



**EMN Ad-Hoc Query on Management system related to assisted voluntary returns: structure and organizations of the responsible authorities at national level**

Requested by Italian NCO on 21st June 2017

**Return**

Responses from Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom, Norway (21 in total)

Disclaimer:

*The following responses have been provided primarily for the purpose of information exchange among EMN NCPs in the framework of the EMN. The contributing EMN NCPs have provided, to the best of their knowledge, information that is up-to-date, objective and reliable. Note, however, that the information provided does not necessarily represent the official policy of an EMN NCPs' Member State.*

## **Background information:**

With the purpose of enhancing the knowledge and the exchange of good practices, among the Member States, concerning the return implementation policies, it would be interesting to acquire information concerning the Member States' internal organization in terms of compositions and functions - as far as the management of the return activities is concerned; it would be advisable to focus, in particular, on the possible best practices (for ex. in terms of legislation, operational procedures, eventual involvement of private support bodies and so on) used for the effective implementation of assisted voluntary returns.

## **Questions**

1. 1 In your Member State, which is the Authority responsible for the assisted voluntary returns (for ex. Ministry, Agency, and so on)?
2. 2 Which is the Authority's structure? Is it a centralized Authority – that is, are all assisted voluntary return activities managed by only one Authority at central level, or is it a decentralized management, with operational Authorities at local level?
3. 3 How many human resources and which professional roles are involved in the Authority's activity?
4. 4 Which tasks/functions does it carry out : does it directly manage third country nationals eligible for assisted voluntary return or are the relevant activities outsourced to third parties by means of public calls for proposal (for ex. involvement of International Organizations, NGOs, so on)?
5. 5 Are the activities directly managed by the relevant Authority; in which way are they organized?In particular: - how are third country nationals eligible for assisted voluntary return measures identified? - how are counselling activities carried out? - how are pre-departure activities implemented?- how is airline ticket booking implemented?- how are reintegration and monitoring activities in the country of origin implemented?
6. 6 Does the assisted voluntary return managing Authority also deal with forced returns?Yes ( ) No ( )6.1 If YES, which is this Authority?6.2 If NO, pls. explain which is the Authority dealing with forced returns and how is it connected with the Authority dealing with Assisted Voluntary Returns?
7. 7 Do legislative, operational best practices and/or instruments (for ex. the IT platform) and/or experiences exist in your Member State, which enhance the implementation of the return policies?

## **Responses**

	Country	Wider Disseminatio	Response
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	Austria	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> In Austria the Federal Ministry of the Interior and the Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum are the responsible authorities for assisted voluntary returns. Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p> <p><b>2.</b> Both, the Federal Ministry of the Interior and the Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum are centralized authorities. However, the Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum has regional offices in the provinces. Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p> <p><b>3.</b> In the Federal Ministry of the Interior two people work in the field of voluntary return. In the Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum the Headquarter in Vienna is mainly responsible for the handling. Currently, five people are tasked to the work of voluntary return. Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p> <p><b>4.</b> Consultation on return assistance is provided by the Human Rights Association Austria and the Caritas. The decision on the provision of return assistance is taken by the Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum. Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p> <p><b>5.</b> Consultation on return assistance is provided by the Human Rights Association Austria and the Caritas. The decision on the provision of return assistance is taken by the Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum. Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p> <p><b>6.</b> Yes. 6.1 According to Art. 3 of the Act Establishing the Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum the Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum does also deal with forced returns. 6.2 N/A. Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p> <p><b>7.</b> Yes, please see Chapter 7 of the Austrian national report for the EMN study on the return of rejected asylum seekers (2016), p. 44, available at <a href="http://www.emn.at/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/The-return-of-rejected-asylum-seekers-from-Austria.pdf">www.emn.at/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/The-return-of-rejected-asylum-seekers-from-Austria.pdf</a>. Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p>
	Belgium	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> Fedasil (Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers) is the governmental administration responsible for the assisted voluntary returns (AVR) programme for Belgium. Source: Article 54 of the Law from 12 January 2007</p>

[http://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/cgi\\_loi/change\\_lg.pl?language=fr&la=F&cn=2007011252&table\\_name=loi](http://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/cgi_loi/change_lg.pl?language=fr&la=F&cn=2007011252&table_name=loi)

**2.** Fedasil is a public interest organization created by the programme law of 19 July 2001 and is operational since May 2002. Since October 2014, Fedasil falls under the political responsibility of the Belgian State Secretary for Asylum Policy and Migration, Mr Theo Francken. As the centralized Authority responsible for the AVR programme, Fedasil establishes, carries out and monitors the AVR programme but a part of its operational work is devolved to intergovernmental organizations (e.g. IOM), international organizations (e.g. CIB) and local partners in Belgium (cities, NGO, local social services, etc.). The AVR programme has been developed in order to facilitate the return of those who want to return, but who are not able to organize their return by themselves. To this end, the programme is organized as follows: **CENTRALIZED:** - Policy development: definition of general mission, target groups, return/reintegration packages, eligibility criteria, return path - article 2 12 of the Law from 12 January 2007 - (proactive approach centered on asylum seekers), counselling strategy. - General management of the programme: planning, preparation, monitoring, control/evaluation (content & financial). This proceeds via a scoreboard, monthly financial monitoring, quarterly steering committees with IOM/ CIB, financial/control missions in countries of return. - AVR communication tools & strategy development: unique AVR website for frontline workers & target groups, AVR posters/ flyers/ brochures with similar layout, communication towards consular services to inform them about the AVR programme, AVR counselling coordination (e.g. return path, return desks (see below), free AVR hotline number, etc.) - Development of target groups based initiatives: persons with severe medical needs, UAM, country based initiatives, medical/social pool of escorts management, etc. **REGIONALIZED:** - Counselling: (i) 5 “Return Desks” established and managed by Fedasil (Ghent, Brussels, Antwerp, Liège, Charleroi) where migrants can be referred to in order to obtain tailor-made information/counselling about voluntary return and reintegration possibilities; (ii) a network of voluntary return counsellors active in Fedasil centers and dedicated open return places (to embed the voluntary return options in the daily process of the reception structures (cf. return path)); (iii) a network of return partners consisting of social services/NGOs across the country where migrants can also apply for a voluntary return (managed via IOM Belgium) - Operational implementation of return travel: airport assistance, booking tickets, transit assistance, travel documents reimbursement, operational preparation medical voluntary return, etc. proceed in cooperation with IOM Brussels (convention Fedasil – IOM) and of reintegration assistance: via IOM Brussels and Caritas International Belgium (tri-partite convention Fedasil - IOM – CIB). Fedasil

is also involved in European cooperation programmes such as ERIN SA, EURLO, etc. - Information dissemination: cooperation with Belgian main cities (e.g. Antwerp, Ostend, Ghent) to embed the AVR communication into the local city policy and (social) services provided to the target groups and to detect specific needs on a local level

**3.** See attached table

**4.** See answers above. Furthermore: - Communication: Fedasil has a convention with the Cities of Ghent, Ostend and Antwerp. There is also a cooperation with Aalst and Eupen via Croix Rouge and Charleroi via the NGO Accueil et promotion des Immigrés. In the course of the following months, Fedasil aims to expand this regionalized communication approach to other cities in Belgium. - Counselling: Fedasil concluded a convention with a social service in Antwerp (CAW) where a native counsellor (funded by the city of Antwerp) is dedicated to native counselling towards irregularly staying (Moroccan) citizens with a view to pro-actively discussing return options and guiding/referring them to the Fedasil Return Desk in Antwerp. In the following months, a similar cooperation will be set up in Brussels with the Polish foundation Barka for the outsourcing/direct counseling of irregularly staying vulnerable migrants from Eastern Europe. It mainly concerns homeless people, addicts, etc. (2 FTE will be dedicated to this project). These migrants will also be referred to the Fedasil Return Desk in Brussels. - Operational implementation of the return travel: in some exceptional cases, Fedasil will organize the return travel itself (e.g. voluntary return to the Palestinian Territories via Egypt - Cairo, etc.)

