

Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration

Annual Report of Activities 2011



International Organization for Migration (IOM)

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Editorial Team, under the overall supervision of Laurence Hart, composed of Ana Fonseca, Anna Hardy, Anvar Serojtdinov and Ryan Martin (Migrant Assistance Division), as well as the Regional Thematic Specialists Rosilyne Borland (Regional Office Buenos Aires), Sacha Chan Kam (Regional Office Brussels), Sarah Craggs (Regional Office Cairo), Linda Eriksson-Baca (Regional Office Brussels), Yitna Getachev (Regional Office Pretoria) Laura Lungarotti (Regional Office Dakar), Agueda Marin (Regional Office San José), and John McGheogan (Regional Office Bangkok) would like to thank IOM colleagues in the field who actively contributed to this document. The team acknowledges the work and time invested to make this document happen.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AVRR	Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration
AVR	Assisted Voluntary Return
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FYROM	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRRINI	Information, Return and Reintegration of Iraqi Nationals to Iraq
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OPT	Occupied Palestinian Territory
PARA	Post-Arrival Reintegration Assistance
RCM	Regional Conference on Migration
REAB	Return and Emigration of Asylum Seekers ex-Belgium
SMC	Significant Medical Condition
UMC	Unaccompanied Migrant Children
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VoT	Victim of Trafficking

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FOREWORD

Today all forms of migration have impacts on the social and financial development of individuals and societies. Thus, adequate management of migration is crucial if positive impacts are to be achieved.

Return is today one strong element in the migration cycle, whose potential has not yet been fully harnessed. Being spontaneous or assisted, return can play a pivotal role in the development framework of the country of origin, if adequately managed. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has been promoting the overall concept that links migration and development for over 60 years.

Since the late 1970s, IOM programmes on Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration have helped individuals to reintegrate and to achieve their development potential and governments to develop a human cooperative approach to returning migrants. The Organization's expertise and the number of United Nations and NGO partners working with us in these areas have grown over the decades, reflecting not only the global reach of our programmes, but also the critical importance and the generous financial resources that our Member States have devoted to the growing need to support returnees in the return and reintegration process.

It is with great pleasure that, within the overall framework of migration management, we present this second Annual Report on IOM activities in the areas of Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration. This report reflects the current state of progress. Almost all IOM missions around the world are involved in directly assisting returnees, while supporting our Member States in developing innovative and more effective structures to aid and reintegrate migrants.

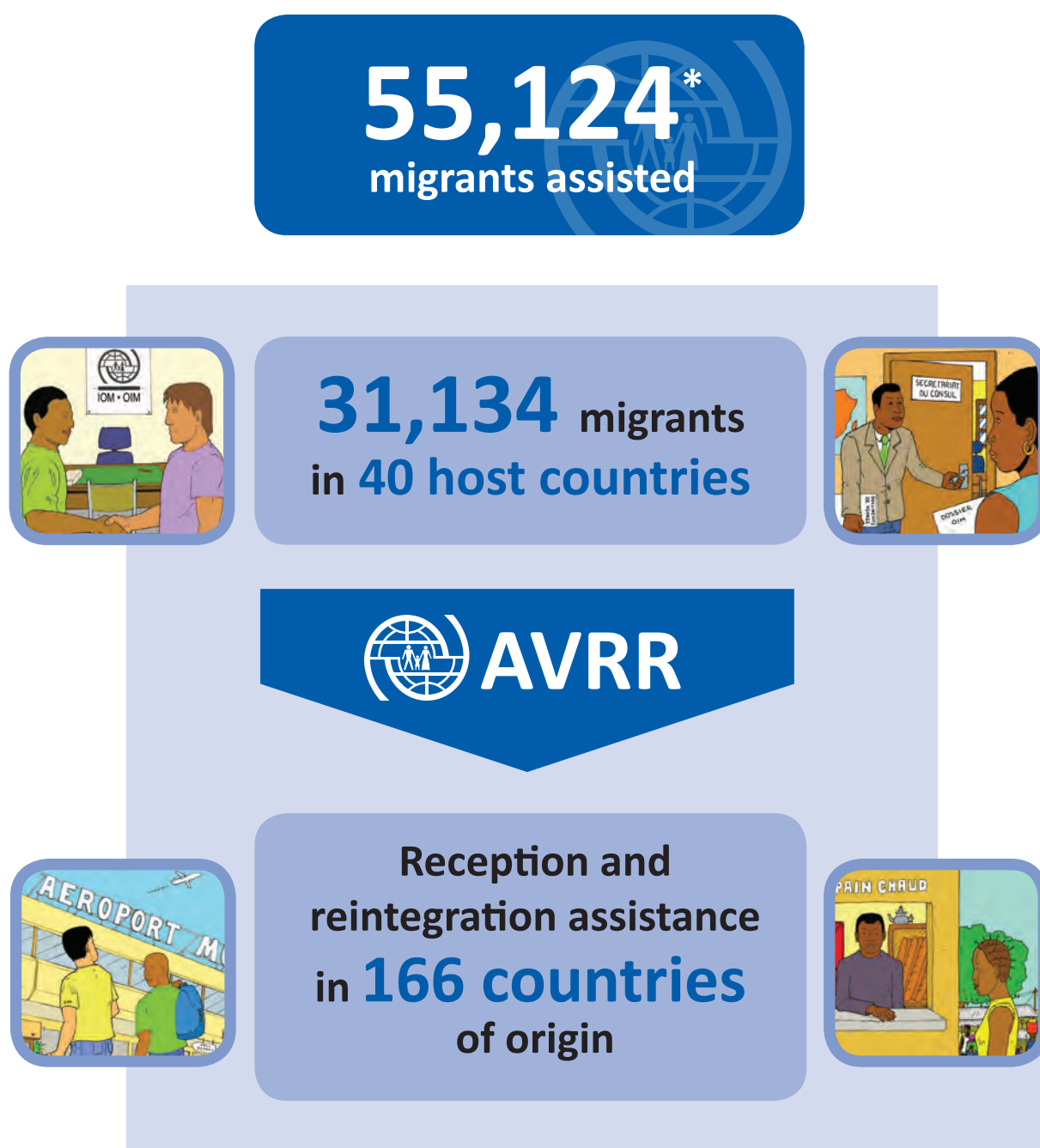
The Migrant Assistance Division of the Department of Migration Management in collaboration with the respective Regional Thematic Specialists in Regional Offices and IOM colleagues in the field have put together this Annual Report to illustrate how the Organization is working around the globe on helping governments to develop adequate and humane return programmes and migrants to return and reintegrate with respect and dignity.

We hope that this report will enable readers to quickly identify areas of interest to them and gain an overview of the Organization's work, as well as what trends and challenges are emerging. As with all our undertakings, we wish that this work will ultimately be of benefit to the millions of migrants around the world, and to countries that are working with us to address migration management.

Irena Vojackova-Sollorano
Director, Department of Migration Management

2011: ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION AND POST-ARRIVAL REINTEGRATION ASSISTANCE AT A GLANCE

Figure 1: AVRR 2011 at a glance

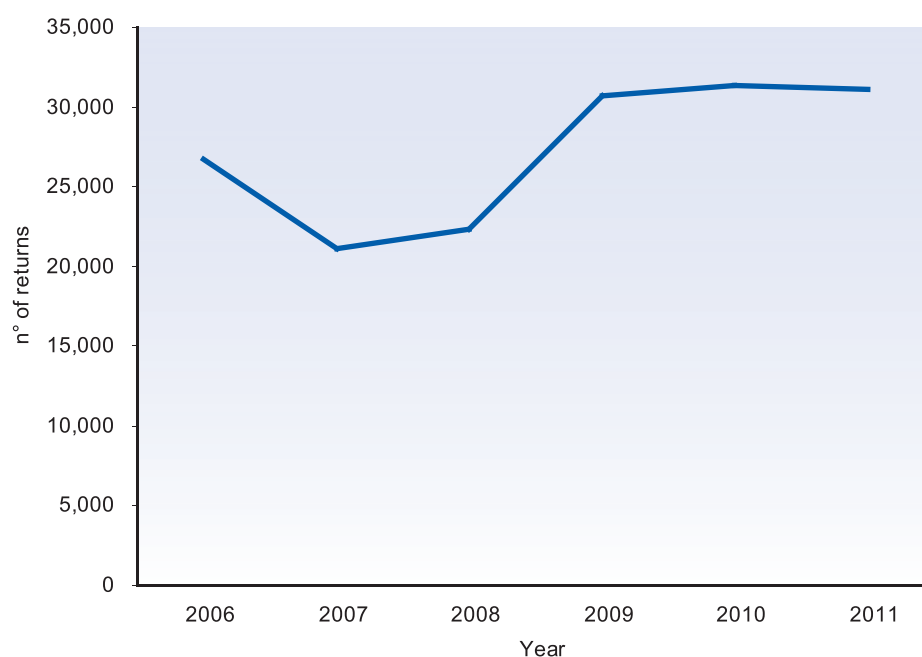


* In addition to the 31,134 migrants returned with the assistance of IOM, 23,990 migrants received assistance after arrival in their respective countries of origin.

In 2011, assisted voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR)¹ programmes globally required the direct involvement of 40 International Organization for Migration (IOM) offices in host countries and 166 countries of origin to assist approximately 55,124 migrants to voluntarily return and/or reintegrate.² Last year, IOM assisted 31,134 migrants to return in a humane and dignified manner to their countries of origin. Approximately 50 per cent of these migrants received reintegration³ assistance in their countries of origin.

Figure 2 shows the numbers of AVRR beneficiaries⁴ globally over a six-year period, from 2006 to 2011.

Figure 2: Overview of AVRR between 2006 and 2011



Additionally, approximately 24,000 migrants who were returned by host governments received IOM assistance in the framework of post-arrival reception and reintegration assistance schemes implemented in cooperation with countries of origin in response to the returnees' humanitarian needs (IOM internal database, 2011).

Upon reviewing the work by IOM and its partners in the field of AVRR throughout 2011, three relevant facts can be highlighted:

1. The concept of AVRR is no longer a concept limited to the geographical and political context of the European Union (EU), but is now being implemented from an increasing number of host and transit countries in all regions of the world.
2. The provision of reintegration assistance to migrants in their countries of origin is an integral part of return migration policies implemented by governments.

¹ Assisted voluntary return is defined by IOM as "the administrative, logistical, financial and reintegration support to rejected asylum-seekers, victims of trafficking in human beings, stranded migrants, qualified nationals and other migrants unable or unwilling to remain in the host country who volunteer to return to their countries of origin" (IOM Glossary, 2nd edition, 2011).

² IOM defines reintegration as re-inclusion or re-incorporation of a person into a group or a process, e.g. of a migrant into the society of his or her country of origin or habitual residence (IOM Glossary, 2nd edition, 2011).

³ The provision of reintegration assistance under IOM programmes varies according to the limitations imposed by donors with regards to the financial support provided to returned migrants. The levels can vary from the provision of cash as pocket money to help with immediate assistance to more sustainable reintegration modalities that can include help with self-employment, work placements, health, education and training assistance.

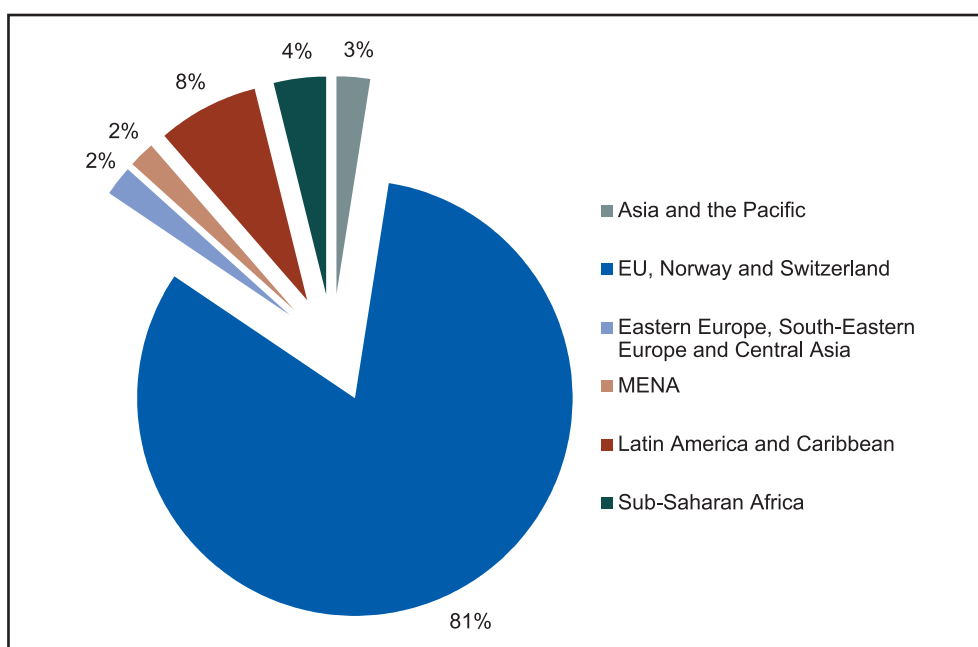
⁴ The AVRR beneficiaries in this graph correspond specifically to those whom IOM assisted with actual return travel under AVRR programmes globally.

- Return migration programmes are set in sensitive and often complex social, political and – more recently – difficult economic contexts. Within these contexts, IOM and its partner agencies have worked together to provide specialized assistance to highly vulnerable migrants such as unaccompanied migrant children (UMC), victims of trafficking (VoT) and migrants with health-related needs.

The concept of AVRR is no longer a concept limited to the geographical and political context of the EU , but is now being implemented from an increasing number of host and transit countries in all regions of the world.

As it can be seen in Figure 3, the majority of AVRR still takes place from EU Member States, Norway and Switzerland to countries of origin around the world. Nonetheless, an increasing number of AVRR projects are now being implemented in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), sub-Saharan Africa, and Asia and the Pacific. Figure 3 presents the percentage of returns under AVRR programmes from different regions.

Figure 3: Overview of departure regions for AVRR worldwide in 2011

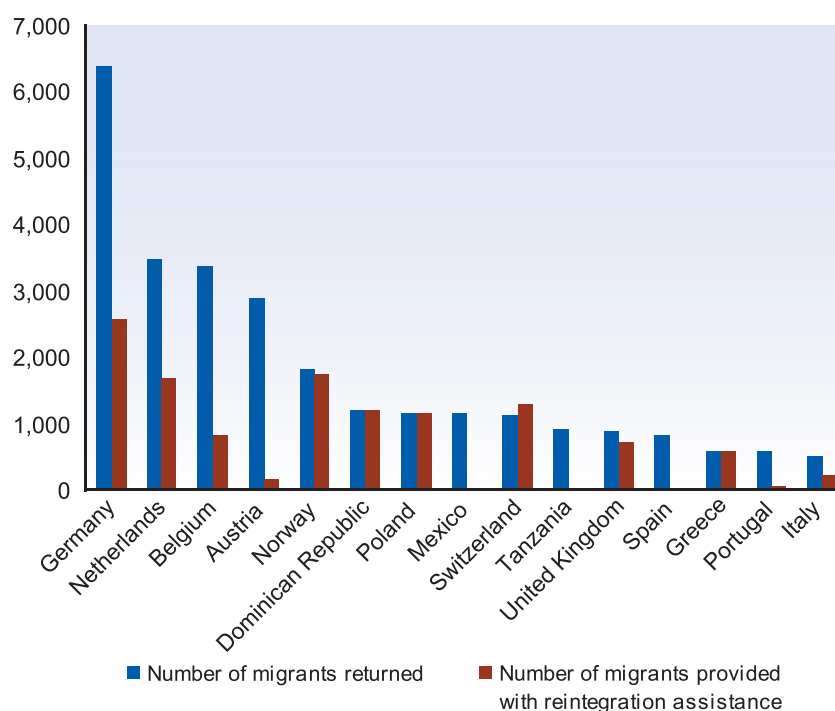


IOM and its partners implemented AVRR programmes in the following host countries outside the territory of the EU, Norway and Switzerland:

- Sub-Saharan Africa: Niger, South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania;
- Middle East and North Africa: Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Yemen;
- Latin America and the Caribbean: Dominican Republic and Mexico;
- Asia and the Pacific: Australia, Belarus, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Ukraine;
- Eastern Europe, South-Eastern Europe and Central Asia: Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Moldova and Turkey.

Figure 4 shows the top 15 host countries conducting AVRR programmes with IOM.

Figure 4: Top 15 host countries for AVRR worldwide in 2011⁵



IOM offices in both host countries and countries of origin have played a key role in ensuring that advice and counselling on return and reintegration could be provided to migrants, either directly by IOM or by its partners. This pre-return component of AVRR programmes is crucial in helping migrants to come to a decision on whether or not they wish to take the option of assisted voluntary return (AVR) to their countries of origin. One of the key aims of these programmes in host countries has been to ensure migrants' access to information and advice on available options in both host countries and countries of origin. Furthermore, assistance provided by IOM caseworkers and other specialized practitioners to facilitate the voluntary return of vulnerable groups, such as UMC, migrants with health-related needs, VoT and other highly vulnerable migrants, has been particularly relevant. Equally important has been the work carried out by IOM staff at departure, transit and arrival airports, ensuring that migrants travel along the smoothest, safest and most viable routes, and assisting them in obtaining documentation and transit waivers or – in exceptionally vulnerable cases – accompanying them home.

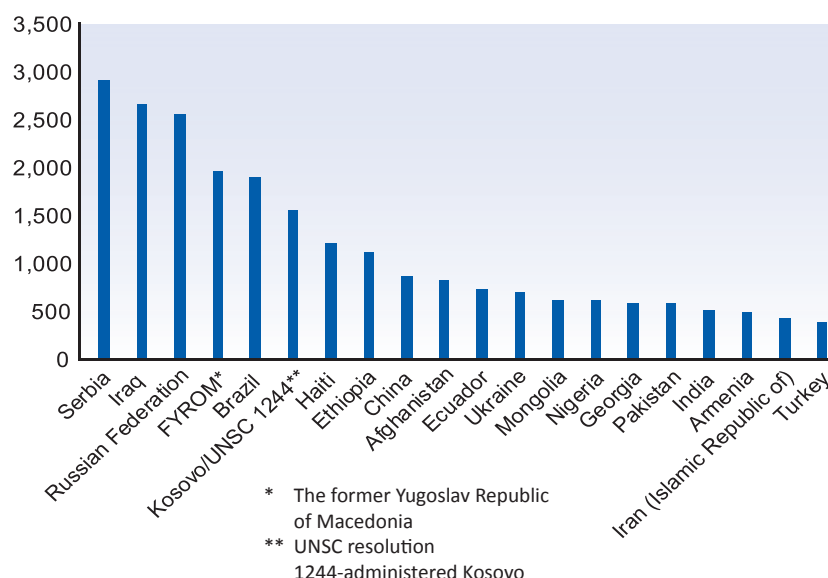
Despite the predominant importance of return movements within IOM's AVRR programmes, facilitating the voluntary return of migrants is not just about arranging return travel. Above all, AVRR is about assisting migrants in addressing the challenges they face prior to and after return to their countries of origin, especially during the first six to 12 months, when they face key challenges to reintegrate into their home societies. Seventy-one per cent of all AVRR programmes in 2011 included some level of reintegration assistance in kind.⁶

⁵ Reintegration figures are slightly higher than assisted return movements. This is due to the fact that not all return movements are organized by IOM Switzerland, these cases do, however, receive pre-departure and post-arrival assistance from the office in Bern and partners.

⁶ Globally, IOM delivered 91 AVRR projects. Out of these, a total of 65 projects included financial support in kind for reintegration activities undertaken by the returnees in their countries of origin within a wide range of options: small business set-up, training, education or other, as agreed and eligible under each respective programme.

Figure 5 shows the top 20 countries of origin for AVRR returnees and indicates where IOM has been most active in assisting with the reintegration of migrants under its AVRR programmes.

Figure 5: Top 20 countries of origin for AVRR worldwide in 2011



IOM has invested substantial efforts to strengthen the links between the pre-return and post-arrival reintegration stages. This has taken the form of dialogue mechanisms directed at migrants and/or counsellors, such as video conferences or “Stories of Return”, allowing potential returnees in the host country to hear from those who already left and went through the process of reintegration. However, for these interlinkages to succeed, there is a need for large internal coordination among IOM offices globally. In order to strengthen consistency and coordination among AVRR programmes, IOM colleagues around the world who manage AVRR programmes met in Geneva at the AVRR Internal Global Meeting in May 2011, including missions in traditional host countries and also countries of origin.



The AVRR Global Meeting, organized in May 2011, gathered IOM staff from IOM field missions in countries of origin, transit and destination in order to discuss issues linked to AVRR. © IOM, 2011

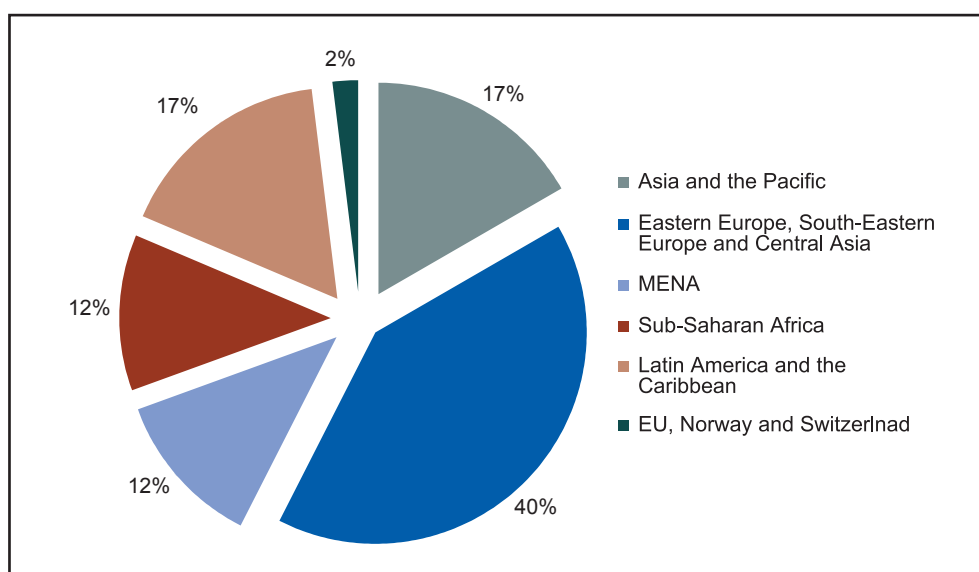
The provision of reintegration assistance to migrants in their countries of origin is an integral part of return migration policies implemented by governments.

The impact of this trend on the work of IOM and its partners is twofold: firstly, the provision of individualized and tailored reintegration assistance to voluntary returnees has become a key component of most AVRR programmes; secondly, the number of IOM projects providing post-arrival reintegration assistance (PARA) to migrants returned by host governments⁷ increased by 66 per cent in 2011 compared to 2010.⁸

As indicated in Figure 5 above, the major countries of origin for returnees were: Serbia, Iraq, the Russian Federation, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) and Brazil. As far as possible within the limitations of the respective AVRR programmes, IOM's work in these countries focused on the reception and sustainable reintegration, responding to the immediate and longer-term needs of returning migrants.

As illustrated in Figure 6, the region comprising Eastern Europe, South-Eastern Europe and Central Asia continues to be the main region of origin for migrants returning under AVRR programmes, followed by Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and sub-Saharan Africa.

Figure 6: AVRR by region of origin in 2011



In the field of AVRR, IOM continues to promote actions that aim at sustainability and durable solutions in the context of return migration. In practice, this has been reflected through assistance that provides relevant tools for returnees to be self-sufficient; for example, the facilitation of access to basic services and the identification of opportunities for work and education. This type of assistance has been very important: on the one hand, it can help to address the socio-economic root causes of migration; on the other hand, it can prevent the potential negative impact of return migration on local communities of origin. Issues of lost remittances and weak labour markets in countries of origin are crucial to take into consideration when providing reintegration assistance.

Although important progress has been achieved in many programmes globally, the reality is that the levels of assistance provided to migrants still differ significantly from country to country. Although

⁷ PARA are programmes implemented in cooperation with governments of both countries of origin and host countries specifically to assist migrants after they are returned by host-country authorities (by force or voluntarily) and have officially entered their own countries, that is, after the process of return has been concluded.

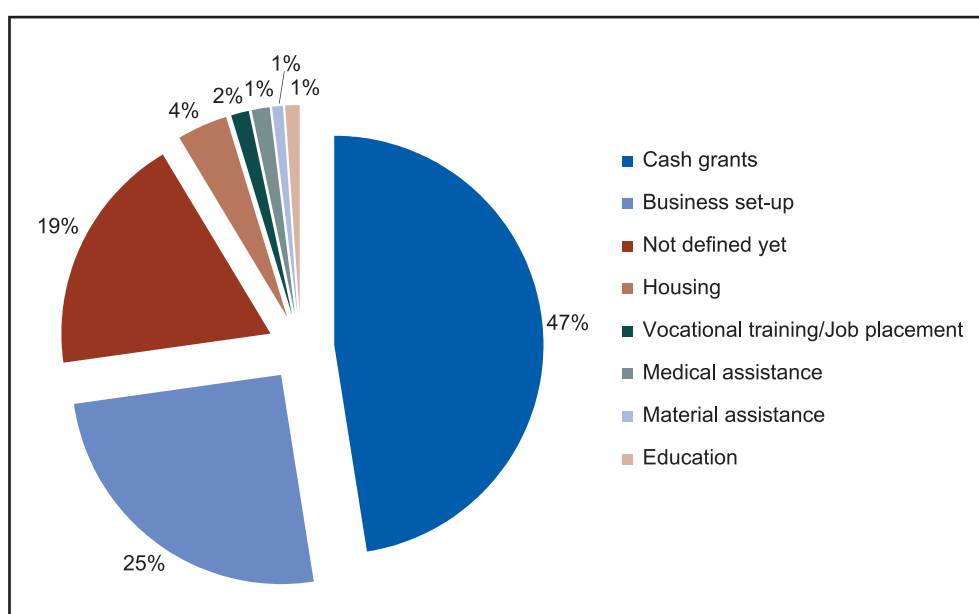
⁸ In 2010, a total of 12 PARA programmes were delivered, compared to 18 in 2011. However, some of these programmes did not yet assist any migrants returned by host-country governments.

approximately 60 per cent of AVRR programmes in 2011 offered some level of reintegration support to migrants, not all had the resources to provide reintegration assistance. Where reintegration was feasible, the amounts of assistance provided differed widely among countries and projects. These inconsistencies have been subject of analysis by IOM, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and academics studying the topic of return and reintegration, and agreement exists that there is a need to finance reintegration support to migrants within AVRR programmes to make the return process more sustainable.

