author interview with IOM Cyprus staff, Nicosia, Cyprus: July 2017
individuals returning to India, Vietnam and Bangladesh; yet, most reintegration funding went to those returning to Sri Lanka, Egypt, Bangladesh, the Philippines and Kenya. According to IOM Cyprus staff⁴⁸, of those that had registered with the program by July 2017, the three largest groups were traditional irregular migrants, (primarily those that have overstayed their visas), asylum-seekers, and finally, international students. This last group is particularly interesting, because as a share of AVRR registrations their numbers had doubled, but also because international students do not normally make up such a significant number of AVRR registration or deportations in other countries. In Cyprus, some private colleges have gained notoriety for deceptive admissions practices, sponsoring student visas for students that do not possess adequate resources for staying in Cyprus without employment; the dissemination of information regarding AVRR among this group has apparently accelerated.

Greece

The inclusion of Greece as a local context under examination in this dissertation is based largely on the opportunity to interview IOM staff working on the island of Crete, based in the regional capital of Heraklion. Crete does not experience the same migration dynamics that many of the Greek islands in the Aegean Sea do, yet does experience its own not-unsubstantial flows and remains an important site for the holding of migrants prior to their removal from Greece. Until the increased utilization of AVRR programming by Germany during and after the onset of the European migration crisis, Greece as a whole saw as high a level of utilization of AVRR programming as any state; as was learned in interviews with IOM staff, this experience in managing AVRR programming spread not only throughout

⁴⁸ Author interview with IOM Cyprus staff, Nicosia, Cyprus: July 2017
Greece into the various regional offices, but also to AVRR programming new to other states (specifically, in Cyprus).

**Greece Migrant Flows**

Migrant flows in Greece, while always complex, have been quite large in recent years, and this has posed a challenge for migration governance for Greece, the European Union and the wider region. While Greece was not too many decades ago a country of net emigration, the increasing significance of the Schengen zone for delineating the physical borders of free movement within the European Union and Middle East regional conflicts have produced a reversal with regard to net migration, and a substantial strain on a Greek state and economy already faltering under the weight of its sovereign debt obligations. The rapid entry of hundreds of thousands of migrants through Greece into the European Union since 2015 has produced a migration policy environment which was already centered on a discourse of crisis, and was already generating significant backlash among Greek citizens in the form of popular support for the fascist Golden Dawn party and in highly visible attacks on migrant communities.

The mitigation of migrant communities, or ‘otherness’ in general in Greece has longstanding roots stretching back to its elimination of minority communities through forced assimilation and the suppression of non-Greek languages after World War I, and there is a strong impulse in Greece to pursue migrant return whenever possible in the present. This is to say that Greece has generally protected its cultural identity quite fiercely, and demands assimilation from those relatively few migrants allowed to stay through legal pathways. The most recent wave of migrants going to Greece have been legitimate refugees and asylum-seekers, which has complicated the migration management efforts of
the IOM: migrant return is not (yet) an option for many in the most recent wave of migrants and permitting migrants to move beyond Greek borders in the direction of other EU states has become increasingly untenable with the rise of conservative governments across the bloc.

Unlike Malta and Cyprus, Greece has a longstanding relationship with the IOM; indeed, Greece was a founding member of the IOM, and IOM Greece officials are quick to point out that in the early years of the IOM’s existence, numerous Greek nationals were resettled in the United States and Canada with IOM assistance. In addition, the IOM facilitated the resettlement of foreign nationals present in Greece to the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand from the 1980’s onward, with 89,000 foreign nationals being transferred from the Greek state to third countries since that time.49

**AVRR in Greece**

Of the three countries addressed in this chapter, Greece has seen both the most complex migrant flows and, in turn, utilized AVRR programming to the greatest degree. IOM statistics show that between 2010 and February 2019, 46,457 migrants were returned from Greece to their country of origin.50 In addition, over the two years preceding February 2019, 3,778 of those migrants returned received reintegration funding, which is a rate of approximately 25% of those returned. The vast majority of returns since 2010 have been

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50 International Organization for Migration. Online resource: [https://greece.iom.int/worldmap](https://greece.iom.int/worldmap)
to Pakistan (16,940), followed by Afghanistan (4,453), Iraq (3,681) and Georgia (3319). These numbers reflect the nature of the migrant flows impacting Greece, in comparison to those impacting Malta and Cyprus.

AVRR is managed in Greece by the IOM, but the IOM’s operations there are substantially larger than in Malta and Cyprus, as is to be expected. The IOM boasts a staff of 50 officers dedicated to AVRR, and sub-national offices in Thessaloniki, Crete, Patra, Ioannina, in addition to its headquarters in Athens. As in Cyprus, IOM facilities are closely integrated with the relevant state police authorities: during my interview with IOM officials in Heraklion, for example, the dedicated IOM official’s office was located inside the building housing the immigration authorities for Crete, which are a branch of the national police.51 The close integration of IOM AVRR programming and state authorities is noticeable in other ways: for example, in an end of year report for 2016-2017, IOM Greece documents the number of migrants to whom AVRR-related information was provided: over the one year period, 5,513 individuals of 8,630 total were provided with AVRR information and applications while inside closed migrant facilities, including pre-removal centers, reception and identification centers, and police stations.52 This is suggestive of a situation where not only do state authorities actively assist in the identification of migrants that might become participants in AVRR (by simply allowing IOM officials to contact

51 Author interview, IOM staff in Heraklion, Greece. June 2017.

52 International Organization for Migration. 2018. “Greece AVRR Annual Report 2017” Online resource: https://greece.iom.int/sites/default/files/AVRR%20Annual%20Report%20YEAR%201%20-%20RT.1243%20%28ENG%29.pdf; Statistics include figures from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the AVRR effort of which is managed by IOM Greece: 33
already identified as irregular or otherwise bound for deportation), but also of one where voluntariness is qualified by the physical enclosure of migrants and separation of migrants from the outside world. IOM Greece is quite open about this when reporting that “even though opting for AVRR is not the newcomer’s first option upon their arrival to Greece, it has been proven that knowing the programme and acquiring an information leaflet to facilitate communication with IOM can be beneficial for possible future use.” In other words, migrants are informed that they ultimately have a friendlier version of return to their country of origin than the deportation they will almost certainly face otherwise.