**5.** See questions 1 to 4 In particular: How are third country nationals eligible for assisted voluntary return measures identified? Fedasil has developed eligibility criteria whereby the access to the return and reintegration packages depends on the migrant's status: the home country (visa free or not), administrative status in terms of asylum and vulnerability. See also answers in previous EMN AHQ (EMN AHQ on support to persons who have returned to the country of origin 31.05.2017). + <http://www.fedasil.be/en/content/aid-reintegration> How are counselling activities carried out? The eligibility assessment of the migrant to the AVR programme proceeds via the return counsellors themselves and is based on general eligibility criteria. Background checks about the migrant (e.g. involvement in criminal issues) are in principle not conducted to define the eligibility of the migrant to AVR. The quality control of the eligibility of the migrant to AVR proceeds via: 1°) return counsellor 2°) the service provider (IOM/CIB) involved 3°) Fedasil itself via its financial control cycle (sample based)

			<p>How are pre-departure activities implemented?- how is airline ticket booking implemented? See question 2 How are reintegration and monitoring activities in the country of origin implemented? - Preparation and implementation of reintegration activities: national reintegration programme (almost worldwide coverage) via IOM or CIB, or via ERIN SA programme if applicable - Monitoring in country of return via IOM/CIB: reporting via financial/narrative reporting and monthly monitoring list. Fedasil also developed an online pilot reintegration survey for the monitoring of post-arrival assistance provided to returnees in specific target countries – in view of further target group based programme development (see also ppt in annex). Currently, Fedasil works on the further development of this tool - Fedasil conducts (in cooperation with IOM/CIB) yearly monitoring visits in the countries of return to meet the local reintegration partners and visit returnees. Voluntary return counsellors are also invited to participate in some of these monitoring visits (cf. reinforcement capacities of voluntary return counsellors) - Fedasil developed a yearly control cycle (financial &amp; content) – sample based. This control proceeds via a desk study of individual reintegration cases and control visits at the reintegration local partners in return countries</p> <p><b>6.</b> No. The Belgian Immigration Office is the Authority responsible for the forced returns. Fedasil and the Belgian Immigration Office are two distinct entities but since 2011 both fall also under the authority of the State Secretary in charge of Asylum &amp; Migration. Fedasil and the Belgian Immigration Office collaborate closely through: - Return path (see above): liaison officers of the Immigration Officers are dedicated to the open reception places in the reception structures and have an operational cooperation with the return counsellors (common case handling) - Sefor (project aimed at informing and monitoring foreigners who are issued an order to leave the territory and are not living in a reception structure) : regular contact/communication between return counsellors/desks and Sefor Liaison Officers.</p> <p><b>7.</b> - Legislative basis: the return path for persons staying in reception centers. For more information about the return path, see previous answers to EMN AHQs (for example AHQ on the correlation between forced and voluntary return from 3 January 2017, AHQ on means to incentivize (voluntary) returns of irregularly staying third-country nationals from 2 December 2016). - Operational best practices: (i) structural cooperation with cities (to embed information sharing on AVR and identify target groups/needs at the local level - see above), (ii) return desks (to make the programme easily accessible - see above), (iii) cooperation with NGO's (to make the programme more credible towards frontline workers, target groups), (iv) continuous reinforcement of return counsellors (e.g. via country specific</p>
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			information sessions, trainings concerning how to address the option of voluntary return as an alternative towards the target groups, possibility to participate to monitoring missions in countries of return, etc.). - Instruments: (i) online reintegration monitoring tool, (ii) wiki-tool for return counsellors with specific countries of return information (bottom-up approach based on information from monitoring missions & in future possibility also via EURLO).
	Croatia	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 1. Croatia has not yet established system of assisted voluntary return.</li> <li>2. 2. N/a.</li> <li>3. 3. N/a.</li> <li>4. 4. N/a.</li> <li>5. 5. N/a.</li> <li>6. 6. N/a.</li> <li>7. 7. N/a.</li> </ol>
	Czech Republic	No	
	Estonia	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration (VARRE) Programme is carried out by IOM and co-funded by the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and by the Estonian Ministry of the Interior. Ministry of the Interior is responsible for management and monitoring of AMIF national projects. The Ministry has also right to propose new projects and activities which are needed for the use of EU funds resources.</li> <li>2. VARRE programme is implemented by IOM Office in Estonia</li> <li>3. There are 4 persons in IOM Office who are responsible for carrying out the VARRE programme. The</li> </ol>

			<p>project is monitored and evaluated by the Ministry of the Interior (Foreign Financing Department as well as Citizenship and Migration Policy Department ).</p> <p><b>4.</b> The Ministry of the Interior has selected IOM through a public procurement process.</p> <p><b>5.</b> The information on assisted voluntary return and reintegration program is provided through different procedures and channels (e.g. through counselling services, within the asylum and return procedure). In case the third country national is interested to join the assisted voluntary return and reintegration program the officials of PBGB contact directly the representatives of IOM. Similarly IOM is doing outreach to reception and detention facilities, diplomatic corps and diaspora communities. Also the AVRR programme has a website.</p> <p><b>6.</b> No. Estonian Police and Border Guard Board has power to issue and enforce return decisions. In case the third country national is interested to join the assisted voluntary return and reintegration program the officials of PBGB contact directly the representatives of IOM.</p> <p><b>7.</b> N/A</p>
+	Finland	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> The Finnish Immigration Service (<a href="http://www.migri.fi">www.migri.fi</a>) is responsible on assisted voluntary return system in Finland. The actual case management (counselling, receiving applications and deciding about the return and reintegration support) is conducted in reception centers. Most reception centers are run by external organizations such as local municipalities, Finnish Red Cross and private companies. Finnish Immigration Service is responsible on management, planning, and monitoring of the reception system in general.</p> <p><b>2.</b> See Q 1. Operational work is done in the reception centers. Only those returnees that are no more customers in reception centers leave their AVR applications to Finnish Immigration Service.</p> <p><b>3.</b> In Finnish Immigration Service, only one employee (a Senior Adviser at the Reception Unit) is working full time for AVR. Additionally, Finnish Immigration Service has at the moment a 10-months (June 2016 - April 2018) AMIF-project on enhancing voluntary return in reception centers. This project has 16 employees who are supporting reception centers' case workers in assisted voluntary return issues.</p>

			<p>Otherwise, all the case work is done in reception centers by their social workers and other staff.</p> <p><b>4.</b> Finnish Immigration Service is responsible on management, planning, and monitoring of the voluntary return system. Reception centers deal with assisted voluntary return cases and IOM Helsinki organizes the travel arrangements for return.</p> <p><b>5.</b> As the third country nationals eligible for assisted voluntary return are mostly asylum seekers they are mostly customers in reception centers. After a negative asylum decision and/or a return decision police discusses with the asylum seeker and asks about his /her plans concerning (voluntary) return. If he/she wishes to return voluntarily he/she can apply for voluntary return assistance from reception center. If he/she says he/she is not willing to return voluntarily police starts preparing for forced return. Reception centers social workers also inform their customers about the possibility of voluntary return and assistance that is available. Counselling for AVRR is available in reception centers from social workers. Pre-departure activities and ticket booking: IOM Helsinki helps the returnee to obtain travel documents if needed. It also makes the travel arrangement from Finland to return country and assists the returnees in Helsinki Airport upon departure. Local IOM assists the returnees in transit and in return country. Reintegration assistance in country of return is implemented through ERIN (in-kind assistance) or IOM Helsinki / local IOM (in-cash assistance). Monitoring activities are not included in our return and reintegration system at the moment.</p> <p><b>6.</b> No. Police is responsible of forced returns. Both Finnish Immigration Service and Police are agencies under the Ministry of Interior.</p> <p><b>7.</b> -</p>
	France	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> The French office for immigration and integration (OFII) which is a public administrative body, operator of the ministry of Interior, is competent for implementing the French programme for voluntary return, regarding management of process, logistics and its promotion.</p> <p><b>2.</b> The OFII is a decentralized entity with 31 territorial directorates (28 in metropolitan France and 3 in overseas territories) competent for processing applications for return assistance as well as for promoting this process locally. In the central office of the OFII in Paris, the Directorate of immigration, return,</p>

reintegration and international affairs manages the voluntary return programme and provides with a legal and technical support to decentralized directorates. The OFII has also a travel agency (tour operator) located in the Roissy Charles de Gaulle airport, which is also competent for the Orly airport as well as local travel offices in Lyon, Marseille, Nice, Cayenne, Pointe-à-Pitre and Saint-Denis de la Réunion, in charge of booking return flights and giving the money allowance to the beneficiaries just before their boarding. Lastly, the OFII also relies on 8 representative offices out of France for implementation of assistance to reintegration.

**3.** OFII Staff as of 31 May 2017 is: In regional directorates: 41,82 full time employees In travel agencies and offices: 11.75 full time employees In representative offices out of France: 11.3 full time employees (local employment contract) In the central directorate in Paris: 6 full time employees

**4.** As indicated above, the OFII manages the whole French programme for return assistance, with no participation of any third party. Out of France, regarding reintegration, the OFII delegates the technical support of project holders to civil society organisations (especially associations, in order to involve local actors) and in some cases to international organisations (Caritas, IOM, regarding the ERIN programme in which the OFII participates). The OFII representations out of France or the Paris office manage the reintegration programme (project audit, audit of providers, drafting and signature of conventions, statistics).

