



Ad-Hoc Query on voluntary return policy

Requested by COM on 18th December 2013

Compilation produced on 20th February 2014

Responses from Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom plus Norway (22 in Total)

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1. Background Information

In preparation of the first meeting of the Voluntary Return Experts' Group (VREG) which will take place on 14th February 2014 (tbc), it is important to have a clear picture of all the on-going activities carried out at national level in the field of voluntary return. Given that more in-depth discussions on the different components of Assisted Voluntary Return programs and reintegration projects will take place at a later stage, the main objective of this Ad-Hoc Query is to collect basic information on voluntary return programs and reintegration projects implemented at national level.

As a background document, please find attached the last version of the e-compendium produced in the context of the VREN network which maps all the on-going activities in the field of voluntary return in 12 Member States.


Question:

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1. Please provide succinct information on your country's voluntary return policy and your on-going programs/projects promoting voluntary departure and reintegration. Please indicate a) the name of the programs/projects; b) the period covered; c) the leading partners; d) the target group and e) a short description of the activity.

We would very much appreciate your responses by **31st January 2014**.


2. Responses

	Austria	Yes	<p>Return and Reintegration Programmes Austria</p> <p>Name of project Return Counselling in the Austrian Federal Province of Carinthia Leading partner Implementing Organization: Amt der Kärntner Landesregierung – Flüchtlingsreferat Target groups Asylum seekers receiving basic welfare support, Refused asylum seekers Main actions and outcomes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comprehensive discussion of returnee's perspectives 2. Information provision and advice on voluntary return 3. Information on the situation in the country of origin 4. Helping clients when contacting officials and embassies, translation of documents, support in receiving travel documents 5. Registration and support for voluntary return and reintegration projects, assistance with travel (preparations), accompaniment to the airport 6. Financial repatriation support <p>Name of project Integrated Return Management IRMA 1.1 –return counselling (July 2013 - June 2014) Leading partners Implementing organization: Caritas Vienna, Caritas Burgenland, Caritas Styria, Caritas Salzburg, Caritas Upper Austria, Caritas Vorarlberg Target groups Asylum seekers, Refused asylum seekers, Recognized refugees, Subsidiary protection holders and Irregular migrants from third countries (non-EU countries) Main actions and outcomes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information and counselling sessions with clients 2. Comprehensively clarifying the situation and prospects in Austria and in the country of origin 3. Research of country of origin information 4. Preparation and organisation of the voluntary return 5. Attaining necessary travel documents at the embassy, alien's police or from other EU Member States or the country of origin 6. Accompanying to medical examinations, authorities, embassies etc., if required by the client 7. Assistance with document translation
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		<p>8. Enabling contact with relatives and/or friends in the country of origin</p> <p>9. Identifying needs/neediness</p> <p>10. Identifying necessary and possible reintegration measures</p> <p>11. Referring to reintegration projects in countries of origin</p> <p>12. Providing accommodation for the period of the organisation of the voluntary return if required</p> <p>13. Intervention measures in particular cases (f. ex. physical or mental illness, death, unaccompanied minors, victims of trafficking): cooperation with relevant institutions (hospitals, physicians, psychologists etc.)</p> <p>14. Conflict prevention</p> <p>15. Assistance in settling personal matters prior to departure</p> <p>16. Providing relief supplies, f. ex. clothes, suitcases</p> <p>17. Identifying additional possibilities of support, f. ex. Medicine</p> <p>18. Accompanying clients to the airport</p> <p>Name of project Integrated Return Management IRMA 1 July 2013 - January 2014</p> <p>Leading partners Implementing organization: Caritas Burgenland, Caritas Styria, Caritas Upper Austria, Caritas Vorarlberg</p> <p>Target groups Asylum seekers , Subsidiary protection holders and, Irregular migrants from third/non-EU countries currently in administrative detention, awaiting forced removal</p> <p>Main actions and outcomes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Crisis prevention 2. Measures in the case of hunger-strike or other exceptional situations 3. Where applicable suitable preparation for a forced return 4. Creation of daily structures (f. ex. leisure activities) 5. Provision of reading material, DVDs and the like, additional food, tobacco, clothes, etc. 6. Reduction of hunger strikes and self-inflicted injuries due to reliable and comprehensive counselling 7. Helping to enhance the acceptance of negative rulings <p>Name of project Return preparation in detention centres in Vordernberg, Styria (until 30.06.2014)</p> <p>Leading partners Implementing organization: Caritas Styria</p> <p>Target groups Asylum seekers , Subsidiary protection holders and, Irregular migrants from third/non-EU countries currently in administrative detention, awaiting forced removal</p> <p>Main actions and outcomes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Crisis prevention 2. Measures in the case of hunger-strike or other exceptional situations 3. Where applicable suitable preparation for a forced return
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			<p>4. Reduction of hunger strikes and self-inflicted injuries due to reliable and comprehensive counselling</p> <p>5. Helping to enhance the acceptance of negative rulings</p>
	Belgium	Yes	<p>1. Program voluntary return Fedasil is responsible for the coordination and organization of the voluntary return program. This program exists since 1984 and is extended in 2006 with a reintegration fund that offers migrants material support in the country of origin. With the establishment of the European Return Fund this reintegration programme is extended by several projects organised by IOM and Caritas International in order to offer the beneficiary more in kind support in the countries of origin.</p> <p>Target group: Asylum seekers, (ex) asylum seekers and persons with an irregular stay in Belgium. Theoretically anyone with an illegal or temporary stay in Belgium has access to the voluntary return programme, irrespective of his administrative antecedent.</p> <p>The program provides the following support (recurrent):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The organisation of the return travel (organised by IOM) - A cash grant of 250 euro (except for citizens with no visa duty and Kosovo) - In kind reintegration support in the country of origin (except for citizens with no visa duty and Kosovo) – organised by IOM or Caritas International and paid by national sources and the European Return Fund. The amount allocated to the migrant is cumulative organised, depending of the migrant's administrative situation and vulnerability. <p>2. Project: Strengthening of the voluntary return program by specific actions (period 1/07/2013 – 30/06/2015)</p> <p>Coordinated and implemented by Fedasil – co-financed by the European Return Fund</p> <p>Target group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Asylum seekers in the reception structures for asylum seekers, foreigners with an obligation to leave the country and irregular migrants - Return counsellors (in and outside the reception structures) as well as return partners, local public administrations and first line social services - Strategic management and experts from different European government administrations responsible for the development and implementation of the national policy in the field of voluntary return and reintegration <p>Main activities of the project:</p> <p>1. Strengthening of the accessibility and performance of the voluntary return program by the development and implementation of</p>