IOM aims at addressing the needs and priorities of migrants upon return through the provision of different options for reintegration assistance. In 2011, most migrants opted for assistance with the set-up of small businesses, medical expenses, short-term accommodation or education and training. Some of IOM's AVRR programmes have followed the good practice of starting the assessment of migrants' priorities and plans for reintegration prior to return, to ensure that migrants can be assisted more effectively and in a timely manner upon arrival in the countries of origin.

Figure 7 provides a comprehensive overview of the type of assistance provided to returnees towards their reintegration in countries of origin, that is, from three months to one year after return has taken place.

Figure 7: Reintegration assistance provided under AVRR programmes in 2011⁹



Return migration programmes are set in often complex social, political and economic contexts.

Political, economic and social factors lead governments to implement return migration programmes as key components of their national migration policy frameworks. In this context, the success or failure of such programmes can have a relevant impact on the spectrum of wider international relations between origin, transit and host countries. Furthermore, the application of State sovereignty principles in the framework of international law usually leads to complex and often sensitive domains for operating both AVR programmes in host countries as well as PARA programmes in countries of origin.

⁹ The category "not defined yet" refers to returnees who have been assisted through AVRR and are entitled to reintegration assistance, but who have not yet decided which option to choose (e.g. whether they want to enrol in vocational training or to set up a business).

In a world of political, economic and security instability, with very limited options for migrants to move and work legally, and countries with restrictive migration legislation (detaining, penalizing or criminalizing irregular migrants), it is not surprising that the voluntary nature of returns facilitated under AVRR programmes is questioned and debated by civil society at large. For instance, in the case of migrants detained for immigration-related offences, the return assistance provided by IOM and its NGO partners might be better qualified as “humanitarian assistance to return”; while the assistance is based on the personal will of the migrant, there are fewer alternative options available. In addition, the significant number of migrants ending up destitute and without any social protection from the host country has led to an increasing number of applications to AVRR programmes by vulnerable migrants. These include individuals with health-related needs, UMC deciding to return to their families in countries of origin, or migrants who have become victims of trafficking or other forms of exploitation or violence. This situation requires IOM and its partner agencies to organize quick and effective referral structures and, in many instances, to provide specialized AVRR assistance to these groups of migrants. It can be expected that the more restricted the socio-economic context becomes for migrants in host countries, the more complex and open the debate will be between civil societies and governments in relation to the different levels of voluntariness linked to AVRR programmes.

While in many cases AVRR programmes have to overcome a number of challenges to ensure key principles are respected (such as ensuring that migrants are returning based on personal and informed decisions, or assisting humane and dignified returns with sustainable solutions for migrants after return), AVRR programmes have so far achieved significant humanitarian weight in the migration policy spectrum at the national, regional and global levels. On the one hand, AVRR provides policy and practical frameworks for states to allow a more humane and dignified option than forced returns for migrants who do not have the legal means to stay in the host country; on the other hand, AVRR ensures that migrants have more time to prepare for their return in comparison with deportation time frames. However, there is an increasing tendency among States to reduce the time frame for migrants to be able to opt for AVRRs.¹⁰ Furthermore, AVRR programmes allow migrants to return to their countries of origin without facing the coercive means usually associated with forced returns. Moreover, through AVRR programmes, migrants have more chances of receiving support beyond the response to their immediate needs after arrival, support that can lead to their self-sufficiency and sustainable reintegration.

In conclusion, there is growing social and political recognition that AVRR programmes, pioneered by IOM in 1979, can benefit migrants, governments and civil society, not only because of their humanitarian value but also because of their crucial contribution to migration management. Furthermore, the concept of reintegration and the relevance of durable assistance to migrants upon return to their countries of origin is increasingly becoming an integral part of AVRR programmes. However, there are many challenges and factors to be taken into consideration when implementing AVRR within different legislative and structural contexts, nationally and internationally. The reasons underlying migrants’ decision to go home differ widely, and a common ground for IOM, NGOs and civil society in the field of voluntary return is the mutual effort to ensure that a migrant in need is a person to be helped in the most humane and dignified manner.

¹⁰ Throughout the EU, for instance, legislative frameworks and operational practices in relation to the minimum standards of treatment of irregular migrants in the context of returns and detention vary. IOM acknowledges that, for certain Member States which do not count with a provision for AVRRs, the Return Directive constitutes an improvement as it stipulates a minimum period of between seven and 30 days for a migrant to opt for voluntary return. However, IOM is cautious that the success of assisted voluntary returns largely rests on having adequate time to be well prepared for the return, and to take into account specific circumstances and identified vulnerabilities of the migrants concerned. In its comments to the European Commission in relation to the EU Return Directive in March 2009, IOM encouraged EU Member States to follow the Directive’s recommendations to extend this period.

AVRR AS PART OF RETURN MIGRATION

Rather than being viewed as an isolated phenomenon, return migration needs to be seen in the larger picture of the international migration cycle of individual migrants, and in the context of migration management instruments applied by governments. Return migration can occur at different stages of the migration cycle, either after a time of legal residence in the host country or – if this is not possible – shortly after arrival, as a result of lacking residence possibilities. No matter at what point return takes place, spontaneous voluntary returns are the most frequent and preferred option. Over time, return migration has become more and more subject to analysis and evaluation, particularly in assessing migrants' reasons for return; the impact on individuals, groups, families, economies and societies in general; and the sustainability of voluntary return migration vis-à-vis forced return policies. In fact, return migration is no longer seen as a secondary or ancillary phenomenon, but rather as an integral and crucial component of international migration.



A Nepali returnee from the United Kingdom at the construction site for his poultry farm, which will be set up with the reintegration assistance he obtained through the AVRR programme. © IOM, 2011

IOM's work in the field of return migration

IOM is mandated by its Constitution to ensure orderly migration, inter alia, through voluntary return and reintegration assistance. Article 1, paragraph 1(d) of the IOM Constitution spells out the various services the Organization can provide, including “voluntary return migration”¹¹ and “voluntary repatriation”.¹² IOM policy guidelines on the implementation of voluntary return assistance are enshrined in three IOM Council documents.¹³ Within this framework, return migration has been an integral part of IOM's cooperation with Member States, in line with their legislation and national policies. IOM works with migrants and civil society to specifically address the contemporary challenges of migration and to ensure that returns occur in a safe, orderly, dignified and sustainable manner. IOM's intervention takes place during all stages of the migration cycle and is nurtured greatly from cooperation and coordination at the international, national, regional and local levels with governmental and non-governmental partners, whose specialized expertise allows for more targeted assistance to both migrants and governments. As an intergovernmental organization, IOM is at the centre of the return debate. This gives the Organization a privileged position to engage in discussions and facilitate dialogue and cooperation between concerned countries, but also poses challenges as to the maintenance of impartial service delivery in this particularly sensitive field of migration policy.

Understanding the concept of AVRR

AVRR is one of the many services that IOM offers to its Member States in the interest of effective migration management, within and between countries. AVRR aims at orderly, humane and cost-effective return and reintegration of migrants who have seen their asylum application rejected, whose asylum application is pending or who have withdrawn their claim and other migrants currently residing or stranded in host countries, who are willing to return voluntarily to their countries of origin.

¹¹ Voluntary return migration includes AVRR, as included in this report.

¹² “Voluntary repatriation projects” refer to IOM humanitarian assistance provided to refugees returning home when conditions allow. These are projects done under the auspices of the MoU between UNHCR and IOM.

¹³ IOM Return Policy and Projects: A Contribution to Combating Irregular Migration, MC/INF/222 (1992); IOM Policy Concerning its Assistance to Unsuccessful Asylum Seekers and Irregular Migrants Returning to Their Countries of Origin, MC/EX/INF/51 (1996); Policies and Practices with Respect to Rejected Asylum-Seekers, MC/INF/236 (1997).

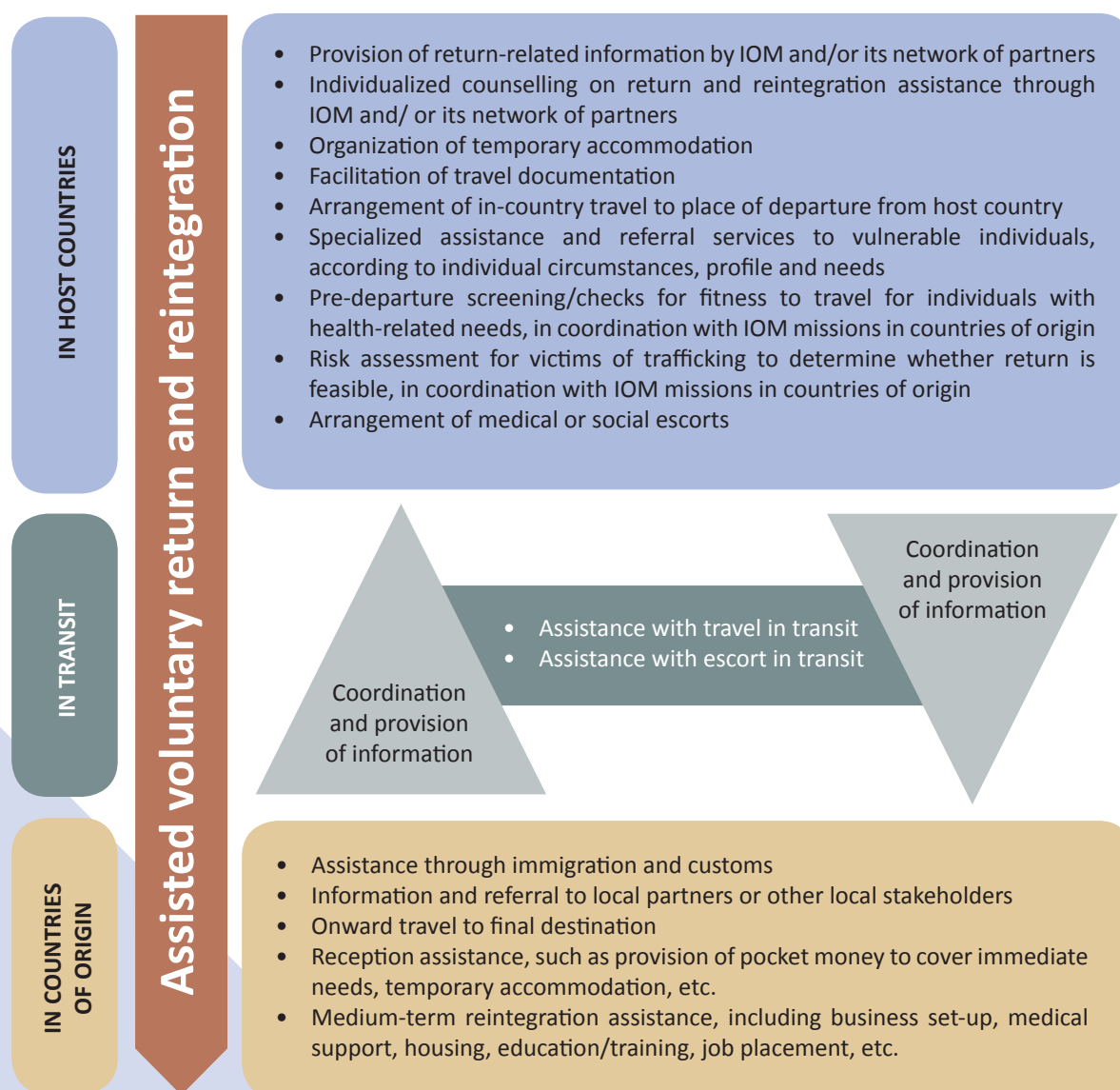
Assisted voluntary return and, where applicable, reintegration¹⁴ involves administrative, logistical and financial support to rejected asylum-seekers, victims of trafficking in persons, stranded migrants, and other migrants unable or unwilling to remain in the host country who volunteer to return to their countries of origin. To a varying degree, this includes reintegration assistance, which is the process by which a migrant is reinserted into the economic and social structure of the country of origin, and becomes self-sufficient and able to earn his/her own livelihood.¹⁵



IOM Vienna staff accompanying a returnee to Vienna International Airport. © IOM, 2011

The different services provided within AVRR programmes are outlined in the following diagram:

Figure 8: Overview of the AVRR process and services



¹⁴ Definition of “assisted voluntary return” taken from IOM, *Glossary on Migration* (2011).

¹⁵ Definition of “reintegration assistance” taken from IOM, *Glossary on Migration* (2011).

In recent years, there have been increasing efforts to improve return policy formulation and make return assistance more effective for those in need of such support. Among other things, facilitating the sustainability of returns is an essential component of return assistance provided to migrants and policies formulated by governments. Reintegration assistance plays a key role in facilitating sustainable returns for all parties – migrants, host countries and origin countries. Unless the factors that compelled individuals to emigrate by irregular means, overstay their visa or otherwise undertake risks during their migration experience are addressed, a substantial number of returnees are unlikely to remain in their countries of return and refrain from future irregular migration. Key tools for return and reintegration assistance include the socio-economic profiling of potential returnees in host countries to assess their needs and motivations, coupled with an assessment of the conditions and prospects in the country of origin to support a migrant's decision to return. Effective coordination between IOM missions in the host country and country of origin during the pre-departure stage of the AVRR process can maximize a returnee's preparation for return, as it allows for the drafting of up-to-date reports on local conditions for return and reintegration and also supports the counselling process.



Project participants returned to Georgia discussing their business plan and implementation modalities with IOM Georgia reintegration staff. © IOM, 2011

Individual reintegration assistance should be placed in the context of wider community development to ensure greater sustainability. Addressing the needs and concerns of communities of origin can help to address the push factors of irregular migration, as well as avoid creating disadvantages for local (non-migrant) populations through the assistance offered to returnees. Moreover, post-return monitoring is necessary to ensure appropriate and sustainable delivery of reintegration assistance and allow for adjustments to be made to AVRR projects, where necessary.

Derived from the Organization's mandate, voluntariness is a prerequisite for IOM's AVRR assistance throughout the whole process of return. This means that a returnee can withdraw from the process at any moment before departure. Voluntariness is assumed to exist if a decision to return is taken by the migrant. Such a decision embraces two elements: "freedom of movement", which is defined by the absence of any physical force, and "informed decision", which requires having enough accurate and objective information – both on the situation in the country of origin and the potential impact of return to the host country – upon which the decision is based. These two elements are a precondition for any AVRR assistance and are essential for the credibility of AVRR activities.

In line with this, IOM's key policy considerations when providing AVRR services and developing and implementing AVRR projects are as follows:

- To safeguard migrants' dignity and rights in operating returns, seeking adherence to applicable international principles and standards;
- To preserve the integrity of regular migration structures and asylum procedures;
- To enhance cooperation between origin, transit and host countries in the return process and reinforce the responsibility of countries of origin towards their returning nationals;
- To address the root causes of irregular migration;
- To advocate for the adoption of comprehensive voluntary return approaches inclusive of post-return reintegration assistance, wherever possible, as a more effective, sustainable and mutually beneficial option that can contribute to addressing repeated irregular migration.

AVR/AVRR as an evolving practice

Since 1979, when IOM developed the first AVR programme in Europe, the range of host countries where AVRR activities are implemented has grown steadily beyond the limits of the EU to include Northern Africa, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, as well as host countries in Asia, the Americas, Australia and Oceania. This progression of AVRR projects in different parts of the world is a reflection of the fact that return migration has been increasingly incorporated into the migration management strategies of many governments and has gained prominence in international policymaking discourse, due to the developments outlined earlier. At the same time, an increasing number of governments agree that AVR becomes more sustainable if linked to individual reintegration assistance. In 2011, the majority of IOM's AVR programmes included at least some kind of reintegration element, either through in-kind support or cash assistance provided to returnees upon their arrival in countries of origin. AVRR is also becoming part of key measures to be implemented in coordinated responses by affected countries to address irregular transit migration, providing needed assistance to stranded migrants who are in distress and often destitute.



A Moldovan returnee from Austria who used her reintegration assistance to buy equipment for an atelier where she sews national suits and traditional Moldovan crochets. After a period of six months, 10 women were already working in the atelier. © IOM, 2011

AVRR and migration management

IOM considers AVRR to be an indispensable part of a comprehensive approach to migration management that combines efficient border management, effective asylum processing structures and respect for human rights, by facilitating the safe and dignified return of migrants and encouraging their sustainable reintegration in countries of origin. IOM also advocates for the establishment of a cooperative approach and partnerships for the management of return migration frameworks by engaging countries of origin, transit and destination. The cooperation initiated in the context of voluntary return among the various parties involved in the process constitutes a platform on which discussion may be expanded to explore, inter alia, possibilities to establish broader regular migration channels between those same countries. In doing so, it enhances the positive value of coordinated migration management, including voluntary return options, rather than the unilateral approach that may be adopted to handle such issues.

Comparative advantages of AVRR

IOM considers AVRR to be more beneficial to migrants and governments than forced removals, in as much as it represents a more humane and dignified approach to return. This has also been highlighted by several national and international research studies and reports, which confirm that an important number of host governments in the EU have recognized AVRR as “a preferable outcome in relation to forced return”, mainly due to the more humane and dignified nature of the return process and for reasons of cost-efficiency.¹⁶ On the one hand, AVRR offers an opportunity for migrants who wish to return home voluntarily to their countries of origin as a result of personal circumstances; on the other hand, AVRR can be an alternative option for migrants who are or may become subject to potential removal or deportation from the host country. Contrary to forced returns, AVRR allows for the provision

¹⁶ See for example: European Migration Network, Study on Projects and Strategies Fostering Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) and Reintegration from EU Member States (2010), available from <http://emn.intrasoft-intl.com/html/news/news.html#N4>, which lists in particular Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal and Sweden as countries which have recognized AVRR as “preferable option”; Council of the European Union (2011) EU Presidency Report *Current Practices in Assisted Voluntary Returns (AVR) of Third-Country Nationals*, Doc N° 13620/11, p. 9; Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (2010), *Voluntary Return Programmes: An effective, humane and cost effective mechanism for returning irregular migrants*, Doc. N° 12277.

of impartial advice and support for migrants' return and reintegration. In addition, voluntary return tends to be more cost-effective than deportation; this becomes clear when comparing the costs of voluntary return with: (1) deportation costs, usually involving complex law enforcement elements; (2) costs arising from the provision of social welfare benefits to migrants in the medium-term to long-term before their removal from the host country; or (3) costs resulting from multiple deportations of the same individual as a result of irregular re-migration to the host country if reintegration in the country of origin is not possible as a result of lacking support.

AVRR programmes being delivered by IOM as an intergovernmental organization with a network of offices and partners worldwide allow for smoother delivery of assistance throughout the process: preparation for return, travel documentation obtained by the relevant diplomatic representations of countries of origin based in the host countries, and assistance at departure and arrival at customs in countries of origin, as well as additional help with onward transportation and reintegration, if resources allow.



An Ecuadorian returnee from Belgium who used his reintegration assistance to open an internet café and copy shop. © IOM, 2011

The comparative advance of AVRR has been achieved through the following aspects:

- Allowing the migrant to make his/her own choice about return, prepare for the journey and avoid the stigma of deportation and its negative repercussions which facilitates successful reintegration and future aspirations for legal return to the host country;
- Offering an effective (both in terms of cost and timing) and consensual alternative to the often contentious and politically charged environment in which forced returns may be operated in host countries;
- Reinforcing the integrity of regular migration projects and fair asylum procedures;
- Ensuring that the return process is devoid of human rights violations by facilitating respect of international principles and standards, and helping to ensure that the highest standards are applied throughout the return and reintegration process by providing counselling, assessing the voluntary nature of return, and considering the protection concerns and needs for support of the returnees concerned;
- Allowing the migrants concerned to identify potential opportunities for socio-economic reinsertion into communities of origin prior to departure, thereby facilitating the sustainability of their return;
- Providing appropriate responses to the needs of vulnerable migrants requiring return assistance;
- Providing the possibility of more effective reintegration assistance that can respond in some capacity to the immediate needs of returnees and contribute to their self-sufficiency upon return as well as to the local development of communities of origin;
- Providing the possibility to support labour migration arrangements and agreements and assist with the return and socio-economic reinsertion of returning workers;
- Facilitating and enhancing a cooperative approach to return between the relevant authorities in host, transit and origin countries;
- Leading countries of origin to assume greater responsibility towards their returning nationals through the AVRR process than would be the case for forced returns;
- Addressing the root causes of irregular migration and supporting institutional and economic development efforts in countries/regions of origin, through targeted returns and reintegration support to returnees as well as communities of return (such support can be more effective when combined with measures such as the return of qualified nationals, the improved management of a country's expatriate workforce, or the linkage to development policies in general).

Post-arrival reintegration assistance

In line with its Constitution,¹⁷ IOM does not involve itself in the implementation of forced returns. However, the Organization, at the request of countries of origin, does provide post-arrival reintegration assistance (PARA) to returnees who have been returned under the auspices of their host governments, once these returnees have been formally admitted in their countries of origin. In line with the humanitarian needs of forcibly returned migrants, PARA can involve short-term reception assistance or longer-term socio-economic reintegration support to facilitate the reintegration of these individuals into their communities of origin. The rationale behind providing post-arrival reintegration assistance is similar to that underlying the provision of reintegration assistance to voluntary returnees. The provision of post-arrival reintegration assistance recognizes the fact that, irrespective of the way in which migrants have returned to their countries of origin, they are in need of assistance.

¹⁷ Article 1, paragraph 1 (d) of the IOM Constitution.

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

This chapter presents a regional perspective on the trends and types of return and reintegration assistance¹⁸ provided to migrants in the following regions:

- The EU, including Norway and Switzerland
- Eastern Europe, South-Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus, and Central Asia
- Asia and the Pacific
- Middle East and North Africa
- Sub-Saharan Africa
- Latin America and the Caribbean



¹⁸ The information on assisted voluntary return and reintegration as well as post-arrival reintegration assistance activities is based on data provided by IOM missions managing AVRR or PARA projects that assisted migrants in 2011. IOM received data from the following missions: IOM Afghanistan, IOM Albania, IOM Australia, IOM Austria, IOM Belarus, IOM Belgium, IOM Bosnia and Herzegovina, IOM Bulgaria, IOM Czech Republic, IOM Denmark, IOM Dominican Republic, IOM Egypt, IOM El Salvador, IOM Estonia, IOM Finland, IOM France, IOM Germany, IOM Greece, IOM Guatemala, IOM Haiti, IOM Hungary, IOM Indonesia, IOM Ireland, IOM Italy, IOM Latvia, IOM Lithuania, IOM Luxembourg, IOM Malta, IOM Moldova, IOM Morocco, IOM Nicaragua, IOM Niger, IOM Norway, IOM Papua New Guinea, IOM Poland, IOM Portugal, IOM Romania, IOM Russian Federation, IOM Sierra Leone, IOM Slovakia, IOM Slovenia, IOM South Africa, IOM Spain, IOM Sri Lanka, IOM Sweden, IOM Switzerland, IOM The Netherlands, IOM Tanzania, IOM Turkey, IOM United Kingdom, IOM Ukraine, IOM Yemen.

WESTERN AND CENTRAL EUROPE¹⁹

An insight from the region

IOM's activities in Western and Central Europe cover the EU as well as Norway and Switzerland. The EU is the geographical area with the largest number of countries where IOM operates AVRR projects for migrants returning to their countries of origin; it is also the area with the largest number of projects in a single region. In 2011, IOM operated 61 AVRR projects in 26 EU Member States, including Norway and Switzerland. The EU represents the region where the concept of AVRR was first introduced by IOM more than three decades ago and where it has evolved into an indispensable part of different national migration management systems as well as the EU migration policy framework.

In 2011, AVRR trends in EU Member States, Norway and Switzerland were influenced by a change in the principle group of beneficiaries: the accession of traditional countries of return to the EU reduced the number of persons eligible for voluntary return assistance under EU-funded programmes, for example. In addition, the regularization of certain categories of migrants residing in irregular situations in the EU Member States, or the expectation that migrants will benefit from such a process in the future (e.g. due to a change in government or relevant legislation) had an impact on the return decision process of individuals. Nonetheless, assistance to irregular migrants is increasing, and several IOM missions have been successfully implementing outreach and other enhanced initiatives tailored to this category of migrants. New or smaller programmes for these migrants have been expanding and have shown growth in the number of returns.