**5.** The criteria for return and reintegration support and the amount of allowances are fixed by an order of the ministry of Interior and clarified through an instruction of the General Director of the OFII. Any foreign national residing illegally in France or whose asylum application was rejected can benefit from the return assistance, provided s/he has been residing for at least 6 months in France. Then, the OFII regional directorates have to support the promotion of this assistance directly with the migrants (especially in emergency shelters, in reception centers for asylum seekers, in centers of preparation for return, as well as in dismantlement of camps), and with the associations and public services. Lastly, a lot of foreign nationals contact directly the OFII offices to obtain some information and apply for return assistance. The OFII regional directorates have to proceed with the application, based on required criteria for eligibility (irregular situation) and ineligibility (for example holding a residence permit in one EU member State). The OFII advisors on return proceed with the instruction of the administrative situation of the foreign national and depending on it, approves or rejects the return assistance (the regional director

takes the decision). The OFII central directorate brings its legal support for disputed cases. Return assistance is not a right and can be refused because of a legitimate reason (for example because of the migration pathway of the migrant, his/her financial situation, etc.). The applications for return assistance are all computerized and managed through a specific national computer application. This application takes over fingerprints and ID photo, compulsory for all return assistance application. Processing a return assistance application implies several individual interviews with the migrant and the return advisor, which are organized in the OFII premises or in the centers of preparation to return (open centers managed by the French state where the OFII has its own offices). These interviews aim at preparing the return from a psychological, administrative (the OFII can obtain Consular laissez-passer) and logistic standpoint (preparation of the travel with the travel agency) and also inform the migrant on the reintegration assistance. Once the assistance return application validated, it is sent electronically to the travel agency in Roissy or to another travel office, which books the flight. Once confirmed, the migrant meets for the last time the advisor in the OFII regional directorate to be issued his/her administrative sheet and flight plan. S/he will have to meet with the travel agent who will accompany him/her in the luggage registration process and will give him/her up the money allowance (in cash) in the departure lounge. Regarding reintegration, the OFII proposes 3 kinds of assistance: assistance for social reintegration (emergency support regarding the housing needs, health, children education), assistance for reintegration through employment and/or vocational training, or through the creation of a business. These 3 levels of support exist in 30 countries either through a bilateral agreement managed by the OFII, or through the ERIN European programme. In all cases, the OFII works with local providers who are in charge of accompanying the beneficiaries (for employment and business creation support) and managing the financial assistance granted to the beneficiary. For bilateral programmes, these providers are locally controlled by the OFII team through continuous links. The project is monitored by providers and OFII team for at least one year. The OFII is in charge of the administrative, financial and accounting management of the project and as such, is responsible for financial assistance when the projects start and for the salaries of the selected providers agreed by the OFII, after the use of competitive process for local proposals (tender process). For ERIN, such tender process is managed by the European leader of the programme. Management of reintegration support is dealt with the OFII central directorate regarding the ERIN programme and the bilateral French-German agreement for Kosovo, and by OFII representations out of France for bilateral programmes.

**6.** No the OFII only manages voluntary returns. Forced returns are managed by department prefectures,

			<p>under the ministry of Interior authority (same as for OFII).</p> <p><b>7.</b> Centers for preparation to return (CPAR in French) have been opening in France. As of end of June 2017, 8 CPAR are already opened and several others are planned to open soon. These are open centers where irregular migrants (rejected asylum seekers, foreign nationals with no residence permit) who can benefit from return assistance are protected or assigned to residence, pending the process of their return assistance application. These centers aim at simplifying the national accommodation process for asylum seekers (where rejected asylum seekers reside). The objective of these centers whose management is delegated to the operator, is to strengthen the support for voluntary return through the presence of social workers and of OFII agents. If the voluntary return project fails after 45 days, the forced return is organized by French authorities.</p>
	Germany	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> There is no central agency who manages assisted voluntary return single-handed. The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge) manages several programmes in coordination with non-governmental agencies like the IOM and other governmental agencies. In addition, some Federal States (Bundesländer) offer regional programmes to assist persons who want to return to their country of origin voluntarily. At the local level, the foreigner’s registration offices (Ausländerbehörden) or the welfare agencies (Sozialämter) deal with the most important aspects of voluntary return. There are also support programmes conducted by NGOs which do not cooperate with government authorities. Return counseling is offered both by governmental authorities and by NGOs. For a more detailed description of the German system of return management, see the attached EMN study “Dissemination of information on voluntary return: How to reach irregular migrants”. Chapter 3 of the study deals with the allocation of tasks in the field of voluntary return in Germany. Please note that not all of the information may be up to date.</p> <p><b>2.</b> As explained above, there are multiple authorities, both at the federal and local/state level who deal with assisted voluntary return. Describing the structure of each of them would go beyond the scope of an AHQ.</p> <p><b>3.</b> Because of the multitude of actors concerned with the topic of voluntary return, a reliable statement on the scope of human resources and the professional roles involved cannot be given since the effort to</p>

			<p>provide all the data would go beyond the scope of an AHQ.</p> <p><b>4.</b> Since there are a multitude of actors involved in the field of voluntary return, there is no single authority to manage third country nationals. However, governmental agencies, both on federal and on state level, have access to a central data base on foreign country nationals (Ausländerzentralregister). This applies to the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees and the foreigner’s registration offices of the federal states.</p> <p><b>5.</b> See questions 1-4.</p> <p><b>6.</b> Most actors involved in voluntary return don’t deal with forced return. The foreigner’s registration authorities of the federal states are an exception, since they are responsible for every aspect of return that concerns persons without a German citizenship, including forced return.</p> <p><b>7.</b> In order to give a better overview on the field of voluntary return, the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees has implemented a return hotline, where basic information on voluntary can be given. In 2017, an online information portal (<a href="https://www.returningfromgermany.de/">https://www.returningfromgermany.de/</a>) has been launched, which gives interested persons easy access to a large amount of information on support programmes for voluntary return and the conditions in countries of origin. It is also possible to search for counseling centres all over Germany. Please note that while the information given on the portal is extensive, it does not feature every single programme or counseling centre, only those the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees has information about. As explained above, there may be more programmes supporting voluntary return being conducted by NGOs or on local level by the agencies of the federal states.</p>
	Hungary	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> The Immigration and Asylum Office (hereinafter: IAO) has a partnership agreement with International Organization for Migration.</p> <p><b>2.</b> All assisted voluntary return activities managed by Immigration and Asylum Office at central level.</p> <p><b>3.</b> A third country national may submit an application for assisted voluntary return at any stage of any procedure. The Aliens Policing Directorate of the IAO evaluates and decides on the possibility of taking</p>

			<p>part in the return programme.</p> <p><b>4.</b> The Aliens Policing Directorate of the IAO evaluates and decides upon the possibility of participating in the return programme. The return is arranged by the IOM in close cooperation with the IAO.</p> <p><b>5.</b> Third country national is eligible for the programme... - if wishes to return voluntarily; - if has an expulsion decision; - if has no financial means to cover the costs of return; - based on the deliberation of the IAO (does not pose of threat to flight security).</p> <p><b>6.</b> Yes. Aliens Policing Directorate of the IAO.</p> <p><b>7.</b> General Laws on Immigration (Act II of 2007 on the Admission and Right of Residence of Third-Country Nationals; 114/2007 Gov. Decree on Implementation of Act II of 2007 on the Admission and Right of Residence of Third-Country Nationals), Lower level legislation: 26/2007. (V. 31.) IRM Implementing Decree of Regulation on deportation, Operational Cooperatipn between the Police and IAO, IAO takes part at international level in FRONTEX, EURLO, EURINT platforms (cooperational agreements).</p>
	Ireland	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> Return policy, including assisted voluntary return, is the responsibility of the Repatriation Unit of the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service of the Department of Justice and Equality.</p> <p><b>2.</b> Central Government Department.</p> <p><b>3.</b> The Repatriation Unit of the Department of Justice and Equality is staffed by 80+ civil servants, although all are not involved in voluntary return.</p> <p><b>4.</b> The Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) of the Department of Justice and Equality, in conjunction with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), offers voluntary assisted return and reintegration programmes for asylum seekers, failed asylum seekers and other illegally present migrants. Asylum seekers or failed asylum seekers who have not had a Deportation Order made against them are returned under the Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programme (VARRP). Other illegally present migrants are returned under the Irregular Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration</p>

Programme (IVARRP), which is co-funded by the EU AMIF on a 75/25 basis. Under these programmes, the flights home for such persons are paid and where required, the IOM will assist in securing travel documents and give assistance at the airport at departure and arrival. Persons availing of these programmes can apply for reintegration assistance to allow them to start up a business or enter further education or training when they are back in their country of origin. This takes the form of an 'in-kind' rather than a cash payment. In addition to the two IOM programmes referred to above, the Department of Justice and Equality also assists people who are illegally present in the State and wish to return home voluntarily by covering the cost of the flight, if necessary, and assisting in securing travel documents.