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		<p>initiatives in the field of information, communication, return counselling and capacity building by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Providing an accessible network of professional return counsellors where persons can receive more information about return as well as where they can prepare an effective departure to the country of return b. Improving of the communication to the target group as well as to their formal/ informal representatives (embassies, Diaspora communities etc.) c. Improving of the quality of the return counselling offered to (potential) returnees by the organization of trainings to social assistants etc. d. The development of communication tools and a referral system for all the stakeholders involved in the assistance towards UAM <p>2. The further development of the voluntary return program</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. National level: by maintaining and the development of (the content and financial) management mechanism b. European level: by setting up the ‘Common Support Initiative’: a platform of direct ‘government – to – government’ cooperation on the level of voluntary return. This platform stimulates strategic consultations and operational cooperation between member states in order to accelerate the individual learning process of each national administration as well as to maximise the economies of scale. <p>3. Project: AVRR B-Connected Coordinated and implemented by IOM Brussel, co-financed by the European Return Fund (period: 01/01/2014-30/06/2015)</p> <p>Target group of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (ex)-asylum seekers and irregular migrants - return counsellors (Fedasil, IOM, Rode Kruis), return network of NGO’s and local public administrations and other stakeholders in Belgium (including embassies and consular) - IOM reintegration assistance in the countries of return <p>Main activities of this project:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Further enhancement of the reintegration support packages in order to facilitate a sustainable return in country of return. This additional reintegration support is complementary to the reintegration support offered in the national return and reintegration packages. The main elements are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assistance with set up of a micro business b. Supporting beneficiaries with a wage subsidy support scheme c. Material assistance for vulnerable persons d. Looking for best practices and pilot activities to reinforce the existing reintegration approach e. Further development of activities with regard to the preparation and post-arrival assistance in the country of return, taking into account the specific situation in some countries of return 2. Further enhancement of the reintegration support for vulnerable groups, in particular UAM through the implementation of a specific
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		<p>and targeted approach</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. The development and implementation of activities concerning pro-active or re-active return counselling by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The development and implementation of a web-tool for IOM staff, Fedasil and return counsellors (reinforcing the link between pre-departure and post-departure counselling) b. Strengthening of the return network of NGO's and local public administrations accessible for the target group as well as setting up of a referral system in 4 key cities in Belgium. 4. Project: Strengthening Tailor-Made Assisted Voluntary Return 2014 (STAVR 2014, 2015) <p>Coordinated and implemented by Caritas International Belgium (period 01/01/2014-30/06/2015) – co-financed by the European Return Fund</p> <p>Target group of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (ex)asylum seekers and undocumented migrants considering the possibility of voluntary return to their country of origin - UAM and young adults - Foreigners facing forced return: providing of country information and reintegration information <p>Main activities in the frame of this project:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthening reintegration support in the country of return by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Setting up micro-business for returnees b. Providing wage subsidy for returnees in their country of return c. Providing additional reintegration support for vulnerable groups (in particular for Morocco and returnees facing unforeseen circumstances during or shortly after the start-up of their reintegration project, e.g. natural disasters etc) d. Strengthening capacities of the focal point organizations in the county of return (capacity building) involved in the implementation of reintegration activities for returnees e. Dissemination of practices on European level between NGO's involved in voluntary return and reintegration 2. Return counselling for vulnerable persons <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. UAM: by enforcement of the return counselling of the minor as well as stimulating awareness of the family in the country of return b. Single women with children by setting up a gender specific approach with a central focus on persons from Rwanda and Burundi c. Victims of human trafficking (mainly women) with a central focus on persons from Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Pakistan (and in a later phase also Morocco) 4. Project: City Gent – Project Voluntary return <p>Coordinated and implemented by the city Gent – co-financed by the European Return Fund (period 01/01/2014-30/06/2015).</p>
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			<p>Target group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (ex)asylum seekers and persons with an irregular stay - local stakeholders in Gent (professionals, social services, volunteers etc.) who are regularly in contact with the target group - Other communities and cities in Belgium <p>Main activities of the project:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing reception capacities for candidate returnees without shelter, waiting for an effective departure to their country of return 2. Knowledge and expertise centre with regard to voluntary return whereby the city of Gent will act as focal point for persons in the neighbourhood who would like to have more information about voluntary return (potential returnees, professionals, volunteers etc) 3. Trainings/ info sessions about the voluntary return program or about how to discuss the return option 4. Set up meetings with partners within Gent (OCMW, cabinet, social services for undocumented migrants, public services regularly in contact with potential returnees etc.) 5. Sharing of expertise with other public services and cities in Belgium <p>5. European partnerships and projects Further Fedasil is also actively involved in European projects like ERI, TIGA and TIA.</p>
	Bulgaria	Yes	<p>The national policy in the field of return is a complex of interrelated priorities and policies accorded with the national interests, the EU policy and the interests of the persons subject to return.</p> <p>The National Strategy of the Republic of Bulgaria in the field of migration, asylum and integration (2011-2020), explicitly states that the voluntary return is a priority in the state policy for combat with illegal migration.</p> <p>The main priorities of the Republic of Bulgaria in the implementation of integrated management of return are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotion of voluntary return; - Special approach to vulnerable persons; - Supporting of durable and sustainable reintegration in the countries of origin; - Improving the international cooperation with the countries of origin at all stages of the return process in order to achieve lasting return of the persons. <p>The Strategic Programme for Integrated Management of Return is foreseen to be updated after finishing the previous 2011-2013 period.</p> <p>The on-going projects promoting voluntary departure and reintegration are the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Voluntary return and reintegration of third-country nationals residing illegally in the Republic of Bulgaria, ERF Annual Programme 2012, IOM; 2) Information and consultation on the possibilities for voluntary return of third-country nationals asylum seekers in the Republic of Bulgaria, ERF Annual Programme 2012, IOM; 3) Implementation of an assisted programme of up to 250 migrants returning to their respective countries of origin, Emergency measures in


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			ERF Annual Programme 2012, IOM.										
	Croatia	Yes	<p>The Republic of Croatia does not have on-going activities in the field of voluntary return, such as programs/project promoting voluntary departure and reintegration, but the Return Directive has been implemented in Croatian Law on foreigners (OG 130/2011, 74/2013). At the moment voluntary return is practiced only by issuing return decisions to irregular migrants by MoI.</p> <p>In the Migration Policy of the Republic of Croatia for the period 2013-2015 (OG 85/2010), in chapter 6 "Irregular migration", measure 6.3., encouraging of voluntary return of irregular migrants has been foreseen.</p> <p>The aim of the measure is to encourage voluntary return of foreigners and provide assistance by non-governmental and international organizations through implementation of reintegration programs in their countries of origin. The aim will be achieved through co-operation with non-governmental or international organizations which will prepare necessary programs regarding voluntary return and reintegration of third country nationals.</p> <p>Providing of voluntary return has been foreseen through European Return Fund in frame of programme SOLID and it will be provided through Asylum and Migration Fund in frame of programme Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF).</p>										
	Cyprus	Yes	<p>Cyprus has only recently begun to implement actions towards voluntary returns, as this is a relatively new area of policy being addressed by the government. Actions have been implemented mostly through the European Return Fund with aim to strengthen the informational background in the area of voluntary departures and reintegration in order to proceed to a more sustainable policy making while enabling the relevant authorities to gain better insight on how a voluntary return programme should be set up and what must be taken into account. So far the following actions have been implemented:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="548 986 1825 1425"> <tr> <td>Name of project</td> <td>Research study regarding best practices in the field of voluntary and enforced return with the emphasis on particular countries of origin and immigration groups (i.e. women, children and the elderly)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Period covered</td> <td>This action was implemented under the Annual Programme 2009 of the Return Fund and was concluded by the 30th of June 2011.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Leading partners</td> <td>Social Innovation Institute, a non-governmental organization based in Greece, with partners from Cyprus.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Target groups</td> <td>Member states</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Short description of activity</td> <td>The research compared data from various member states of the European Union regarding the legislation for both forced and voluntary return as well as best practices per member state. This comparative research has been and will be used when designing the policy and the course of action for voluntary returns</td> </tr> </table>	Name of project	Research study regarding best practices in the field of voluntary and enforced return with the emphasis on particular countries of origin and immigration groups (i.e. women, children and the elderly)	Period covered	This action was implemented under the Annual Programme 2009 of the Return Fund and was concluded by the 30 th of June 2011.	Leading partners	Social Innovation Institute, a non-governmental organization based in Greece, with partners from Cyprus.	Target groups	Member states	Short description of activity	The research compared data from various member states of the European Union regarding the legislation for both forced and voluntary return as well as best practices per member state. This comparative research has been and will be used when designing the policy and the course of action for voluntary returns
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	Name of project	Production and publication of a guide/brochure providing fundamental information regarding the current situation in the country of origin/residence of potential returnees	
	Period covered	This action was implemented under the Annual Programme (AP) 2009 and 2011 of the Return Fund. Under the AP 2009 the action was completed by the 30 th of June 2011 while for AP 2011 the action was completed by the 30 th of June 2013.	
	Leading partners	Centre for the Advancement of Research and Development in Educational Technology LTD (CARDET), a non-governmental organization.	
	Target groups	Third country nationals who wish to return to the country of origin (either legally or illegally residing in the Republic of Cyprus)	
	Short description of activity	For AP 2009 informational guides were produced for: Syria, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, in the main languages of their respective population: Arabic (Syria), Bengali (Bangladesh), Tamil and Sinhala (Sri Lanka) as well as English. The information concerned perspective occupations which are in demand in the country of origin, vocational training, state financial support/subsidy, education for all family members as well as information of helpful services and organizations.	
	Name of project	Research on the factors that affect voluntary return –experiences across the EU	
	Period covered	This action is being implemented under the Annual Programme 2012 of the Return Fund and it is expected to be completed by the 30 th of June 2014.	
	Leading partners	International Organization for Migration (IOM)	
	Target groups	Cyprus and other Member states	
	Short description of activity	The scope of this research is to focus particularly on the area of voluntary returns, address the main factors that affect voluntary return as a whole (motives, procedures, etc) in Cyprus, take into account experiences from across the EU (at least three member states) as well as bring updated data in regards to the previous research conducted under the AP 2009.	