In the light of the trends described above, attention to return measures among EU Member States and the European Commission (EC) remains high. A variety of activities have been implemented to enhance AVRR and tailored assistance, as well as advisory services on returns in response to the diversification of beneficiaries. Assistance to vulnerable migrants (especially UMC) has featured prominently on the agenda, with the EC launching a study on the issue of return of UMC. At the same time, reintegration strategies targeting specific countries of origin and specific vulnerable groups have gained importance. Several AVRR programmes saw tailored reintegration packages being designed for families with children, unaccompanied and aged-out migrant children, and other vulnerable categories of returnees. Finally, the motivation of EU Member States to learn from each other, organize study visits, and nurture multilateral common projects within the EU has also increased.

Overview of assisted voluntary return and reintegration activities implemented in Western and Central Europe

Assisted voluntary return and reintegration from the region

Analysis of gender and social status of migrants assisted with voluntary return and reintegration

In 2011, IOM assisted 25,520 migrants to return voluntarily from EU Member States, Norway and Switzerland. Roughly two in three returnees were male (66%), while 33 per cent of the returnees were females. Nearly 75 per cent of the applications for AVRR were made by individuals, while only roughly 25 per cent were made by families or groups. AVRR programmes implemented from EU Member States assisted 2,026 accompanied migrant children, and 281 UMC. Accompanied migrant children, both female and male, were more or less equally represented (52% male and 48% female); with respect to UMC, 64 per cent of the assisted cases related to boys and 36 per cent related to girls.

¹⁹ The Western and Central European region, as referred to in this publication, covers: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

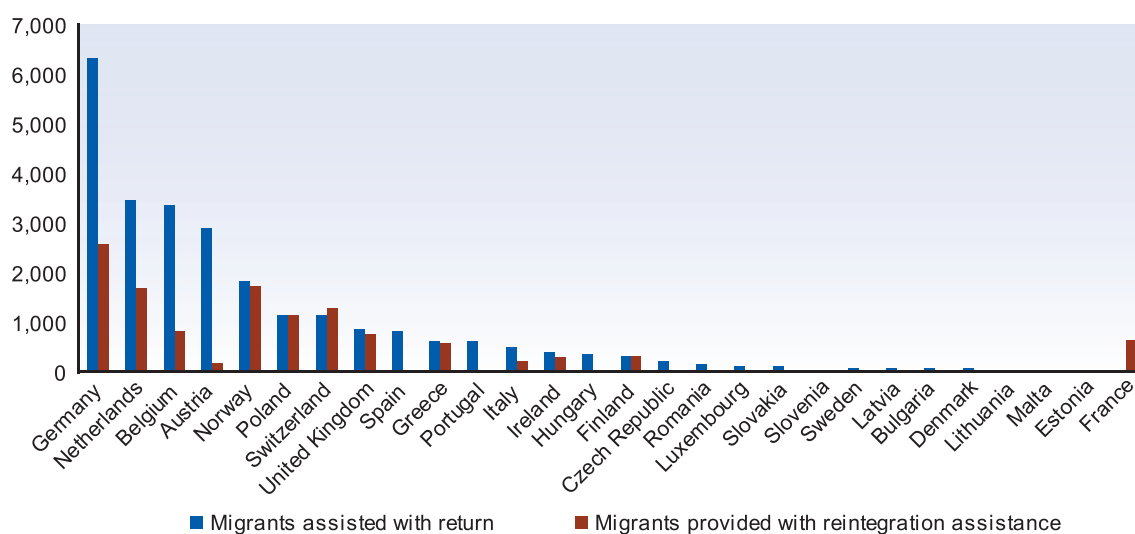
Figure 9: Voluntary return and reintegration assistance from the EU, Norway and Switzerland in 2011²⁰

Figure 9 points out the broad coverage of IOM's AVRR activities throughout the EU. In 2011, Cyprus was the only EU Member State that did not implement an AVRR project in cooperation with IOM. The largest AVRR programme implemented by IOM was carried out in Germany (6,338 returns in 2011). Apart from Germany, the Netherlands (3,473 returns), Belgium (3,358 returns), Austria (2,880 returns), and Norway (1,812 returns) represented major host countries in the EU, Norway and Switzerland for migrants returning through IOM's AVRR programmes in 2011.

The YouProject Website (www.youproject.ch)

- A website created in 2011 by IOM Bern together with the Swiss Federal Office for Migration.
- Migrants provide their own photos and videos telling their return and reintegration experience.
- The website reflects the experiences of migrants returning under AVRR programmes from Switzerland.
- A tool for return counsellors who expressed their need for visual material to inspire and reassure migrants interested in AVRR.



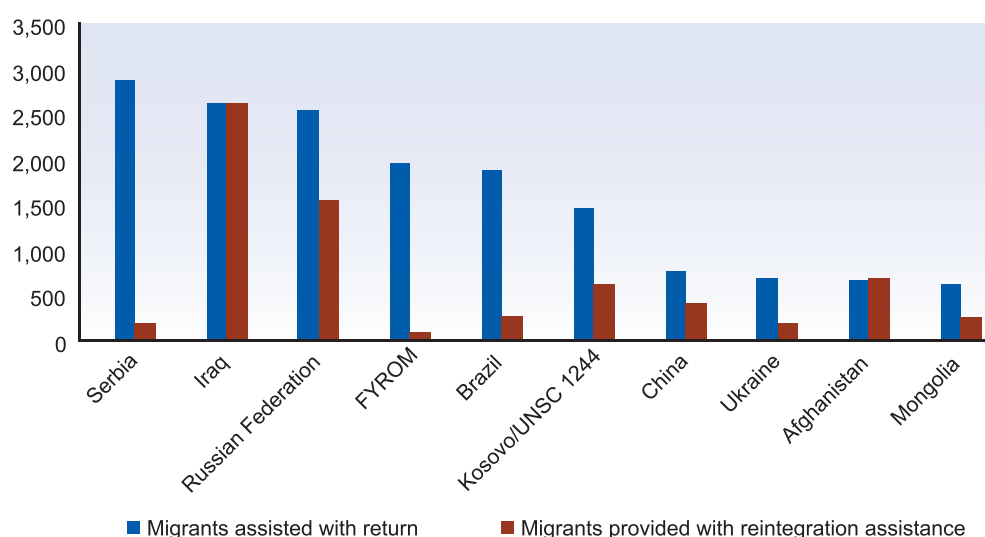
The YouProject was developed by IOM Bern in February 2011. © IOM, 2011

Over the past years, more and more governments in Europe have started to implement assisted voluntary return programmes which include individual reintegration assistance for migrants in their countries of origin. While some governments preferred payment of reintegration assistance in the form of cash grants (e.g. Norway, Germany, Sweden), the majority of AVRR programmes implemented in the EU involve the provision of reintegration assistance in kind. This allowed migrants to benefit from counselling from IOM's reintegration staff in the countries of origin and to receive support while searching for the best solutions for their reintegration. Under these in-kind reintegration programmes, costs for housing, education/vocational training programmes or business set-up were paid directly to the landlord/training institute or the respective supplier of the material used for the business. The preference for in-kind assistance is linked to the fact that IOM has an opportunity to counsel the migrant about the best use of reintegration assistance; moreover, regular contact with the returnee through counselling facilitates monitoring the whole reintegration process of the individuals in their countries of origin.

²⁰ Data on AVRR from France reflects only the reintegration assistance provided as the return movement is not organized by IOM, but by the Office Français de l'Immigration et de l'Intégration (OFII). IOM does, however, provide pre-departure counselling to migrants wanting to return voluntarily. Similarly, as regards Switzerland, reintegration figures are slightly higher than those for assisted return movements. This is due to the fact that not all return movements are organized by IOM Switzerland; these cases do, however, receive pre-departure and post-arrival assistance from the office in Bern.

Apart from national governments, the EC – in particular through the European Return Fund – played an important role in (co-)funding AVRR activities. This relates in particular to EU Member States in Central Europe, Greece or Malta. EC funding often allowed for the continuation or broadening of existing AVRR structures and/or the development and implementation of complementary activities; these include the production of information and awareness-raising material for migrants; research; capacity-building for national stakeholders; or the organization of conferences, workshops or study visits in order to foster increased cooperation among stakeholders.

Figure 10: Top 10 countries of origin for AVRR from the EU, Norway, and Switzerland



As shown in Figure 10, the major countries of origin for AVRR from the EU, Norway and Switzerland are spread across all five continents, namely in the Western Balkans, Central and South-West Asia, East Asia, as well as the Middle East and South America. The differences between the number of migrants assisted through assisted voluntary returns and the number of migrants provided with reintegration assistance can be explained through the fact that not all (but most) AVRR programmes implemented from EU Member States, Norway and Switzerland provide reintegration assistance.

The presence of Serbia and FYROM among the major countries of origin shows how migration management policies directly impact on AVRR programmes: since Serbian nationals are able to enter the EU without a visa, the number of asylum applications from these nationals increased substantially. As a result, the number of returns of rejected asylum-seekers from these countries predictably increased. In Germany, for example, 2,600 returns related to Serbian nationals alone – by far the biggest group of beneficiaries within the AVRR programme in Germany. Several EU Member States reacted to this influx by limiting or even terminating support for Serbian nationals requesting voluntary return assistance, if their applications were received after the introduction of the new visa scheme. This can be seen in Figure 10 above which highlights that the number of migrants provided with reintegration assistance in addition to return was minimal compared to other countries of origin.

As in 2010, the number of assisted voluntary returns in 2011 to the Russian Federation, Iraq and Brazil remained high. The lack of an IOM office in Brazil did not prevent the Organization from successfully implementing assisted voluntary returns as well as reintegration assistance for returnees upon their arrival in Brazil. Assistance was provided with support from the IOM office in Buenos Aires, as well as a network of NGOs in Brazil.

Research report: *Where do I go from here? The leading factors in voluntary return or remaining in Ireland* (IOM Ireland, 2011)

This research explores the key determining factors for migrants in making the decision to stay in Ireland or to return to their country of origin. The report primarily draws on a series of biographical case studies of over 60 migrants living in Ireland, the majority of whom are in the asylum system. The personal experience of migrants is at the centre of this research, giving migrants the opportunity to share their own understanding of the many varied factors influencing the decision to stay in Ireland or to return.

Key findings:

- Safety concerns and lack of opportunities in countries of origin discourage thoughts of return.
- Apprehensions about “settling back” in country of origin discourage people from returning, in particular the stigma attached to returning without having achieved financial success.
- Hopes for a life in Ireland encourage people to stay.
- Difficulties experienced in Ireland do not encourage people to think of return.
- Ireland’s AVRR programme is valued by migrants who engage with it, but its presence, in itself, does not encourage thoughts of return.



Cover page of the research conducted by IOM Ireland “Where do I go from here – the leading factors in voluntary return or remaining in Ireland”. © IOM

Aside from the implementation of voluntary return assistance to individual migrants, IOM missions in EU Member States, Norway and Switzerland focused their work on improving outreach and information capacities towards migrant populations, and tailoring existing programme services to the needs and features of specific target groups. In this light, a number of IOM missions developed new information material for migrants, while others engaged in research on migration trends and profiles in the host countries, providing additional information about potential target groups for assisted voluntary return programmes.

Information material for migrants interested in voluntary return from Malta (Restart II)

- Production of information material in English, French, Amharic and Arabic
- “Stories of Return” providing information on:
 - IOM and AVRR programmes
 - Outline of the RESTART procedure
 - Migrants’ stories of return from Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal
 - Answers to frequently asked questions on return and reintegration assistance
- Setting up a business booklet with information on:
 - Reintegration assistance procedure
 - Information on identifying business opportunities, and managing and expanding businesses
- Production of posters, leaflets, mouse pads and bookmarks.



Cover page of the brochure designed by IOM Malta on how to set up a micro-business within the restart project. © IOM, 2011

At the same time, IOM missions in host countries worked with governmental and non-governmental partners, as well as migrants themselves, to improve communication and information flows between destination countries and the migrants' countries of origin. A number of missions carried out monitoring visits to major countries of origin served by their AVRR programmes, in order to assess whether current programme services facilitated sustainable return and reintegration. Moreover, the production and dissemination of "Stories of Return" supported by photographic or video material helped to inform migrants, governments, donors and non-governmental partners about the returnees' diverse individual experiences with AVRR and the impact of the reintegration assistance provided.

Contrary to the expectations of a number of European governments, the influx of migrants from the North African region as a consequence of the Tunisian and Libyan crisis remained relatively low, at least when compared to the outflow of migrants to other countries within the North African region. The majority of migrants arriving from North Africa crossed the Mediterranean Sea and arrived on the Italian island of Lampedusa or in Malta. IOM Rome worked with the Italian government and three ad hoc AVRR projects were developed, which were implemented alongside the general Italian AVRR programme. The ad hoc programmes focused specifically on the assisted voluntary return of migrants who had arrived in Italy in the context of the crises in Libya, Tunisia and neighbouring countries. Migrants were provided with return assistance and limited cash support to cover immediate expenses upon arrival. Moreover, IOM in Italy engaged in the monitoring of reception facilities throughout the country in order to obtain more information about the impact of the crisis on the other side of the Mediterranean.

EASTERN EUROPE, SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE, SOUTHERN CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA²¹

An insight from the region

In 2011, many of the countries in Eastern Europe, South-Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus and Central Asia could be categorized as both countries of origin and transit. This equally holds true for the countries of the Western Balkans, which represented important transit countries for irregular migrants and asylum-seekers from within the region and further east. The whole Eastern European, South-Eastern European, Southern Caucasus and Central Asian region observed an increase in irregular migrants/asylum-seekers from countries outside Europe, especially from Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) and countries in the North African region. These individuals entered Turkey, then crossed the border towards Greece and continued via the Western Balkan route towards other EU Member States. Another issue that has affected migration flows in South-Eastern Europe was the visa liberalization scheme that enabled visa-free entry of nationals²² of Western Balkan countries to the EU.²³ The visa liberalization in Western Balkans decreased the numbers of irregular migrants from the region into the EU; however, at the same time it facilitated the increase in asylum applications from Western Balkan nationals in EU countries.²⁴

As to the situation in Eastern Europe, South-Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus, and Central Asia, the main migration patterns are the movement of regional migrants towards the Russian Federation and the movement of regional and extraregional migrants towards the EU. These two flows differ significantly in their modus operandi and need for facilitation. The first group includes labour migrants and is facilitated through the visa-free agreements of former Soviet Republic countries with the Russian Federation. The main nationalities migrating to the Russian Federation are Moldovans and Georgians, with Ukraine being the main transit country. The second group, that is, extraregional nationals migrating irregularly towards the EU, involves mainly Afghans, Pakistanis and Palestinians transiting via Ukraine towards EU Member States.

An outstanding issue that needs immediate action is the voluntary return assistance for migrants from outside Europe (especially Afghan, Pakistani and Palestinian migrants) who are increasingly transiting through the Western Balkan route towards the EU. In 2011, there was no funding mechanism in place to provide support to these migrants in need.

Overview of assisted voluntary return and reintegration activities in Eastern Europe, South-Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus and Central Asia

Assisted voluntary returns and reintegration to the region

Analysis of gender and social status of migrants assisted with voluntary return and reintegration

Of the 12,655 individuals who were assisted to voluntary return and reintegrate into their country of origin in the region, 60 per cent were male and 40 per cent were female. The proportion of female returnees assisted is therefore slightly higher than at the global level (33% of female migrants vs. 67%

²¹ The Eastern European, South-Eastern European, Southern Caucasus, and Central Asian region, as referred to in this publication, covers: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo/UNSC 1244, Kyrgyzstan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Russian Federation, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

The subregions cover the following countries: South-Eastern Europe: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYROM, Montenegro, Kosovo/UNSC 1244, Serbia, and Turkey; Eastern Europe: Belarus, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, and Ukraine; Southern Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia; Central Asia: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

²² Citizens of Kosovo/UNSC 1244 who are not holders of Serbian passports are the only exception to visa liberalization in Western Balkans.

²³ Compare with the previous chapter, "Overview of assisted voluntary return and reintegration in Western and Central Europe", in particular the increase in the number of assisted voluntary returns from Germany.

²⁴ UNHCR, Asylum Levels and Trends in Industrialized Countries: Statistical overview of asylum applications lodged in Europe and selected non-European countries (2011), p. 17.

of male migrants). As regards the civil status of the returnees, 60 per cent of migrants returned to the region were single persons, while 40 per cent were families. Among the returnees assisted by IOM were 1,137 migrant children accompanied by family members and 45 UMC. While the gender distribution among accompanied children was nearly equal (53% male vs. 47% female), only one third of all assisted UMC were girls, while two thirds were boys.

Figure 11: Overview of AVRR to Eastern Europe, South-Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus and Central Asia according to subregions in 2011

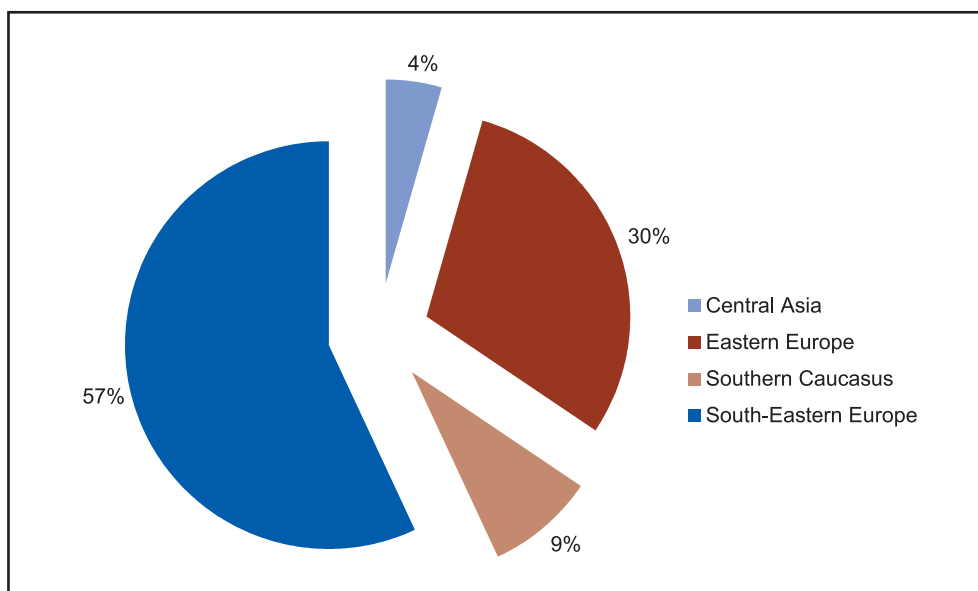
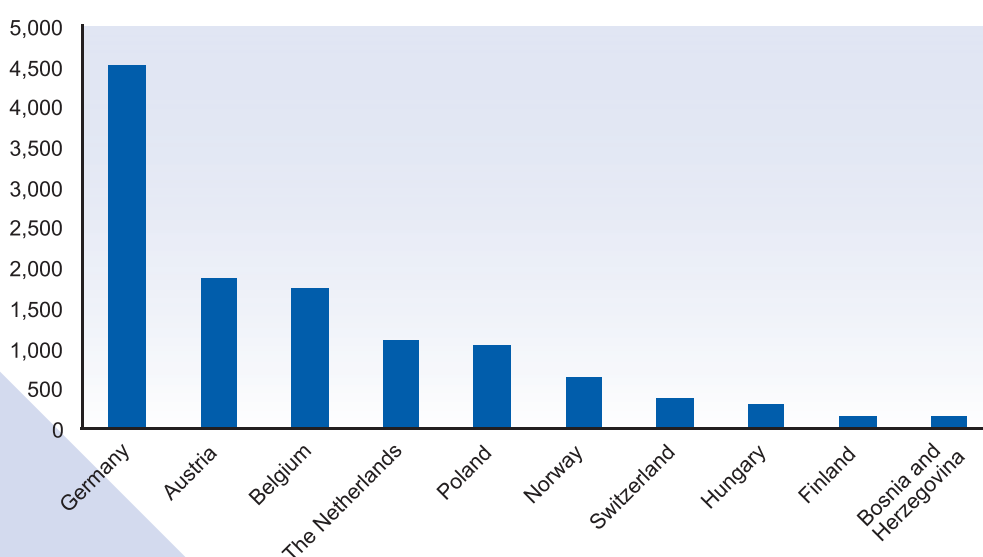


Figure 11 shows the high number of returns to South-Eastern Europe in 2011, making up more than half of the returns to the region, which was mainly linked to the visa waiver introduced for some of the Western Balkan countries.²⁵

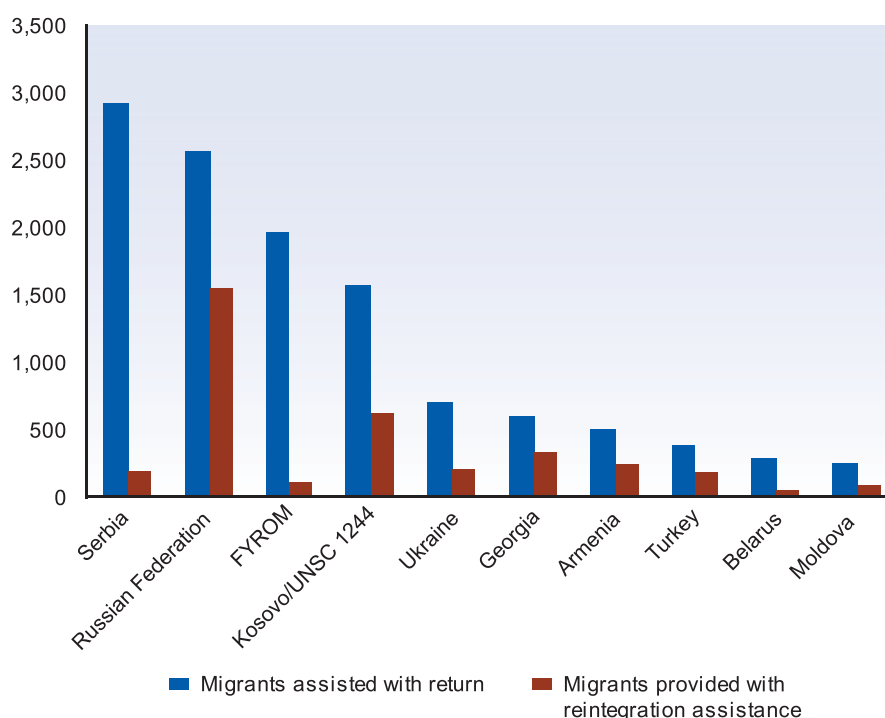
Figure 12: Top 10 host countries for AVRR to Eastern Europe, South-Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus and Central Asia in 2011



As shown in Figure 12, the majority of assisted voluntary returns to the region take place from the EU Member States, Norway and Switzerland to countries of origin in the region. The dominance of Germany relates to the high number of individuals who returned to Serbia and FYROM.

²⁵ Compare with the previous chapter, "Overview of assisted voluntary return and reintegration in Western and Central Europe", in particular the increase in the number of assisted voluntary returns from Germany.

Figure 13: Top 10 countries of origin in Eastern Europe, South-Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus and Central Asia



As can be seen in Figure 13, the Russian Federation and the Western Balkan countries continued to experience high numbers of assisted voluntary returns in 2011, following a similar trend in previous years. IOM missions in the region implemented important work focusing on the provision of reception and reintegration assistance to voluntary returnees, as well as individual counselling and advice to identify the best option for migrants to reintegrate in their country of origin in a sustainable manner. Where possible, returnees were encouraged to team up with and/or employ members of the local community, thus contributing to local development.

IOM Georgia: Job counselling and placement project targeting returnees and local communities

- Access for 284 returnees who returned to Georgia through AVRR programmes from 15 European countries.
- Creation of employment network in seven key regions in Georgia through establishment of a job-placement centre offering the following services to jobseekers:
 - Professional consultation; assistance in curriculum vitae development and liaison with potential employers; distribution of methodological guidelines; provision of special training on orientation, career planning, and job search issues; referral to existing vocational training institutions and provision of internship and practice opportunities to training graduates; provision of seed money and technical assistance with setting up microenterprises.
- Enhanced sustainability through close cooperation with government/municipalities, employer organizations, education/vocational training institutions and local communities in Georgia.



The Job Placement Centres operated by IOM are located in seven different cities throughout Georgia. © IOM, 2011

Provision of reintegration assistance in Albania

- Provision of reintegration assistance to approximately 100 individuals returned from nine countries of destination.
- Ninety-five per cent male returnees; only 5 per cent female returnees.
- Approximately 10 per cent of individuals were migrant children, of which 50 per cent were unaccompanied migrant children.
- Two thirds of all returnees assisted through reintegration assistance.
 - Preferred option: business set-up and vocational training, making up 85 per cent of all cases assisted;
 - Remaining 15 per cent of cases involved the provision of housing, education support and financial assistance.