**5.** The IOM has, in conjunction with the Department of Justice been offering voluntary assisted return and reintegration programmes (VARRP) for asylum seekers and irregular migrants. To date IOM Ireland has assisted approximately 4,000 migrants to voluntarily return in a dignified and humane manner to 96 countries of origin since the opening of the IOM Dublin office. In the past 10 years the trends and needs have changed with the yearly VARRP programmes aiming to constantly evolve to better meet the needs of potential beneficiaries, The key emphasis is now on consolidating and strengthening the information and outreach approach, networking at a grassroots level, increasing awareness amongst diaspora groups and diaspora/community leaders, continuing and building upon link up visits with IOM staff in key countries of return, and developing a strong analytical model / tool for analysing reintegration feedback. Further information may become available and we will update this response at that point.

**6.** YES.

**7.** The recently introduced International Protection Act 2015 provides for the introduction of a single application procedure for international protection, which is specifically aimed at addressing the length of time persons spend in the protection process. The new procedure will streamline and speed up the processing of protection applications and will significantly reduce the length of time that persons spend awaiting a decision on their protection application. This in turn will mean that those with no right to be in the country will become the subject of Deportation Orders sooner than might otherwise have been the case.

	Italy	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> In Italy, the Authority responsible for the implementation of assisted voluntary returns is the Ministry of Interior – Department for Civil Liberties and Immigration.</p> <p><b>2.</b> At central level, a Unit within the Department of Civil Liberties and Immigration of the Ministry of Interior is competent for the planning of the implementation activities of the AVR programs, as well as for the coordination, supervision and monitoring of the whole Assisted Voluntary Return implementation procedure which, at local level, is implemented in a decentralized way through the joint activity between “Prefecture” and “Questure”.</p> <p><b>3.</b> The central Unit is composed of 1 Head of Unit (Deputy Prefect), nr. 2 administrative officers, nr. 1 interpreter/linguistic officer, nr. 1 external migration expert. This Unit was recently strengthened by means of a special appointment assigned to another Head of Unit. Moreover, the staff working in all the “Prefecture” and “Questure” for the management of the files at decentralized level has to be taken into account.</p> <p><b>4.</b> The central Unit doesn’t directly manage the AVR program’s actions, but directly entrusts the relevant management to organizations and entities, which have expertise in the field of migration and returns and which are selected by means of specific calls for proposal (the so-called projects’ successful tenderers). In Italy, the main entity which, according to this system, works in this field, is IOM, in addition to other specialized entities.</p> <p>6 AVR projects are currently active in Italy: 5 of them are funded with AMIF Funds 2014-2020, and 1 is funded with National Funds.</p> <p>The activities provided for in the framework of any project are the following ones:  Identification of the potential returnees eligible for the AVR Programme in accordance with the AMIF provisions;  accompanying to the departure for returnees eligible for this measure by means of counselling by specialized staff, information and cultural mediation services;  definition of the individual reintegration plan for any person/family group concerned. The plan is developed through a personalized approach, which takes into account the characteristics as well as the needs of the person/family group concerned and which defines an individual reintegration project as well as the specific assistance which is required for its implementation. The amount of the reintegration grant, in kind, aiming at the implementation of the reintegration plan, amounts between Euro 1.500</p>
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		<p>and Euro 2.000 for each single returnee or head of family;  pre-departure assistance  organization and assistance for the return journey;  provision of a pre-departure contribution for the first accommodation amounting to Euro 400  implementation of the reintegration plan and specific assistance on-the-spot defined in the individual reintegration plan  ex post monitoring of reintegration, in order to evaluate the plan's result.</p> <p><b>5.</b> By means of desk activities and local information actions regarding the AVR measure (i.e. "info-days"), in the framework of the activities carried out by the project national beneficiaries, described in the previous point.  Moreover, AMIF funds 1 project for the development of an Institutional Network on Assisted Voluntary Returns, which provides for information/awareness raising activities and training activities on the measure, as well as 1 project for launching a Campaign of Institutional Communication on AVR.  how are counselling activities carried out?  In the framework of the activities entrusted to the AVR project beneficiaries, counselling activities are implemented through counsellors and specialized staff, devoted to the information and awareness raising activities.  They are implemented through the beneficiaries of the active AVR projects, which contact the consulates of the third countries of origin, for the issue of the travel documents  how is airline ticket booking implemented?  It is implemented through the beneficiaries of the active AVR projects which buy air tickets at travel agencies.  Through the definition of an individual reintegration plan funded by "in kind" grants. The reintegration activities in the country of origin are included in a monitoring report drawn up by the beneficiaries of the AVR projects.</p> <p><b>6.</b> NO  The Police Department of the Ministry of the Interior is competent for the management of forced returns.  In relation to the AVR measures, this Office coordinates the activities carried out at local level by the</p>
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“Questure”, which are competent for the checks requested to issue the authorizations to the AVR measure of third country nationals eligible for that measure.

7. In Italy, the Decree of the Minister of the Interior dd. October 27<sup>th</sup> 2011 established the criteria for the implementation of the programs of assisted voluntary return as well as the access procedures for third country nationals to these programs.

For the purpose of implementing the abovementioned provisions, an IT platform was implemented for the management of assisted voluntary returns. Through this system, a telematic dialogue among the Ministry of Interior at central level, “Prefettura” and “Questure” at local level and active project beneficiaries takes place. This system enables to manage on-line the program access procedure which provides for the following activities.

The third country national concerned submits at the “Prefettura” of the Province, where he/she is staying, an application for getting access to the AVR programme (provided for by Art. 14 ter, Consolidated Act on Immigration, Leg. Decree Nr. 286/98) together with the relevant documents and information.

The “Prefettura” informs thereof the competent “Questura”; the latter ascertains that there are no cases falling within the exclusion from the return programme, as provided for by Art. 14 ter par. 5 of the Leg. Decree 286/98 and that the applicant either has a valid identity document or that his/her identity has been ascertained in spite of the lack of such document.

In case of positive checks, the Prefecture admits the person concerned to the AVR programme and informs thereof, without delay, the competent “Questura” as well as the entity competent for the implementation of the project.

In case the applicant is not admitted to the AVR programme, the competent “Prefettura” informs thereof, without delay, the competent “Questura” as well as the entity competent for the project’s implementation.

The entity competent for the project’s implementation informs the “Prefettura” about the successful return as well as about the eventual withdrawal application.

The IT platform enables to carry out the constant monitoring of all the started AVR files, to check the number of the submitted applications and of those which still have to be authorized, the number of effective returnees. In case of procedure difficulties or any kind of delays, the system also enables to trace the causes of the problem and to proceed in order to find a solution.

	Latvia	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In Latvia the responsible authority for the assisted voluntary returns is IOM Riga Office.</li> <li>2. IOM Riga Office is centralized authority. All assisted voluntary return activities are managed by IOM.</li> <li>3. There are 2 staff members working with assisted voluntary return at IOM Riga Office, who provide wide range of activities - from counselling and interviewing to reintegration and accounting.</li> <li>4. IOM Riga Office directly manage assisted voluntary return activities.</li> <li>5. Yes, voluntary return activities are directly managed and implemented by the IOM Riga Office. Eligible persons are identified by addressing rejected asylum seekers in both centers - closed and open - and providing them information. Additionally relevant foreign embassies and consulates are regularly informed. Also State Border Guard refers potential cases to IOM. IOM staff meets with applicants, provide counselling and obtain travel documents, if necessary. In case persons have no means, IOM provides room in a hostel and small amount of money for food. IOM also does the airline, train or bus ticket purchase and transfer the returnee from Asylum Center to airport. Reintegration and monitoring is done by IOM Office in third country.</li> <li>6. No. Forced return is carried out by State Border Guard. State Border Guard and IOM Riga Office have signed cooperation agreement, which prescribes conditions for cooperation between both authorities, for example, State Border Guard shall inform irregular migrants about AVRR programmes.</li> <li>7. Yes, there are legislative, operational best practices and instruments (for example, the Register of Returned Foreigners and Entry bans, cooperation agreement between IOM and State Border Guard), which enhance the implementation of the return policies.</li> </ol>
	Lithuania	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assisted voluntary return (AVR) programmes are implemented by the International migration organization (IOM) Vilnius office. AVR programmes are financed by the AMIF. Authority responsible for management of AVR funds under AMIF is the Ministry of Social security and labour. Migration department under the Ministry of the Interior takes decisions regarding return.</li> <li>2. The Ministry is responsible for managing AVR funds. Implementing agency is IOM Vilnius office. It</li> </ol>