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			Name of project	Establishment of a multilateral network between countries on return issues
			Period covered	This action is being implemented under the Annual Programme 2012 of the Return Fund and it is expected to be completed by the 30 th of June 2014.
			Leading partners	Educational Excellence Corporation Ltd (EDEX), a non-governmental organization in collaboration with other non-governmental organizations and experts in Cyprus.
			Target groups	Mediterranean member states (i.e. Greece, Malta and probably Italy) which share the same migration issues and Middle East/ African countries (i.e. Iran and Egypt),- government officials, NGO's, international organizations, various stakeholders
			Short description of activity	Although this is a network that will cover the whole spectrum on return, nonetheless, the area of voluntary return and reintegration will be addressed as an essential part of this policy area. The network aims to exchange information, experiences and practices and reinforce the communication between various countries that have mutual interests in the area of return, both EU member states as well as third countries. The network may provide information concerning legislation, financial, vocational opportunities, and forums of discussion.
	Czech Republic	Yes	There are two on-going voluntary return programs of the Ministry of the Interior:	
			1)	
			Name of the program/project	„Program of Voluntary Returns“
			Period covered	since 1996
			Leading partners	Refugee Facilities Administration of the Ministry of the Interior
			Target group	former asylum seekers (only): asylum seekers who withdrew the application, and refused asylum seekers
			Main actions and outcomes	Voluntary returns: 1) providing of flight tickets 2) return counseling 3) obtaining travel documents 4) return assistance 5) transport to the Prague airport 6) providing a temporary accommodation before the

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			<p>departure</p> <p>7) providing a transport allowance for the purpose of returnee's transport from an airport in the destination country to returnee's home</p>
		2)	
		Name of the program/project	"Program of Assisted Voluntary Returns"
		Period covered	since 2001
		Leading partners	International Organization for Migration (IOM)
		Target group	former asylum seekers (asylum seekers who withdrew the application, and refused asylum seekers), foreigners with departure order
		Main actions and outcomes	<p>Voluntary returns:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) providing flight tickets 2) return counseling 3) obtaining travel documents 4) return assistance 5) transport to the Prague airport 6) providing a temporary accommodation before the departure and upon the arrival 7) providing a transport allowance for the purpose of returnee's transport from an airport in the destination country to returnee's home 8) providing a reintegration aid
	Estonia	Yes	<p>Migration and asylum policy fall under the responsibility of the Estonian Ministry of Interior, while Police and Border Guard Board (PBGB) implements the policies. Both institutions maintain working relationships with other Ministries regarding migration and asylum issues. Since accession to the EU in 2004 and to the Schengen Agreement in 2007, a major overhaul of legislation took place. Migration management was intrinsically part of this overhaul, as Estonia became one Member States part of the External Borders to the EU.</p> <p>Actors involved to return:</p> <p>Governmental actors- in addition to border control, the PBGB has an active role to play in both voluntary and enforced return. The Internal Security Service is jointly responsible for return decisions, surveillance and removals.</p> <p>Non-governmental actors- Integration and Migration Foundation Our People is responsible for the return and integration of Estonian nationals to Estonia. Aside from this organization, the Estonian Red Cross oversees forced return monitoring and family tracing. The Estonian Human</p>


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			<p>Rights Centre offers legal counseling for asylum seekers whilst the Johannes Mihkelson Centre provides them with a social support service. IOM implements the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration project VARRE.</p> <p>VARRE project</p> <p>The Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration from Estonia (VARRE) programme began operating in 2010 by IOM and PBGB and has since then assisted 59 Third Country Nationals to return home. The program is co-funded by the European Union through the European Return Fund and Estonian Ministry of the Interior. IOM implements the Assisted Voluntary Return project in partnership with PBGB.</p> <p>Project activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-departure information, return and reintegration assistance to eligible migrants. Approved reintegration plans range from 1000-1400EUR per person and they have been mainly destined to finance the setup of new small businesses, farming, or buying into a partnership in already existing small businesses. • Strengthening the return counseling system and the capacity building of return stakeholders. <p>Target group of project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Returnees and potential returnees: irregular migrants, rejected asylum seekers, refugees and persons with alternative status, who would like to return voluntarily to their country of origin. • State officials and other professionals working with (potential) returnees in Estonia: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board, Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of the Interior, Reception Centre, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NGOs, etc. 						
	Finland	Yes	<p>According to Future of migration Strategy 2020, voluntary return must be considered the primary option.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Name of project</td> <td>Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programme (VARRP-FIN)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Leading partners</td> <td>IOM Helsinki; MIGRI Referral agencies: MIGRI (Finnish Immigration Service)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Target groups</td> <td>Project was launched in January 2013. The VARRP-FIN project functions as a continuation of the “Developing Assisted Voluntary Return (DAVRiF)” project that was implemented between 2010 and 2012. The project offers Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration assistance to the following groups:</td> </tr> </table>	Name of project	Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programme (VARRP-FIN)	Leading partners	IOM Helsinki; MIGRI Referral agencies: MIGRI (Finnish Immigration Service)	Target groups	Project was launched in January 2013. The VARRP-FIN project functions as a continuation of the “Developing Assisted Voluntary Return (DAVRiF)” project that was implemented between 2010 and 2012. The project offers Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration assistance to the following groups:
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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asylum seekers withdrawing their asylum process • Rejected asylum seekers • Asylum seekers with a Dublin hit who decide to cancel their process in Finland and return to the country of origin • Persons with a valid residence status for protection reasons • Victims of trafficking • Certain groups of persons with expired or voided residence status, or persons who have not had any permits for stay in Finland 				
			Main actions and outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Information and outreach work 2.Pre-Return counselling 3.Referrals to access legal advice; medical care; accommodation 4.Reintegration counselling 5.Travel documentation 6.Departure, transit and arrival assistance (including (medical) escorts 7.Reintegration assistance with follow up monitoring 8.Reintegration in kind: family grant max EUR 1,500 adult and child EUR 1,000 9.Monitoring 				
			Year	Incoming Flows	Forced Returns	Voluntary Departure	Assisted Voluntary Return	Top five nationalities
			2013	Asylum seekers 3,230	2,325	n/a	341	Iraq, Serbia, Russia, BiH, Kosovo



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			2012	Asylum seekers 3,129	2,359	n/a	288	Iraq, Serbia, Russia, BiH, Kosovo
	Germany	Yes	<p>Regular AVR-program in Germany: REAG/GARP (Repatriation and Emigration program for asylum seekers in Germany / Government assisted Repatriation program).</p> <p>Main purpose: Financial assistance for voluntary returnees on a nationwide level (migration matters incl. return matters are managed by the 16 German Federal states (e.g. Bavaria, Berlin, Saxony etc.). The REAG/GARP grants are: payment for travel costs (ticket), travel allowances up to 250.- EUR by using a car, start-up 300-750.- EUR per returnee (depending on the target country). Amendments will be discussed on an annual meeting among Federal Ministry of the Interior, Federal States, BAMF and IOM. Annual information sheet will be disseminated to aliens authorities, counselling agencies and networks dealing with migration matters. Applications will be sent directly to IOM for the ongoing procedure (e.g. organizing a departure) which works effectively. Roughly 7.000 returnees have been assisted during the recent years. In 2014 we expect a higher number of returns (ca. 11.000 persons).</p> <p>REAG/GARP was established 1979 and has been implemented by IOM Germany (Nuremberg). The program has been funded by the Federal Government and 16 Federal States (since 2010 partially by the European return Fund with an annual budget of roughly 5-7 Mio. EUR).</p> <p>Besides the regular AVR program REAG/GARP the BAMF (managing body of voluntary returns on a nationwide level in Germany) implements some special return projects to selected third countries: The ZIRF-DATABASE ZIRF database provides comprehensive information in a combined form. The answers to previous enquiries for individual cases are made available anonymously. This enables the ZIRF to make available the necessary knowledge to a large number of users efficiently and quickly. The database is a major focus of the work of the ZIRF, and is being constantly expanded. The database contains</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> voluntary return programmes <input type="checkbox"/> promotional measures (national / international / EU level) <input type="checkbox"/> country of origin information, as well as questions and answers on the countries <input type="checkbox"/> contacts/advice agencies, and <input type="checkbox"/> other information supporting the goals of the ZIRF <p>This ambitious tool relies entirely on cooperation with the Federal Länder and the other institutions (in particular the independent welfare organisations) in collecting the abovementioned information.</p> <p>A) Project ERI (06/2012 – 02/2014)</p>					