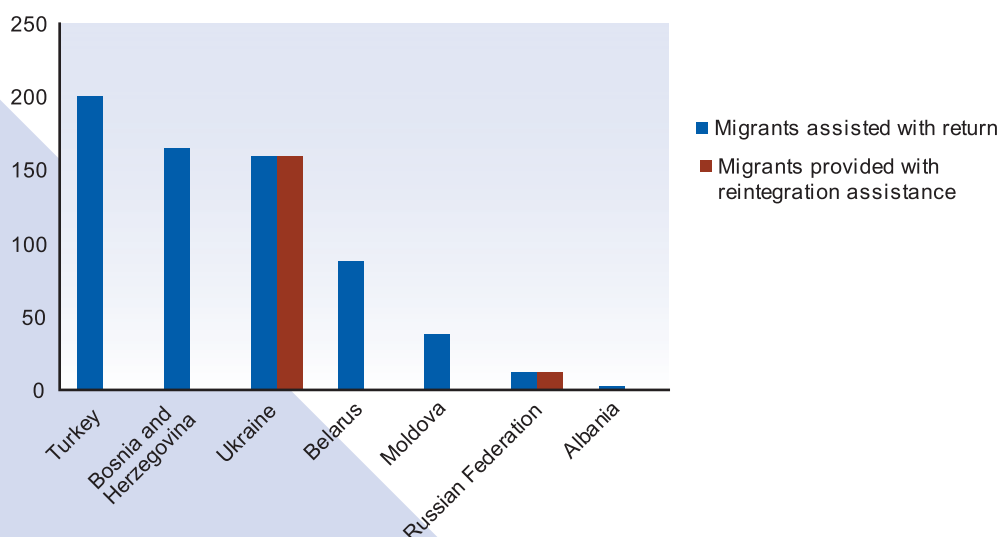
A returnee from Belgium after her return to Albania where she opened a small patisserie and bakery in Korca town, southeast of Albania. This business allows her to support her family financially. © IOM, 2011

Examples of this collaboration include business support for returnees, who subsequently were able to employ members of the local population, or job placement support open to both returnees and the local community.

Assisted voluntary return and reintegration from the region

IOM supported the governments of transit countries in Eastern Europe, South-Eastern Europe and Central Asia in dealing with the double challenge of reintegrating their own nationals while at the same time developing more humane and efficient policies directed at migrants arriving from countries further east or south. Although numbers remain small compared to long-standing programmes in some EU Member States, assisted voluntary return has proven to be a welcome alternative for both governments and migrants in the region. Apart from the AVRR project in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which mainly focused on assisted voluntary return within the Balkan region, beneficiaries of the AVRR programmes implemented in Eastern Europe included high numbers of nationals of countries in the Central and South-West Asian region (Pakistan, Afghanistan, Georgia, Uzbekistan), as well as nationals of Middle East and African countries. In 2011, 663 migrants were assisted from the countries listed in Figure 14.

Figure 14: Host countries for AVRR from Eastern Europe, South-Eastern Europe and Central Asia in 2011





A beneficiary and his children after his return from Ireland to Moldova. The reintegration assistance allowed him to buy a cultivator for ploughing vineyards and to restart the agricultural work in which he was involved before leaving Moldova. © IOM, 2011

In Ukraine, the IOM office in Kyiv has provided assistance to over 450 migrants to voluntarily return to their countries of origin since 2005. In 2011, apart from facilitating the reception and reintegration of 700 Ukrainian nationals returning voluntarily to their country, assistance was provided to 384 men, 47 women and 36 children with irregular status to go back to their countries of origin from Ukraine.²⁶

As can be seen in Figure 14, reintegration assistance for returnees from these transit countries was not applied as consistently as in AVRR programmes from EU Member States. Nonetheless, IOM continued to work with the governments and donors to continuously increase the availability of reintegration assistance for migrants returning from these countries in the future.

Governments and donors in the region have realized the benefits of addressing migration management challenges from a regional perspective. An example of this is the regional project "Support to the Implementation of the EU Readmission Agreements with the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation and Ukraine: Facilitation of Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (SIREADA)", implemented in all three

participating countries. The project focused on strengthening migration management capacities to respond to migration challenges resulting from increased migratory flows from and to the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, and Ukraine. In all three countries, IOM provided voluntary return assistance and cash support to third-country nationals who had been returned to the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, and the Russian Federation from EU Member States. Moreover, the project provided PARA to citizens of these three countries after their return from the EU under the auspices of European governments.

²⁶ IOM Ukraine Newsletter, Issue 2, 2011.

ASIA AND THE PACIFIC²⁷

An insight from the region

The Asia and Pacific region is characterized by a vast number of countries, which gives rise to diverse trends and different dynamics for migration flows between the different subregions, including South-Central Asia, South-Eastern Asia, Eastern Asia, and Australia and Oceania.²⁸ While legal migration channels are either absent or extremely limited, undocumented migration is increasingly an issue within the region and currently represents one of the largest overall contemporary flows of irregular migration. Migrants travel for different reasons, mainly economic, but also increasingly as a consequence of natural disasters, conflict, and political and economic instability in their countries of origin.

In this context, return and reintegration assistance to help stranded irregular migrants returning to and reintegrating in their countries of origin is one of IOM's key areas of intervention in the region. These activities complement the Organization's activities in other areas of work, such as information campaigns to prevent irregular migration, combating migrant smuggling and trafficking, and cooperation with States in the fields of labour migration and border management.

AVRR of stranded migrants is increasingly addressed in the framework of the Bali Process, the principal forum for dialogue and cooperation on migration issues in the region. In 2012, IOM will open a regional support office in Bangkok to support the Bali Process. It is expected that the office will address, among others, issues linked to AVRR.

With respect to emerging issues and new interest in AVRR, 2011 saw discussions between the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan on a future course of action with regard to the large number of undocumented Afghans in Pakistan. At the beginning of 2012, exploratory discussions were started with the governments of Malaysia and Hong Kong, China to explore potential collaboration in the development of AVRR programmes. Both countries are considered important destinations for migrants from all over the region.

Overview of assisted voluntary return and reintegration activities in the Asia and Pacific region

With the exception of Australia, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea in 2011, the Asia and Pacific region was made up mainly of countries of origin from an AVRR perspective. IOM was mainly involved in the provision of reception and/or reintegration assistance in different countries spread across this vast region.

Assisted voluntary returns and reintegration to the region

Analysis of gender and social status of migrants assisted with voluntary return and reintegration

In 2011, IOM assisted 5,165 individuals to return to the Asia and Pacific region. Nearly 75 per cent of the returnees were male, while approximately 25 per cent were female migrants. The gender distribution is linked to the social status of the returnees: while 81 per cent of the migrants assisted were single migrants, only 19 per cent of migrants corresponded to family groups returning to the

²⁷ The Asia and Pacific region, as referred to in this publication, covers : Australia, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Fiji, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Pakistan, Philippines, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tonga, Vanuatu, Viet Nam.

²⁸ The subregions cover the following countries: South-Central Asia: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka; South-Eastern Asia: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Viet Nam; East Asia: China; the Democratic People's Republic of Korea; Hong Kong, China; Japan; Macao, China; Mongolia; Republic of Korea; Australia and Oceania: Australia, American Samoa, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Pitcairn, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Wallis and Futuna Islands.

region. Among the individuals assisted by IOM were 256 migrant children accompanied by family members – 47 per cent of them female and 53 per cent male. Moreover, IOM assisted 18 UMC to return to the region (approximately 80% were boys and 20% were girls).

Figure 15 shows assisted voluntary return flows in the Asia-Pacific region by subregion. The majority of voluntary returnees assisted by IOM went back to countries in South-Central Asia, leaving South-East Asia and East Asia in second and third place. Only roughly one per cent of IOM-assisted returnees went back to Australia and Oceania.

Figure 15: Overview of AVRR to the Asia and Pacific region according to subregions in 2011

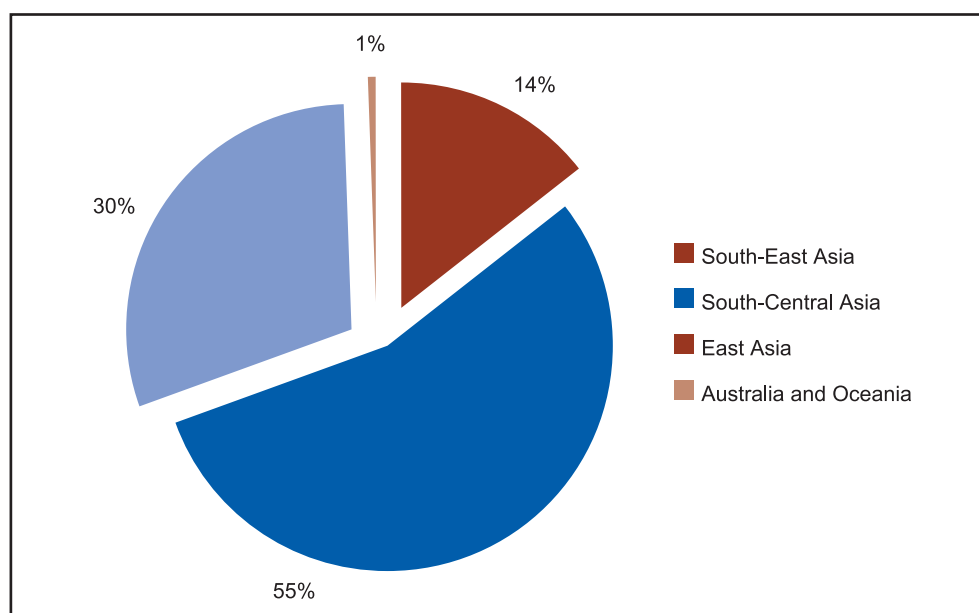
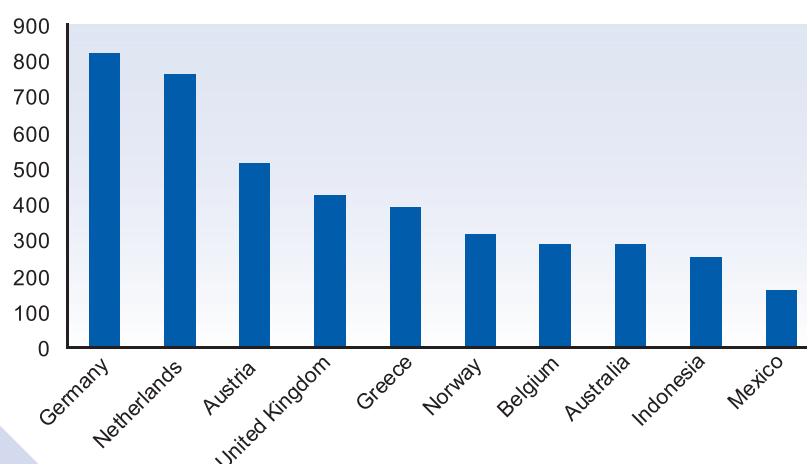


Figure 16 shows that the major host countries for migrants returning to the Asia and Pacific region continued to be EU Member States, Norway and Switzerland, as well as Australia and Indonesia.

Figure 16: Top 10 host countries for AVRR to the Asia and Pacific region in 2011



As shown in Figure 17, there were similar trends in the years 2011 and 2010 regarding countries of origin for AVRR in the Asia and Pacific region. IOM-assisted returns took place to a broad range of countries of origin, including China, Afghanistan, Mongolia, Pakistan, India, and Iran (Islamic Republic of). Indonesia stands out as the principal country in the region that does not only function as country of destination for AVRR, but equally as a country of origin that received considerable numbers of its own nationals returning from different countries in Europe, Australia or Mexico. Without prejudice to these figures, it

should be taken into consideration that several other countries face similar challenges; however, these are not reflected in this report as in 2011, no AVRR programmes were implemented in these countries.

Figure 17: Top 10 countries of origin for AVRR to the Asia and Pacific region

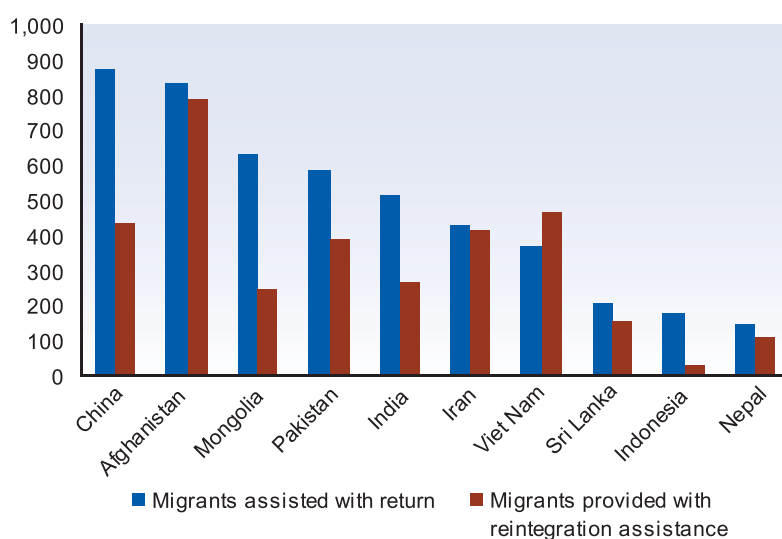


Figure 17 points out the importance of Afghanistan and Pakistan among the countries of origin in the Asia and Pacific region. Apart from providing reintegration assistance, as established under respective AVRR programmes implemented by IOM missions in EU Member States, IOM offices in Afghanistan moreover implemented a number of separate reintegration assistance projects directed at both voluntary returnees who returned with IOM as well as migrants returned under the auspices of host-country governments. In 2011, IOM in Afghanistan assisted 2,182 migrants upon their return to Afghanistan; activities included both reintegration assistance provided to migrants returned under IOM's AVRR programmes (1,087 migrants) as well as PARA provided to migrants returned under the auspices of host-country governments (1,095). Major host countries for Afghan migrants returning voluntarily to Afghanistan were the United Kingdom (28.6% of all returns), Greece (20.42% of all returns), Indonesia (9.2% of all returns) and Norway (8.56% of all returns). Apart from voluntary returns from European countries, IOM offices in Kabul and other Afghan cities also received large groups of returnees from neighbouring countries Pakistan and Iran (Islamic Republic of); the assistance provided to these groups focused mainly on responding to their most urgent humanitarian needs upon arrival and at the border. As regards AVRR to Pakistan, major host countries were the United Kingdom and Belgium, with a smaller number of migrants voluntarily returning from other EU Member States.



Afghan returnee from Norway in his grocery shop which he opened with the reintegration support provided under the Information, Return and Reintegration of Afghan Nationals to Afghanistan Programme. © IOM, 2011

The provision of reintegration assistance and the monitoring of returnees continued to form an important part of AVRR programmes, wherever local conditions allowed for it. In Pakistan, IOM assisted returnees to reintegrate in different provinces across the country (including Punjab, Sindh and Khyber Pukhtunkhwa, in addition to the federal capital, Islamabad). Depending on the place of return, beneficiaries received phone or face-to-face counselling, which allowed returnees to explore their

plans and to discuss further how these could be converted into reliable and stable economic activities capable of generating a sustainable income over a longer period of time. Reintegration assistance included, depending on the options available under the respective AVRR programmes, setting up of small businesses solely or in partnership, medical assistance, education/vocational training, temporary accommodation or support to rent a house.

The unstable political and security situation in Afghanistan posed a common problem with regard to monitoring the reintegration processes of many returnees, which in turn impeded consistent follow-up in several cases, in particular when returnees lived a great distance away from the IOM offices throughout the country. However, IOM's Afghanistan reintegration team monitored the reintegration of returnees whenever feasible, bearing in mind possible restrictions due to security reasons. Whenever on-site visits to small businesses were not possible, other methods of monitoring were put into action, including speaking with the returnees on the phone, requesting pictures and documentation, and, whenever possible, requesting the returnees to visit one of IOM's offices in Afghanistan. In addition, in order to facilitate the overall reintegration process for returnees who choose to establish their self-employment activity in unsecured areas, IOM's normal procedure is to disburse cash assistance in one tranche instead of two. Another solution reached by IOM Afghanistan that will be put into practice in 2012 (for some projects) is to hire contracted monitoring assistants. Those assistants will be hired directly by a contracted company and report back to IOM Afghanistan; they will be following IOM rules and regulations but will not face the same security restrictions imposed by the United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS). This will provide a bigger geographical coverage for the monitoring of returnees.

Return and reintegration in Mongolia

- IOM office in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, opened in September 2011.
- Returns to Mongolia:
 - Since 2002: 5,000 individuals returned through AVRR from 14 host countries;
 - 2011: 620 returnees, 100 returnees assisted with reintegration since opening of the office.
- Main countries from where migrants returned: Belgium, Ireland, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and Turkey.
- Coordination between Mongolia and destination countries:
 - Monitoring visits from four EU Member States in 2011;
 - Production of a comprehensive fact sheets for counsellors and returnees that highlighted economic conditions in Mongolia, including housing, banking and education.
- Perspectives: Mongolian authorities expect an increased number of returnees due to the improvement of the Mongolian economy.

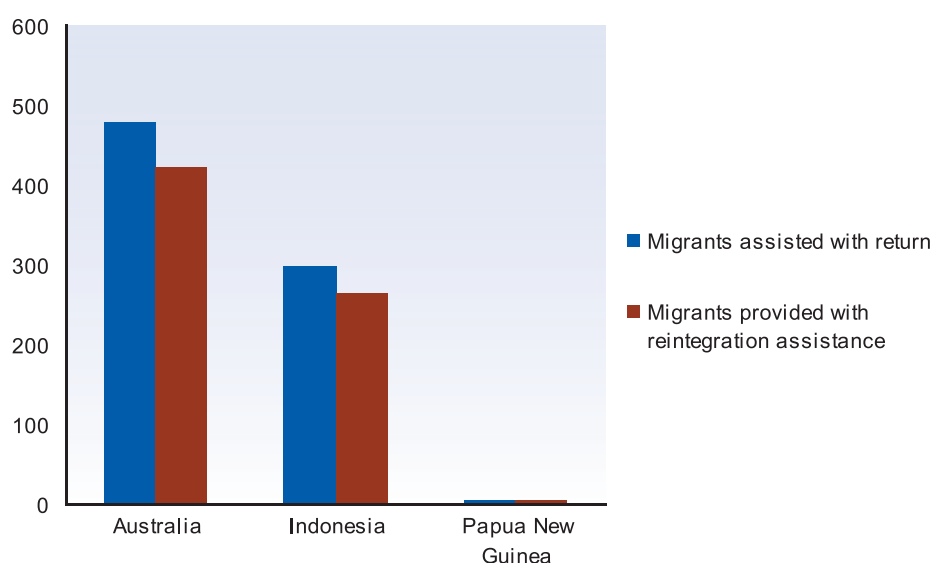


IOM Mongolia staff in a felt business supported by an AVRR beneficiary returning to Mongolia from Ireland. The reintegration grant allowed him to purchase additional equipment and expand the business, which produces traditional Mongolian felt products, to employ over ten workers. © IOM, 2011

Assisted voluntary return and reintegration from the region

Figure 18 shows host countries for IOM's assisted voluntary return programmes in the Asia and Pacific region in 2011. In total, 780 migrants were assisted to return voluntarily to their countries of origin. Following the same trend as in previous years, activities focused mainly on Australia and Indonesia, with the exception of a very small number of voluntary returns taking place from Papua New Guinea. Nonetheless, in order to address current challenges linked to irregular migration and stranded migrants, assisted voluntary return was discussed in 2011 in intergovernmental fora such as the Bali Process as a very important tool for a number of countries in the region to address current challenges linked to irregular migration and stranded migrants.

Figure 18: Host countries for AVRR from the Asia and Pacific region in 2011



Returns from the countries above took place to a vast number of countries of origin, mainly, but not exclusively, spread throughout the Asia-Pacific region. Major countries of origin for assisted voluntary returns taking place from Australia and Indonesia were Afghanistan, Iran (Islamic Republic of), India and Iraq.

In particular, voluntary returns from Australia also assisted nationals from other regions, such as MENA, sub-Saharan Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA), and, to a small extent, Latin America.

Post-arrival reintegration assistance for migrants returned under the auspices of host governments

At the request of the governments of Sri Lanka and Afghanistan, IOM missions in these countries provided PARA to migrants returned under the auspices of the governments of the United Kingdom (for returns to Sri Lanka and Afghanistan) and Norway (to Afghanistan). In Afghanistan, the number of individuals assisted after their arrival was 1,095. The great majority of migrants assisted included Afghan migrants returned under the auspices of the UK government (approximately 93.24%), with a smaller number of individuals returned by the Norwegian government. Approximately 400 of these individuals have so far received reintegration assistance packages similar to those provided to AVRR returnees. The remaining migrants have been assisted with reception assistance only (i.e. onward transportation to their community of origin and temporary accommodation, where needed); at the end of 2011 they had yet to contact the IOM office for more comprehensive reintegration assistance.

In Sri Lanka, 163 migrants returned under the auspices of the UK government were provided with reintegration assistance packages. This PARA to individual returnees was implemented simultaneously with and complemented community stabilization and development projects implemented in regions in Sri Lanka experiencing large numbers of returns. These fall outside the AVRR/PARA spectrum and are therefore not included in this report.

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA²⁹

An insight from the region

Assisted voluntary returns in relation to the Middle East and North Africa region are both a representation of a much needed humanitarian response to migrants in need and a reflection of the complex face of migration within the region. In recent years, more and more migrants have found themselves in situations of vulnerability during their migration experience. IOM's provision of AVRR in the region increasingly covers trafficked persons, smuggled migrants, unaccompanied and separated migrant children, migrants with health-related needs, and other vulnerable groups.

One particular example concerns the plight of sub-Saharan African migrants who often risk their lives to reach the MENA region. Pushed by economic uncertainty, conflict and natural disaster, migrant men, women and children find themselves reliant on human smugglers; and many in these "mixed migration" scenarios are at risk of exploitation. At the same time, host governments within the region have to contend with ever-changing and ever-increasing (irregular) migration dynamics and flows, with detention being a not uncommon result. Further, opportunities for local integration or support are limited. In 2011, IOM was able to help fill this assistance gap through the provision of much requested AVRR assistance to migrants from Chad, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Somalia.

The events of 2011 also had a noteworthy impact on AVRR to and from the region. Commencing in Tunisia in January 2011 and soon after including uprisings in Egypt, Libya, Syria, Yemen and Bahrain, the "Arab Spring" sent shockwaves through the region and equally left many migrants in need of IOM's assistance. The impact on IOM's traditional AVRR programmes was twofold: returns to some countries in the region were temporarily put on hold (and, for Libya, the restriction remained in place until the end of the year); and returns from the region took on an evacuation dimension where mass humanitarian movements temporarily replaced assisted voluntary returns.³⁰ In the months following the unrest, and as AVRR activities from the region resumed, a notable trend emerged whereby there was a steady demand for AVRR from North Africa following the regional unrest as employment opportunities became limited and migrants instead sought assistance to return home. However, the events of 2011 in the MENA region were not shaped by social uprisings alone: equally, the economic downturn in Europe – coupled with traditional factors – led to a continued demand from migrants for IOM's support to return to their countries of origin.

As 2011 came to a close, and as much of the MENA region moved from a crisis to post-crisis response, it was all the more apparent that AVRR needs to play an integral part in the migration management approach for the region. In 2012, IOM will implement a regional stabilization project, funded by the EU and covering Egypt, Tunisia and Libya. This project, together with ongoing regional AVRR initiatives, will aim at providing durable solutions through AVRR for migrants in need.

²⁹ The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, as referred to in this publication, covers : Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Lebanon, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), Oman, Qatar, Sudan, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Western Sahara, Yemen and the United Arab Emirates.

³⁰ With the exception of Morocco, from where AVRR continued throughout 2011.

Overview of assisted voluntary return and reintegration activities in the Middle East and North Africa region

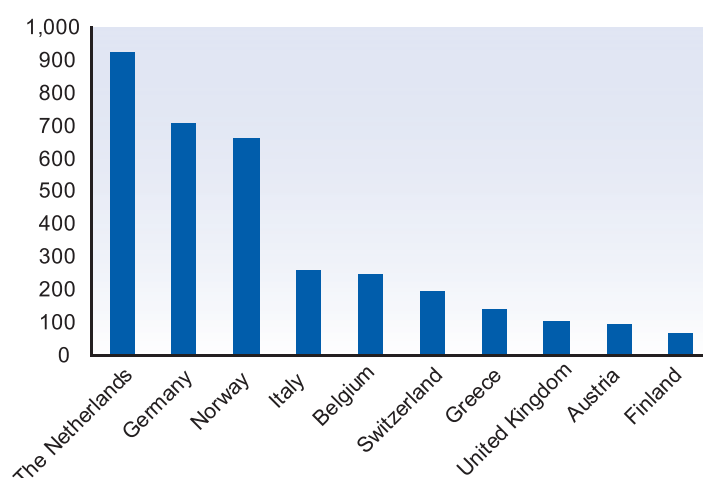
The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region represents both a destination and transit region for migrants. Some countries in this region need to be considered as countries of destination and transit, such as the Gulf States (destination), Morocco and Libya (transit; although Libya once more become a country of destination as soon as the levels of violence decreased). Finally, while serving as transit countries for sub-Saharan migrants, some countries in the region were also important countries for voluntary returnees, as can be seen in the case of Morocco.