			<p>covers all Lithuania.</p> <p><b>3.</b> At IOM Vilnius 2 staff members work directly with beneficiaries.</p> <p><b>4.</b> AVR services are outsourced to third parties.</p> <p><b>5.</b> No. All activities are managed by the IOM Vilnius office.</p> <p><b>6.</b> No. Migration department under the Ministry of the Interior takes decisions regarding forced returns. Police and State border guard service under the Ministry of the Interior implement forced returns.</p> <p><b>7.</b> IOM Vilnius has a Memorandum of understanding with the State border guard service. The document outlines cooperation arrangements between these institutions in implementing AVRs. The cooperation provides for smooth and expedite handing of cases.</p>
	<p>Luxembourg</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p><b>1.</b> The responsible authority is the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, through the Return Department of the Directorate of Immigration.</p> <p><b>2.</b> It is a centralized authority. However, a scheme for the assistance of voluntary returns and of reintegration to third-countries with the exception of the Balkans countries (including Kosovo since 1 December 2016) is made available by means of the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration from Luxembourg Programme (AVRR L), which is handled by the International Organisation for Migrations through a convention signed between the the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs and IOM. The Return Department organises directly the voluntary returns by bus to the Balkans countries.</p> <p><b>3.</b> The Return Department is composed of 15 persons including the Director. There are 5 persons involved with voluntary returns (Director, Responsible of International Relations, 2 staff members who organise voluntary returns and one staff member who is in charge of the statistics).</p> <p><b>4.</b> See answer to question 2.</p> <p><b>5.</b> I. Eligibility of third-country nationals A. Individuals whose country of origin is a Balkan country</p>

		<p>(including Kosovo). The Directorate of Immigration organises returns by bus of these individuals if they accept to return voluntarily. The Luxembourgish government only covers the costs of the transportation. They provide to the transportation company a list of the passengers (returnees) during the return trip and the passports or travel documents that will be handled back to the third country nationals once s/he leaves the Schengen area. B. Other third-country nationals that can apply to the AVRR-L programme. The third country national who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• during the procedure of international protection decides to withdraw his/her application for international protection and to return voluntarily to his/her country of origin</li><li>• who was ordered to leave the territory under the relevant provisions of the Law of 18 December 2015 on international protection and temporary protection (Asylum Law).</li><li>• who is detected as an irregular migrant residing in Luxembourg and who decides of his own will to return voluntarily to his/her country of origin.</li></ul> <p>This programme does not comprehend TCNs coming from Macedonia, Kosovo, Albania, Montenegro, Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina nor Dublin cases. II. Financial aid: There are two types of financial aid provided</p> <p>Complete aid:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Single adult: up to 500 € (pre-departure)</li><li>• Adult couple: up to 1000 € (pre-departure)</li><li>• Family: up to 500€ per adult and 400€ per child (pre-departure)</li></ul> <p>Basic aid :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Single adult: up to 300€ (pre-departure)</li><li>• Adult couple: up to 600 € pre-departure</li><li>• Family: 300€ per person pre-departure</li><li>• Vulnerable cases: nothing in cash pre-departure but 700 € in-kind per person post-departure</li></ul> <p>This aid is a premium given to the beneficiary of the program to incentive the return but there are no activities covered by this financial assistance. This aid is given in cash before departure at the airport. Complete aid concerns asylum seekers registering with IOM before a month has elapsed from the time when they received the refusal decision to their application or if the asylum procedure has lasted over 6 months and the asylum seeker willing to return hasn't had any decision on their application by the Minister. The individuals that register for the AVRR programme after the deadline set for return (30 days in Luxembourg), are entitled to basic assistance. III. Pre-departure activities In the AVRR programme IOM provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assistance for obtaining travel documents (i.e. it covers the fees and the travels that the applicant has to do to the embassy of the country of origin in Brussels)</li><li>• Transport from Luxembourg to their village of origin (includes booking of the airport transportation)</li><li>• Assistance at the Luxembourg International Airport and at the transit airport</li><li>• Medical escort in case it is required</li></ul> <p>IV. Counseling activities From the moment a foreigner has lodged an asylum application, return counselling becomes an integral part of the accompaniment offered to asylum seekers in all reception facilities. The Directorate of Immigration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs informs also the international protection seekers and the rejected international protection seekers about the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration. A</p>
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			<p>flyer in ten languages published by the OIM explaining the program is distributed. The topic of voluntary return is raised by the authorities to the international protection seeker since the beginning of the procedure. A brochure is handed out by the Directorate of Immigration that contains information about the voluntary return. Information sessions are regularly organized by the OIM in the international protection seekers reception centers. The OIM assures a weekly permanence in Luxembourg, in their office outside the reception centers. The information concerning the voluntary return program is in principle given, either by information sessions, individual counselling by OIM and NGO's (i.e. Red Cross, Caritas ASTI, CLAE,). Once that the order to leave the country is notified to the rejected asylum seeker, the brochure is systematically joint to the Directorate of Immigration's decision. V. Reintegration aid and Monitoring in the country of origin Luxembourg provides reintegration aid in the country of origin of the returnees. However, this aid in kind is available for a duration of six months so it is difficult to follow the success of the reintegration process in this short period of time. • Complete aid (assistance to reintegration in kind): o Single adult: up to 3000 € o Adult couple: up to 4000 € o Family: up to 5000 € • Basic aid (assistance to reintegration in kind): o Single adult: up to 500 € o Adult couple: up to 700 € o Family: up to 1000 € • Vulnerable cases: o 700 € per person IOM also provides some other type of in-kind assistance to reintegration, which consists in: • Airport assistance and onward transportation • Temporary lodging and housing • Assistance to find a job • Material and legal assistance • Assistance in setting up a micro-business • Purchase of professional equipment • Investment in training and learning • Medical assistance/medicines; orientation and information on the health system in the country of origin</p> <p><b>6. 6. YES. 6.1. See answer to question 1. 6.2. No.</b></p> <p><b>7. See answer to question 5 point IV in regards to the brochure provided to the asylum seekers.</b></p>
	Malta	Yes	<p><b>1. IOM Malta in partnership with the Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security</b></p> <p><b>2. Established in 1951, IOM is the leading inter-governmental organization in the field of migration and works closely with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners. As of September 2016, IOM became a related organization of the United Nations – the UN Migration Agency. IOM – the UN Migration Agency – has been implementing Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) programmes since 1979. The IOM Mission in Malta was established in 2007 and, since then, has been actively supporting the Government of Malta in assisted voluntary return. IOM Malta is a decentralised</b></p>

organisation with operations being carried out in Malta.

**3.** IOM Malta has 2 full-time staff members – Project Manager and Operations Assistant – working on the RESTART VI project, who are supported by Finance/Admin colleague and Officer in Charge (working on the project at 25% and 40%, respectively).

**4.** IOM Malta directly manages the activities of AVRR – identification of returnees, consultation, filing of applications, procurement of travel documents etc

**5.** - Are the activities directly managed by the relevant Authority – The AVRR project ‘Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration in the Country of Origin – RESTART VI’ (MT/2015/AMIF/1.01) is managed by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Mission in Malta and implemented in partnership with the Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security (MHAS) of Malta. in which way are they organized? In particular: - how are third country nationals eligible for assisted voluntary return measures identified? – The target group of the RESTART VI project – TCNs who are eligible to apply for AVRR in Malta – is the following: non-EU nationals who have not yet received a final negative decision in relation to their request for international protection in Malta; non-EU nationals enjoying the right to stay, legal residence and/or international protection, or temporary protection in Malta; non-EU nationals who are present in Malta and do not or no longer fulfil the conditions for entry and/or stay in Malta. The return decision has to be voluntary and informed. In each case, IOM Malta requests clearance from MHAS before proceeding with the AVRR arrangements. - how are counselling activities carried out? – AVRR counselling is carried out by IOM Malta at the IOM Malta office, closed and open centres, hospitals (e.g. mental health hospital) or other places, based on the needs of the AVRR applicants. All counselling sessions are confidential. In case needed, during counselling, AVRR applicants can also be linked to IOM staff in countries of origin (e.g. to discuss their reintegration plans). - how are pre-departure activities implemented? – pre-departure activities include outreach, information dissemination, counselling, pre-departure assistance (travel arrangements, including facilitation of issuance of travel documents, purchase of flight tickets, arrangement of transit and arrival assistance and onward transportation if needed, as well as medical escorts, if needed), departure assistance (including disbursement of the EUR 200 pre-departure cash allowance), and coordination with IOM Missions in countries of origin for the provision of tailor-made reintegration packages to support returnees’ re-establishment in their countries of origin upon return. - how is airline ticket booking implemented? –