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			<p>Joint European return project with five Member States and 7 target countries. Budget: 1.6 Mio. EUR funded by EC (90%) and MS (10%). Main purposes: Cooperation among Member States, cooperation with Service Providers (partner organizations) in third countries, focus on post-arrival-assistance (sustainable reintegration), estimated 500 returnees have been reached.</p> <p>B) Project ERIN Consecutive project of the ERI project; proposal has been awarded by the EC. Estimated budget: 1.9 Mio: EUR (funded by EC (90%) and MS (10%). Main purpose: Procurement team (more structural approach), focus on post-arrival-assistance (sustainable reintegration).</p> <p>C) Project Northern Iraq (10/2014 – 09/2014) National return project funded by European return fund (75) and BAMF (25%) to realize effective return assistance into a country with special challenges. Main focus is vocational and social reintegration of families and vulnerable groups.</p> <p>D) Project RACOB (11/2012 – 10/2014) French-German return project. Main purpose is the assistance of returnees (Armenian nationals) from Germany by using French structures in Armenia. France may use German structures and financed facilities for French returnees in Kosovo.</p> <p>E) Target Initiative Georgia BAMF staff (liaison) was present in Tbilissi for any assistance of returnees until the end of January 2014.</p> <p>All information concerning voluntary return matters on a federal level is provided on the BAMF website.</p>
	Greece	Yes	<p>a) the name of the programs/projects: Facilitation of voluntary departure by the Hellenic Police; b) the period covered: January 2012 – June 2014; c) the leading partners: Aliens Division of Hellenic Police Headquarters of the Ministry of Public Order & Citizen Protection; d) the target group: Category I -Migrants who do not meet the conditions for their stay in the Greek territory and they are willing to return to their country of origin on a voluntary basis, and also Category II -Migrants who are in detention and they decide to fully cooperate with Police Authorities in order to return as soon as possible to their country of origin. e) a short description of the activity: Voluntary departure concerns cases of migrants who are willing to cooperate on the fulfillment of the conditions of their departure from Greek territory. Category I-Migrants are informed on the spot regarding the procedure and within short period of time (inside some days), they depart for their country of origin mainly via air (on commercial or chartered flights) but also via land or sea. The following costs will be covered for this Category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tickets by commercial flights for returnees and in exceptional cases, costs of hired aircrafts (charter flights) if it is the most convenient



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			<p>option (no commercial connections etc)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs for travel documents issuing • 300 Euros financial aid in order to meet their basic initial needs <p>Category II-Migrants should fulfill the declaration form for voluntary departure. Nominated focal points in all Aliens Directorates of Hellenic Republic will convey the forms to the Coordinator Focal Point in Athens, who will proceed with all relevant actions concerning the issuing of travel document, if needed, and the planning of the voluntary return.</p> <p>The following costs will be covered for this Category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tickets by commercial flights for returnees and in exceptional cases, costs of hired aircrafts (charter flights) if it is the most convenient option (no commercial connections etc) • Costs for travel documents issuing • 200 Euros financial aid in order to meet their basic initial needs <p>Please note that the above programs/projects are running directly by Hellenic Police (Ministry of Citizen Protection and Public Order) and are additional to the programs implementing by IOM (n.b. relevant e-compendium).</p>
	Hungary	No	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that it is not disseminated further.
	Italy	Yes	<p>In Italy, assisted voluntary return (AVR) was initially formally provided for victims of human trafficking with Law no. 286/1998 and for other categories with Law no. 189/2002. Eligible groups for the assisted voluntary return programmes could be easily divided into two large categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Humanitarian emergencies and asylum: holders of a permit for temporary humanitarian protection and displaced persons, asylum applicants, refugees, as well as people who have renounced applying for asylum or who have been denied the status of refugee or another form of temporary protection as well as former Dublin Convention cases; b) Trafficking victims and humanitarian cases: groups of migrants in a state of vulnerability, trafficking victims, humanitarian cases, unaccompanied minors and stranded migrant workers. <p>Before 2011, assisted voluntary return was denied to irregular migrants with the exception of those considered to be particularly vulnerable (the elderly, single mothers, people with mental or physical illness). However, in 2011 the “Return Directive” was implemented in Italy through Decree Law no. 89, which extended voluntary return to those irregular third-country nationals who have been granted a term of 7 to 30 days by the Prefect to return to their country of origin. Only the following categories remain excluded: those who endanger public order and national security; who are at risk of absconding; who are subject to a removal order of the court; who violate the security measures imposed by the “questore” (public security authority at provincial level); who violate the terms of voluntary return. Moreover, in 2013 the Ministry of the Interior provided clarification on access to AVR programmes for third-country nationals irregularly present on Italian soil through Circular no. 448, stating that a preventive adoption of expulsion measures is not mandatory in order to access a AVR programme.</p> <p>The Decree of the President of the Council of Ministers of the 28th of February 2013 allows for international protection status holders (from North African countries who entered Italy between the 1st of January and the 5th of April 2013) to request voluntary assisted return to their</p>

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		<p>country of origin, or convert their residency permit into a work, family, study and/or professional training permit before the 31st of March 2014. In either case, their humanitarian permission to remain will be extended until the conclusion of conversion or assisted return procedures. However, for those beneficiaries who do not select one of the abovementioned options, case by case provisions will be made for their expulsion or removal from national territory.</p> <p>Since the establishment of the Return Fund, organizations responsible for assisted voluntary return programmes have been organized in the Italian Network for Voluntary Assisted Return (RIRVA) which has now reached its fifth year of existence. RIRVA provides information and orientation services on AVR. It promotes cooperation between public and private contact points for migrants on a national level in order to improve the efficiency of access to and implementation of AVR procedures. To this end, a communication campaign has been developed to promote AVR and a national call-centre has been set up. The Network's official website also provides additional multilingual information and a Help Desk service for return. The RIRVA network is composed of public and private entities (local institutions, non-governmental organizations, IOM) who participate in reinforcing the Italian referral system on AVR, in collaboration with the Ministry of Interior. The Network operates through a multilevel strategy and is constituted by staff at the National level, Regional Branches and Local Information and Awareness-raising Local Points.</p> <p>Ongoing programmes/projects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) PARTIR V b) July 2013 – June 2014 c) IOM d) 830 immigrants from all countries present on Italian soil. All categories eligible under the current legal framework can access, with priority given to vulnerable returnees. e) Project activity includes: pre-departure counselling; departure organization; cash contribution of 100 Euros upon departure; reintegration support for single immigrant or families through the provision of up to 1,000 Euros in kind to cover basic needs; micro-business start up; medical treatment. 2. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) AUSILIUM b) November 2013 – June 2014 c) IOM d) 950 immigrants from all countries present on Italian soil. All categories eligible under the current legal framework can access, with priority given to irregular immigrants from all countries (or immigrants at risk of irregularity) NOT belonging to vulnerable categories. e) Project activity includes: pre-departure counselling, departure organization, cash contribution of 200 Euros upon departure. 3. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Remploy II
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			<p>b) September 2012 – March 2014</p> <p>c) IOM</p> <p>d) 142 immigrant workers at risk of becoming irregular from all countries present on Italian soil.</p> <p>e) Project activity includes: pre-departure counselling; a reintegration plan based on the creation of an enterprise in country of return; ad-hoc micro-business training and business plan elaboration; departure organization; cash contribution of 400 Euros per family member upon departure; up to 3,000 Euros in kind to cover the start up of the income-generating entrepreneurial activity; elaboration of a multi-language business guide containing technical tools for business start-up.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>a) Return to the Future</p> <p>b) September 2013 – April 2014</p> <p>c) Xenagos Foundation & Connecting People</p> <p>d) 81 Tunisian nationals residing in the regions of Piedmont, Lazio and Sicily.</p> <p>e) Project activity includes: pre-departure counselling, departure organization, cash contribution of 400 Euros upon departure; individual reintegration plan through 6 workshops aimed at setting up cooperatives in the country of return; contribution of up to 1,100 Euros in kind to back reintegration plan activities; monitoring of reintegration plan.</p> <p>5.</p> <p>a) REMIDA 2</p> <p>b) August 2012 – June 2014</p> <p>c) CEFA</p> <p>d) 190 nationals of Morocco, Tunisia, Senegal and Sri Lanka.</p> <p>e) Project activity includes: pre-departure counselling; reintegration through assistance with business start up in country of return; up to 2,000 Euros in kind to back business start-up; reintegration through labour insertion for up to 45 people; monitoring of reintegration plans.</p>
	Latvia	Yes	<p>a) Continuation of Voluntary Return and Reintegration in Latvia, Stage V (May 2013 – June 2014)</p> <p>b) May 2013 – June 2014</p> <p>c) The project is implemented by IOM in cooperation with the State Border Guard and the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs</p> <p>d) As in Latvia only one project is implemented this project is used for all the possible target groups</p> <p>e) Assisted voluntary return and reintegration assistance, information dissemination, counseling.</p> <p>Latest statistics for 2013 – total number of persons who received assistance from the projects implemented by IOM in 2013 is 82.</p>
	Lithuania	Yes	<p>According to national Law on the Legal Status of Aliens (Law) priority is given to voluntary departure. Currently Lithuania is implementing three projects related to voluntary return and reintegration. Those are the fifth consecutive projects funded under the European Return Fund.</p>