Assisted voluntary return and reintegration to the region

Analysis of gender and social status of migrants assisted with voluntary return and reintegration

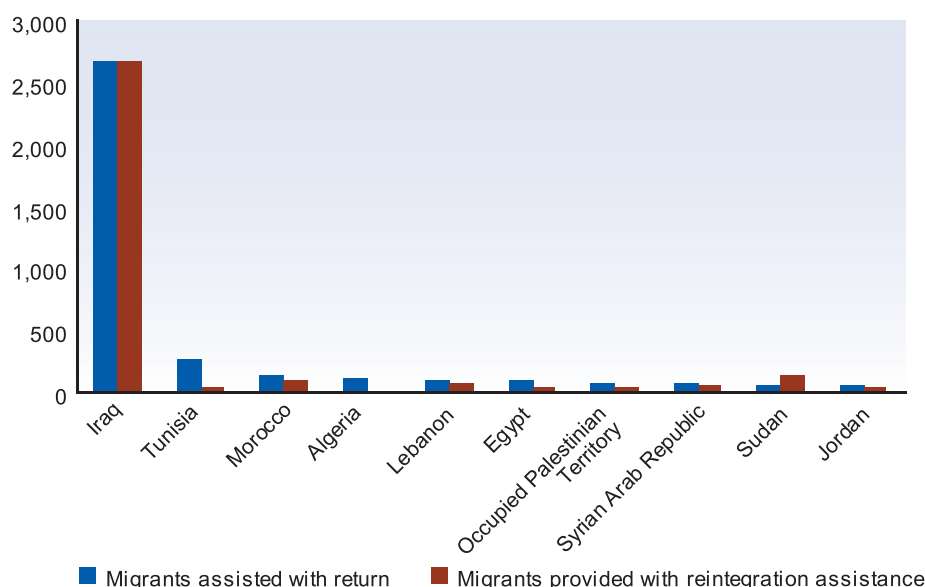
In 2011, IOM assisted 3,750 individuals to return to the MENA region. The dominance of male beneficiaries among IOM-assisted returnees in this region was even stronger than in other regions, with 84 per cent of all assisted voluntary returns concerning male migrants, while only 16 per cent corresponded to female migrants. Twenty-one per cent of the cases assisted through AVRR related to families, while 79 per cent corresponded to individual applications. With the exception of assisted voluntary returns to Iraq, which represents the vast majority of returns to the region, assistance to migrant children was minimal. Overall, IOM assisted 118 migrant children accompanied by family members – 51 per cent female and 49 per cent male. Moreover, IOM assisted 13 UMC to return home – 77 per cent male and 23 per cent female.

Figure 19: Host countries for AVRR to the MENA region in 2011



As shown in Figure 19, migrants who returned to the region throughout 2011 did so mainly from EU Member States, Norway and Switzerland. While IOM supported individuals willing to return to countries such as Tunisia or Egypt, returns to Libya were halted under the impact of the Libya crisis when IOM was no longer in a condition to assist returning individuals in safe conditions. This decision was lifted again in early 2012 once the situation in Libya had stabilized. In addition, IOM's assistance to returnees wanting to return to Syria remained in place at the end of 2011 the organization had to suspend return assistance from March 2012 onward; however, this was contingent on confirmation of IOM staff in the country that returns could take place in adequate conditions of safety (this de facto meant that returns to some areas of Syria were not feasible).

Figure 20: Top 10 countries of origin for AVRR to the MENA region in 2011



As can be seen in Figure 20, returns to Iraq remained high and were unaffected by the crisis in North Africa throughout the year, placing the country among the major countries of origin for IOM's assisted voluntary returns worldwide. In the remaining countries in the region, local IOM offices kept monitoring closely whether the security situation allowed for the continuation of AVRR assistance to migrants wanting to return.

IOM Iraq: Production of *Portraits of Returnees, Voices from Iraq* (DVD) and *The Human Side of Migration, Returnee Perspectives from Iraq* (photo booklet)

- Participation of 19 Iraqis after having returned from various host countries to different locations in Iraq (Dahouk, Suleymanyia, Erbil, Kirkuk, Mosul and Baghdad).
- Picture/video illustration of individual experiences throughout the AVRR process and the individuals' experience with return and reintegration.
- Information on returnees' perception of IOM's role and on their new life in Iraq.
- Balanced picture of the AVRR experience through the eyes of the returnees, showing diverse feelings about return and reintegration to Iraq:
 - Happiness about having returned and joined their families;
 - Regret about having left Iraq in the first place;
 - Desire/plans to leave again as a result of economic and security constraints in the country.



Cover page of the booklet "*The human side of migration*" produced by IOM Iraq in 2011, together with the video on stories of return. © IOM, 2011

Morocco: A country of origin, transit and host country: Assistance to nationals returning voluntarily and voluntary return and reintegration assistance to irregular migrants

- Assistance in 2011:
 - 29 reintegration projects established for Moroccan nationals returned from Europe and other host countries (mainly from Belgium, Italy and Switzerland);
 - Cooperation with IOM missions in host countries on specific vulnerable groups, such as AVRR for UMC from Belgium;
 - Assisted voluntary return assistance to 440 irregular migrants, returning mainly to the Western African region (main countries of origin: Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Guinea and Senegal);
 - Important assistance to vulnerable migrants, including victims of trafficking.
- Since 2005: approximately 3,400 irregular migrants have been assisted by IOM to return voluntarily to their country of origin.



A Moroccan returnee from Belgium who used his reintegration assistance to buy a motorized tricycle to transport goods in his home town of Mohamedia. © IOM, 2011

Assisted voluntary returns and reintegration from the region

Figure 21: Host countries for AVRR from the MENA region in 2011

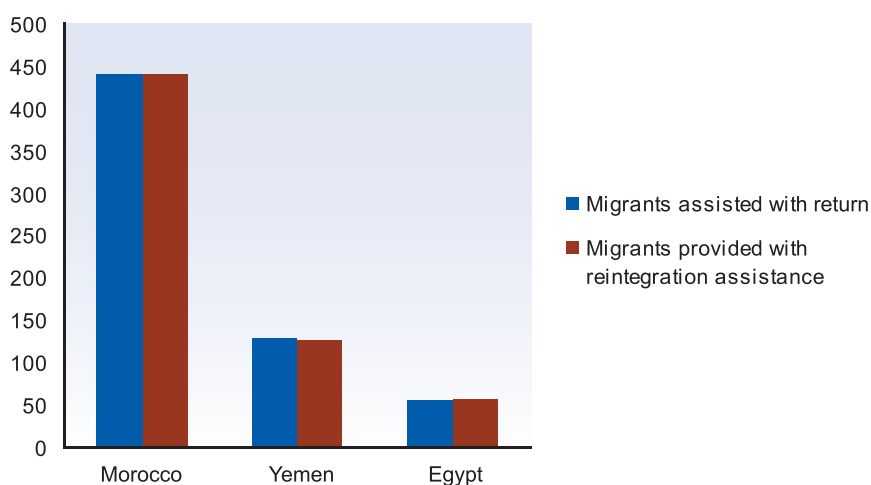


Figure 21 highlights the AVRR activities that took place from the MENA region throughout 2011. A total of 622 migrants were assisted with their voluntary return from Morocco, Yemen or Egypt.³¹

Unaffected by the crisis in the region, IOM Morocco was able to continue its assisted voluntary return and reintegration activities throughout the whole of 2011. In particular, the AVRR project in Morocco assisted mainly migrants from West African countries such as Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Guinea, Cameroon, Senegal, Mali and Ghana. As regards Egypt, AVRR activities only took place for a few weeks at the beginning of 2011 before the start of uprisings in the country. Beneficiaries of the AVRR programme received assistance to return to different sub-Saharan African countries and Asia to a lesser extent.

³¹ The statistics for Egypt exclude migrants assisted through evacuations and reflect exclusively those assisted through AVRR while the normal AVRR programme was in place (i.e. before the crisis started). The number of cases that received reintegration assistance under the AVRR programme in Egypt is slightly higher than the number of migrants assisted with voluntary return due to the fact that the embassy organized the flight of three cases.

RAVEL: From AVRR to the evacuation of migrants from Egypt and Libya

- Regional assisted voluntary return and reintegration project for migrants returning from Libya and Egypt; operations halted due to “Arab Spring”.
- Reallocation of resources for AVRR to support the international community in assisting migrants escaping the conflict: evacuation of 841 migrants to Niger, Mali and Ghana during the first few months of 2011.
- Support programme in receiving communities to improve reception capacities in the most affected areas.
- Assistance to stranded migrants in Egypt and vulnerable migrants travelling through Sinai.

Yemen stands out as principal transit country for thousands of migrants and asylum-seekers who make the hazardous journey from their places of origin in the Horn of Africa towards Somalia (particularly Puntland) and Djibouti, and onward across the Gulf of Aden. Considering the few available durable solutions in Yemen – opportunities for local integration and third-country resettlement remain limited – there has been considerable growth in stranded migrants over the past years. In 2011, the IOM office in Sana’a provided assisted voluntary return services to 125 stranded migrants with irregular status to return to Ethiopia, while several thousand received emergency evacuation support. Apart from direct assistance to Ethiopian migrants, the IOM office also worked with the Yemeni government and NGOs to strengthen the framework for AVRR from Yemen. This included a comprehensive assessment of the administrative and regulatory framework and operational procedures for AVRR from Yemen, a two-day training on “Essentials of Migration Management” for 21 government officials and NGO representatives to enhance their understanding of migration management, particularly AVRR, as well as a study visit for government officials to Morocco in order to learn from the experiences of other transit countries.

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA³²

An insight from the region

International migratory movements in Africa have become more complex in recent years and are increasingly mixed in character. Some of the major categories of persons involved in these flows are individuals in need of assistance and/or international protection, including refugees, stateless persons, victims of trafficking, smuggled migrants, and UMC. All groups are in a remarkably similar situation when it comes to the means of movement used, as well as the risks and vulnerabilities faced by individuals who entrust themselves into the hands of “brokers” and smugglers – as almost all of them do. Refugees and irregular migrants moving with the “aid” of smugglers report grim tales of rough handling, abandonment, lack of food and water or medical support, confinement, beatings, drowning, sexual attacks, extortion, detention, robbery, kidnapping and death.

As regards East and Southern Africa,³³ the region has become increasingly characterized by both intranational and international mixed migratory movements. Large groups from Ethiopia and Somalia, pushed by conflict, drought, floods, political oppression, endemic poverty or simply an inability to thrive, have been moving away from their countries. Many of the migrants travelling within these movements seek asylum in the vast, overcrowded refugee camps of Kenya (Dadaab and Kakuma). The two major migratory routes for Eastern and Southern Africa are the following: 1) north-eastern route: through Puntland or Djibouti into Yemen, normally with the intention of getting into Saudi Arabia and beyond; and 2) southern route: through Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania, Malawi and Mozambique or another “frontline state” into South Africa. An IOM research report³⁴ estimates that some 50 per cent of the Somali and Ethiopians who manage to reach South Africa in this way will continue to North America, Europe and Australia. However, of the estimated 20,000 individuals who take this route every year, many do not manage to reach South Africa.

Throughout the sub-Saharan African region, the absence or extreme weakness of appropriate screening and referral mechanisms for migrants in need of protection has likely inflated the number of those who are trapped, stranded, in detention or facing protection dilemmas. In this context, IOM offices have witnessed an increasing number of referrals from governments, partners and migrants themselves; the latter are often stranded and in dire conditions in West and Central Africa and asking for assistance to return to their countries of origin, in the region and outside the region. Referrals of stranded migrants from Asia are increasing and constitute a new migratory trend requiring a closer look. These migrants are often smuggled in West Africa to reach other European and non-European destinations. Assistance has been provided on an individual basis, using emergency funds like the fund for Humanitarian Assistance for Stranded Migrants (HASM), but at least for West Africa, new fully-fledged AVRR programmes addressed to this category of migrants will be implemented in 2012. Under these circumstances, the large majority of migrants deemed ineligible for protection are often left with little choice apart from accepting voluntary return and reintegration assistance.

Importantly, contrary to a common perception, the percentage of Africans leaving the region remains relatively modest. As per official data, some 30 million Africans (3% of the population) have migrated

³² The sub-Saharan region, as referred to in this publication, covers: Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mayotte, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Reunion, Rwanda, Saint Helena, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Togo, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

³³ The subregions of sub-Saharan Africa, as mentioned in this report, are divided as follows: Central Africa: Angola, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Sao Tome and Principe; Eastern Africa: Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mayotte, Mozambique, Réunion, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe; Southern Africa: Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland; Western Africa: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Saint Helena, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.

³⁴ IOM, *In Pursuit of the Southern Dream: Victims of Necessity* (2009).

internationally, outside of the continent.³⁵ At the same time, about two thirds of migrants from sub-Saharan Africa have moved to other countries in the region. As regards West Africa, migration flows in this region are perhaps the best example of these intraregional migration patterns, with more than 70 per cent of movements taking place within the subregion.³⁶ In addition to that, the Free Movement Protocol of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), in vigor since 1979, allows for a greater intraregional, rather than international, migration.

Emergency returns of migrants during and after the Libyan crisis have been an important destabilizing factor for the sub-Saharan region, considering that, as of December 2011, more than 200,000 had abruptly returned to their countries of origin (with peaks in some countries such as Chad and Niger). These particularly vulnerable migrants were leaving behind their sources of income, savings and sources of remittances, and returning to the same areas where individual AVRR cases are also traditionally returning, thus putting an extra burden on communities of origin. Individual or community-based reintegration activities represent yet another challenge for the region. Local partnerships and an integrated strategy whereby returning migrants are best counselled and followed up in their reintegration plans will be the focus for 2012 in West and Central Africa.

Family tracing linked to the voluntary return and reintegration of UMC is also an important activity in West and Central Africa, a region characterized by children on the move. Besides several ongoing projects on family tracing leading to returns and reintegration of UMC originating from the region and hosted in Europe, in 2011 an emergency related activity focused on family tracing, return and reintegration of stranded unaccompanied and separated migrant children in Tunisia, following the Libyan crisis. At the end of 2011, 83 UMC from the region had been reunited with their families in the countries of origin and subsequently benefited from reintegration assistance. This activity strengthened partnership with a network of local NGOs in countries of origin that are specialized in the protection of children, as well as reinforced partnership with UNICEF both at the country and regional levels.

Overview of assisted voluntary return and reintegration activities in the sub-Saharan Africa region

Assisted voluntary returns and reintegration to the region

From an AVRR perspective, with the exception of the United Republic of Tanzania, sub-Saharan Africa can be considered to be a region of origin of individuals leaving either for economic reasons or as a result of conflict and political instability. In consequence, IOM assistance in this region is mainly limited to the provision of reintegration assistance to migrants returning voluntarily from destination and transit countries in Europe, North Africa and, to a lesser extent, other regions.

Analysis of gender and social status of migrants assisted with voluntary return and reintegration

In 2011, IOM assisted 3,658 migrants to return to countries of origin within the sub-Saharan Africa region through AVRR programmes; this number does not include migrants assisted through emergency evacuations, which took place on a regular basis from Yemen. Importantly, the majority of assisted voluntary returns of migrants from sub-Saharan Africa took place from host countries in the African continent, mainly through programmes for irregular migrants stranded in the United Republic of Tanzania and South Africa. While 80 per cent of all voluntary returns related to male migrants, 20 per cent related to female migrants. At the same time, 81 per cent of voluntary return assistance was provided to individuals, while only 19 per cent concerned family groups travelling together. IOM assisted 229 migrant children to return with their families (55% male and 45% female); in addition, the Organization also assisted 95 UMC to return home. As regards UMC, these children returned mainly to Ethiopia (from Yemen), Zimbabwe (from South Africa) and Côte d'Ivoire (from Morocco). Eighty-four per cent of the children were male and only 16 per cent were female.

³⁵ IOM, *World Migration Report* (2011).

³⁶ Ibid.

Figure 22: Overview of AVRR to the sub-Saharan Africa region according to subregions in 2011

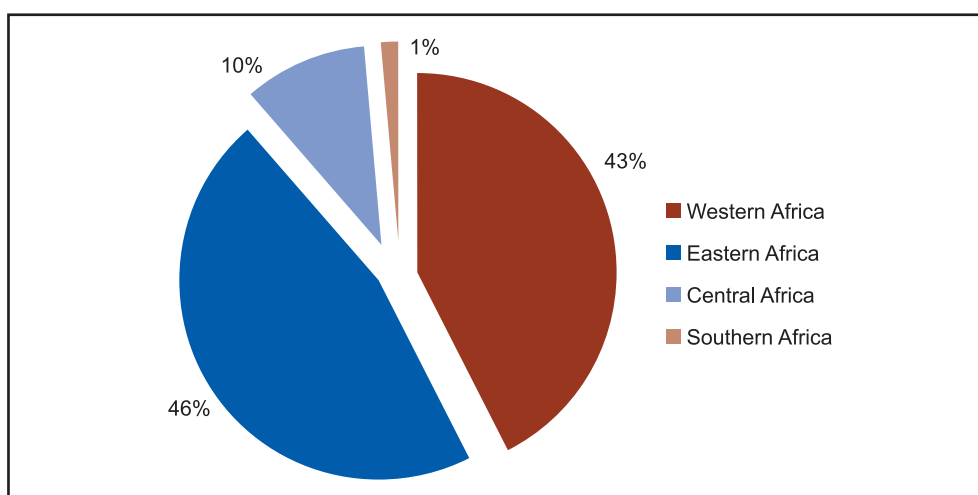


Figure 22 shows that the majority of AVRR to the sub-Saharan region takes place to Eastern and Western Africa. Returns to Central and Southern Africa take place on a smaller scale.

In the Southern and Eastern African contexts, the high numbers relate to the AVRR programme implemented for irregular Ethiopian migrants in the United Republic of Tanzania. Apart from this programme, voluntary return and reintegration-related activities have so far been small, but are gaining increasing significance in the Eastern and Southern African regions, without changing the existing dynamics and migration patterns. On the one hand, the relatively small caseload of AVRR beneficiaries returning mainly from European countries, including UMC, continues to rise; on the other hand, a much larger group returning from closer locations such as the Gulf countries or countries in the African region itself have dominated broader return movements in the African continent.

In contrast to the Southern and Eastern African regions, migrants from Western and Central Africa (23 countries covered and IOM presence in 17 countries) have traditionally been assisted in the framework of assisted voluntary return and reintegration. Some countries in these regions have witnessed important numbers of individual returns in the course of 2011; these countries include Nigeria, Niger, Guinea Conakry and Senegal (the latter on a smaller scale). Traditional emigration/host countries for migrants from these regions are Switzerland, Belgium and the UK, and recently transit countries such as Morocco and Libya as well.

Reintegration assistance provided by IOM Nigeria

- Since the inception of the AVRR programme, over 2,000 Nigerians (including irregular and stranded migrants, labour migrants and trafficked persons) have been assisted until the end of 2011.
- Reintegration assistance covers activities such as:
 - Setting up small businesses
 - Vocational training courses
 - Educational support (e.g. school fees for adults/children)
 - Medical assistance
 - Provision or support in securing temporary or long-term accommodation.



A Nigerian returnee from Austria arranging the display of canned goods in a shop which he opened with the reintegration assistance obtained through the Austrian AVRR programme. © IOM, 2011

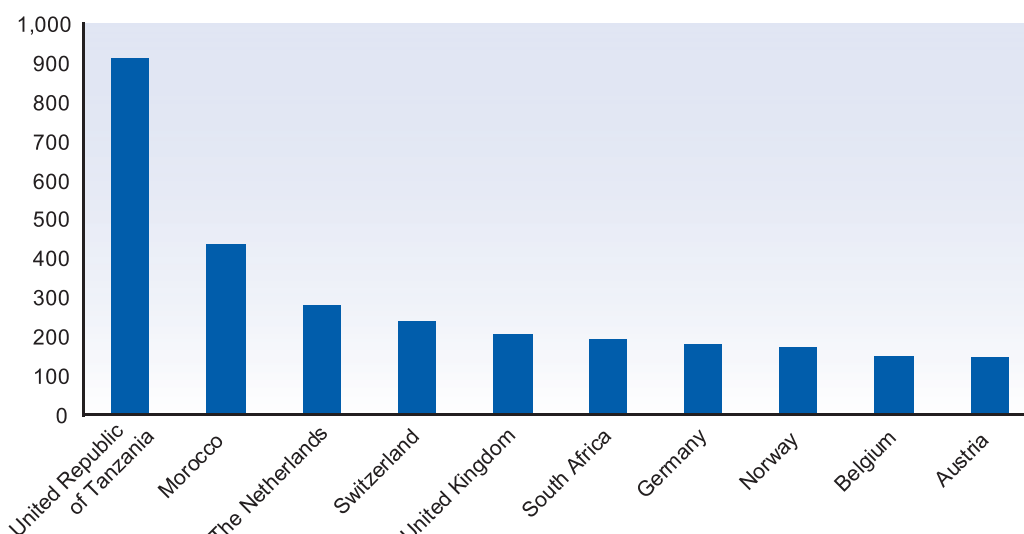
Figure 23: Top 10 host countries for AVRR to sub-Saharan Africa in 2011

Figure 23 above shows that, apart from EU Member States, Norway and Switzerland, Morocco and the United Republic of Tanzania represent important host countries for AVRR beneficiaries in the sub-Saharan region. The importance of Morocco as a host country relates to its location along a major transit route of migrants into the EU.

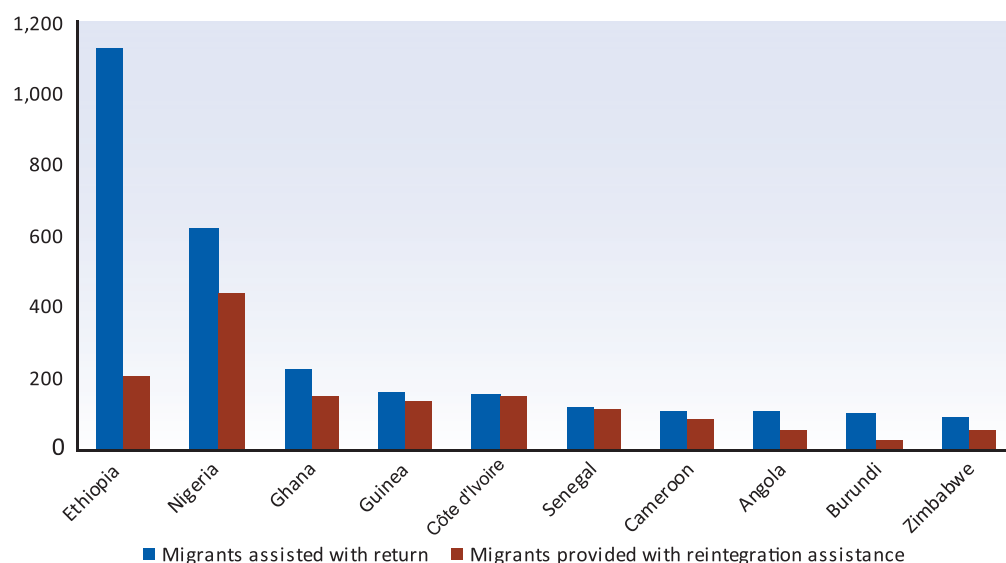
Figure 24: Top 10 countries of origin for AVRR in sub-Saharan Africa in 2011

Figure 24 shows that the major countries of origin in Africa are spread more or less equally throughout the different regions of the continent, with a slight preference for West Africa due to the high number of returns taking place within the Moroccan AVRR programme. Ethiopia stands out as a main country of origin of migrants returning from Yemen and the United Republic of Tanzania, while minor numbers of migrants returned to the country from different host countries in Europe. Apart from Ethiopia, the numbers of migrants provided with reintegration assistance are relatively high, which is based on the fact that most AVRR programmes in Europe and Morocco provide at least some degree of reintegration assistance.

IOM Ethiopia: Provision of reception and reintegration assistance to returnees from Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, and the United Republic of Tanzania

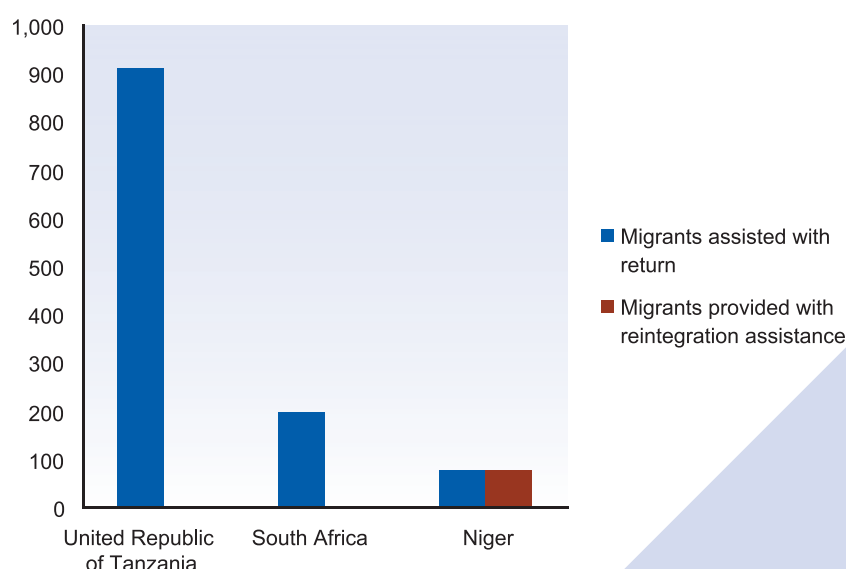
- Provision of in-kind or cash reintegration assistance to 81 migrants returned through AVRR programme from various host countries in Europe and Middle East/North Africa.
 - Individual support to set up small businesses (such as taxi businesses, retail shops, Internet cafes or beauty salons).
- Reception, accommodation, onward transport and reinsertion support provided to voluntary returnees and evacuated migrants from Yemen and the United Republic of Tanzania in collaboration with IOM missions in the host countries, including:
 - Approximately 900 returnees assisted upon voluntary return from the United Republic of Tanzania in the framework of the AVRR project for irregular migrants detained in the country;
 - Approximately 5,200 returnees from Yemen (mostly emergency evacuations to stranded and vulnerable irregular migrants).
- Assessment of return and reintegration of Ethiopian returnees from the United Republic of Tanzania based on information from 235 individuals returned between August and September 2009.
 - Major findings:
 - Need to enhance medium-term assistance to returnees to strongly improve livelihood; need for stronger linkage of AVRR to local development projects;
 - Increased community awareness about the negative consequences of irregular migration as a result of large-scale returns;
 - AVRR as an important element within the broader migration management context to minimize abuse and suffering of migrants;
 - Enhanced information about the root causes of irregular migration and the limitations of information campaigns.