			<p>Flight tickets are purchased by IOM, with the support of Operations staff in IOM HQ in Geneva. - how are reintegration and monitoring activities in the country of origin implemented? – AVRRE returnees under the RESTART VI are entitled to in-kind reintegration assistance of EUR 3,800 per person aimed at contributing to ensuring sustainability of returns. Reintegration assistance is provided upon return, in countries of origin, with the support of local IOM Missions. Since the assistance is in-kind, based on the returnee’s reintegration plan, payments are made directly to the suppliers of the required goods and/or services. Reintegration monitoring is carried out whenever feasible, usually approx. 6 months after the provision of reintegration assistance, by IOM Missions in countries of origin (should a visit to the returnee prove not feasible, monitoring can also be conducted over the phone).</p> <p><b>6.</b> No. The Malta Police Force deals with forced return. There is no direct connection between MPF and IOM. The Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security serves as a focal point.</p> <p><b>7.</b> National legislation lays down the return procedures and the rights of prospective returnees; moreover Maltese authorities make use of IT mechanisms such as IRMA to enhance coordination efforts at operational level amongst various stakeholders on return and readmission</p>
	Netherlands	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> The Repatriation and Departure Service. The Repatriation and Departure Service is responsible for expediting the voluntary and forced departure of foreign nationals who are not allowed to stay in the Netherlands. The Repatriation and Departure Service operates on behalf of the Ministry of Security and Justice and belongs to the Directorate General for Migration. The International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the Dutch Council for Refugees and other non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are also helping migrants to voluntary return in a worthy manner.</p> <p><b>2.</b> The organization is composed of three primary processes, namely: the Return Facilitation Directorate, the Supervision and Measures Directorate and the International Affairs Directorate. In addition, DT&amp;V has a Staff Directorate, which is located in The Hague. See the organizational chart: <a href="https://english.dienstterugkeerenvertrek.nl/Organization/Organizationchart/index.aspx">https://english.dienstterugkeerenvertrek.nl/Organization/Organizationchart/index.aspx</a></p> <p><b>3.</b> Around 600 people are working at the Repatriation and Departure Service, spread across the country. The Repatriation and Departure Service has positions along the whole spectrum; from controllers,</p>

departure supervisors, policy officers and directors.

**4.** The Repatriation and Departure Service coordinates the departure of foreign nationals who are not entitled to stay in the Netherlands. Together with other government agencies and social services, the goal is to ensure that foreign nationals return to their countries as independent individuals with positive prospects. DT&V employees act with care and respect for the dignity of each foreign national. The guiding principle is that foreign nationals are always given the opportunity to leave voluntarily, with or without our assistance. The Repatriation and Departure Service subsidizes IOM and several NGOs that can assist with informing, advising, preparing and supporting in the framework of voluntary return and reintegration in the country of origin. The offer and contact details of all these organisations can be found on: [www.infoterugkeer.nl](http://www.infoterugkeer.nl)

**5.** a) Through the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND), the police and the Royal National Marechaussee. b) The first contact points are the departure supervisors. The departure supervisor supports the foreign national in preparing for departure. c) The departure supervisor is in contact with the foreign national and helps the foreign national in preparing for departure. In addition, there is a booking department that arranges the flight, and an international affairs directorate that is in touch with the third country and arranges the necessary travel documents. d) This is done by the booking departments or by IOM/NGOs. e) The Repatriation and Departure Service provides reintegration support to foreign nationals that are returning voluntarily. In addition, foreign nationals that are returning to their country of origin can make use of the ERIN network. The Repatriation and Departure Service does not monitor foreign nationals that have returned.

**6.** Yes. A foreign national that has to leave the Netherlands and does not want to leave voluntarily can be forced to depart.

**7.** Direct contact (face to face) between the TCN and helping organisations is very important. Therefore the R&DS works with case managers who stay in close contact with the TCN. IOM and NGO's also invest in this direct contacts. Speaking in the same language and having a similar background could also help in creating direct contact with the TCN; gaining their trust. IOM therefore also works with the so-called native counsellors.

	Portugal	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> The Portuguese Immigration and Border Service (SEF) which depends on the Ministry of Interior, and the International Organization for Migration ( IOM). These entities work closely together to facilitate the access to the option of voluntary return and the AVRR Programme. SEF and IOM keep a very close relation and are working together on this subject.</p> <p><b>2.</b> Portuguese Immigration and Border Service - SEF is a centralized Authority in the dependence of the Ministry of Interior. The Central Directorate For Immigration and Documentation (DCID) is one of SEF's four central directorates and it deals with immigration and documentation policies related issues, acting, at the same time, as a back office structure. Among other tasks, DCID team is the contact point with IOM for Assisted Voluntary Return requests. The International Organization for Migration is an intergovernmental organization part of the UN system. Portugal has an IOM Country Office which is responsible for overall implementation and coordination of the AVRR Programme in Portugal since 2001. Some activities are implemented by IOM with partners in the field, counting around 60 counselling and information points spread throughout the territory as part of the Information and Counselling Network. The local partners conduct counselling, information and case registration. As for post-arrival assistance and monitoring – this is provided by IOM missions in countries of origin and, in the specific case of Brazil, by a network of local partners in main states of return.</p> <p><b>3.</b> Three Technicians work in DCID . However, immigration officials who support OIM on boarding are not specifically allocated to this task. All SEF's officials are prepared and can perform that task. In the framework of ARVoRe VI, co-funded by AMIF and SEF, IOM has 3 full-time dedicated staff: 1 AVRR focal point; 1 reintegration focal point and 1 operations assistant and 3 part-time staff: 1 project manager, 1 financial manager and 1 operational assistant.</p> <p><b>4.</b> After the interview by IOM staff and/or Counsellors the voluntary return request is addressed, by IOM, to DCID through email and includes an interview form, copy of the travel or identification documents and other documents useful to perform this analysis such as travel authorization, etc. To analyze an application request, DCID consults persons and documents databases, such as SIS / Interpol Data base and National Data Bases of Portuguese Immigration Service and Ministry of Justice; When necessary, in individual cases, other Immigration Services, Liaison Officers and Courts are consulted. The positive or negative replies are sent to IOM, by e-mail; Once a case is cleared for Voluntary Return, IOM is responsible for book the flights and liaise with relevant Embassies in case a travel document is</p>
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needed; IOM also liaises with other relevant actors in case some specific intervention is needed such as medical cases, victims of trafficking and unaccompanied minors. SEF supports IOM on Boarding; the Notification of entry ban is made by the Portuguese Immigration and Borders Service/SEF, at the airport, upon boarding. If the migrant is the holder of a residence permit, the document must be delivered before boarding; The immigrant will be notified of three years entry ban and have to sign a declaration renouncing to the right of residence in Portugal. IOM implements AVRR activities through a AMIF funded project and a long-standing Collaboration Protocol with GoP/SEF.

**5.** IOM is the responsible organization for implementing ARVoRe VI Project co-funded by AMIF and SEF. This project foresees not only return but also related activities such as counseling and information, awareness raising and information sessions for practitioners, activities in the framework of Counseling and Information Network in Portugal, activities dedicated to reintegration support and post-arrival assistance, production of visibility material, capacity building for practitioners on the psico-social impact of return and a study on return and reintegration sustainability methodology. Activities are organized directly by IOM such as operational and airport assistance or indirectly such as awareness raising and information sessions which are organized at local level, in partnership with Counseling and Information Network focal points. Other activities related to production of visibility materials are produced by external service providers contracted by IOM. IOM always looks to involve other partners such as academia who will produce the study on reintegration. TCNs can be identified directly by IOM, when they come to seek information at IOM office or indirectly if they seek support throughout the Network of partners. Together with this first contact, a quick assessment related to eligibility is made before register the case on AVRR database and seeking SEF clearance for voluntary return. Applicants for asylum who have not yet received a decision; asylum-seekers whose requests have been definitively rejected; asylum seekers or beneficiaries of international protection who wish to return to their country of origin; illegal and other foreigners who doesn't want or doesn't gather conditions to stay in Portugal are eligible to benefit from ARVoRe VI. Counseling activities are carried out directly by IOM or partners from the Counseling and Information Network. This network was created in 2007 with the main goal of decentralize AVRR counseling and information. Currently it counts 60 organizations distributed from north to south including Madeira and Azores islands. Tickets are booked directly by IOM using the most direct and economic route. IOM books AVRR flights using AMADEUS and/or through a local agreement with TAP. Reintegration and monitoring in country of origin are implemented in coordination with IOM missions based on needs identified in pre-departure phase for each reintegration beneficiary. In