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			<p>a) 1. "Return Home V"; 2. "Assisted Voluntary Return for Vulnerable Migrants IV" and 3. "Reintegration: a Future in Homeland II".</p> <p>b) Implementation period for current projects is 01.07.2013-30.06.2014.</p> <p>c) Projects are implemented by IOM Lithuania. Institutions involved: Migration Department / Migration services, state border guard services, Foreigners' Registration Center.</p> <p>d) Third country nationals eligible for voluntary departure (those to whom return decision can be issued, grounds for return decision are set in 125 Article of the Law):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Third country national who entered Lithuania legally but find himself / herself illegally present in Lithuania (the alien's visa has been annulled; the alien's temporary residence permit or permanent residence permit has been withdrawn; the alien stays in Lithuania after the expiry of his visa; the alien stays in Lithuania after the expiry of the temporary residence permit; the alien entered Lithuania lawfully, but stays in the Republic of Lithuania without possessing a temporary or permanent residence permit, where he is obliged to possess one; the alien has been staying in Lithuania for a period exceeding the period of visa-free stay); 2. Asylum seeker or vulnerable person, who entered Lithuania illegally or staying in Lithuania illegally, agrees to return voluntary with assistance of international or non-governmental organization. <p>From AVR can also benefit refugees / persons who have been granted other form of protection provided they withdraw their status</p> <p>e) Main activities in the framework of the projects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provision of AVRR, including vulnerable migrants (counseling and pre departure assistance, assisting in voluntary return, post arrival assistance (reintegration, in case of vulnerable migrants medical assistance) and monitoring); 2. Dissemination of information on AVRR, visibility campaign, production of new AVRR web page, production of video clip about reintegration assistance; 3. Meeting with national stakeholders; 4. Informational seminars for target group; 5. Informational seminars for state border guards; 6. Bilateral / multilateral meetings with diplomatic missions of Country of Origin; 7. Final conference on reintegration and its significance. 8. Two trainings for practitioners involved in AVR; <p>Study visits to Kazakhstan and Afghanistan in order to explore possible reintegration activities.</p>
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			13	PAA (Post Arrival Assistance) project Ukraine	1 Jan 2012 – 30 Jun 2014	Repatriation and Departure Service, R&DS (NL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Migrants from Ukraine Both asylum seekers and non-asylum seekers are eligible Both voluntary and non-voluntary returnees are eligible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing counselling, referral and return and reintegration assistance
			14	Targeted Initiative to Armenia	1 Jan 2013 – 1 Jan 2016	French Office for Immigration and Integration, OFII (FRA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Migrants from Armenia Both asylum seekers and non-asylum seekers are eligible Both voluntary and non-voluntary returnees are eligible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing counselling, referral and return and reintegration assistance
			Other return and reintegration projects					
			15	PAA (Post Arrival Assistance) project Sierra Leone	1 Jan 2014 – 31 Dec 2014	Repatriation and Departure Service, R&DS (NL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Migrants from Sierra Leone Both asylum seekers and non-asylum seekers are eligible Both voluntary and non-voluntary returnees are eligible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing counselling, referral and return and reintegration assistance
			16	Post Arrival and Reintegration Assistance to Angolan Unaccompanied Minors returning from the NL (Mulemba project)	1 March 2013 – 28 Feb 2015	Repatriation and Departure Service, R&DS (NL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Angolan unaccompanied minors returning from the NL (and participating EU member states) Both asylum seekers and non-asylum seekers are eligible Both voluntary and non-voluntary returnees are eligible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing counselling, referral and return and reintegration assistance Providing reception at Mulemba facilities until the UAM has reached the age of 18
			17	Post Arrival and Reintegration Assistance of Congolese unaccompanied minor asylum seekers from the NL (Don Bosco project)	1 Feb 2013 – 31 Jul 2014	Repatriation and Departure Service, R&DS (NL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Congolese unaccompanied minors returning from the NL Both asylum seekers and non-asylum seekers are eligible Both voluntary and non-voluntary returnees are eligible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing counselling, referral and return and reintegration assistance Providing reception at Don Bosco facilities until the UAM has reached the age of 18
	Poland	Yes	<p>Voluntary Return Policy of Poland</p> <p>Return policy is commonly perceived as an important tool in combating illegal migration, limiting the undesirable situation, such as irregular stay of foreigners, and playing significant prevention role. The above is reflected in documents significant for the migration system in Poland, i.e. “<i>Migration Policy of Poland – the Current State of Play and the Further Actions</i>” of 2012 and in a new law on foreigners of 12th December 2013 [Journal of Laws of 2013, item 1650]. The first of them provides a special road map of new migration solutions while the second one implements a number of solutions indicated in the strategic document. Among them should be mentioned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ reinforce and improve of existing procedures and mechanisms; ✓ limit of channels of illegal immigration (fictitious students, fictitious marriages, foreigners misusing simplified system of taking up the employment); ✓ distribution of information in the countries of origin on opportunities of legal migration while indicating at the same time the consequences of the violation of the provisions of migration law; ✓ reduce time of execution of expulsion decisions specifically in case of minors placed at guarded centres; 					