A returnee from Belgium who used her reintegration assistance in Ethiopia to open a whole sale store in partnership with a friend. © IOM, 2011

Assisted voluntary return and reintegration from the region

Figure 25: Host countries for AVRR in sub-Saharan Africa in 2011



As can be seen in Figure 25, the only countries in sub-Saharan Africa from where IOM carried out assisted voluntary return activities in 2011 were the United Republic of Tanzania, South Africa and Niger. In total, 1,187 migrants were assisted to return voluntarily from these three countries. In the United Republic of Tanzania, the year 2011 represented the end of a multi-year project providing voluntary return assistance for irregular Ethiopian migrants in the country. Between 2008 and 2011, IOM assisted approximately 2,300 Ethiopian migrants to return from the United Republic of Tanzania to their country of origin. As regards voluntary return programmes from South Africa and Niger, these programmes were open to stranded migrants of any nationality. The South African programme included reintegration assistance for a small number of vulnerable cases, but from its start in October 2011 until the end of 2011, no reintegration assistance had yet been provided. For Niger, the AVRR programme provided reintegration assistance to returning Nigeriens from Libya, as well as voluntary return and reintegration assistance to stranded migrants in this country who subsequently returned to a vast range of countries throughout the sub-Saharan region.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN³⁷

An insight from the region

South America has historic migration flows to many countries in Europe, but has also seen recent increases in flows to Spain, as well as Italy, the UK and Portugal (2000–2008). Following the recent financial crisis, these migration trends changed, with both decreased emigration to Europe from the region and increased returns from Europe back to countries in South America. In 2011, IOM in South America continued to assist many migrants to return through AVRR programmes, particularly from Europe. Interestingly, IOM offices also saw migrants returning from countries not included in AVRR programmes in 2010, such as the Netherlands, Australia, the UK and Israel. Brazil continued to be a significant country of origin for returning migrants, with a large caseload. Ongoing discussions with the Government of Brazil regarding the possible opening of an IOM mission in Brazil in 2012 may create opportunities to expand reintegration support to returning Brazilians.

South America is a region with a strong focus on protecting and promoting the human rights of migrants. Subregional integration processes in the context of the Comunidad Andina de Naciones (CAN) and the Mercado Común del Sur (MERCOSUR) are important in the region. South–South cooperation among countries in the region in providing assistance to vulnerable migrants returning from *within* the region is an emerging topic. IOM is currently discussing ways to work together with governments to develop programmes to support these vulnerable migrants within the region, as well as those returning from Europe and other parts of the world. This is also a challenge, as funding from current donors is primarily focused on *interregional* flows, particularly to and from Europe, while governments are also concerned about *intra*regional flows. IOM is exploring how to further assist Member States to build their capacity to include return and reintegration assistance as part of migration management strategies, whether returns are from outside the region or within.

As regards Central America and Mexico, this subregion of the Americas has been experiencing some of the most complex migration dynamics in the world over the past years: irregular migration is a major concern, including *intra*regional and *extra*regional flows. Estimates show that over 2 million migrants cross the border between Guatemala and Mexico each year, of which 400,000 are said to be irregular migrants from Central America. Additionally, approximately 250,000 Mexicans migrate irregularly to the United States each year. The estimated number of irregular migrants in 2010 was about 11.2 million in the United States, representing a small decline compared to previous years. This is likely linked to the overall decline in migration from Mexico due to the economic crisis. Mexico also saw an increase in the number of returnees who lost their jobs during the crisis. Apart from the United States, European countries, mainly Germany and Spain, are principal destinations for migrants leaving Central America. Despite recent movements of Central American nationals into EU Member States, relatively speaking, Central American countries receive a small number of returnees from Europe, while big numbers are returned from the United States and Mexico. In turn, Mexico receives a high flow of Mexican nationals being returned from the United States. Given the relatively short distances, the porous borders, and lack of reception and reintegration support after having been removed from the United States, returnees become part of the circular migration that characterizes this region. More recently, there have been reports of Guatemalan citizens travelling in large numbers to Jordan, and of Nicaraguans travelling to Spain and Italy.

³⁷ The Latin America and Caribbean region, as referred to in this document, covers the following countries : Anguilla, Antigua, Argentina, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Falkland Islands (Malvinas), French Guiana, Greenland, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Martinique, Mexico, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Pierre and Miquelon, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands, Uruguay, and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

In the Central American region, Costa Rica, Panama, Belize and El Salvador are the primary countries of destination. Countries in the region are also receiving extracontinental irregular transitory migration flows, especially from Asia and Africa, involving people who mainly transit through Brazil, Chile and Uruguay. These migrants mainly come from Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia and Zimbabwe. Migrants coming from Asia (Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) usually transit through Ecuador.

By identifying the return of migrants as a mechanism for migration management, the governments of Central America and Mexico, in the framework of the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM), have coordinated efforts to provide return assistance to intraregional migrants. A set of guidelines for the establishment of bilateral and multilateral Memorandums of Understanding for the return of intraregional migrants was drafted and approved in 2003 as a result of thematic workshops and coordination between countries of origin and countries of destination. Since 2004, a special fund, which is supported by yearly contributions from Member States and managed by IOM, provides return assistance for vulnerable migrants from the Central American region, including migrant children, the elderly and victims of trafficking. Furthermore, the RCM drafted in 2003 the General Framework for the Execution of the Multilateral Cooperation Programme for the Assisted Return of Extraregional Migrants Stranded within the Member Countries of the RCM. However, the return of extracontinental migrants is currently identified as a major challenge for governments in the region due to the lack of diplomatic representation of major countries of origin that can provide identity, confirm nationality and provide any return assistance. The high cost of returns has also been pointed out as a major obstacle. Discussions are underway to find common solutions.

The migration context in the Caribbean is also complex, as there are strong flows to, within, and out of this subregion. Flows into the Caribbean are mostly from Africa, East Asia and South America, while outflows are usually towards North America and the UK. Emigration rates are seven times higher than inflows, and inflows are mainly made up of skilled migrants. Intraregional migration constitutes 4 per cent of the total emigrant stock from the Caribbean. Haiti is the primary emigration country and Dominican Republic is the main recipient.

In addition, governments in Latin America have identified the reintegration of their own nationals who return as a high priority, as reflected in recent discussions within the framework of the EU–Latin America and Caribbean (EU–LAC) High-Level Dialogue. The identified priorities include the need to focus on social assistance and protection of vulnerable groups, such as migrant children. During the Eleventh South American Conference on Migration held in Brazil in 2011, the Declaration of Brasilia reiterated the need to share good practices among countries in the region on how to facilitate the successful reintegration of returning nationals.³⁸ So far, a number of AVRR projects have been implemented, facilitating the assisted voluntary return of Latin American nationals from Europe and Mexico. One concern linked to these programmes relates to the fact that most AVRR programmes developed with European donors only include a limited reintegration assistance component. IOM missions in the region recommend reintegration programmes that allow for monitoring and support over a longer period than is normally foreseen under some existing programmes, in order to provide sustainable reintegration support with a true positive impact on the returning migrant. Moreover, governments have recognized the need for additional capacity and resources towards reintegration. As a result of this situation, there is a need to continue the dialogue with donor governments in Europe and elsewhere towards an increase in the reintegration assistance provided, with a focus on ensuring sustainable reintegration.

³⁸ Declaration of Brasilia, point 7.

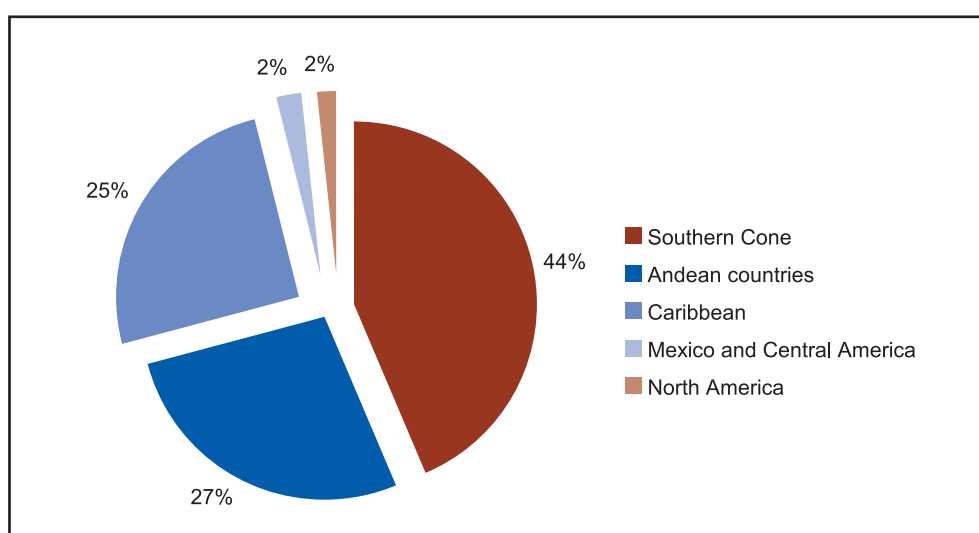
Overview of assisted voluntary return and reintegration activities in the Americas region

Assisted voluntary returns and reintegration to the region

Analysis of gender and social status of migrants assisted with voluntary return and reintegration

In 2011, IOM assisted 5,233 migrants to return to countries of origin in Latin America and the Caribbean. Interestingly, the strong gender divide seen in other regions applies less to this one. The proportion of female migrants assisted with voluntary return and reintegration amounted to 45 per cent, while male migrants represented 55 per cent of the target group. This is also linked to the social status of the returnees assisted: compared to other regions of origin for AVRR programmes, the proportion of families among the returnee population was higher (47% vs. 53% individual applications). IOM assisted 791 migrant children to return to the region together with their families (47% female and 53% male), as well as 93 UMC (46% female and 54% male). The majority of this latter group relate to voluntary returns to Ecuador implemented in the framework of the AVRR programme in Mexico.

Figure 26: Overview of AVRR to the Americas according to subregion in 2011³⁹



The overview of returns to Latin America and the Caribbean in Figure 26 points out that nearly 80 per cent of IOM-assisted voluntary returns took place to South America, namely the Andean countries (Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)) and the Southern Cone (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay).

³⁹ The subregions cover returns to the following countries: Southern Cone: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay; Andean countries: Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of); Central America and Mexico: Belize, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama; and Caribbean: Cuba, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica and Suriname.

Figure 27 shows that the majority of voluntary returns to South and Central America take place from the Dominican Republic (to Haiti), Mexico (to various South and Central American countries), and various European countries.

Figure 27: Top 10 host countries for AVRR to Latin America and the Caribbean

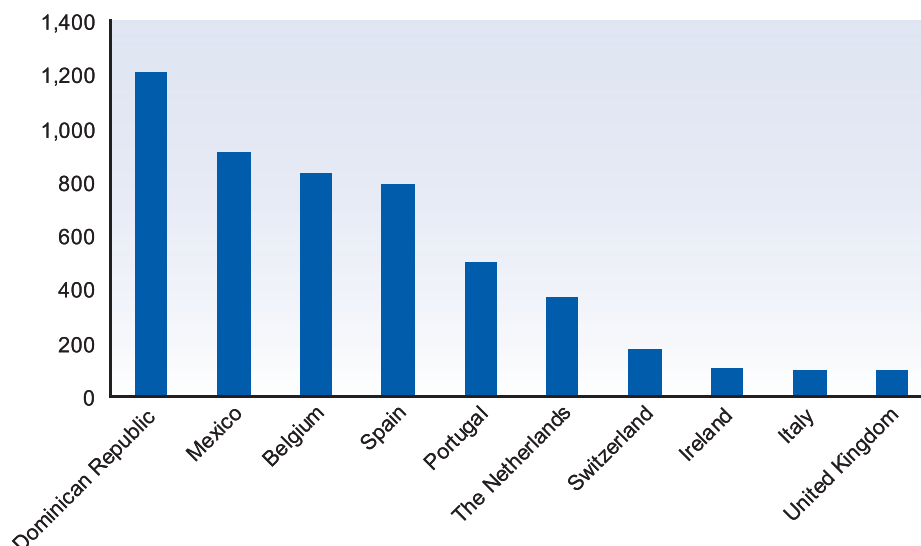
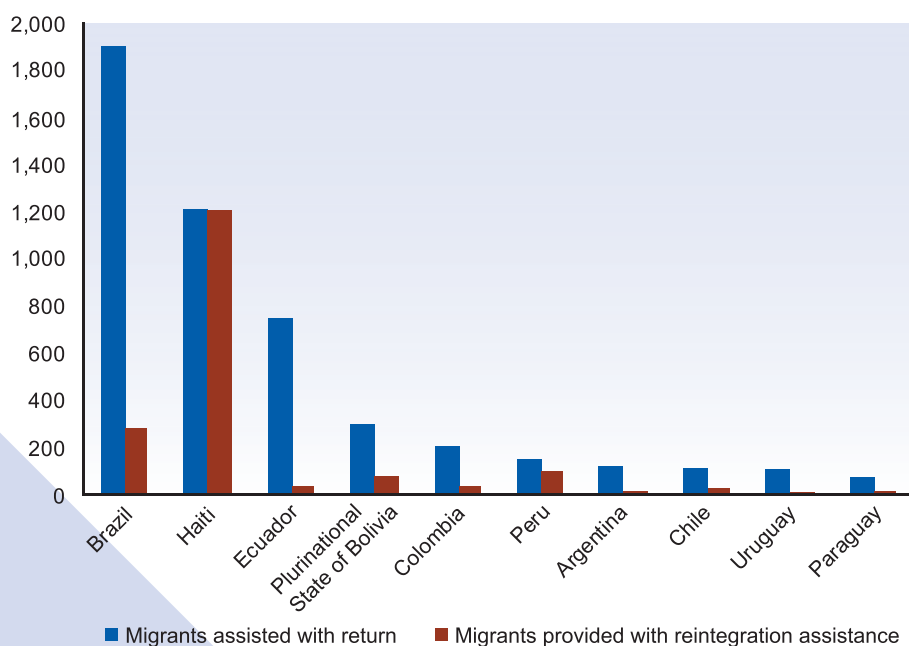


Figure 28 shows the countries of origin for AVRR programmes with the highest numbers of returns: Brazil, Haiti, Ecuador, Bolivia (Plurinational State of) and Colombia. Similar to 2010, Brazilian migrants were motivated to return, considering that the economic perspectives in their home country tended to be more promising than in many host countries in Europe, which were suffering from the consequences of the economic crisis (e.g. Ireland and Portugal). Apart from the continuation of existing programmes, the year 2011 also saw the development of new programmes, including a programme for Colombian migrants voluntarily returning from Spain. Such programmes are an innovative initiative, including joint training programmes beginning in Spain and continuing in Colombia upon arrival.

Figure 28: Top 10 countries of origin for AVRR in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2011



Within the limits of the AVRR programmes under which migrants returned, IOM missions in the region focused on assisting migrants with reception and reintegration in their country of origin. In many cases, this happened in the context of partnerships with either governmental or non-governmental partners. These were, in many cases, very helpful to complement IOM's assistance to returnees, and in other cases essential. The latter holds true in the case of Brazil, where IOM does not yet have an office, and the provision of reintegration assistance to returnees would have been impossible without a network of partner NGOs which had been previously established in 2009 through the AVRR programme of IOM Portugal. This network provided direct assistance to returnees throughout the country, guided them in the design of business plans, monitored their reintegration assistance, and finally assisted in the identification and collection of information on relevant local development policies which could complement existing assisted voluntary return and reintegration programmes.

IOM Colombia: *Bienvenido a Casa* (Welcome Home)

- Specific reception and reintegration support project for Colombian returnees, returned either through IOM returns or spontaneously, implemented alongside reintegration support under other AVRR projects
 - Humanitarian emergency attention
 - Psychosocial assistance
 - Legal assistance
 - Support towards economic reintegration
 - Monitoring of the reintegration process of returnees.
- Implemented in cooperation with municipal/provincial governments in Bogota, Risaralda, Valle del Cauca and Norte de Santander.
- Assistance provided in 2011:
 - Bogota: 1,677
 - Risaralda: 889
 - Valle del Cauca 75
 - Norte de Santander: 23



A Colombian beneficiary who returned from Italy and used the reintegration assistance to buy two cows, a horse, a calf and seeds in order to start farming on a farm located in Dagua, Valle del Cauca. © IOM, 2011

Figure 28 also reflects the different levels of reintegration assistance provided under the different AVRR programmes implemented in the region. As a result of the particularly vulnerable situation of the target group, the AVRR programme for Haitian migrants in the Dominican Republic provides reintegration assistance to every returnee; however, other programmes limited reintegration assistance to vulnerable groups only, or were not able to provide any reintegration assistance. This can be seen in the case of Ecuador: the largest proportion of Ecuadorian migrants assisted through AVRR relates to those returning from Mexico, where voluntary return assistance is limited to the organization of the return itself and a small amount of pocket money, and no reintegration assistance is provided. As regards the remaining Ecuadorians returning mainly from the EU, IOM in Ecuador was actively involved in coordinating with a large number of host countries in the process of providing reintegration assistance.

Reintegration assistance provided by IOM Ecuador

- Main country of origin of migrants returning voluntarily from Mexico and the second biggest country of origin in the region.
- Provision of in-kind reintegration assistance to 52 returnees from four countries of destination (Belgium, Italy, Switzerland and the UK).
- Approximately 56 per cent were female returnees and 44 per cent were male returnees; 27 per cent of returnees were minors accompanied by adults.
- Business set up (44%) and housing assistance (30%) were the preferred reintegration options, followed by medical assistance, educational support and cash grants.



An Ecuadorian returnee from Italy who used her reintegration assistance to support the construction of a small apartment for her and her family. © IOM

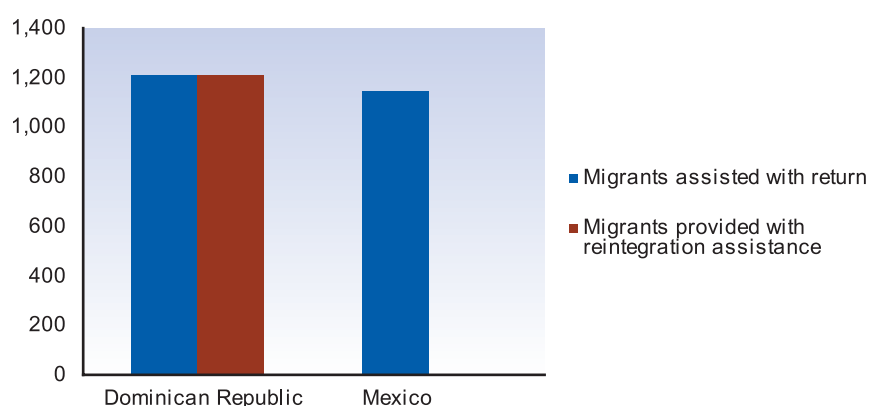
The long-standing history of return of Latin American nationals to their countries of origin has led governments in the region that were previously less involved in AVRR to show a growing interest in becoming more active in this field. This can be seen in Bolivia, where the IOM office worked jointly with the Foreign Ministry of Bolivia to strengthen the management capacity of the Government of Bolivia in the field of migration, return and reintegration within the EU-funded project *Fortalecimiento a la gestión gubernamental para migración retorno y reintegración* (Strengthening of Governmental Management Capacity of Return and Reintegration; hereinafter referred to as the AENEAS Project). The project produced an important amount of research and information material, as well as inter-institutional commitments directed at paying better attention to Bolivians residing abroad and those who have returned, in particular.

AENEAS Project: Strengthening of the capacity of the Bolivian government on return and reintegration of Bolivian nationals

- Assessment of existing programmes and services for returnees in Bolivia leading to important conclusions and recommendations regarding the current state of the discussion around return migration in Bolivia at the legislative, policy and practice levels.
- Profiling exercise for the returnee population, providing important information regarding the profile of the returnees (i.e. their age, sex, socio-economic background), migration projects and the main barriers to sustainable reintegration in Bolivia. Recommendations highlighted the need for tailored reintegration assistance for an increasingly feminized community of returnees, as well as the need for partnerships – in particular in the sector of microbusiness development and job placements – to ensure greater sustainability of the return and reintegration process.
- Production of *Guide for Returnees*, an information tool for Bolivians abroad that includes information on opportunities for assistance, regularization and protection available upon return to Bolivia.

Assisted voluntary return and reintegration from the region

Figure 29: Host countries for AVRR from Latin America and the Caribbean in 2011



In total, 2,362 migrants were assisted to return voluntarily from Latin America and Caribbean in 2011. As pointed out in Figure 29, the Dominican Republic and Mexico were the two major countries from where IOM operated AVRR programmes. While the project from the Dominican Republic was exclusively directed at returnees from Haiti, the Mexican assisted voluntary return programme assisted a large range of nationalities in the region, as well as a small number of extraregional migrants. In addition to these established programmes, assisted voluntary returns for highly vulnerable migrants from Central American countries were organized from a number of Central American countries (El Salvador, Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama), in the framework of the RCM, as mentioned above. Nonetheless, these returns took place on a much smaller scale than the established assisted voluntary return programmes in Mexico and Dominican Republic.

Assisted voluntary return from Dominican Republic to Haiti

Assisted voluntary return assistance to Haitians who had entered the Dominican Republic following the earthquake in Haiti in January 2010.

Assistance in 2011: 1,209 individuals provided with voluntary return and reintegration support

Target group: Extremely vulnerable Haitians, 90 per cent of returnees without education, residing in remote areas without proper access to health care, education and/or income-generating activities. Partnership with three experienced NGO partners allowed for the registration of returnees in 23 points in the Dominican Republic and return to 31 points inside Haiti.

Services provided: Individual counselling, individual financial travel assistance for adults and stipends for child maintenance, awareness-raising on cholera prevention and oral rehydration salts (ORS), soap, and water purification sachets, delivery of education grants directly to schools in Haiti, business training and seed capital.

Post-arrival reintegration assistance for migrants returned under the auspices of host governments

While IOM does not involve itself in the forced return of migrants from their host countries, IOM missions provided PARA in a small number of Central American countries at the request of the governments in these countries of origin. In this context, IOM offices in Guatemala, El Salvador and Haiti provided migrants returned under the auspices of the US government with reception and reintegration support in their countries of origin. While assistance in El Salvador took place on a considerably small scale,

focusing exclusively on UMC, projects in Guatemala and Haiti assisted larger populations of migrants upon their return from the United States. In 2011 alone, nearly 20,000 migrants were assisted with humanitarian assistance upon their arrival and, to a smaller extent, with medium-term reintegration assistance.

Guatemalan Repatriates Project: Post-arrival reintegration assistance to returnees from the United States

- Immediate assistance to Guatemalans at the airport upon their arrival from United States.
- Provision of medium-term reintegration support:
 - Development of support networks in regions of origin with major returnee presence (Quetzaltenango, San Marcos and Guatemala);
 - Referral of migrants to the private sector for employment or access to training opportunities.
- Strengthening of capacity of migrant shelters, specific focus on assistance to vulnerable migrants such as victims of trafficking.
- Return policy: Inclusion of migration management and return on the political agenda in the context of presidential elections.
- Pilot research with returnees in San Marco Department (border area with Mexico) and Quetzaltenango to assess migrants' profiles and individual migration experiences, as well as destabilizing factors in Guatemala.
 - Key findings:
 - Porous borders, weak institutions, poverty and unemployment affect stability in the region;
 - Lack of opportunities and criminalization of returnees reduce chances of employment and increase the pressure for re-emigration.



Post-arrival reintegration assistance provided by IOM Guatemala staff to migrants returned by the US Government after their arrival at the airport. © IOM, 2011

ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION OF UNACCOMPANIED MIGRANT CHILDREN AND MIGRANTS WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS

The most challenging programmatic area for IOM and its partners is the voluntary return and reintegration of UMC,⁴⁰ migrants with health-related needs and victims of trafficking.⁴¹ This section aims to outline the parameters of IOM's assistance to UMC and migrants with health-related needs, and to highlight some of the activities carried out by IOM missions in the field during 2011.



Upon arrival, beneficiaries of the project "Post-arrival Reintegration Assistance for Unaccompanied Minors from the United States" receive a medical checkup and necessary medication from IOM El Salvador. © IOM, 2011

⁴⁰ This category of migrants is also referred to by IOM as "unaccompanied children", defined as persons under the age of majority in a country other than that of their nationality who are not accompanied by a parent, guardian, or other adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for them. Unaccompanied children present special challenges for border control officials, because detention and other practices applied to undocumented adult non-nationals may not be appropriate for children (IOM Glossary, 2011).

⁴¹ More information on the work IOM has undertaken with victims of trafficking can be found at: www.iom.int.

UNACCOMPANIED MIGRANT CHILDREN

Unaccompanied migrant children are especially vulnerable and require specific care and safeguards. Assisting the voluntary return of UMC can be a complex undertaking for all stakeholders involved in the process of return. IOM has provided vital assistance to UMC willing to reunite with their parents or relatives back in their countries of return or, alternatively, in a third country (in case the parents/legal guardians of an unaccompanied migrant child or youth are found to be legally resident in a third country). Consequently, an increasing number of IOM offices worldwide are becoming very engaged in implementing family assessments, family tracing, and facilitating family reunification.⁴² An integral part of this type of assistance is the provision of reintegration assistance that is viewed as having a long-term, positive effect on the child and his/her family. The role of the legal guardian is paramount to IOM's work, and the best interest of the child is a primary consideration during the whole AVRR process.