			<p>the specific case of Brazil (more that 80% of AVRR caseload from Portugal) besides IOM mission support there is a network of partners assisting and monitoring reintegration cases in main states of return.</p> <p><b>6.</b> No, in Portugal SEF is the Institution responsible by all activities connected with forced return Policy. As already explained intervention on AVRR results from a longstanding partnership between IOM and SEF.</p> <p><b>7.</b> Yes .All legal instruments, practical guidelines, applications forms can be consulted on Return Portal, with a link to IOM.</p>
	Slovak Republic	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> The Bureau of Border and Alien Police of the Police Force Presidium (within the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic) is the authority responsible for the area of assisted voluntary returns (AVR) in the Slovak Republic. This body takes final decisions about the possibility of a foreigner to depart within AVR while it considers the security risks, risk of absconding, the existence of legal obstacles for expulsion etc. In the area of AVR, the Bureau cooperates with International Organization for Migration (IOM) which is the only organisation carrying out the AVR in the Slovak Republic based on the bilateral Agreement on Cooperation between IOM and Ministry (MoI) of Interior of the Slovak Republic on Assistance with Return of Unsuccessful Asylum Seekers and Illegal Migrants to Country of Origin signed on 17 May 1996. The legal framework is set by the Act on Residence of Aliens and the Act on Asylum. IOM staff have access to the facilities of the Bureau of Border and Alien Police of the Police Force Presidium where there is an assumption that the target group can be present there.</p> <p><b>2.</b> The Bureau of Border and Alien Police of the Police Force Presidium is an authority with nation-wide scope of activities. This body manages activities related to AVR centrally. IOM is the only authority that manages the whole return process, including provision of AVRR information to the target group, logistics preparation and implementation of returns. IOM cooperates informally with NGOs providing services to the target group in terms of provision of basic information on the existence of AVRR programme and with IOMs personal contacts.</p> <p><b>3.</b> All units of the Bureau of Border and Alien Police of the Police Force Presidium participate in the AVR activities (departments of Alien Police, Border Police, Asylum, and Detention Centres for</p>

Foreigners). Their activities related to AVR are managed centrally through the Alien Police unit of the Bureau of Border and Alien Police of the Police Force Presidium. These departments participate in AVR based on their scope related to content and place. It is not possible to count the total number of police officers who implement AVR activities, it is always a different staff for the specific case of AVR and its nature (it depends whether AVR was carried out from a detention, or whether it was carried out without detention). IOM performs its AVRR activities within project cycles financed by EU funds, currently it is Asylum and Migration Fund. The project team consists of Project Coordinator, Coordinator of Operations, Coordinator of Reintegration and Operational assistant. Project Coordinator is responsible for project management and on time and proper implementation of all project and return activities, budget issues, reporting, monitoring end evaluation of return activities, identification of project priorities, implementation of publicity related activities and technical supervision of project staff. PC also ensures that correct administrative processes are on place and appropriate support documentation is provided to the donor. Coordinator of Operations (located in Bratislava) ensures coordination of all external partners and IOM operation staff involved in return process in Slovakia, transit countries and countries of origin. Besides the coordination role, he carries out individual return counselling, provides AVRR information to the target group all over the Slovakia, registers migrants to the programme, prepares return logistics, ensures departure, transit and arrival assistances, ensures travel documents, provides food, accommodation and other items requested by returnee. Coordinator of Reintegration provides individual reintegration counselling all over Slovakia, in cooperation with returnees prepares individual reintegration schemes, coordinates reintegration process in countries of origin, coordinates awarding grant scheme processes, in coordination with PC approves individual expenses, ensures appropriate support documentation for the donor and coordinates monitoring and evaluation of reintegration process with IOM offices in countries of origin. In order to ensure substitutability, CoR provides also general AVRR counselling and if needed ensures the whole return process. Operational Assistant (located in Kosice – eastern part of Slovakia) provides individual AVRR counselling at asylum and detention facilities of the MoI and all over Slovakia, registers applicants to the programme, ensures travel documents, provides food, accommodation and other items in pre-return process, provides all departure airport assistances.

**4.** After the positive decision on AVR, all other activities related to AVR are carried out by IOM based on the above mentioned agreement while it cooperates with the Border and Alien Police units regarding the legal status of a foreigner in the territory of the Slovak Republic and also regarding transport within

Slovakia, registration of the foreigner during departure through the external border into the national information system (especially at the Kosice airport and the border between the Slovak Republic and Ukraine). Close cooperation between IOM and The Bureau of Border and Alien Police of the Police Force Presidium in order carry out an effective return within AVR is required. IOM carries out all return processes including AVRR information campaign in the field, logistics preparation and implementation of returns and reintegration of returnees in countries of origin.

**5.** As described in question 3, IOM staff manages and carries out the whole counselling and return process and implements all particular return activities. Eligibility criteria are defined in bilateral AVR agreement, only rejected asylum seekers and irregular migrants may apply for assisted voluntary return. Concerning AVRR counselling activities, IOM operates AVRR green line 5 days a week, runs an AVRR web site, promotes AVRR through social media such as facebook, provides AVR counselling directly in its premises, regularly meets with consulates and embassies staff and inform them about the AVRR programme as well as regularly visits asylum and detention facilities and inform the target group in detail on services provided within return and reintegration support. Pre-departure activities are carried out based on the individual needs of migrants, IOM staff meets the migrant in closed or open MoI premises, or migrants visits IOM staff at IOM premises. Activities include ensuring of travel documents, mediation of contact between consulate and migrant, assistance with state authority contact upon request and individual multiple return counselling provided if needed. Food, health care, clothes or other items are provided based on the individual needs. Migrants are provided with detailed explanation on step by step return process, departure, transit and arrival airport assistances as well as reintegration help after return. Due to advantageous agreements concluded between IOM and 41 airline companies, airline booking is done in house through the system Amadeus. IOM can thus better manage the return process in terms of logistics and finance. Reintegration, monitoring and evaluation processes are implemented through IOM offices located in countries of origin.

**6.** See 1. The Bureau of Border and Alien Police of the Police Force Presidium also carries out forced returns. IOM does not carry out forced returns.

**7.** IT tools: An effective tool is the information system MIGRA which serves for the registration of all return procedures (for which the Bureau of Border and Alien Police of the Police Force Presidium is responsible) and procedures related to the application for international protection (for which the

			<p>Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior is responsible). This system is a connection between the two national authorities. Besides, this system also registers each step related to AVR e.g. confirmation about the registration, interview, issue of the return decision, departure from the territory of the Slovak Republic within AVR, respective documents for return etc. This system also helps to prevent a repetitive departure through AVR by the same person as it also stores biometric data. It also helps to prevent misuse of AVR. The system is managed and administered by the Bureau of Border and Alien Police of the Police Force Presidium. Legislative tools: According to the respective legislation and internal regulations, if a foreigner alone voluntarily and accompanied by IOM come to the respective Alien Police department in order to deal with his irregular situation, he/she is issued a decision about the administrative expulsion with an entry ban. If a foreigner departs within the period set by the decision on administrative expulsion to the country of origin within AVR, he/she can subsequently ask the Ministry of Interior for the withdrawal of an entry ban if it was imposed in the decision. According to Act on Residence of Aliens, the state authorities are obliged to inform migrants about the possibility to apply for assisted voluntary returns. This obligation is implemented through AVRR information sheet that is part of each issued administrative expulsion decision. The sheet consists of information on services provided by IOM within the return process including reintegration in countries of origin.</p>
	Slovenia	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. IOM is the responsible authority for the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration programs in Slovenia upon a contract with the Police (Ministry for Internal Affairs).</li> <li>2. All activities are managed by IOM in close cooperation with the Police.</li> <li>3. Between 2-3 people (IOM staff) are responsible for implementation of the programs.</li> <li>4. IOM was selected upon call for proposals.</li> <li>5. According to the agreement between the Police and IOM, all activities taken by IOM are priority confirmed by Centre for Foreigners which is within the Police responsible for the implementation of the programs. The Centre of Foreigners is actually a detention facility for third country nationals who has been issued a return decision and for whom a risk of absconding exists. During the return process the foreigners are informed by IOM about the AVRR programs. They are mainly promoted for vulnerable categories but does not exclude other returnees. For TCN who enter the program all next activities for</li> </ol>