In Greece, there are substantial differences between the mainland and the islands, and the organizational structure of IOM Greece reflects this, especially with regard to reporting. Mainland Greece functions as a holding center for many migrants that are introduced to/targeted by AVRR information campaigns, while the islands have, in recent years, been the primary sites of reception: where the dramatic scenes of migrant arrivals by boat from Turkey that have captured the media’s attention have become a part of the daily life of certain island communities. Greece’s mainland/island geography has created differing flows with differing levels of responsiveness to AVRR as well. Most of the island arrivals have been from states experiencing ongoing internal conflict or human development conditions so poor as to warrant risking the expensive and dangerous journey via human smuggler networks to the Greek shoreline.

**Thematic Consideration of the Cases**

When discussing the three cases thematically based on the topic areas elaborated earlier in the chapter, a number of commonalities and relevant observations come to the fore:

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53 Ibid: 33
Topic 1 - AVRR Policymaking: IOM staff in the states under consideration uniformly indicated that it was the primary goal of the IOM to link those elements of the Global Compact (then still under development) having to do with migrant return with policy in the states in which they operate, supporting local governments while encouraging those same governments to abide by international standards regarding return. Return was quite openly and closely linked with a concerted effort to reduce deportations as a category of return. While none of the local IOM representatives I spoke with suggested that the IOM assisted states directly with the writing of laws authorizing return programming, it was clear that the IOM viewed its role even prior to the authorization/legalization of AVRR programming as an advisor on global best practices in return programming – an area for which it is the only notable global provider!

Topic 2 – IOM Operational Autonomy on Returns: With regard to the autonomy of local IOM officials from local authorities in terms of decision-making vis-à-vis migrants enrolled in the program, there was a significant divergence between the three states looked at here. In both Greece and Cyprus, the IOM offices were housed with, and worked in close conjunction with, the national police. In Greece, for example, IOM officials directly assisted the Greek national police with fingerprinting and document procurement for migrants arriving in Crete (and, presumably, other areas of the country), increasing the capacity of the Greek state to identify individual migrants. The same IOM officials would then go on to be the primary point of contact for migrants considering enrollment in AVRR programming. In addition, in the Cretan local context, the absence of a significant NGO

54 Author interviews with International Organization for Migration staff responsible for AVRR programming in Valletta, Malta, Heraklion, Greece and Nicosia, Cyprus, June-July 2017
presence means that migrants have few other sources of migration-related information than the IOM itself. The author was told that IOM officials in Crete meet migrants upon their arrival to the island and in many cases initiate voluntary return processing quite shortly thereafter.\textsuperscript{55}

On the face of things, it may seem that this undercuts the argument that the IOM has become an increasingly independent global actor. In fact, it may simply indicate that the IOM works closely with member states to achieve common objectives. Although the IOM staff with which I spoke were uniformly quite conscious of a normative divide between state interests in migrant removal and normative global interests in the promotion of liberal treatment of the human rights of migrants, it does not mean that both the member states in question and the IOM see migrant return in very different ways when ‘on the ground’ in context.

Topic 3 – Reintegration Program Implementation and Monitoring: Local IOM staff indicated in interviews that for reintegration programming, as mentioned above, donors are extremely strict with the uses of reintegration funds. Even when there is a standard allotment of funding for each migrant, as in the case of migrants accessing the program type in Malta, disbursal of those funds is only approved after careful deliberation as to whether the intended uses of reintegration funding comply with the expectations of donors, and this is certified by IOM officials in the forward office in conjunction with, and with guidance from, IOM regional offices and IOM headquarters.\textsuperscript{56}

\textsuperscript{55} Author interview, IOM Greece in Heraklion, June 2017
\textsuperscript{56} Author interview, IOM Malta staff responsible for AVRR programming, June 2017
In addition, IOM officials in Cyprus indicated that, in their experience, there remains considerable variation in the monitoring of migrants once returned, echoing information gathered during an interview with IOM staff in Geneva. Monitoring missions have been undertaken by the IOM, but reintegration funding and tracking is understood to be a challenge both at the top and from below.

Topic 4 – IOM Organizational Structure: Anecdotal evidence from interviews with IOM staff indicate that local IOM staff understand local IOM offices across the world to be approaching their work with returning migrants in relatively standardized ways. Whether through ‘constant communication’ with coordinating offices at the regional level regarding standard operating procedures, or the understanding at IOM Greece that there is “no real differentiation in terms of IOM [in Crete and] in the rest of Greece,”57 with regard to their approach on AVRR, a consistent theme in interviews is the degree to which the IOM as an organization pursues AVRR policies in like ways across field offices.

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And what of the connection between these three states, with their reputations for being highly restrictive with migration and quite liberal with deportation orders, and the expansion of AVRR programming? IOM staff in all three of the states were careful to make note of the connection between AVRR programming and the goal of the reduction of deportations on normative grounds. The notion that AVRR-related pathways to the departure of an irregular, vulnerable or willing migrant are preferable to state-directed (and

57 Author interview, IOM Greece staff in Heraklion responsible for AVRR programming, June 2017
funded) removals in the eyes of both the states and the IOM (though for differing reasons) was not contested.