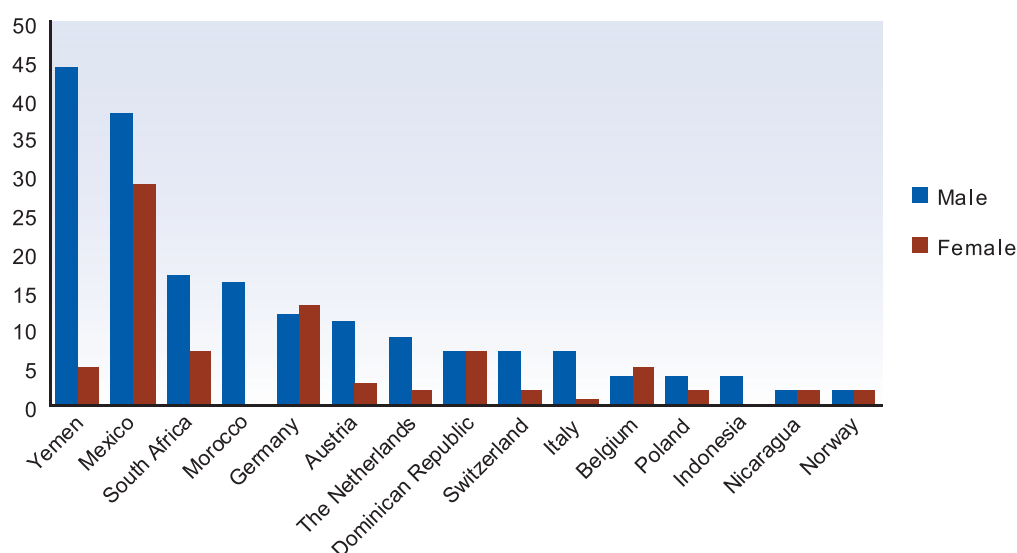
In 2011, 280 UMC were assisted by IOM under its AVRR programmes. In addition, 40 UMC were assisted upon the request of their respective legal guardians⁴³ through specific reintegration projects in their countries of origin.



An unaccompanied Albanian minor returned from Italy who used his reintegration assistance to purchase a cow in order to support the income of his family. © IOM, 2011

As shown in Figure 30, IOM assisted UMC with assisted voluntary return from all continents. The main host countries from where IOM assisted UMC in 2011 were Yemen, Mexico, South Africa and Morocco.

Figure 30: Top 15 IOM missions assisting unaccompanied migrant children through AVRR in 2011

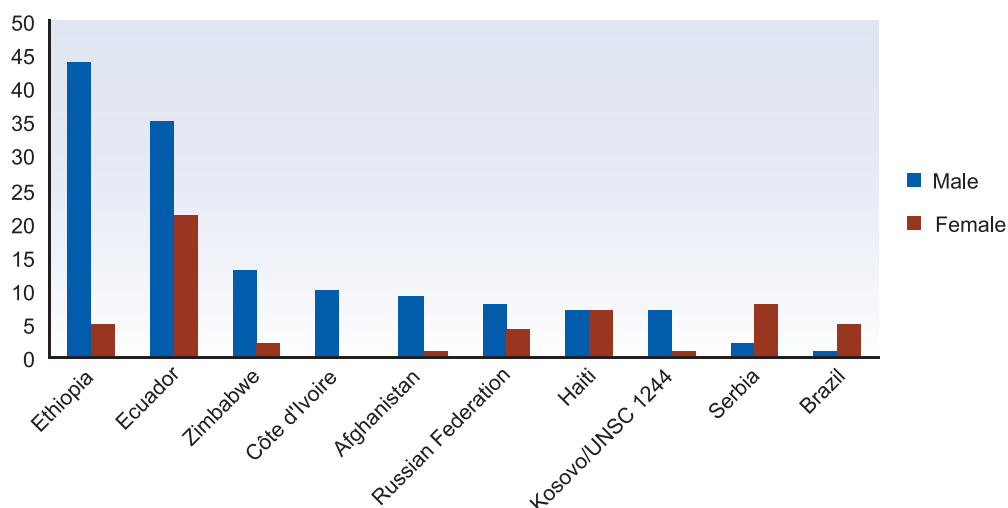


⁴² For more information on IOM's work with UMC beyond AVRR, see the IOM publication *Unaccompanied Children on the Move* (2011), which outlines the work of the organization with UMC.

⁴³ The entities assuming legal guardianship in countries of origin differ from country to country. One of the IOM's key parameters is that these entities are fully engaged and take responsibility for the full care and well-being of the minor. Projects related to the reintegration of unaccompanied children who are returned under the auspices of governments are done in conjunction with the relevant ministries taking overall legal guardianship responsibility for this group, as well as care providers (NGOs or government agencies).

Males accounted for the majority of this young group of beneficiaries (69%), but it is interesting to note that girls made up a significant percentage of UMC (31%). Figure 31 shows the percentage of UMC by gender and country of origin.

Figure 31: Assistance to UMC through AVRR programmes according to countries of origin and gender



In the area of AVRR, IOM provides specifically tailored assistance to respond to the individual situation of an unaccompanied migrant child. This assistance includes information and return counselling, making travel arrangements (including escort assistance), reception assistance in countries of origin, facilitation of family reunification, and provision of reintegration assistance to the child (in some instances with support to the families as well). Reintegration assistance, in general, should help to minimize the risk of discrimination by the local population and maximize the sustainability of returns through institutional/community support approaches. This is particularly important when children return to an area where there are other populations of children and adolescents who are equally vulnerable (including internally displaced persons and street children). Due consideration should also be given to providing proper reintegration assistance to unaccompanied children who have reached the age of 18 in the host country (“aged-out” minors), and whose legal stay there has expired.

Apart from generic AVRR guidelines and the Global Movement Management Guidelines, several standard operational procedures on AVRR have been developed by IOM offices in Europe and Latin America. In Europe, work in this area has been most recently undertaken by IOM Belgium and IOM Switzerland. For the Latin American region, IOM took part in the Puebla Process (or Regional Conference on Migration⁷²) to develop specific guidelines for the assisted voluntary return of Central American UMC and adolescents, especially those coming from Mexico.

Legal guardianship and the principle of “best interest”

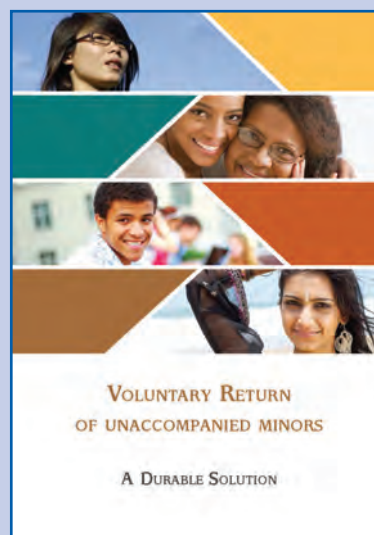
The role of the legal guardian is paramount to IOM’s work in the context of return of an unaccompanied migrant child from the host country to the country of origin (or a third country). For AVRR assistance, IOM requires the confirmation of the legal guardians both in the country of origin and in the host country, in order to secure concrete arrangements for care and to define custodial responsibilities for UMC in the country of origin. In the absence of parents, the identity of a legal guardian is verified depending on the national law of the host country and the country of origin.

In the majority of host countries where IOM assisted UMC with AVRR, the role of the legal guardian is assigned to the relevant social services. In a smaller number of cases, private persons are appointed by the respective States as legal guardian (e.g. trustees, tutors); NGOs may take on this function, as well as shelter management services. Other IOM offices dealt with ministries (often the Ministry of Justice)

or immigration authorities as the official entities designated by the State to assume the functions of legal guardianship. In the process of AVRR, the legal guardians in the country of origin are mostly the respective parents and, to some extent, the close relatives of the unaccompanied migrant child.

AVRR of UMC and former UMC from Belgium to Morocco

- **Beneficiary group:**
 - Moroccan UMC and former Moroccan UMC identified in Belgium as a vulnerable category in need of specific assistance.
- **Objective:**
 - To strengthen the reintegration approach with the identification of durable solutions in the country of origin.
 - To contribute to better understanding of AVRR for UMC through training of legal guardians and social workers in Belgium.
- **Implementing partners:**
 - Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum-Seekers (FEDASIL).
 - Belgian Guardianship Service.
- **Services provided:**
 - Return assistance tailored to the individual needs of the children and guided by IOM policy and operational standards (i.e. best interest determination; identification of legal guardians in both host country and country of origin).
 - Tailored reintegration support focusing on durable solutions.



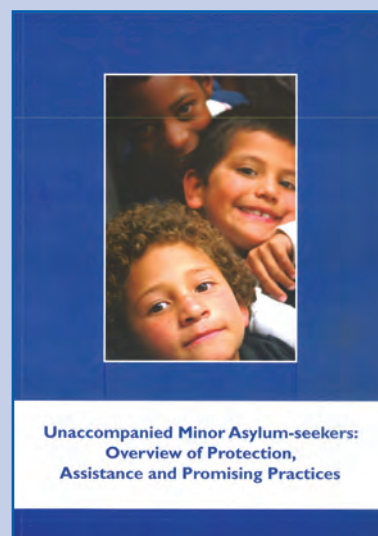
*An information leaflet about the Belgian AVRR programme for unaccompanied migrant children.
© IOM, 2011*

The principle of the best interest of the child, as laid down in the Convention on the Rights of the Child⁴⁴ (CRC), is of particular interest to IOM's work. The best interests of the child must be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children. Thus, best interest determination is a very important tool and a precondition for IOM's work. It is to be noted, however, that despite this inclusion in the CRC, international law fails to provide sufficient clarity as to what the process of best interest determination entails.

⁴⁴ Convention on the Rights of the Child of 20 November 1989, 1577 U.N.T.S. 3.

Research: *Unaccompanied Minor Asylum-Seekers: Overview of Protection, Assistance and Promising Practices* (IOM Budapest, 2011)

- **Objective:** To provide a contribution to the development of a coordinated approach towards addressing the needs of unaccompanied children seeking asylum and former unaccompanied children seeking asylum.
- **Methodology:**
 - Surveys and comparison of national systems for protection of and assistance to UMC and former UMC in Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Italy, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.
 - Desk reviews and 313 semi-structured interviews with 192 UMC and former UMC, as well as with 121 adults who served or were serving as guardians, care workers, attorneys and other experts in charge of implementation of child protection and immigration policies.
- **Key findings:** Widespread agreement among UMC and former UMC and experts that there is still a lack of essential information on asylum procedures for the target group. As a result, UMC and former UMC are unable to make informed decisions on matters affecting them.



*IOM Study cover from Budapest.
© IOM, 2011*

Social services, NGOs, and relevant welfare departments in both host countries and countries of origin play important roles and have been proactively involved in assisting AVRR-related activities such as family tracing, facilitating family assessments, preparing return documentation, organizing travel escorts, family reunification, reintegration activities and follow-up monitoring.

Post-arrival reintegration assistance to unaccompanied migrant children returned from the United States by IOM El Salvador

- Implementation in coordination with Government of El Salvador: IOM working closely with the governmental Technical Commission in El Salvador in the following areas:
 - Return to communities of origin, family reunification, reintegration and social reinsertion, prevention activities in communities and schools, as well as research and monitoring.
- Focus on strengthening governmental capacities to provide better follow-up to the reintegration of UMC.
- Assistance provided to date: 52 UMC (since 2009).
- Nationwide assistance to UMC through integrated approach: provision of assistance to UMC and families as well as socio-economic, psychosocial and educational support.
- Strengthened local capacity for inter-institutional coordination of referral of returnees.



IOM staff in San Salvador provides a basket of groceries, following an evaluation of the nutritional situation of the family. © IOM, 2011

MIGRANTS WITH HEALTH-RELATED NEEDS

IOM's vision of "migration health" is that migrants and mobile populations benefit from an improved standard of physical, mental and social well-being, enabling them to substantially contribute towards the social and economic development of their home communities and host societies. Migrants, in particular those with irregular or undocumented status, are often vulnerable to acquiring or aggravating health conditions, as a result of the migratory process. Conditions surrounding some patterns of modern migration, such as exposure to risky travel, marginalization and anti-immigrant sentiment, exploitative working and living conditions, and limited access to health care and social services all represent determinants of physical and mental health inherent to migration. Although the great majority of IOM's AVRR beneficiaries do not suffer from major health-related needs, a small but important group suffers from significant medical conditions (SMC) that seriously impact their return process. In the context of AVRR, SMC refers to a disease or disability of the beneficiary which is likely to have an impact on the standard implementation of AVRR, either at the pre-departure stage with regard to matters of eligibility (e.g. having the capacity to make a competent decision, the availability of necessary lifesaving health support in the country of destination) or in relation to transportability (e.g. fitness to travel, special travel requirements, need for a medical/nurse escort), or at the post-arrival stage (e.g. continuity of care, physical rehabilitation).⁴⁵ Specific standards and procedures exist for the assistance of such cases through AVRR programmes. These start from the moment of pre-departure counselling, and determine arrangements for the associated travel as well as the reintegration requirements. Over the past years, the number of individuals with SMCs who wished to return to their countries of origin with IOM's support has been increasing.

Project on exchange of information and good practices in six European Union Member States on AVRR of persons with mental and physical disabilities

Implemented in 2010 in Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, Poland, and the UK; adopted recommendations guided the work of participating missions in 2011.

Objectives:

- Assess existing procedures for AVRR of cases with health-related needs and exchange information to strengthen assistance.
- Build expert networks within the selected EU Member States; create adequate tools for practitioners that deal/may deal with medical cases.

Outcomes:

- Creation of a network of experts and focal points on AVRR cases with health-related needs in participating countries, as well as a national pool of escorts;
- Analytical report on the numbers of cases with health-related needs returned from the six selected countries in the past five years;
- Compilation and evaluation of existing procedures in selected countries;
- Two-day expert consultation in Brussels;
- Drafting of a handbook on best practices and training scheme for practitioners linked to AVRR of cases with health-related needs;
- Meeting in Brussels to present the handbook and conduct a training session for partners of the Belgian AVRR programme (REAB Network);
- Twenty returns and reintegration of cases with health-related needs from Belgium according to best practices, including close follow-up and assessment of returnees in countries of origin.



Cover page of the final publication of the Project "Research of Procedures on Handling Assisted Voluntary Returns of Medical Cases from Selected European Union Member States". © IOM, 2011

⁴⁵ Migration Health Division (MHD), IOM Geneva, 2010.

In particular, IOM offices in Europe implementing large and comprehensive AVRR programmes have gradually increased their expertise with regard to the return of this vulnerable group of individuals through exchange of information, experience and increased cooperation. Several missions note that the need for medical assistance among voluntary returnees is increasing, in particular among those with irregular legal status who often have not had access to medical treatment during their stay in host countries.⁴⁶ However, medical assistance to voluntary returnees is also increasingly important in the context of AVRR activities outside Europe, such as in the case of AVRR from the Dominican Republic to Haiti. The particularly vulnerable situation of Haitian nationals in the Dominican Republic, which is often characterized by lacking access to medical services, leads to an increasingly high number of returnees who are in need of health support, which is provided by the programme.⁴⁷

Post-arrival medical assistance to Haitian migrants returned by the United States government

- Review of medical records of all returnees and provision of instruction and recommendations regarding usage of medication.
 - Ongoing cooperation and support between IOM Haiti and IOM Migration Health Division, including the Mental Health and Psychosocial Section, at IOM Headquarters.
- Successful adjustment of post-arrival reintegration programme to address increasing medical needs among returnees upon return; assistance includes:
 - Psychosocial assistance at the airport, treatment of individuals with particular health needs;
 - Socio-economic reintegration assistance.
- Different strands of work by IOM to improve the situation for returnees:
 - Work with the Haitian government to improve the country's health infrastructure;
 - Referral of beneficiaries to specialized service provision to support ongoing specialized medical care for those with life-threatening health conditions;
 - Work with local service providers to support returnees with mental health needs.



Reintegration assistance provided to Haitian returnees after their arrival from the US. © IOM, 2011

In order to ensure that adequate care and treatment can be provided to the migrant throughout the return and reintegration process, SMCs need to be determined as early as possible during the return process. For this reason, IOM offices request an assessment of the health condition from the treating doctor to determine the migrant's "fitness for travel"⁴⁸ as soon as the migrant expresses, or the return counsellor determines, that a potential SMC exists which could impact his/her return and/or reintegration process. Assessment of the migrant's health condition and consideration of these different factors help the IOM missions involved to determine whether assisted voluntary return is the appropriate⁴⁹ solution for the individual.

⁴⁶ See for example, IOM Dublin, IOM internal assessment, February 2012.

⁴⁷ IOM Santo Domingo, IOM internal assessment, February 2012.

⁴⁸ Involves the possession of a physical and mental condition that enables the AVRR beneficiary to safely travel with no significant risk of deterioration under normal circumstances, no risk of jeopardizing the safety of other passengers (e.g. as in the case of infectious, active and communicable diseases, harmful behaviour), or of causing – as a result of foreseeable health-related conditions – a logistical and/or financial burden (e.g. flight deviation) or other disturbances (MHD, 2010).

⁴⁹ The appropriateness of return is no longer guaranteed if a person with a chronic, deteriorating health condition cannot be provided with curative or palliative treatment after return, and for whom aggravation and suffering can be directly attributed to return. The abrupt withdrawal of life-prolonging treatment, owing to the inability of the country of return to provide adequate access to required care, exposes returnees to "inhumane and degrading treatment". Informed consent may at times be necessary in order to document the free will of the applicant to return, despite a foreseeable aggravation to health status, in which case the applicant's self-determination prevails (MHD 2010).

Migrants willing to return home could have been declined return assistance precisely because the examining doctors had not declared them fit for travel or because relatives had to be traced to ensure that the returnee would be looked after upon arrival in the country of origin.⁵⁰ At the same time, other cases have been reported in which highly complex cases, such as migrants suffering from leprosy or epilepsy, could be assisted successfully, thanks to strong collaboration between IOM, governmental authorities in the host country and the country of origin, medical practitioners and the migrant's family.⁵¹

In all cases dealing with migrants with SMCs, the individual's informed consent⁵² is even more important than in normal AVRR cases, particularly if the migrant wishes to proceed with the return in spite of recognized grounds for the inappropriateness or inadvisability of return, according to IOM's criteria.⁵³ Informed consent can be ensured through individual pre-departure counselling providing realistic and up-to-date information about the situation in the migrants' country of origin. IOM missions provide detailed information to the migrants and return counselors about the conditions for medical treatment in countries of origin, as well as detailed answers to individual questions, such as availability or price of medicines and treatment. As regards migrants suffering from mental health problems, the voluntariness requirement and informed consent inherent to IOM's AVRR programmes is of even greater importance, considering that their ability to make a competent decision⁵⁴ may be limited. Before agreeing to assist an individual through AVRR, IOM therefore requests a clear and authoritative assurance stating in writing that the person in question is fit to make his or her own decisions and providing recommendations concerning the return travel.

Once voluntariness and appropriateness of return are established, IOM and partners involved proceed with the arrangement of return and reintegration, in line with the results of the health assessment. This involves the determination of an appropriate travel date, adequate movement assistance,⁵⁵ such as the arrangement of a (medical) escort as needed, as well as necessary arrangements/referrals in the country of origin. IOM Bern, for example, has provided medical escorts for approximately 33 migrants on a yearly basis over the past years.⁵⁶ IOM Belgium's continued assistance to cases with health-related needs throughout the years has allowed the mission to establish a pool of escorts which can be accessed, when needed, for individual cases.⁵⁷

⁵⁰ IOM Pretoria, IOM internal assessment, February 2012.

⁵¹ IOM Malta, IOM Khartoum, IOM internal assessment, February 2012.

⁵² Informed consent must be based on free will, the capacity to make a competent decision, and a full awareness and understanding of the facts, implications and potential future consequences. The consent should include a disclaimer of IOM's responsibility; it is recommended to use informed consent forms to be signed by the applicant, following proper counselling (MHD, 2010).

⁵³ For example, in cases where the applicant is severely ill and knowingly faces the lack of availability of needed care after return, and is still willing to return to the country of origin.

⁵⁴ Competent decision refers to the possession of sufficient mental capacities to understand and make a reasonable decision in relation to a problem, and to understand and appreciate the potential consequences of that decision. In cases of incapacitated individuals, informed consent is usually required from the state authority or other legal guardians, though the willingness to return in such cases might be questionable (MHD, 2010).

⁵⁵ For further information see: IOM Migration Health Services, *Medical Manual* (2001), pp. 168–206.

⁵⁶ IOM Bern, IOM internal assessment, February 2012.

⁵⁷ IOM Brussels, IOM internal assessment, February 2012.

AVRR for Georgian asylum-seekers in Switzerland and medical assistance for returnees with a history of drug dependence

- Beneficiaries: Georgian nationals residing under the Swiss asylum regime.
- IOM doctors (at Headquarters or other experienced doctors) determine fitness for travel on the basis of a medical/psychological evaluation from the treating doctor in Switzerland and the feedback from the case manager and IOM Bern for each case.
- Organization of medical/psychological/social escort during return travel depending on individual needs.
- Possibility to start/continue a methadone substitution therapy upon arrival in Georgia.
- Medical support provided six to 12 months after arrival, depending on the degree of health/drug abuse problem faced by the migrant; eligibility for support after arrival in Georgia is also applicable in cases where individuals were initially unwilling to speak about their addiction problems and only request help upon return to their country of origin.
- Specific medical support independent from the general in-kind assistance for which participants are eligible.



*A Georgian returnee from Switzerland received medical assistance and subsequently used his reintegration assistance to open a market stand in his hometown in Georgia.
© IOM, 2012*

Upon arrival in the country of origin, access to adequate medical treatment and continuity of care are often predominant over the socio-economic concerns of the individual.⁵⁸ Several AVRR programmes therefore provide additional support to cases with particular medical concerns, in addition to general socio-economic reintegration assistance such as vocational training or business support that can be accessed in subsequent phases once health concerns are addressed. IOM Guatemala, for example, entered into cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to provide specialized assistance to highly vulnerable individuals, such as individuals with disabilities, assisted after having been returned to the country by the Government of the United States. At the same time, the mission organized a training to increase awareness among governmental and non-governmental counterparts about the importance of adequate medical assistance for returnees.⁵⁹ In Argentina, the gathering of information on individual cases as well as established networks with national public health services prior to and after return have allowed the consolidation of information about best and long-term sources for treatment at the place of return (private and public). Moreover, the mission has provided increased follow-up support with returnees in order to strengthen their adherence to psychological treatments when recommended, either through phone counselling or through actively involving the family/local community as support network during the reintegration and recovery phase.⁶⁰ Without prejudice to the support IOM offices have been able to provide to migrants with particular health-related needs, it is important to note the limitations of the assistance to be provided by the organization: IOM staff do their best to identify, liaise with and provide access to existing services in the countries of origin, but cannot be ultimately responsible for such matters or guarantee continued access to these services for many years.

⁵⁸ Continuity of care implies the establishment of adequate mechanisms for the continuity of health care in the country of return, through relevant referrals in the country of origin. This applies to individuals with known chronic, yet stable, health conditions requiring lasting medical care (e.g. insulin-dependent diabetes, complicated hypertension, seizure disorders), as well as those requiring the continuity of an ongoing treatment initiated in the host country and for whom interruption of the treatment could have a significant public health impact (e.g. tuberculosis, AIDS) (MHD 2010).

⁵⁹ IOM Guatemala, IOM internal assessment, February 2012

⁶⁰ IOM Argentina, IOM internal assessment, February 2012.

The types of return described above can be a challenging process, requiring a high level of coordination and cooperation between IOM and other stakeholders, involved in the host country, during transit and in the country of origin. IOM missions have lent their best support to take additional steps during return counselling, and preparations for return and reintegration have taken place in close cooperation with doctors or other health care providers, social workers and NGOs that may be involved in providing health care support to AVRR applicants.

PARTNERSHIPS

IOM's work with partners

This section aims to provide an overview of IOM's partnerships in the field of AVRR, with particular focus on the year 2011. Furthermore, it presents the findings of an internal review carried out by IOM at the beginning of 2012, which focused on the partnerships established by the different IOM offices in the field.⁶¹

- *Implementing partners have helped IOM's work mainly in areas with limited knowledge and during initial phases of projects.*
- *They have helped to strengthen relations with host communities and local authorities in different areas of work.*
- *Partnerships allow for sharing of good practices, models, tools and guidelines to continue improving the quality of activities.*
- *Partnerships provide added flexibility to our programmes in light of IOM administrative and security constraints.*

- IOM Yemen, 2012

In the field of AVRR, IOM undertakes formal partnerships with more than half of its partners (56%). The remaining 44 per cent represent partnerships which are not based on a formal agreement. AVRR programmes strongly depend on support from community representatives, service providers, NGOs and government agencies. As a result, there is a significant number of partners with whom IOM liaises and works on a regular basis, but with whom the organization has no formal agreement.