			<p>their return are organised by IOM (counselling, reservation of tickets, assistance in transit areas, reception in home country, reintegration activities, etc.). All this activities are confirmed - agreed by the centre for Foreigners.</p> <p><b>6.</b> Yes, the Centre for Foreigners is the responsible authority within the Police to carry out forced returns. Nevertheless, the centre favours voluntary return and promotes the AVRR programs to TCN who have been issued return decision. The counselling and other activities related to AVRR programs are carried out by IOM.</p> <p><b>7.</b> /</p>
	Sweden	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> The Swedish Migration Agency.</p> <p><b>2.</b> All assisted voluntary returns are handled by the one authority, the Swedish Migration Agency (SMA) however some return activities are centralised and others are managed at local level. Return counselling is managed at local level by the SMA's reception units which are located all around the country. The case officers in the reception centres are responsible for all direct contact with voluntary returnees regarding return arrangements. The SMA also has two centralised national units which work with assisted voluntary return: The Unit for Return Co-ordination - this unit is responsible for making decisions in relation to applications for cash support and also for in-kind support through the ERIN program. The unit also has responsibility for obtaining travel documents for returnees who cannot make their own arrangements to obtain travel documents. The Unit for Travel Co-ordination – this unit books flights and other transport for those who do not have the means to pay for their own travel. The unit also makes arrangements for medical and other escorts where necessary.</p> <p><b>3.</b> The SMA has over 30 reception units. Most of these units work with voluntary return. Each reception unit is staffed by a team (or several teams) of case officers, decision makers, team leaders and unit managers. The two centralised national units currently have the following staff: - The Unit for Return Co-ordination – 13.5 case officers, 3 administrative assistants, 1 personnel assistant, 1 economic assistant, 3 experts, 2 team leaders, 1 unit manager - The Unit for Travel Co-ordination – 13 case officers, 2 experts, 2 team leaders, 1 unit manager</p>

4. The SMA directly manages third country nationals eligible for assisted voluntary return.

5. Identifying those eligible for assisted voluntary return measures: The SMA's unit for travel co-ordination books travel for third country nationals who want to return voluntarily but are unable to pay for their own travel arrangements. Those returnees who lack the means to pay for their own travel are identified during the return counselling process carried out by the local reception units. Those eligible for cash support and for in-kind support through the ERIN program are also identified during the return counselling process. Cash support and in kind support are only available to those returning to certain countries. Return counsellors inform those returning to relevant countries of the possibility of applying for support and take in applications from returnees. All applications are then sent to the Unit for Return Co-ordination which decides which returnees are eligible for support measures. Counselling activities: Return counselling is carried out by case officers working in reception units located all around Sweden. When a returnee receives a decision that they are to leave Sweden and return to their country of origin, their case is allocated to a return counsellor. The return counsellor is responsible for meeting with the returnee, informing them that they are obliged to leave Sweden and informing them of the time limit for them to leave. They are given information about support measures available, where relevant. They are also informed of the consequences of failing to leave Sweden within the given time limit. Return counsellors usually meet several times with returnees during the return process to ensure that all practical arrangements are in place for the person to leave the country. Pre-departure activities: As described above, the units for return and travel co-ordination arrange to obtain travel documents and book flights. Shortly before departure many returnees are transferred to temporary accommodation specifically for returnees. These accommodation centres are located near the international airport of departure. In terms of reintegration support, there are no pre-departure activities. All reintegration measures, including the preparation of business plans, are implemented post-departure. Airline ticket booking: Airline tickets are booked by the Unit for Travel Co-ordination. This is done via a travel agency which the SMA has a contract with. The unit for travel co-ordination also makes arrangements for medical and other escorts where necessary. Reintegration and monitoring activities in country of origin: All of the SMA's in-kind reintegration efforts are currently being channelled through the ERIN program. The ERIN program includes monitoring of the reintegration activities. Through the ERIN program, the SMA offers reintegration support to those returning to 7 selected countries: Afghanistan, Iraq, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Russia, Somalia.

			<p><b>6.</b> No, the Swedish Police deal with forced returns. All returnees' cases are initially managed by the SMA. If the returnee absconds or it otherwise becomes clear that they are not willing to return voluntarily, their case will be transferred from the SMA to the Swedish Police. The Swedish police also enforce returns for those who have received an expulsion order as a result of a criminal conviction.</p> <p><b>7.</b> There is some legislation which enhances the implementation of return policies. For example there is legislation which results in rejected asylum seekers with a legally enforceable decision to leave the country (with some exceptions) losing their right to state benefits, including the right to live in state accommodation. The SMA also has the possibility to impose a re-entry ban on those who fail to leave the country within a set time limit. The SMA publishes internal guidelines for case officers as well as application forms and other information regarding return on the SMA's internal intranet. The SMA also uses a centralised internal database to share information and best practices in relation to return. Information about return, travel documents, orderly reception for minors and support measures in relation to the most common countries of origin is collected and stored in the database and is continually updated. All staff working with voluntary returns throughout Sweden have access to this. This is an extremely valuable tool for working with return since it allows us to ensure that up to date information about return to specific countries is accessible. It also allows us to ensure that policies in relation to return are implemented uniformly throughout the organisation. Having a centralised national unit for obtaining travel documents allows us to ensure that we have a single point of contact for embassies and foreign authorities in relation to travel documents. This allows us to build relationships with embassies and foreign authorities and ensure we have good communication channels. It also helps us to implement the readmission agreements with various countries. A centralised unit for travel co-ordination has allowed us to build up efficient procedures for booking airline tickets and arranging escorted journeys. It also allows us to co-ordinate return operations via Frontex flights more easily since we have one unit which has an overview of all return cases throughout the country and can therefore identify where there is a need for a specific return operation. The centralised decision-making process in relation to cash and in-kind support measures for voluntary returnees allows us to ensure consistency of decision-making when it comes to decisions about eligibility for these measures.</p>
	United Kingdom	Yes	<b>1.</b> The Home Office is the government department responsible for all returns, both enforced and

			<p>voluntary.</p> <p><b>2.</b> All assisted voluntary returns are managed centrally by the Voluntary Returns Service within the Home Office.</p> <p><b>3.</b> The Voluntary Returns Service team is organised along normal Home Office structure. This is strictly delineated according to grade, and the Voluntary Returns Service team consists of 5x Administrative Assistants, 58x Administrative Officers, 37x Executive Officers, 16x Higher Executive Officers and 7x Senior Executive Officers, led by 3x Grade 7 managers. This is headcount and includes current vacancies, accurate to the end of July 2017. The Grade 7 managers report to a Grade 6 manager, who reports to the member of the Senior Civil Service responsible for National Returns Command – which deals with both voluntary and enforced returns. International matters relating to reintegration are managed by the Home Office Voluntary Returns Service team in association with the ERIN project.</p> <p><b>4.</b> The Voluntary Returns Service deals with all aspects of the return.</p> <p><b>5.</b> Third county nationals eligible for assisted voluntary return are identified in the following ways: i. Through direct engagement by front facing officers who work for the wider Home Office (for example, work in communities, enforcement activities and promotion of voluntary return at immigration reporting centres); ii. Through communications work (posters, leaflets, availability of a hotline, information sent with immigration decisions). Counselling activities are not carried out through the Voluntary Returns Service. If individuals require such activities then they are at liberty to approach third parties for advice and support. Any pre-departure activities and airline ticket bookings are organised through the Voluntary Returns Service, including obtaining travel documents. Approval of plans for use of the reintegration package through the structured support available through ERIN are given by the VRS once the individual has returned and had the opportunity to discuss plans with a reintegration partner in country. Reintegration activities are carried out either through ERIN (where possible), in which case reintegration is delivered with the assistance of reintegration partners (typically NGOs) in the country of return, or (if the returnee is returning to a country not covered by ERIN) directly through the Voluntary Returns Service. Where ERIN is not available, the VRS team provide a start card which is preloaded with the total reintegration package. For a small number of countries, the start card is not an option; in these</p>
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			<p>cases, cash is provided directly to the returnee at the point of departure).</p> <p><b>6.</b> Yes. Voluntary returns and enforced returns are both managed through the Immigration Enforcement directorate of the Home Office, however, they are arranged through different teams.</p> <p><b>7.</b> The Voluntary Returns Service has many years of experience in organising voluntary returns, either unilaterally or in association with partner organisations, and the programme has also been regularly evaluated since 2002. Additionally, the team regularly shares information bilaterally with other European Member States on processes, procedure and organisation of voluntary returns. Best practice identified through all of these workstreams is used regularly by the management team to inform and improve practice and procedure.</p>
	Norway	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) is the responsible authority. The logistics have been sub-contracted to IOM.</p> <p><b>2.</b> UDI and IOM handles all assisted voluntary returns.</p> <p><b>3.</b> This information cannot be provided within the date set for replies.</p> <p><b>4.</b> See reply to question 1.</p> <p><b>5.</b> This information cannot be provided within the date set for replies.</p> <p><b>6.</b> No. Forced returns are managed by the National Police Immigration Service.</p> <p><b>7.</b> This information cannot be provided within the date set for replies.</p>