**Joining the Views from Above and Below**

What does a look at the IOM’s work on AVRR from both an intra-organizational top-down perspective, and intra-organizational bottom-up perspective tell us? What are the lessons in such an exercise? There are a few take-away lessons that seem to be valuable. First, the discourse which links AVRR programming with efforts towards creation of convergence on migration governance like the Global Compact on Migration, the Migration Governance Framework, and more is shared both at the highest levels of the organization and at secondary field offices within states. Throughout the organization, there appears to be a recognition of, or at least the reinforcement of, the normative connections between global standards related to migration governance and the role of AVRR programming in conforming to (yet simultaneously having allowed for the creation of) those standards, and a concerted push for governance agreements to be met with actual policy convergence.

Second, there is widespread recognition at both the highest and most local levels of the organization of the gap between the return-aspects of AVRR programming and the reintegration side of those efforts. The frustration voiced by some of the local IOM officials was echoed by a frank acknowledgement of the relative lack of capacity to ensure consistent application of the reintegration packages that select migrants receive, yet this was also brought back around to a call for the extension to the organization of a global funding mechanism which would allow for transnational reintegration implementation and tracking which would be less dependent on any one set of donors. The discourse linking
return and reintegration is one that enables the IOM to assert itself (quite necessarily so) as a transnational actor, yet its work on return alone (through coordination at multiple levels of the organization to bring about a fluid process and consistent return-related outcomes) actually already implies transnational significance vis-à-vis the structuring of migration management practices, with important consequences for our conceptions of migration governance.

Third, and perhaps more important still, the varying nature of the migrant flows affecting the three states under consideration as cases was not seen to be a significant factor with regard to the IOM’s capacity to provide AVRR programming in those states. IOM offices in Greece, which in recent years regularly assists greater than 5000 migrants per year to return to their country of origin, did not report being overburdened with cases, nor did the relatively small numbers coming out of Cyprus and Malta indicate that the IOM was being ‘underutilized’. Although projectized, AVRR programming has become one of the principle programs offered by the IOM and for the moment its capacity to achieve return-related outcomes is reflected by the funding it has received. A more pointed evaluation of AVRR-related outcomes might rest on the IOM’s own stated objectives. As discussed above, the IOM Framework on AVRR programming outlines six major objectives:

1) Migrants can make an informed decision and take ownership of the voluntary return process
2) Migrants reach their countries of origin in a safe and dignified manner
3) Returnees are able to overcome individual challenges impacting their reintegration
4) Communities have the capacity to provide an enabling environment for reintegration
5) Adequate policies and public services are in place to address the specific needs of returnees and communities alike
6) Migrant vulnerabilities are addressed throughout the voluntary return and reintegration process\textsuperscript{58}

After reviewing the institutional perspectives discussed here, one might reasonably conclude that the IOM has a realistic capacity to achieve objective 1 and 2 alone (and even objective 1 is up for debate given the contested nature of the voluntariness of AVRR programming in general). The remaining objectives either depend on a transnational monitoring system for long-term reintegration success which is still under development as MIMOSA is expanded (objectives 3, 4) or depend on a greater constellation of actors beyond the IOM in order to be achieved (objective 5 and 6). This does not undercut the argument that the IOM is projecting institutional authority with long-term impacts on migration management and migration governance, yet does indicate that, like in many other issue areas in global governance in which convergence is pursued and common solutions to common ‘problems’ devised, effective solutions depend on a plurality of actors at times.

\textsuperscript{58} International Organization for Migration. “A Framework…”
Chapter 5

FUTURES AND CONCLUSION

This chapter aims to conclude the dissertation by first exploring in greater depth the possible futures for IOM migration management - especially AVRR - in light of power and authority, highlighting the small but critical indications that the Niger example that was discussed briefly in this dissertation’s introduction is likely to reveal to us that increasingly ‘global’ (though certainly not impartial) migration management is taking definite form. Then, I provide some summative commentary on power and authority and their relationship to migration management. Next, I review the chapters of the dissertation, pulling out my major assertions and how I have defended them in this project. Finally, I elaborate briefly upon the connections between migration management and global governance before concluding that there is a definitive significance for migration governance in the work of the IOM.

AVRR and Migration Management Futures

There are many possible futures for IOM-managed AVRR programming itself. Here I will consider several, focusing a considerable amount of attention first on what might be the rise of AVRR outside of Europe, taking up, in essence, where Europe is leaving off. Then I consider the possibility that the EU is simply utilizing IOM-managed AVRR as a stepping stone to greater authority over its member states’ migration-related policymaking. Finally, I consider how the future of the IOM and its AVRR programming might change if its funding mechanism were to change.
In Europe specifically, it seems quite likely that average numbers of returns coming out of each host country may vary year-to-year going forward depending on variations in migrant flows in the preceding years. The significant spike in returns in Germany following 2015-2016 followed by a decline seem to indicate this, and although there is likely to be continued utility in maintaining return programs for European states (given the ongoing ‘attractiveness’ of European states as a destination for migrations), it seems less likely that returns will number close to 100,000 again in the near future. In addition, in my own interactions with IOM officials in Greece and Malta, year-to-year variation was reported to be the expectation for AVRR programming locally: not one of continually increasing volume combined with an increasing bureaucratic complexity designed to address it, but rather one in which there is an ebb and flow with regard to ‘returnable’ migrant registrations, and the IOM is prepared to assist with those returns accordingly.\footnote{Author interviews with IOM officials in Heraklion, Greece and Valletta, Malta, June 2017}

However, the Niger example referenced only obliquely at the beginning of this dissertation points to the possibility that for the IOM as an organization, a much more substantial, global role in migration management is opening up, and that the productive power that inheres in the IOM’s discourse regarding the need for sustainable return has been crucial for shaping that developing role.

**The Immediate Future of Migration Management: From Global North to South?**

The chart below shows total assisted returns, along with totals for Germany and Greece for the sake of comparison. However, here Niger is also included. Although Niger has a very low capacity to finance IOM operations in the country on its own, returns from Niger
represented the second-highest number of total returns from a single country for 2018 (13,729 were returned from Niger as a host country)\(^2\). Financing for IOM AVRR programming came from other sources, of course; in this case from the European Union, individual EU member states like Germany, and the United States.