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ set priority to voluntary returns; and ✓ introduce regulations that in justified cases will allow persons staying illegally to legalise their stay or leave the Republic of Poland without negative consequences (i.a. entry on the list of undesirable persons). <p>Under the return policy, among additional activities <u>aimed at developing prompt, sustained, and effective returns</u> the following should be pointed out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ organise by the Border Guard several inter-institutional meetings of consultative character in order to foster cooperation and exchange experience related to return decisions with regard to foreigners illegally staying in Poland [ongoing implementation since 2012]; ✓ organise consultations with other EU Member-States on the execution of an agreement on the transfer and admission of persons [ongoing implementation since 2012]; ✓ prepare study visits concerning, among others, the best practices in the monitoring of forced returns based on the experience of other EU Member States [ongoing implementation since 2012; e.g. in May 2012, such meeting was arranged with the cooperation of Germany and the Netherlands]; ✓ organise charter flights by Border Guard [often with the cooperation of other EU Member States] and the participation in the European Union charter flights coordinated by Frontex Agency [ongoing implementation]. <p>Implementation Plan to the “<i>Migration Policy of Poland – the Current State of Play and the Further Actions</i>” which is now [until 31 January 2014] under public consultations formulates several activities related to the voluntary return policy of Poland that should be fulfilled within next two years. One should mention here: 1. arranging and promoting in foreigners` countries of origin, whose citizens are mostly affected by Polish legislation and rules on entry and residence, information showing the possibilities for legal entry and residence in Poland, as well as information on the consequences of illegal migration. Publicizing this issue should show the effectiveness of both systems for border control and control activities inside the country [ongoing implementation]; 2. extending the categories of foreigners who can make use of the voluntary return programme to include persons granted subsidiary protection on the territory of Poland and victims of human trafficking who have not expressed interest in their participation in the Human Trafficking Victim / Witness Assistance and Protection Programme [partly implemented]; 3. ensuring the possibility of reintegration assistance to foreigners whose returns are entirely organized by the Office for Foreigners [not implemented yet]; 4. systematic research into effectiveness of voluntary returns taking place and of reintegration assistance [ongoing implementation].</p> <p>Providing assistance in Poland in voluntary return to the country of origin may be currently done in three ways. Firstly, the Head of the Office for Foreigners under Article 70(1) and 75 of the Act of 2003 on granting protection to foreigners on the territory of the Republic of Poland, has the opportunity to assist the voluntary return to his/her country of origin of any foreigner who is undergoing the refugee procedure, and who expresses such a wish. Such a return of a foreigner is completely organised and financed from the budgetary resources of the Office, intended for the care of foreigners.</p>
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		<p>Secondly, on the basis of the Agreement of 12 July 2005 between the Minister of the Internal Affairs and Administration and the International Organization for Migration on co-operation in the field of voluntary returns of foreigners leaving the territory of the Republic of Poland, a voluntary return programme is implemented under which foreigners leave Polish territory with the organizational support provided by the IOM, and financed by the Border Guard and the Office for Foreigners.</p> <p>Thirdly, the IOM also implements projects of voluntary returns of foreigners co-financed by the European Union under the European Return Fund in which the Office for Foreigners and the Border Guard are partners of this organisation.</p> <p>In general, two categories of foreigners can apply to participate in the voluntary return programme. Firstly, foreigners who have submitted applications for international protection and the proceedings in their case is pending or they received a negative decision, and if proceedings to grant them the tolerated stay is pending or is dismissed, or they resigned from applying for the refugee status (but only if the procedure for expulsion from the territory of Poland in their case has not yet been implemented). Secondly, foreigners who have received the decision, which implies an obligation to leave the territory of the Republic of Poland (with the exception of the removal decision which was given order of immediate enforceability, except for a situation in which the decision was taken because of the legitimate interest of a foreigner), irrespective of the fact whether they previously filed applications for international protection.</p> <p>The analysis of statistics on foreigners who have been granted assistance under the assisted voluntary return programme clearly demonstrates constant interest in this form of departure from Poland of third-country nationals residing on the territory of the Republic of Poland contrary to applicable regulations. In 2011, 1141 people participated in the assisted voluntary return programme, in 2012 the number of beneficiaries of the assisted voluntary return programme was around 752 people, and in 2013 – over 1993 people.</p> <p>On the other hand, foreigners who were granted subsidiary protection in Poland are eligible to benefit from the assisted voluntary returns but no later than the date of eligibility to be granted social assistance and health care. Since 2011 according to the amended <i>Agreement between the Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Poland and International Organisation for Migration on Cooperation in the Voluntary Returns of Foreign Nationals Leaving the Territory of the Republic of Poland drawn up in Warsaw on 12 July 2005</i> all foreign victims of human trafficking, including European Union Member-States nationals can take advantage of voluntary return.</p> <p>A person returning voluntarily to their country of origin can be provided with further assistance in the form of financial reintegration assistance for the purpose of satisfying the basic needs upon return (money to buy food, clothing, hygiene products, etc.), or in the form of material aid, inter alia, intended to start and run a business, or for education, including vocational training. However, a lack of possibility is visible to grant reintegration aid to migrants, whose returns are fully organised and funded by the Office for Foreigners (based on Article 70 and 75 of the Act of 13 June 2003 on granting protection to foreigners on the territory of the Republic of Poland).</p> <p>The advantage of voluntary returns is a more effective and humane system of returning foreigners to their country of origins, ensuring respect for human dignity.</p> <p>In addition, voluntary return is, in principle, more durable than an organised return using coercion. This is, inter alia, due to the reintegration assistance for returning migrants as provided for under the assisted voluntary return programmes. Along with bringing about the foreigner's</p>
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		<p>assisted voluntary return, the chances of permanent “anchoring” of immigrants in the society from which they emigrated greatly increase, thus limiting the re-immigration.</p> <p>One shall also mention about the financial aspect of this mechanism. As it follows from the Border Guard the average cost of organising the voluntary return of a foreigner is in fact two times lower than the average cost of a forced return (see the Annex).</p> <p>Implemented in Poland activities regarding the voluntary return are consistent with the settlement adopted within the European Union included in the so-called Return Directive - <i>Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals</i>. This document encourages EU states to use more widely the mechanism of voluntary return, and to use for its implementation appropriate EU financial instruments.</p> <p>Details as regards to ongoing in 2014 AVR programs:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the name of the programs/projects; b) the period covered; c) the leading partners; d) the target group and e) a short description of the activity <p>Programme: <i>Assistance In Voluntary Return</i></p> <p>On the basis of Articles 70 and 75 of the Act of 13 June 2003 on granting protection to foreigners within the territory of the Republic of Poland, the Head of the Office for Foreigners may provide a foreigner with assistance in voluntary return to the country they have the right to enter upon their request. It aims to provide return to: foreigners, whose proceedings to be granted the refugee status is pending; foreigners, whose proceedings have been completed, provided notification to the Head of the Office for Foreigners of foreigner`s intention to voluntarily return to the country of return [however the notification should be submitted no later than the deadline to which they are obliged to leave the territory of the Republic of Poland]; foreigners who have received decisions on granting subsidiary protection or tolerated stay, but no later than the date of eligibility to be granted social assistance and health care.</p> <p>The aforementioned Act requires that the foreigner, who intends to leave Poland voluntarily or to return to the country which agrees or is obliged to receive him, informs the Head of the Office for Foreigners thereof (Article 75 of the aforementioned Act). In practice, this means that the Office for Foreigners may organise a voluntary return of a foreigner to their country of origin, once they express such intention. The Head of the Office issues a decision in this case upon the foreigner`s application. Assistance in voluntary return includes covering the costs of a ticket for the cheapest means of public transport to the country of foreigner`s choice, which agrees or is obliged to receive a foreigner (train is</p>
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		<p>the mean of transport chosen most often by foreigners leaving Poland and benefiting directly from IOM assistance). The Office also assists foreigners with obtaining necessary documents and helps them reach their means of transport heading for their countries of return¹. This program is implemented by the Office for Foreigners on the annual basis and is fully financed by the state budget.</p> <p>Programme: <i>Programme of Voluntary Returns of Aliens Leaving the Territory of the Republic of Poland</i> The project is fully financed by the Polish government – namely, Office for Foreigners and Border Guard Headquarters and is implemented on the basis of Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Minister of Internal Affairs and Administration and the International Organization of Migration IOM Warsaw in July 2005, and Action Plan prepared every year by IOM and accepted by the Minister of the Interior. This project offers return assistance to unsuccessful asylum seekers and irregular migrants and return and reintegration assistance to aliens identified as victims of trafficking by an authority competent with respect to conduct procedure on combating trafficking in human beings. It provides them with counselling, voluntary return and if need be medical assistance before departure as well as assistance with obtaining travel documents.</p> <p>Project: <i>Assistance in Voluntary Return and Reintegration. Phase II</i> This project is implemented in partnership with Border Guard Headquarters. It started on 1st March 2013 and will continue until 30th June 2015. It aims to provide return and reintegration assistance to: unsuccessful asylum seekers, persons who have been issued the decision which indicates an obligation to leave Poland, vulnerable migrants (victims of trafficking, single parents, the elderly, pregnant women, unaccompanied minors). The potential beneficiaries are provided with pre-departure counselling on return opportunities, reliable and impartial information regarding present situation in their countries of origin, assistance in obtaining the necessary travel documents, organising the return travel including transit and/or reception assistance, and needs-tailored reintegration assistance in the country of return. Project is financed by the state budget [Border Guard] and the European Return Fund.</p> <p>Project: <i>Increase of the effectiveness in the field of voluntary return. Phase II</i> The project begun on 1st March 2013 and will last for 28 consecutive months [till June 2015]. It is implemented by IOM in partnership with Border Guard and Office for Foreigners. It aims to strengthen the mechanism of voluntary return and reintegration assistance in Poland and to equip the national institutions (Border Guard, Office for Foreigners, consulates of countries of origin, etc) with capacities to implement the programme through the organization of the below listed capacity building initiatives: - a series of consultations, workshops and training seminars for the institutions implementing the AVRR programme in Poland as well as national, regional and local authorities, NGOs, judiciary, consular missions, and other institutions dealing with migrants. Project is financed by the state budget [Office for Foreigners, Border Guard] and the European Return Fund.</p> <p>Project: <i>Consultancy, Travel, Reintegration – Assistance in Voluntary Return from Poland. Phase II</i></p>
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¹ The assistance in voluntary return implemented by the Office for Foreigners does not provide for the possibility of reintegration assistance paid out to a foreigner in the country of return.