Figure 5: IOM-Managed Assisted Voluntary Return Data, 2013-2018 - Total Assisted Returns, plus Germany, Niger, and Greece

- Total Returns
- Germany Returns
- Niger Returns
- Greece Returns
The IOM, through its institutional and productive power and made possible as a result of the expert authority which it can legitimately claim, has created and contributed to a policy discourse on AVRR which has delivered in quite interesting ways a new approach to migration management in places outside of Europe. This is an approach which, when paired with recent IOM ‘activism’ vis-à-vis reinforcing the discourse of sustainable return in global fora and in major international agreements, creates a picture of an ascendant global migration management with the IOM at the productive power center of that management.

In the case of Niger, the IOM, in addition to its AVRR programming, has been contracted to operate four major ‘open centers,’ locations at which migrants coming from sub-Saharan Africa north in an attempt to reach the Mediterranean Sea and, ultimately, Europe stay when barred from proceeding farther along by Nigerien border authorities that have partnered with the European Union to try to stem the flow of migrants to Europe. These open centers serve as major contact points for ‘spreading the word’ about AVRR, and most registrations occur in these centers. The overlap in missions for the IOM in Niger – management of AVRR and management of short-term residential facilities for migrants – creates a new dynamic, substantively different from that in Europe in important ways, that lends itself to the kind of analysis performed throughout this dissertation.

The crucial reason for sharing this information is the demonstrable linkages that one can start to make between power and authority as understood through AVRR programming, and the wider policy environment. The fact is, Niger is not alone in Africa in terms of access to migration management programming. Although more than half of all assisted

\[^{3}\text{Ibid.}\]
voluntary returns still come out of European Union member states, there are important
signs that AVRR is being incorporated into complex regional migration dynamics in West
and Central Africa, not just Niger, and is increasingly perceived as one piece of a larger
puzzle involving migration governance and those that seek to authorize, fund and provide
it in the region. Nearly a quarter of all assisted voluntary returns in 2018 *originated* in
West and Central Africa, with the majority of migrants being assisted to return to a country
of origin within the combined region, and as the statistic in the chart above indicates, that
number is, for the moment, on the rise. Migrants with a country of origin in West and
Central Africa that were assisted to return by the IOM represented nearly 30% of the total
number of migrants assisted.4

In fact, in a Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP) report authored on the increased,
though controversial, cooperation between the European Union and arguably authoritarian
West African regimes, the author notes that:

“between March and September 2017, there were 20 return and reintegration
projects launched in five West African countries [in addition to Niger] – Senegal,
Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Guinea, and Cameroon… as early as 2016, the IOM returned
more than 4,800 migrants to their countries of origin through 70 reintegration
projects in Senegal, Gambia, Nigeria, Mali, and Guinea-Bissau…”5

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Reintegration Bulletin, 4th Quarter,” Online resource:

5 Mueller, Melanie. 2018. “Migration conflict in Niger: President Issoufou Dares, the
North loses,” in Anne Koch, Annette Weber and Isabelle Werenfels (eds). *Profiteers of
Migration? Authoritarian States in Africa and European Migration Management*. Stiftung
In Niger, at least, Mueller notes that migration policy is largely responsive to European interests, writing that “the regulation of migration has only been taking place in Niger since the EU offered to cooperate in this area… With regard to the objectives of migration policy, one can hardly recognise a difference between the rhetoric of the Nigerien and European partners.”

Restriction of migration and return of migrants are considered priorities, and once again, the IOM plays a significant role in implementing the migration management programming financed primarily by the European Union, albeit with somewhat different sets of interests among state leadership, as well as differing levels of power and authority, involved when compared to AVRR and migration management implementation in European states.

This means that the diagrams produced earlier in this dissertation in which the EU Member State, the European Union and the IOM each played an active role in providing both benefits and demands on each other in the production of AVRR can be modified to reflect an emerging center of AVRR-related activity. While the constraints and benefits provided between the EU and the IOM would remain relatively similar to those described in Chapter 3, what of the relationships between the West African state hosting AVRR programming and the EU, and the relationship between that same state and the IOM? This dissertation has focused largely on longer-running AVRR programs and those operating in European Mediterranean states for greater programmatic detail, but some sources provide an indication as to the kind of relationship forged between certain West African states and


6 Ibid: 37
the institutions seeking to enhance migration management (and indeed, call into existence migration governance of any substantial kind) in the West and Central Africa regions. The following is based on a looser reading of the situation in West Africa, but one that is interesting and compelling for the future of the study of migration management.

With regard to the relationship between the EU and West African states, the SWP report paints a somewhat bleak picture of cooperation between a European Union seeking to redirect migrant flows away from its borders (even though, as the report notes, a maximum of only 30% of West African migrants have Europe as their primary destination, most seeking to go to other West African states) and authoritarian West African leaders seeking to improve their image in the West and attract global investment. With regard to benefits, the European Union provides the financing for migration management programs and increased West African state capacity to control the flow of migrants over their borders, as well as the simple productive image of EU-West African cooperation on substantive political issues; the West African states, by agreeing to allow migration management programming as managed by the IOM, UNHCR and others (through legalization or by informal agreement), provide the EU with a smaller flow of migrants heading to the shores of northern Africa and into the Mediterranean. With regard to demands or constraints, the European Union has made cooperation on migration a form of conditionality, precluding other benefits to authoritarian leaders unless the leaders ‘fall into step’ with EU policy; the African states constrain Europe in the sense that the moral authority of the European Union can be questioned when and if West African states choose to ‘go their own way’ on human

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7 Mueller. 2018: 35
rights related to migrants, and deeper impacts on local economies resulting from the stemming of migrant flows in the region.

Between the IOM and West African states, the story would appear somewhat different as well, but perhaps not dramatically so. The IOM benefits from its participation in migration management in West Africa because it provides substantive assistance to additional contexts, including implementation of additional AVRR programs – it is both a recognition and extension of delegated and expert authority. The West African states benefit from IOM participation through increased capacity, but also through the productive power generated by a discourse in which Niger and other West African states are “doing the right thing” with regard to their migration management, setting an example for other states in the process. The IOM is constrained in West Africa to the degree that it continues to rely on continued EU financing of its operations, and in some ways is pulled into a situation in which it must provide migration management services in a state which is not invested to the same degree in those services – in European states, the norm has been that the state will provide roughly 25% of the funding required for return programming. It also must deal with questions about its moral authority in a situation in which authoritarian regimes are recognized as significant partners in the fight to stem migrant flows away from Europe. Although the IOM is a UN-affiliated agency, the benefits to its moral authority resulting from its accession are going to have to be balanced to some degree against continued concerns that it operates to satisfy the most restrictionist interests of states defensible under international human rights norms. The West African states are constrained by the IOM, in turn, because the IOM is now a UN-affiliated agency, and can marshal the institutional and productive power of its relationship with the UN system to
set the standards for appropriate migration management on the ground, and presumably avoid simply doing the work of states which may not necessarily acknowledge (or have the capacity to much care about) important aspects of international law relating to the treatment of migrants: what constitutes non-refoulement, which migrants might actually be better classified as refugees, etc – this is a constraint when and if it prevents the ‘assisted’ return of migrants that would otherwise be deemed undesirable, and leaves to the state the responsibility for removal.

The future of IOM-managed AVRR, and migration management more generally, at least in the short-to-medium term, would appear then to be extension to new parts of the globe in which migrant flows are seen to challenge traditional norms of state sovereign – while this may be, statistically, more significant in some contexts than others, in discourse, this could presumably be in any number of states and regions. The Niger/West and Central Africa example points to the idea that although IOM-managed AVRR operates within the bounds of international norms of human rights and with the moral backing of the United Nations system, the motivations behind the rise of AVRR outside Europe may be partial, and oriented towards the preservation of state sovereignty.

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Other possible futures, exist, of course. In Europe, the European Union may simply be ‘using’ the IOM to extend a degree of consistency across member states to another area of migration in lieu of more centralized control over migration governance there, in anticipation of a time when the European Union develops that control (at which point, perhaps, the IOM’s role would be reduced as the capacity of the European Union to manage AVRR and other migration management directly would have risen to a sufficient level).
In the short-to-medium term, however, this seems less likely. Beyond the well-known divisions within the structure of the European Union between its Commission, Council and Parliament over issues and policies related to migration, the member states of the European Union are, on balance, hesitant to surrender additional migration-related responsibilities to the EU directly unless these work towards the more restrictionist policy priorities of states regarding border control and migrant removal. The rise of populist governments and the continued contestation over the migration issue area expressed by policymakers and publics alike make the EU’s authority more questionable than, perhaps, an organization with a greater argument for existing delegated and expert authority – an organization like the IOM.

There is also the possibility that the IOM, through its proactive stance on the creation and adoption of the Global Compact for Migration, might achieve the fundamental change in its organizing structure that it has been seeking for some time: the establishment of a regular budget. Although the relative lack of enthusiasm for the Global Compact among some of the world’s most significant players in the UN system (the United States chief among them) puts a degree of doubt on this possibility, a change to the IOM’s basic budgeting mechanism could result in significant changes to the ways in which it provides migration management programming to states, and give the organization a greater ability to decide which contexts need what type of programming when. This would presumably enhance the ability of the IOM to monitor the second “R” of AVRR, reintegration, and allow it a much greater capacity to monitor, report on, and seek to enhance the sustainability of migrant return (the ultimate effects of this on migrants themselves, and how this may impact their human rights – positively or negatively – would remain to be
seen). However, even this possibility seems less likely in the short-to-medium term. Although the IOM projects significant institutional and productive power, has shaped the conversation over migrant return and migration management more generally, and is able to claim significant levels of delegated and expert authority, wider structural dynamics and the interests of other actors with different levels and types of power (the United States, the European Union, actors like China with other priorities, etc.) do not yet seem to be in alignment on accommodating a change in the scope of the IOM’s ultimate ‘mission’.

Therefore, it seems wise for policymakers and scholars to ‘keep an eye’ on the work of IOM, especially its work on AVRR, as it develops and progresses in West and Central Africa, and to question whether this represents a model of global migration management that might be extendable to other contexts around the world.

**Reviewing the IOM, Power and Authority, and AVRR**

The IOM exerts considerable power and authority in the international environment when it comes to migration management, and this is in spite of its funding mechanism which Hollifield viewed as so incapacitating. Although its considerable and increasing financial and human resources can collectively be thought to afford the IOM compulsory power vis-à-vis states and the migration issue (primarily in the form of actively advocating for continued IOM involvement in the formation and implementation of state migration management policies once invited by the state to complete a project, and demonstrating that the state actually needs the IOM to maintain a certain level of capacity), I have focused here on the institutional and productive power of the IOM and how these interact with and are made up in part by the increasing authority it can be seen to have in migration
governance. Institutional power rests in part on the perceived legitimacy of an organization to provide certain benefits – and in the case of the IOM, migration-related services - to states (initially) and then, over time, shape state preferences in ways which both address the primary issues of concern shared by the state and the organization, and also reinforce the role of the organization in effecting cooperation on those issues, thus guaranteeing the organization’s survival. The IOM, though often handicapped in comparison to other international organizations due to its funding mechanism and how closely this is seen to tie it to state interests, can be seen as projecting the rational-legal, delegated and expert authority necessary to assert itself as the foremost international actor impacting certain aspects of the migration issue area: namely, those centered on migration management (of which AVRR is one type of program).