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		<p>This project is implemented by IOM in partnership with the Office for Foreigners. It started on 1st December 2011 and will continue until December 2014. It aims to provide return and reintegration assistance to asylum seekers, who have decided to withdrawal their application to be granted refugee status in Poland and asked the Office for Foreigners to organize assistance in return to the country of return. The following measures are performed within the framework of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ disseminating information about voluntary return opportunities among the potential beneficiaries; ✓ counselling on return issues; ✓ gathering and providing reliable and credible information, needed to make a decision on voluntary return to foreigners eligible for participation in the programme; ✓ providing assistance with obtaining valid travel documents; ✓ arranging for return travel and providing reintegration assistance. <p>The measures performed take account of the particular situation and needs of persons requiring special approach – pregnant women, single parents with children, unaccompanied minors, the elderly, the disabled and the sick including those with mental health conditions. Each returnee receives a benefit in cash to cover the costs of their basic needs (food, hygiene products, clothing etc.) in the first days upon return. The returning persons are also offered the opportunity to obtain additional reintegration assistance to be used for, among other things, starting and running business activity or pursuing education (including vocational trainings). Unaccompanied minors and persons requiring medical care in the country of origin are also provided with supplementary reintegration assistance. Project is financed by the state budget [Office for Foreigners] and the European Return Fund.</p> <p>Statistical data on assisted voluntary return:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="548 933 1928 1425"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="548 933 907 975"></th> <th data-bbox="907 933 1034 975">2006</th> <th data-bbox="1034 933 1162 975">2007</th> <th data-bbox="1162 933 1290 975">2008</th> <th data-bbox="1290 933 1417 975">2009</th> <th data-bbox="1417 933 1545 975">2010</th> <th data-bbox="1545 933 1673 975">2011</th> <th data-bbox="1673 933 1800 975">2012</th> <th data-bbox="1800 933 1928 975">2013</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="548 975 907 1129">Number of persons who benefited from assistance in voluntary return (Articles 70 and 75 of the Act)</td> <td data-bbox="907 975 1034 1129">138</td> <td data-bbox="1034 975 1162 1129">48</td> <td data-bbox="1162 975 1290 1129">514</td> <td data-bbox="1290 975 1417 1129">256</td> <td data-bbox="1417 975 1545 1129">25</td> <td data-bbox="1545 975 1673 1129">15</td> <td data-bbox="1673 975 1800 1129">5</td> <td data-bbox="1800 975 1928 1129">45</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="548 1129 907 1300">Number of participants who have been provided with support for voluntary return programmes (implementation of the Agreement of 2005)</td> <td data-bbox="907 1129 1034 1300">228</td> <td data-bbox="1034 1129 1162 1300">262</td> <td data-bbox="1162 1129 1290 1300">721</td> <td data-bbox="1290 1129 1417 1300">226</td> <td data-bbox="1417 1129 1545 1300">180</td> <td data-bbox="1545 1129 1673 1300">8</td> <td data-bbox="1673 1129 1800 1300">7</td> <td data-bbox="1800 1129 1928 1300">25</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="548 1300 907 1425">Number of participants who have been provided with support for voluntary return programmes (implementation</td> <td data-bbox="907 1300 1034 1425">184</td> <td data-bbox="1034 1300 1162 1425">481</td> <td data-bbox="1162 1300 1290 1425">241</td> <td data-bbox="1290 1300 1417 1425">1339</td> <td data-bbox="1417 1300 1545 1425">1442</td> <td data-bbox="1545 1300 1673 1425">1141</td> <td data-bbox="1673 1300 1800 1425">752</td> <td data-bbox="1800 1300 1928 1425">1923</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Number of persons who benefited from assistance in voluntary return (Articles 70 and 75 of the Act)	138	48	514	256	25	15	5	45	Number of participants who have been provided with support for voluntary return programmes (implementation of the Agreement of 2005)	228	262	721	226	180	8	7	25	Number of participants who have been provided with support for voluntary return programmes (implementation	184	481	241	1339	1442	1141	752	1923
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			of IOM projects` co-financed under the financial support of European Funds, the Office for Foreigners and the Border Guard)									
			TOTAL	550	791	1476	1821	1647	1164	764	1993	
	Slovak Republic	Yes	<p>In the Slovak Republic (SR), (assisted) voluntary returns are carried out exclusively by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in close cooperation with the Bureau of Border and Aliens Police of the Police Force Presidium. Voluntary returns are carried out through the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration Programme (AVRR) which operates on the basis of ongoing projects. Current project is entitled Voluntary Return and Reintegration in Country of Origin and runs from May 2013 until March 2014. It is funded from the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic 25% and from European Return Fund, Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows 75%.</p> <p>The Slovak Republic continues to support assisted voluntary returns of third country nationals to their country of origin as its objective. This objective is achieved through adoption of legislative tools in the Act on Residence of Aliens and Act on Asylum but also through practical implementation of activities of the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration Programme.</p> <p>The implementation of the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration Programme started with the signature of the Agreement on Cooperation between the Ministry of Interior of the SR and the International Organization for Migration. The agreement on Assistance in the Return of Rejected Asylum Seekers and Irregular Migrants to their Countries of Origin was signed on 20 August 1998. Besides this agreement, the Act on Residence of Aliens (Act Nr. 404/2011) and Act on Asylum (Act Nr. 480/2002) also constitute a legal basis for the execution of voluntary returns.</p> <p>a) Programme: Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration Programme (1998-ongoing), Project: Voluntary Return and Reintegration in Country of Origin (1 May 2013 – 31 March 2014)</p> <p>b) 1 May 2013 – 31 March 2014</p> <p>c) Bureau of Border and Aliens Police of the Police Force Presidium of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic, Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic and International Organisation for Migration (IOM).</p> <p>IOM Bratislava also co-operates with organisations, mainly NGOs, which can not be described as leading partners, but which get in contact with migrants. This co-operation is based on an informal basis and good long term relationships. If relevant, information on migrants is</p>									

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			<p>exchanged and migrants are referred to respective organisations (e.g. Slovak Humanitarian Council (SHC), Human Rights League (HRL)) and/or representatives of migrant communities.</p> <p>d) Third country nationals: asylum seekers, unsuccessful asylum seekers, irregular migrants detained in official state facilities, unidentified destitute irregular migrants, migrants without residence permit</p> <p>e) The main objective of the project is to provide target group with the possibility of a humane, organized and cost-effective return to and reintegration in their country of origin. The programme consists of 3 main components, 1. Information campaign, 2. Return assistance, 3. Reintegration assistance.</p> <p>1. Multi-level information campaign through distribution of flyers in places where migrants are residing, operation of dedicated assisted voluntary return help-line 0850 211 262 and a website: avr.iom.sk, individual pre-return counselling.</p> <p>2. Return assistance component includes registration of applicants for voluntary return, assistance with provision of travel documents, provision of flight tickets, provision of return assistances, financial contribution to basic living needs upon departure, provision of accommodation and health care before departure from Slovakia.</p> <p>3. Post-return reintegration assistance includes assistance with preparation and implementation of approved reintegration schemes aiming at business start-up, job search, provision of material assistance, legal counselling, training support, help with accommodation, or medical assistance.</p> <p>For more information on Slovak voluntary returns including information on services provided, legislation, statistical data, success stories of returned migrants etc. see: http://www.avr.iom.sk/?lang=en .</p>
	Slovenia	Yes	<p>In Slovenia assisted voluntary return and reintegration projects carried out in accordance with a partnership agreement between the Ministry of Interior, the Police and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). IOM was selected at the public tender started in 2009 in which two more parties were involved. The public tender for selection of the partner as regards AVRR program is repeated every year. The recent agreement with the IOM is valid until Jun. 30, 2014. The target group of the project is a non-EU citizens to which return decision were issued according to the Return Directive which was implemented into national legislation in 2011. The project includes advising, counseling and assistance in pre-departure phase, assistance during the return phase and reintegration in the country of return. It envisages as well capacity building and training of staff who are involved into the processes of return of the non-EU citizens. For reintegration assistance a non-EU citizen alias returnee could express his/her needs and opt between different reintegration facilities such as setting up a small or micro business, study, health treatment, etc. The value of the project for an adult should not exceed 2000 EUR and for a minor 1000 EUR. Maximum grant for a family is 4000 EUR. The migrants can obtain cash (according to certain criteria) up to 1000 EUR.</p>
	Sweden	Yes	<p><u>Voluntary Return Policy - SWEDEN</u></p> <p>Sweden is currently implementing three reintegration programs in order to promote voluntary return but allows also a number of involuntary</p>


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		<p>returnees to take part, though with a lower level of the amount available/person. Please note that the responsibility for the voluntary and forced return is divided between the Swedish Migration Board (SMB) and the Swedish Police Authorities. Afghanistan and Iraq are target countries as having high numbers of potential return cases and being countries which still have considerable capacity-building/support needs. A dialogue is regularly held with the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) in order to try developing synergies and coordination of the individual reintegration support and long-term development assistance strategies. Recently the SMB signed an agreement for a pilot-project to support return and reintegration activities to unaccompanied minors from Uganda which also targets their families back home. If turns out well, more projects of that kind are planned together with local project partners having children's rights profile. In addition to reintegration activities, returnees from certain countries can receive reestablishment support, a cash-grant amounting to 3,400 EUR/adult, 1,700 EUR/child and maximum 8,500 EUR/family.</p> <p>Requested info on specific programs:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Reception and Reintegration Assistance for Afghan Voluntary Returnees to Afghanistan from Sweden b) 1 November 2013 – 31 October 2016 c) IOM Kabul d) 200 voluntary and 200 involuntary rejected asylum seekers returning back to Afghanistan e) 1. Reception Assistance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance with immigration procedures • Onward transportation to final destination • Temporary accommodation • Medical assistance • Information on possible reintegration activities <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Reintegration assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start-up of small business • Vocational or educational training
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-the-job training placement • Employment through job referrals <p>a) Reintegration Assistance for Iraqi Returnees in Sweden</p> <p>b) 1 November 2013 – 31 October 2014</p> <p>c) Danish Refugee Council</p> <p>d) 80 voluntary and involuntary rejected asylum seekers returning back to Iraq</p> <p>e) 1. Pre-departure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information sharing and sensitization • Counseling • Mapping of available services <p>2. Reintegration assistance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration at Municipal level • Medical, Psychosocial, Legal and other specialized services • Provide economic opportunity for returnees; apprenticeships, job placement, training, guidance and cash grants to enable development of small business • Support returnees to obtain relevant documentation through requests/referrals to authorities and agencies. • Returnees with special needs can receive support for rent, food and initial settling-in expenses on a case-by-case basis. <p>a) Enabling Safe Return of Unaccompanied Minors to Uganda</p>
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			<p>b) 1 February 2014 – 31 January 2015</p> <p>c) African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN) Uganda Chapter</p> <p>d) 15 unaccompanied minors with rejected asylum applications returning back to Uganda. Assistance is also available for the UAM's family.</p> <p>e) Activities;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide psychological support, counseling and shelter. • Conduct family tracing • Rehabilitation; needs assessment, counseling, life skills training, making referrals, medical and legal assistance. • Resettlement with their families; provide counseling sessions and sensitization, transport to final destination, provision of resettlement packages including mattresses, clothing, food supplements and additional support according to individual needs. • Reintegration with their communities; Linking to educational institutions, provide scholastic materials and tuition fees for academics needs. Provide legal counseling advice. Support engagement in social and recreational activities/networks. • Support UAMs and their family to improve sustainability of livelihoods; provide business skills and start-up materials for income generating activities, provide participation in existing government or private poverty alleviation programs to ensure economic security and incomes for self-sufficiency of the families.
	United Kingdom	Yes	<p>Voluntary Return at a Glance Overview</p> <p>AVR programmes in the UK have quantitative targets set every financial year. For the financial year 2013/14 the forecast is set for around 4400 AVR returns. At the end of 2012/13, there had been 3740 departures under AVR programmes, mainly returning to Pakistan, China, Iraq, India and Afghanistan.</p> <p>Three separate programmes operate depending on the target group (adult irregular migrants, adults in the asylum system, and families in the above categories and/or unaccompanied migrant children). Counselling, reintegration and monitoring are administered by the Choices service of Refugee Action, a well-known national charity, linking in with reintegration partners in the key countries overseas.</p>