In fact, the IOM has staked out a position in migration management that allows it to largely share the interests of the states which it purportedly services: the IOM is quite clear in justifying its involvement in assisted voluntary return on the grounds of supporting both sustainable migrant return and support for state sovereignty.\(^8\) The IOM has been quite active in both implementing migrant return, but also in shaping the global norms governing migrant return at the same time. IOM officials I have spoken with throughout the course of researching AVRR have indicated that the IOM worked very closely with the European Union to develop the Return Directive, and that they have dedicated significant time and effort over the past several years to push for the inclusion of sustainable return in the Global

\(^8\) International Organization for Migration, “A Framework for Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration.”
Compact for Migration⁹, which was in December 2018 adopted by the vast majority of states around the world. Both of these processes were crafted with IOM input and effectively create legitimate openings for the continued relevance of IOM managed AVRR.

In the case of AVRR, the sustained financial support of the European Union and its member states through their delegation of responsibility for return-related programming provides formally delegated authority to the IOM, and the IOM’s repeated development, implementation, and management of AVRR programming is successive state contexts allows for the continuing development of its expert authority on return-related policy and programming. It can, in effect, tout to the world community that it manages certain forms of migration in an increasing number of states as the EU gradually induced the majority of its member states to take advantage of the capacity of the IOM to manage assisted migrant return on the behalf of the state. Though return is so fundamentally connected to basic states interests and the defense of state sovereignty, the increase in institutional power and delegated and expert authority have arguably (and perhaps paradoxically) translated into increased rational-legal and moral authority for the IOM as well, which are in turn supported by and interact with the IOM’s productive power. Again, this increased rational-legal and moral authority is not necessarily perceived as threatening by the state: each new state for which the IOM provides AVRR programming enters into a project document (or contract) with the IOM which outlines its responsibilities. This is, in effect, an increase in delegated authority and rational-legal authority at once: the IOM’s authority has expanded

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⁹ Author interview with IOM Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration staff, Geneva, Switzerland, June 2018
to another context, which it can subsequently highlight to other actors as an important signal of its overall legitimacy.

As the delegated and expert authority of the IOM have increased due to its involvement in migration management programming in successive states, so too has its ‘reserve’ and use of productive power. As the IOM has ‘grown’ in stature vis-à-vis its involvement in assisting migration governance, it has not hesitated to seek to shape the conversation on migration governance and to emphasize the significance of migration management, and especially sustainable migrant return. The IOM’s presence and placement in a wider community of actors, institutions and structures relating to the meaning of migration, migration management, and migration governance have substantial impacts on the options perceived as available to states and migrants when considering how to pursue policy and practice. The development, implementation and management of AVRR by the IOM necessitates decision-making and position-taking when it comes to the meanings of voluntary, what constitutes assistance, which migrants are ‘returnable,’ where is home, and why sustainable return is described as normatively good. Not only does the IOM go through this process in each context in which its assistance is formally requested by the state, it has gone further to reinforce its organizational position in ways that suggest the IOM views its mission as one that is applicable across-the-board: the development of the Framework for Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration\textsuperscript{10} this past year is the clearest example of this position taking for the organization as a whole, despite no formal change to its project-based budgeting mechanism.

\textsuperscript{10} International Organization for Migration, “A Framework for Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration”
As Barnett and Finnemore write, IOs do not only “identify problems, they also help solve problems by crafting particular solutions to them and persuading others to accept them.”\textsuperscript{11} Although the IOM may have assistance in persuading certain states to engage their program management (such as when the EU provides financial incentives in the form of co-financing for IOM programming in its member states), the IOM quickly helps produce through its institutional memory and practical expertise those options states have with regard to migration and the relationship of this to the wider health of their state and region.

As a result of this meshing of the IOM’s institutional and productive power with existing and new forms of authority, the IOM’s stature as ‘weakly institutionalized’ is called into question. If viewed strictly through the lens of rational-legal authority, the IOM remains a collection of project agreements, to be sure, though its accession as a United Nations-affiliate in 2015 has altered this in ways that are still to be fully understood. Yet, when considering how other forms of authority interact with power, the IOM, in part through its works on AVRR, must be examined more closely and taken more seriously in conversations on global governance.

To return then to the diagrams presented earlier in this dissertation depicting the actors involved in/allowing for the rise of AVRR programming, we can understand how both power and authority moves between those depicted, and how the IOM plays a crucial role in the production of AVRR programming.

Summarizing the Dissertation

In this dissertation I have endeavored to demonstrate to the reader, and to help the reader understand, how the nature of the power and authority of the International Organization for Migration has played a crucial role in the formation of an increasingly global migration management. Using concepts and forms of analysis key to understanding issues of importance in global governance, I have treated the IOM as an actor within global politics once characterized as weak vis-à-vis its ability to affect migration governance that now has a much greater capacity to both set, and appear on, the stage of global migration management and its relevance for the international community. The chapters of this dissertation have provided a complex, yet coherent, approach to understanding migration management as a form of migration governance, impacted by power and authority as understood in other issue areas for which transnational dynamics are necessary for understanding.

In chapter one of the dissertation, the foundations of global governance theory, the scholarly approach to international migration, and the initial inquiry into the meaning and form of migration management were introduced to the reader, and a basic set of questions were posed: What is migration governance? Are there global sources of migration governance? How does the governance of migration intersect (or diverge) from the practice of managing migration? Which international institutions, formal or informal, are most significant in the wider migration governance/management picture? Who or what, in the end, is being governed? As stated in the introduction, these are questions that cannot be answered in one dissertation; however, this dissertation provides parts of answers to them.
To synthesize some answers to these questions coming from the preceding chapters before continuing: migration governance clearly consists, in part, of international cooperation between a variety of actors on the issue. Although some may contest this in a juridical sense, the analysis of AVRR in this dissertation reveals that multiple forms of power and authority influence migrant flows, and this results from converging interests and overlapping sets of benefits and constraints shared between interested actors. While migration governance may not consist of some unified global migration governance, it clearly demonstrates in a number of vital ways its potential to be understood through the lenses of the concepts central to global governance theory. The management of migration is clearly tied up in migration governance as well. Power and authority are involved in both, and management does not simply demarcate a situation where one actor has juridical authority and another has delegated authority: migration management programming does not sit in a straightforward way as either a subset of, or independent from, migration governance. As this dissertation makes clear, the European Union and the International Organization for Migration are important drivers of the discourse of migration management; the United States, though mentioned to a lesser degree here, is an important source of financing of management projects, and the United Nations at large represents a very important source of moral authority, providing credibility to the claims of the IOM in carrying out migration management programming. Finally, it is clear that migrants themselves are, at least in the case of AVRR, subject to situations in which consistent application.

Chapters two, three, and four, have provided the substantive backing to make the above claims tenable. In chapter two, the topic of migration management and the IOM’s
significant role as a center of power and authority were discussed in detail. The IOM is positioned as respondent to and producer of the power that inheres in and the discourses that support migration management. Despite persistent concerns in literature about the source of its funding and the ways in which this is seen to weaken how deeply it can provide for interstate cooperation, the analysis in chapter two reveals how the IOM projects or otherwise influences substantial levels of power and authority over migration management, and in turn, migration governance. These assertions are based on the application of concepts key to global governance theory, and the degree to which there is applicability to the IOM is suggestive of the growing ‘global’ nature of its role in international politics. However, to investigate the motivating questions of this dissertation with more specificity, the case of IOM-managed AVRR programming was addressed in chapter three.

In chapter three I described in detail IOM-managed AVRR, and how this fits into my overarching argument concerning migration management and the ability to understand it through the lens of global governance theory. AVRR programming, despite numbers which suggest year-to-year variation, is a strong example of the institutional and productive power of the IOM as it seeks to influence the form of migration management programming and assist states in navigating the pursuit of their migration-related interests in an international environment in which those states are constrained by norms of human rights, the reduced capacity to provide alternative return options to migrants, and so forth. Despite the controversies surrounding AVRR programming, the IOM has been successful through its partnership with the EU in making AVRR programming indispensable. Sustainable return has become the key phrase, one produced through the IOM’s own efforts to promote a ‘need’ for migrant return capacity, and enabling the return of migrants and requiring that
return be long-term, thereby necessitating a transnational monitoring capacity that the IOM is in the best position to provide to states. The delegated and expert authority involved reinforce the productive power of the IOM to keep return ‘on the radar’ for states and international organizations involved in migration governance.

Chapter four takes a closer look at the IOM’s intra-organizational dynamics related to AVRR, and finds that the internal perspectives about AVRR from the top match, by-and-large, those from the lower echelons of the organizations. That is, there is considerable coordination within the organization on AVRR, the same major goals are understood throughout the hierarchy, and AVRR is understood widely to be closely connected not just with a basic mission to provide a certain service to states, but also to the productive efforts of the IOM to influence the formation and adoption of the Global Compact for Migration, and to enhance the IOM’s role in migration governance more generally. The fourth chapter is key in that it provides an image of the IOM as motivated to both develop and project delegated and expert authority on the management of migration return, and to translate this into productive power over the migrant return ‘agenda’ in a global sense: the discourse of sustainable return.

Finally, the Nigerien example above reminds the reader that AVRR programming is nested within wider migration management and migration government dynamics, yet the projection of power and authority by the IOM is a common element. While this argument should not be overstated – the IOM certainly does not represent in any one a single entity with control of global migration governance – the IOM should also not be relegated to a ‘weakly-institutionalized’ dustbin. Migration management is migration governance, and we are increasingly seeing the global aspects of migration management come to the fore.
Migration Management and Global Migration Governance

To date in much of the international migration and global governance literatures, global migration governance is not thought to be an empirical reality, but rather more of a theoretical construct: something to observe progress towards, even if it never really comes to fruition. At this stage in history, it seems to me that this observed situation is not necessarily because the power and authority to manage the migration issue is concentrated exclusively in the hands of states that refuse to cede their authority over the issue area, but rather that the power and authority ‘net total’ is diffused across and between numerous interested actors, including organizations and agencies which have some migration-related cause as their raison d’etre. The discourse of the preservation of state sovereignty is powerful: it is used to maintain state influence, but it is also used to provide room for others – like the IOM – to have a productive influence on our understanding of what constitutes migration, migration management, and migration governance. The discourse of state sovereignty, in essence, creates and reinforces a structured policymaking environment, yet actors still assert power and authority within that environment. The overlapping sets of power relations and authority described in the dissertation for migration management are quite characteristic of global governance, even if that governance is not unified or coherent. There is no requirement that any particular actor or set of actors be “in charge” of migration. The simple fact is, many are: many states, a certain set of interested IOs, and even non-state actors set expectations and standards for the way migration is defined and performed. Where coherence begins to coalesce (in multiple, around different problems related to the migration issue at large), we see a set of faces not just inclusive of state policymakers, but officials of other bodies: UNHCR, yes, but IOM very frequently as well. As this
dissertation demonstrates, the IOM is present and active in the generation and maintenance of a powerful discourse which has increasingly global ramifications.

There is an assumption in global governance literature, I think, that global governance must take a certain form, a form that is usually conceived of as an organization that is highly centralized, liberal in nature, evidencing a high degree of multilateralism binding state interests while also providing to that organization agency to project power and authority. Migration management and the power and authority that inheres in its production is, so far, partially consistent with that form in some ways: it is certainly liberal in nature, emanating from Western discourses seeking to balance sovereignty with rights and maintaining an order whereby the difficulties faced by (certain) states are attended to by sets of powerful actors. Yet, instead of unified under one organizational, institutional or regime-like umbrella, global migration governance might simply be diffuse – and plural, perhaps – and if so, the dynamics of migration management programming under examination in this dissertation represent an important sub-category, the IOM represents a significant actor in bringing about and reinforcing the discourse involved in that sub-category’s production, and AVRR programming is an important case in which power and authority are more directly observable.
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Webber, Frances. 2011. “How voluntary are voluntary returns?” Race & Class. 54(2).