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		<p>Migration Context/Profile Assisted Voluntary Returns take place if the individual is eligible and wishes to return to their country of origin, under one of the programmes that the Home Office operates. If an individual is accepted on to the AVR scheme they would not be subsequently detained in order to enforce removal, and have would have up to 3 months to prepare and return. For those already detained, they would not normally be released from detention and once accepted onto the programme it is expected they will return on the first available flight.</p> <p>Actors of return Institutional - The Home office is responsible for overseeing policy and operational aspects of migration enforcement. Non-governmental - Refugee Action, an independent national charity, administers the AVR programme through its Choices service, on behalf of Home Office. Refugee Action is responsible for the provision of return assistance and counselling and collaborates with local NGOs in several countries of origin for reintegration assistance.</p> <p>Main features of AVR The AVR scheme is made up of three programmes. Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programme (VARRP) - for those who have sought asylum and those with certain forms of related temporary status in the UK.</p> <p>Assisted Voluntary Return for Families and Children (AVRFC) - for families comprising of a minimum of one adult parent or legal guardian and at least one dependent child, and for unaccompanied migrant children who have either sought asylum or who are in the UK illegally and wish to return.</p> <p>Assisted Voluntary Return for Irregular Migrants (AVRIM) - for migrants who have not sought asylum, but who are in the UK illegally and wish to return home.</p> <p>Returnees under all three AVR programmes are eligible for support acquiring travel documentation, flight to the country of origin and domestic travel and airport assistance at departure and arrival airports. Refugee Action, who administers the programme on behalf of the Home Office, monitors each reintegration case for a period of at least six months after return.</p> <p>The Home Office completes annual quantitative and qualitative evaluation reports on the AVR programmes.</p> <p>Vulnerable cases are determined in accordance with the EU legal definition of vulnerable persons, as set in Article 3.9 of the EU Return Directive 2008/115.</p> <p>Links More information about AVR programmes within United Kingdom is available in the following documents:</p>
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			<p>VREN E-compendium of (Assisted) Voluntary Return activities in the EU (1st and 2nd edition). Available via VREN platform for registered members</p> <p>Websites UKBA (currently transitioning to UK Home Office website www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/ Refugee Action Choices programme www.choices-avr.org.uk/</p>
	Norway	Yes	<p>Norwegian return policy: Foreigners without a residence permit shall return as quickly as possible. Assisted return is the preferred way of return. Assisted return is facilitated by various return and reintegration programmes as well as information and counseling activities in order to motivate and prepare for return.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assisted Voluntary Return Programmes 2. Projects to facilitate assisted voluntary return in Reception Centres (RCs) 3. Outreach activities <p>Name of project Financial Support Reintegration Programme (FSR) 01.01.2014 – 31.12.2014 Leading partner IOM Target groups Asylumseekers, asylumseekers with a final negative decision, irregular migrants, and persons with a residence permit who want to repatriate Main actions and outcomes Information and counselling in reception centres, financial assistance according to a graded scheme of support – NOK 20.000, NOK 15.000 and NOK 10.000 (The date of application for assisted return compared to the officially set deadline for departure defines the level of support.)</p> <p>Name of project Return and Reintegration programme – Afghanistan (IRRANA) 01.01.2014 – 31.12.2014 Leading partner IOM Target groups Afghan nationals in Norway with or without a residence permit Main actions and outcomes • Information and counselling in Norway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach information activities • Cash support and in-kind reintegration support: up to a value of NOK 35.000 • Means-tested support for housing

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocational training and education for young returnees and • Individual follow up after return by implementing partner <p>Name of project Return and Reintegration programme – IRAQ (IRRINI) 01.01.2014 – 31.12.2014 Leading partner IOM Target groups Iraqi nationals with or without a residence permit Main actions and outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and counselling • Outreach information activities • Cash support and in kind reintegration support up to a value of NOK 35.000 • Means tested support for Housing • Vocational training and education for young returnees • Individual follow up after return by implementing partner <p>Name of project Return and Reintegration Programme - Ethiopia (ARE) 1.01.2014 – 31.12.2014 Leading partner IOM/ Administration of refugee affairs, ARRA Target groups Ethiopian Nationals with or without a residence permit, or persons with a residence permit wishing to repatriate Main actions and outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and counselling • Economic and in kind reintegration support to a value of NOK 45.000 • Local development support (RCAP) to a value of NOK 26 000 • Individual follow up and monitoring by implementing partner <p>2. Projects to facilitate assisted voluntary return in RCs</p> <p>Name of project “The-Road-ahead” Leading partner UDI/Reception centers Target groups Asylum seekers without a residence permit Main actions and outcomes Established cooperation between UDI and 70 local reception centres concerning scheduled conversations to motivate for voluntary return</p> <p>Name of project Qualification courses Leading partner ASTERO LTD Target groups Asylum seekers without a residence permit Main actions and outcomes Practical courses 4-8 weeks in: - Aid worker Health</p>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Construction - Welding <p>The aim is to provide the asylum seeker with some practical skills to improve their probability of finding work after return to their country of origin</p> <p>Name of project Qualification courses Leading partner Norges Vel LTD Target groups Asylum seekers without a residence permit Main actions and outcomes Practical courses 4-8 weeks in business administration. The aim is to provide the asylum seeker with enough knowledge to start their own business after return to their country of origin</p> <p>Name of project Qualification courses Leading partner Velle LTD Target groups Asylum seekers without a residence permit Main actions and outcomes Practical courses 4-8 weeks in welding combined with business administration. The aim is to provide the asylum seeker with some practical skills and business knowledge to improve their probability of finding work after return to their country of origin</p> <p>Name of project Voluntary return of imprisoned persons without legal stay Leading partner Norwegian Correctional Services, Oslo Prison Target groups Imprisoned persons without a legal permit Main actions and outcomes Cooperation with the correctional services to identify the target group and to motivate the target group to voluntarily return. Targeted to provide the correctional services with improved competence about foreign citizens.</p> <p>Name of project Return of Unaccompanied Minor Asylum seekers (UMAs) 01.01.2014 – 31.12.2014 Leading partner Reception Centres for UMAs 15-18 YRS Target groups UMAs with a temporary residence permit or UMAs with a rejected asylum claim Main actions and outcomes Scheduled return dialogues in order to motivate for assisted return</p> <p>Name of project Voluntary Assisted Return and Support for Vulnerable Groups in Norway 01.01.2014 -31.12.2014 Leading partner IOM Target groups -Unaccompanied minors and young adults in the 18 to 23 age group who came to Norway as UNAMs -Possible victims of human trafficking</p>
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		<p>-Victims of violence, coercion and exploitation - persons with special medical needs - single elderly persons</p> <p>Main actions and outcomes Reintegration support in cash and funds earmarked for housing, education, starting a business, work training, medicine etc. in the initial period following the return</p> <p>3. Outreach activities</p> <p>Name of programme: Outreach for Voluntary Return – 2014</p> <p>Target groups:</p> <p>1)Potential beneficiaries of IOM return programmes; asylum seekers with a negative decision, including asylum seekers in the process – waiting for a decision, and irregular migrants. 2)Migrant groups/networks/organisations/media in Norway, non-governmental humanitarian organisations who are in contact with the groups mentioned in target group number 1 above, and government agencies working with migrants.</p> <p>Main actions and outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that national and municipal stakeholders, NGOs and migrant organizations have increased knowledge about IOM’s services in particular the Voluntary Assisted Return Programme (VARP) in support of migrants; and • Ensuring that migrants are provided with information on the VARP through different means and channels.
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