Interviewee Invitation (by e-mail):
Dear Sir/Madam:
My name is Michael T. Smith and I am a PhD candidate from the University of Delaware conducting research on migration policy in southern Europe. I have a set of questions related to Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) programs that I would like to pose to (you/a representative of your organization), in order to better understand the implementation of this program in (Malta/Greece/Cyprus).
I am wondering if you or a representative from your office with knowledge of AVRR would be available for a short, 20-minute interview to discuss my questions. For your convenience, the basic set of questions is attached. I will be (in Malta/Greece/Cyprus) on the following dates (list country-specific dates), and will be generally available on each of those days. I would very much appreciate talking with you or another representative from your organization in order to learn more about AVRR.
Thank you very much for your time, and I look forward to hearing from you.
Sincerely,
Michael T. Smith
PhD Candidate
University of Delaware (USA)
APPENDIX B

BASE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS – IOM OFFICIALS

- **AVRR policymaking assistance**: the degree to which IOM headquarters assists states in formulating the appropriate legal framework to make AVRR a reality in local contexts

  - To what degree is there coordination between the IOM and states with regard to formulating policy/a legal framework at the state level to accommodate AVRR programming? Specifically in European states?
  - To what degree has the IOM assisted southern European states, for which Mediterranean migrant flows have been a prominent concern, with orienting AVRR programming towards addressing migrants coming via those recent flows?
  - Would you characterize IOM assistance with regard to policymaking surrounding AVRR as a form of capacity-building? Or is policymaking with regard to legalizing AVRR simply an authorization which then enables the IOM to undertake the activities that it does?

- **Organizational structure**: specific ways that the IOM headquarters and state-level offices coordinate on AVRR program introduction and implementation

  - How would you characterize the ‘typical’ relationship between the IOM headquarters and state-level IOM offices around AVRR programming? Is there a standardized form of engagement, or are AVRR projects ‘variable’ depending on local context?
  - To what degree does the IOM require authorization from the state prior to approving individual returns? Does the IOM function autonomously in this regard, or is state approval required before final approval of an individual return?
  - To what degree does the IOM require the authorization of the state (or the EU) with regard to reintegration funding in individual cases? Does the IOM ‘nominate’ individuals for possible reintegration funding or does it work with a much greater degree of latitude? What is the balance of decision-making with regard to reintegration funding?

- **External cooperation**: the degree of formality of IOM relationships with outside organizations (NGOs) when implementing and managing AVRR programming
- To what degree does the IOM formally contract with NGOs when managing AVRR programming? Is there formal cooperation, or is NGO involvement on a case-by-case basis?
- How does the IOM manage its relationships with other, non-state actors involved in the AVRR process (NGOs especially, but any others as well)?

- **Reintegration monitoring**: the degree to which IOM headquarters manages the monitoring of reintegration efforts for those returned migrants selected for reintegration assistance, and coordinates with state-level offices on this effort
  - Does the IOM headquarters take primary responsibility for managing reintegration monitoring, or is this managed by IOM offices in the home and destination states? To what degree is IOM headquarters involved in tracking and following-up with reintegration funding cases?
  - Does the IOM view the current reintegration monitoring process as adequate, or are improvements needed? If improvements are needed, what specific improvements are needed?

- **AVRR and international/global migration policy convergence**: the degree to which IOM officials view the rapid increase in utilization of AVRR programming by certain states as an indication of policy convergence on migrant return; prospects for future increases in AVRR utilization
  - Is the relatively rapid rise of AVRR programming utilization by states in Europe and elsewhere indicative of policy convergence on migrant return?
  - Does the IOM have the capacity to assist states with a rapid rise in AVRR utilization, should that become desired by states in the coming years? To what degree is AVRR programming intended to be a small piece of the ‘migrant return’ puzzle, or, conversely, to what degree is AVRR programming intended to supplant to the extent possible forced migrant returns?
APPENDIX C

IRB EXEMPT LETTER

DATE: June 22, 2018

TO: Michael Smith
FROM: University of Delaware IRB

STUDY TITLE: [1032431-2] Field Research - Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration in European Mediterranean States

SUBMISSION TYPE: Amendment/Modification

ACTION: DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT STATUS

DECISION DATE: June 22, 2018

REVIEW CATEGORY: Exemption category # (3)

Thank you for your submission of Amendment/Modification materials for this research study. The University of Delaware IRB has determined this project is EXEMPT FROM IRB REVIEW according to federal regulations.

We will put a copy of this correspondence on file in our office. Please remember to notify us if you make any substantial changes to the project.

If you have any questions, please contact Nicole Farnese-McFarlane at (302) 831-1119 or nicolefm@udel.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.
APPENDIX D

LETTER OF SUPPORT

24 May 2017

International Organization for Migration
17, Route des Morillons, CH-1211 Geneva
19, Switzerland

To Whom it May Concern:

Mr. Michael Smith, a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Political Science and International Relations at the University of Delaware, will be undertaking a research trip to Malta, Cyprus, and Greece this summer to examine assisted voluntary return and reintegration programs in the Mediterranean in support of his dissertation, “Governing Migration: Global Approaches, and Responses, in Cyprus, Malta, and Greece.”

The University of Delaware’s Institutional Review Board/Human Subjects Research Office has reviewed his proposed research and declared it exempt from their purview.

With this letter, I am confirming that Mr. Smith is proceeding with full support of both his dissertation chair, Dr. Matthew Weinert, and the Department of Political Science and International Relations.

Please do not hesitate to contact me via email at redlawsk@udel.edu, or by telephone at 302-831-1938, should you require additional information.

Sincerely,

David P. Redlawsk, Ph.D.
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