Who are the partners in the context of AVRR

Effective implementation of AVRR can only be achieved with formal and informal partnerships⁶² among the different stakeholders in the field of migration and service provision. Figure 32 below presents the different types of partners involved in AVRR. It becomes clear that the majority of IOM partners are NGOs, including community-based organizations (CBOs), followed by central governments and local authorities. At the same time, local and regional governments, and especially the private sector, are actors with whom partnerships have been less developed so far. With regard to international organizations, this refers mainly to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). In a number of host countries, the agency represents an important source for referrals of migrants to IOM's AVRR programmes, in particular where these take place in the



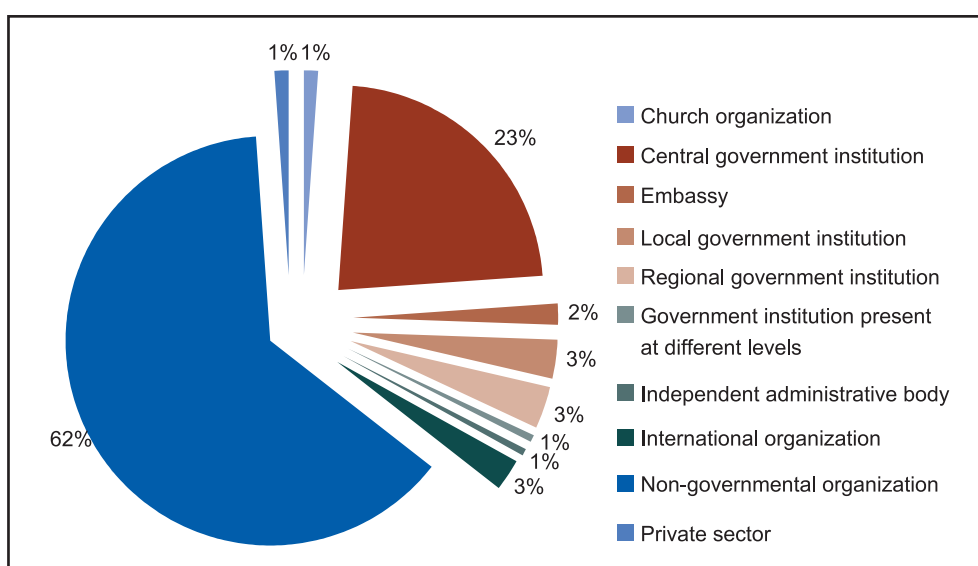
In the framework of a visit to Brazil in June 2011, IOM Lisbon in coordination with IOM Buenos Aires organized an institutional meeting with governmental as well as non-governmental partners in Brazil to discuss issues linked to reintegration for voluntary returnees in Brazil. © IOM, 2011

⁶¹ The results of the internal review are based on input obtained from 37 IOM missions. These missions are located in: Argentina, Australia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bulgaria, Cambodia, Colombia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, Greece, Guatemala, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Morocco, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Niger, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Salvador, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and Yemen.

⁶² Formal partnerships are based on a legal agreement with a predefined scope for implementation within an AVRR programme. Informal partnerships refer to partners who refer migrants to IOM or vice versa, or those who play a part in the AVRR framework but do not hold a legal agreement as the formal partners do. In this case we can include NGOs offering migrant counselling, and State services such as health, legal and protection of victims.

context of mixed migration movements (e.g. in Egypt or Greece). Apart from partnerships at the operational level, both agencies have also worked together at the policy level: efforts include the establishment and ongoing co-chairing of Mixed Migration task forces in the Horn of Africa and Yemen, ongoing close consultation in the Mediterranean, and a joint regional conference in the Americas which followed conferences in 2009 in Africa and the Middle East. Recognizing the need for further collaboration in the Southern African region, UNHCR and IOM, with the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, organized the “Regional Conference on Refugee Protection and International Migration: Mixed Movements and Irregular Migration from the East and Horn of Africa and Great Lakes Region to Southern Africa” in Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, held in September 2010, to discuss the growing phenomenon of mixed movements and irregular migration within this geographical space. Stranded migrants were also at the top of discussions at a conference in Dakar in 2008 on stranded migrants.

Figure 32: Types of partners involved in IOM’s AVRR programmes in 2011



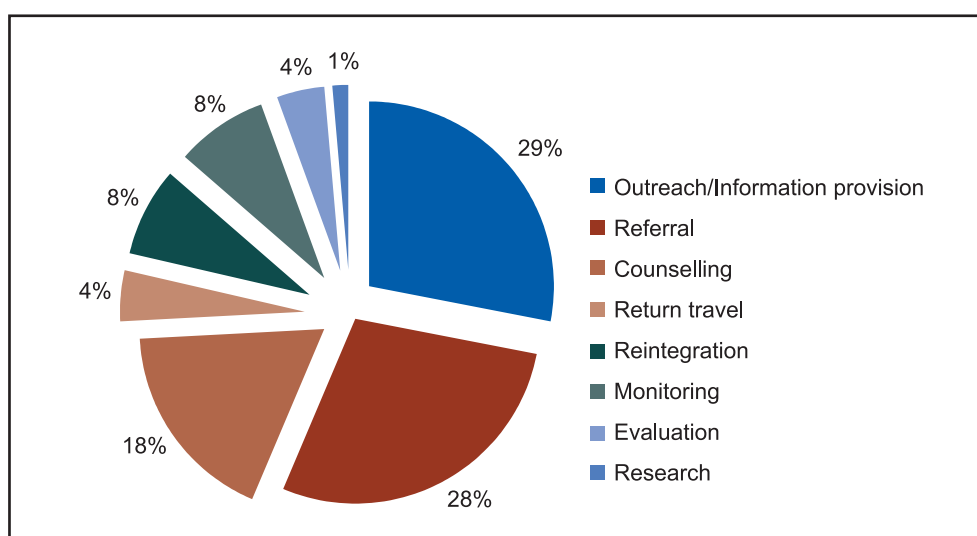
When assessing the possibilities of partnerships, IOM considers several factors; some of the most relevant ones are: 1) geographic coverage; 2) complementarities through partners providing technical knowledge; 3) financial viability (financial capacity to operate); 4) capacity to deliver (bringing added value); and 5) sustainability of its actions (long-term prospects).

The role of partners in the context of AVRR

Partners' involvement is crucial in all the different components of AVRR programmes. However, most of them conduct work in the following fields: referral to IOM; outreach and awareness-raising; return counselling; gathering and provision of country-of-origin information; research and profiling of diasporas; provision of specialized services such as health, social services, legal, training and general public services; and reintegration in countries of origin.

Figure 33 shows the different stages of AVRR at which partners are mostly engaged.

Figure 33: Involvement of partners throughout the different phases of AVRR programmes in 2011



Accounting for more than 60 per cent of all partners, NGOs are playing an increasing role in the provision of reintegration assistance in countries of origin and monitoring the assistance provided to migrants and its relevance and impact towards the individual process of reintegration. Despite representing a small proportion of partners' work, evaluation is also an area in which partners are becoming more engaged.

"The coordination with partners was important to facilitate dialogue and understanding of migration-related issues. The exchange of data and information on reintegration flows and activities has been constant and fruitful. This cooperation has still not reached the operational level, because displacement is still an important issue in Iraq. This partnership will be reinforced in 2012 through projects funded by the EU on reintegration support for returnees."

- IOM Iraq, 2012

The number of partners involved in IOM's AVRR programmes differs from country to country and grows considerably with the size and tradition of the AVRR programme. For example, IOM Belgium lists 34 partners as part of a referral network, while IOM Germany refers to more than 1,000 local authorities and NGOs that are able to apply for IOM's AVRR programme on behalf of migrants.

"Having a network of partners spread out in the whole Portuguese territory has allowed IOM Lisbon to decentralize its services in the return procedure and helped to disseminate information on return. Since this network of partners was established (in 2007), the number of AVR applicants has grown each year. In 2011, 66 per cent of all applications were initiated by the partners. The partners in Brazil – established in main States of return – are fundamental for the follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of reintegration projects, better reintegration of returnees in their communities of origin, and provide – whenever possible – the link and inclusion of reintegration projects into local communities' development projects/policies."

- IOM Lisbon, 2012

The importance of partnerships

According to an internal review by IOM in 2012 to assess the contribution of partners towards effective delivery of AVRR, IOM missions have presented the following roles of partners, which make their involvement essential for AVRR programming:

- Conveying a credible message on the AVRR option through wide networks of partners. Partners raise awareness of diverse groups in direct contact with the migrant to allow the enhancement of possible assistance and provision of accurate information to those who might be interested in the assisted voluntary return option.
- Decentralizing return counselling and providing assistance within the geographical scope of destination countries. NGOs provide for closer communication and information outreach to the migrant community and can significantly facilitate assistance to mixed migration flows.
- Supporting IOM's efforts to safeguard the voluntariness of the return decision in cases of identified concerns of return and/or in cases where migrants (mainly asylum-seekers and refugees) are unable to make an informed decision and seek for further advice.
- Assisting IOM's efforts to better reintegrate returnees in their communities of origin and ensuring return and reintegration assistance in countries where IOM missions are not present.
- Providing – whenever possible – the link and inclusion of reintegration projects into local community development projects/policies.
- Supporting follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of reintegration projects and thus contributing to the sustainability of activities and programmes.
- Providing more comprehensive assistance to highly vulnerable groups, such as victims of trafficking, including shelter, psychosocial support, emergency housing or food, medical support, and vocational training, complementing IOM's AVRR assistance.
- Facilitating dialogue and understanding of migration-related issues among governmental parties and supporting compliance with legislation and national structures.

INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE AND EXCHANGE OF PRACTICES ON AVRR

In 2011, IOM continued to focus on facilitating dialogue among stakeholders in the area of voluntary return and reintegration through the organization of international meetings and conferences, field visits by government officials and NGOs, and national meetings among different stakeholders. The activities held between key partners and relevant entities in countries of origin, transit and host countries aimed at increasing the impact and relevance of existing AVRR modalities by identifying good practices, while promoting synergies among different projects and ultimately finding concerted solutions for AVRR. This section of the report lists and describes the key related activities of IOM in 2011.

International conferences and meetings

On 14–15 November 2011, the “International Conference on Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration as a Humane and Sustainable Way to Return Home” was held in Warsaw, Poland. The conference was organized under the Polish Presidency of the EU Council and it gathered 95 representatives from 33 countries, both EU/European Economic Area (EEA) Member States and countries of origin such as Afghanistan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. The audience’s composition reflected a good balance between officials working for different governmental bodies (Ministries of Interior, Foreign Affairs and Justice; immigration authorities; Inter-Ministerial Committee on Combating Human Trafficking, border guards, the police), representatives of NGOs (e.g. Caritas, Antwerp Protestants Social Centre, Foundation La Strada) and international organizations (IOM, UNHCR, FRONTEX). The aim of the conference was to discuss the main principles and forms of voluntary return assistance offered to third-country nationals, along with some practical aspects and best practices related to the implementation of AVRR programmes throughout the EU. Reflecting on the constantly evolving nature of AVRR programmes, speakers presented mechanisms for supporting and monitoring programmes implemented in different countries. Much attention was paid to some particular aspects, inter alia, the development of the reintegration component, risk related to countries’ conflicting priorities and possible incoherence between programmes. Participants also advocated for actions that would strengthen cooperation between origin and host countries to increase the effectiveness of migration management at the international level. During the conference, the Polish Presidency Report on Current Practices in AVRR was presented; this was followed by a discussion on its provisions. The conference in Warsaw was co-hosted by IOM and the Polish Presidency of the EU Council, 2011.



*The AVRR Conference in Warsaw organized by IOM in Poland in coordination with the Polish Government brought together Governments and IOM representatives from EU Member States.
© IOM, 2011*

IOM also organized a number of international meetings to discuss reintegration modalities. An international meeting was held in Brazil in 2011 with the key focus being the topic of “reintegration support and local development policies”. Participants were from IOM offices in Portugal and Argentina, officials from SEF (Servicos de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras), local partners in Brazil, and representatives of the Brazilian government and institutions. The main goal of this meeting was to raise awareness about the increasing returns to Brazil and discuss issues to create partnerships that could reinforce reintegration in Brazil.

An international seminar, “Reintegration Best Practices and Lessons Learned: from Italy to Iraq”, was organized by IOM Vilnius in April 2011. During the seminar, a model for the delivery of reintegration assistance to third-country nationals voluntarily returning from Lithuania, as well as a preliminary assessment of its effectiveness, was introduced. Presentations were also delivered by guest speakers from IOM Italy and IOM Iraq.

In the context of IOM’s promotion of dialogue regarding migration and health, IOM Vilnius organized an international conference on “Migration and Health”, dedicated to “movable” diseases in the framework of the practitioners’ capacity building project. Several topics were discussed, such as the IOM mandate and policy in this field, assistance to migrants with health problems, tuberculosis and migration, migrant drug users, the general situation in Lithuania and future prospects.



An International Workshop for Return Counsellors which took place in November 2011 in Vienna to enhance understanding of AVRR among return counsellors in Austria and colleagues in Chechnya, Georgia, Nigeria, and the Russian Federation.
© IOM, 2011

On 17–18 November 2011, IOM Vienna, in cooperation with the Austrian Federal Ministry of Interior, organized the second “International Workshop for Return Counsellors”. The goal of the event was to facilitate direct exchange between return counsellors and the IOM practitioners responsible for implementing IOM Vienna’s AVRR projects in the respective countries of origin. For this purpose, IOM colleagues from Georgia, Nigeria and the Russian Federation, as well as representatives of the Chechen NGO Vesta, gathered in Vienna to present their work, provide insight into the living conditions of returnees in respective countries, and answer the questions of workshop participants. The workshop provided an opportunity for partnering NGOs to ask organizational questions, discuss individual cases, and learn more about living conditions in Nigeria, Georgia and the Chechen Republic in order to better inform their clients about living conditions and project implementation in the respective country of origin.

In order to promote international dialogue on assistance to vulnerable groups such as victims of trafficking, in March 2011 IOM Norway organized a conference together with ROSA, an NGO implementing the “Assistance Programme for Women Victims of Trafficking in Norway”, regarding counselling about return options for victims of human trafficking coming from Nigeria, with specific focus on Edo state. IOM partners from Nigeria participated in this event, which featured national actors in Norway providing information about the referral system for Nigerian victims of trafficking and services offered to victims of trafficking, in particular in Edo state. The event allowed stakeholders, in particular shelter staff, to gain better understanding of the Norwegian context and the programme for return and reintegration assistance to victims of trafficking from Norway to Nigeria. Furthermore, it also allowed stakeholders in Norway to better understand how IOM and partners in Nigeria work together in assisting victims of trafficking, and to learn more about the key issues related to culturally specific *juju* rituals and how this is dealt with by Nigerian partners, as well as issues related to the protection and counselling of victims of trafficking.

National meetings

At the national level, IOM has been engaged in awareness-raising, facilitating the exchange of practices and discussing best models for AVRR implementation. The target audiences of such events varied widely depending on the objective of each programme and the national context where they were implemented. It is difficult to assess how many national meetings were held by IOM in 2011 in all countries where the Organization operates AVRR programmes. However, some examples are provided below.

In Norway, several activities were undertaken in 2011, with an aim to inform and improve cooperation among stakeholders. In March 2011, IOM Oslo organized a seminar for embassy personnel to inform them about the Norwegian voluntary assisted return programme (VARP) and discuss opportunities and challenges. The seminar provided embassies collaborating with IOM with information on issuing travel documents to their citizens who reside in Norway, as well as an overview of IOM's assisted voluntary return programmes, including assistance provided to returnees. Other events were conducted in Norway with the overall objective of raising awareness about IOM and its programmes and establishing links with a variety of NGOs in Norway.



IOM Norway organized an outreach seminar with a number of NGOs in Norway with the objective to raise awareness about IOM and its programmes and establish links with a variety of NGOs in Norway. © IOM, 2011

In 2011, within the framework of the practitioners' capacity-building project of IOM Vilnius, the office organized three informational lectures on AVRR at the State Border Guard Service School to present the AVRR programme to future officers, including the procedures and the implementation modalities. IOM Vilnius also organized three seminars on "Knowledge, Attitude, Capacity: AVR for the Representatives of Different Cultures: Muslims". This seminar was organized for practitioners working in the field of return and aimed at strengthening their capacities in implementing assisted voluntary return programmes. The seminars consisted of two parts – lectures on Islamic culture and social lifestyle, and practical sessions on development of intercultural communicational skills.

Monitoring and exchange visits

In October and November 2011, IOM Bern organized monitoring missions to Guinea and Nigeria together with representatives of the Swiss Federal Office for Migration (FOM). The aim was to obtain first-hand impressions on the reality, challenges and opportunities linked to voluntary return and reintegration in these countries. The mission included visiting returnees from Switzerland who had been assisted by IOM, meetings with local governmental and NGO partners involved in reintegration assistance, and visits to local partners involved in structural aid projects financed by the Swiss government.



A representative from the Swiss Federal Office for Migration discusses the impact of a Swiss-financed structural aid project in Guinea with a school director who benefitted from business-setup training and received micro credit to equip the school. © IOM, 2011

IOM Vilnius, in cooperation with IOM Malta, organized an official visit to Malta (30 May–2 June). The purpose of the visit was to learn about AVRR and relocation programmes in Malta, visit reception centres, share information and good practices. The Lithuanian delegation, made up of IOM Vilnius representatives as well as officials from different ministries and State services, met with representatives of the Maltese Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs (MJHA), the Agency for the Welfare of the Asylum-Seekers (AWAS), the Police Immigration and the Refugee Commissioner at the Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs, the UNHCR Representative in Malta, the Emigrants' Commission (MEC), the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), and the Armed Forces of Malta. The delegation also visited Marsa Open Centre, a reception centre for migrants arriving in Malta. Moreover, within the framework of reintegration projects, IOM Vilnius conducted three reintegration monitoring visits, namely to the Republic of Moldova and Azerbaijan (both in February 2011), as well as Georgia (November 2011). The participants were able to monitor the reintegration activities of beneficiaries assisted through AVRR from Lithuania. Based on the findings of the monitoring visits and the information obtained from IOM offices in countries of return, "Stories of Reintegration" were prepared at the end of 2011.

IOM Lisbon conducted a visit to Brazil (Goiânia) in June 2011 under the AVRR programme, in conjunction with IOM Buenos Aires and a representative of the governmental counterpart (The Alien and Border Service – SEF). The meeting allowed consultations with NGO partners in Brazil, to discuss the work done and receive feedback. IOM also visited two AVRR beneficiaries in order to assess their progress in the reintegration process.

IOM Norway and IOM Iraq jointly organized information and counselling activities taking place in the framework of the Information Return and Reintegration of Iraqi Nationals to Iraq (IRRINI) programme on 30–31 May 2011. For this purpose, three staff members from IOM Iraq visited Norway: the programme manager of the Movement and Assisted Migration Unit (MAM) and the two area team leaders in Erbil and Suleymanya. The overall objective of the visit was to exchange information between both missions related to IRRINI implementation, and to look at possibilities on how to further develop the programme. Throughout the two-day visits, various activities were organized in order to share the information related to the programme and trends of return to Iraq.



IOM Iraq representative gives a presentation to various stakeholders during the breakfast meeting organized in the framework of the programme IRRINI- Information, Return and Reintegration of Iraqi Nationals to Iraq Programme. © IOM, 2011

In September 2011, IOM Vienna undertook a one-week assessment mission to Georgia. The objective of the visit was to coordinate the implementation of the newly started project "Assistance for the Voluntary Return and Reintegration of Returnees to Georgia", co-financed by the European Return Fund and the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior. The participants met with returnees who had previously participated in similar projects, representatives of UNHCR, the Anti-Violence Network of Georgia and the Austrian Police Attaché. Furthermore, the delegation visited various health institutions and three of the Job Counselling and Placement Centres run by IOM in Georgia, as well as two settlements of internally displaced persons.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS RELATED TO AVRR AND PARA

IOM Publications

IOM Baghdad

- 2011 The Human Side of Migration: Returnee Perspectives from Iraq. Photo booklet.

IOM Bern

- 2003 *Evaluation Report Communication Concept Return Support* (KK RKH, Kommunikations Konzept Rückkehrhilfe).
- 2007 *Organisation du retour et de la réintégration de personnes vulnérables: guide pratique.*
- 2010a *Drug Use among Asylum-Seekers from Georgia in Switzerland.*
- 2010b *Etude sur les migrants irréguliers dans le canton de Genève.*
- 2010c *Monitoring report August 2009–January 2010 Return Assistance from Switzerland (RAS).*

IOM Brussels

- 2009 *REAB Annual Report 2009 Return and Emigration of Asylum-Seekers ex-Belgium.*
- 2010a *Assessment of Brazilian Migration Patterns and Assisted Voluntary Return Programmes from Selected European Member States to Brazil.*
- 2010b *Exchange of Information and Best Practices on First Reception, Protection and Treatment of Unaccompanied Minors*, 2nd edition (including a chapter on AVRR of UAMs in 6 EU countries: Belgium, Austria, Czech Republic, Poland, Bulgaria and Romania).
- 2010c *Review of Procedures on Handling Assisted Voluntary Returns of Medical Cases from Selected European Union Member States in the Framework of the Project “Exchange of Information and Practices in Six European Union Member States on Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration of Persons with Mental and Physical Disabilities”.*
- 2011 *REAB Annual Report 2010 Return and Emigration of Asylum Seekers Ex-Belgium.*

IOM Budapest

- 2010a *Assessment of Assisted Voluntary Projects in Hungary.*
- 2010b *Assessment of IOM Projects Implemented in 2009* (financed by the European Return Fund).
- 2010c *Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration: Principles and Best Practices.*
- 2011 *Identifying Promising Practices for a Coordinated Approach on Protection and Assistance to Unaccompanied Minor Asylum-Seekers (UAMAS) and former UAMAS (fUAMAS) in 10 EU Member States.*

IOM Chisinau

- 2011 *Reintegration assistance provided by IOM Moldova. Information leaflet.*

IOM Dhaka

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IOM Dublin

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- 2011 *Where do I go from here? The leading factors in voluntary return or remaining in Ireland.* Available from www.ireland.iom.int.

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- 2000 *Managing East–West Return Migration and Voluntary Return of Refugees and Forced Migrants.*

IOM Kiev

- 2010 *Reintegration Assistance Provided by IOM to Returnees from the United Kingdom to Ukraine under VARRP and VRRDM 2003–2010.*

IOM La Paz

- 2011a *Bolivians abroad – A proposal for a public policy and a migration law* (Bolivianos y Bolivianas en el exterior – propuesta de política pública y Ley para las Migraciones).
- 2011b *Evaluation of assisted voluntary return programmes and a proposal for economic reintegration in Bolivia* (Evaluación a programas de asistencia al retorno voluntario y propuestas de reintegration económica en Bolivia).
- 2011c *Guidelines for the design of a sustainable return and reintegration plan for Bolivian migrants* (Lineamientos para el diseño de un plan de Retorno y Reintegración sostenible para migrantes bolivianos y bolivianas).
- 2011d *Return guide for the Bolivian migrant* (Guía de retorn para el migrante boliviano).

IOM Lisbon

- 2008 *The SuRRIA Network – A Decentralized and Sustainable Counselling and Information Mechanism.*

IOM London

- 2004 *Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programme (VARRP) – Reintegration and Self-Evaluation Results.*
- 2005a *IOM UK Reintegration Assistance Self-Evaluation Report 2002–2005.*
- 2005b *Stories of Return – Global.*
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- 2007b *Stories of Return – Returns to Africa.*
- 2007c *Stories of Return – Returns to Asia and Middle East.*
- 2007d *Stories of Return – Returns to Europe.*
- 2007e *Stories of Return – Returns to South America/Caribbean.*
- 2008 *Stories of Return – Zimbabwe.*
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- 2009b *Stories of Return – Returns to Zimbabwe.*
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- 2010c *Stories of Return – Returns to Iraq.*
- 2010d *Stories of Return – Returns to Kosovo.*
- 2010e *Stories of Return – Returns to Nigeria.*

IOM New York

- 2006 *Challenges and opportunities faced by returned female migrants. In: Female migrants: Bridging the Gap throughout the Life Cycle.*

IOM Niamey

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IOM Rabat

- 2009 *Evaluation Report of the Reintegration Component in Congo Brazzaville and Guinea Conakry and Senegal* (currently only available in French).

IOM The Hague

- 2006 *Coping with Return* (AVR Return Counselling Handbook).
- 2008 *Reaching Out to the Unknown: Native counselling and the decision-making process of irregular migrants and rejected asylum-seekers on voluntary return.*
- 2010a *Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration of Iraqi Nationals from Selected European Countries: An Analysis of Policies and Practices.*
- 2010b *Assisted Voluntary Return from the Netherlands: An Analysis of Fluctuations in AVR Participation (1992–2008).*
- 2010c *Leaving the Netherlands: 20 Years of Voluntary Return Policy in the Netherlands (1989–2009).*

IOM Tirana

- 2006 *Compendium of Best Practices in Return, Readmission and Reintegration.*

IOM Valetta

- 2011a How to set up a business (booklet).
- 2011b *Stories of Return* and related information material (bookmark, mouse pad).

IOM Vienna

- 2007 *Return Migration in Austria.*
- 2008 Evaluation of the project “Coordination of the Return and Reintegration Assistance for Voluntary Returnees to Moldova”. Evaluation carried out jointly with Austrian Development Cooperation by Study and Assessment Ltd (S&A).
- 2010a *Policies on reception, return, integration arrangements for, and numbers of, unaccompanied minors in Austria.*
- 2010b *Programmes and Strategies in Austria Fostering Assisted Return to and Reintegration in Third Countries.*
- 2010c *Study on the Situation and Status of Russian Nationals from the Chechen Republic receiving Basic Welfare Support in Austria.*

IOM Vilnius

- 2009 *On the Road - Unaccompanied Minors in Lithuania.*
- 2010a *Programmes and Strategies Fostering Voluntary Return from the Republic of Lithuania and Reintegration in Third Countries.*
- 2010b *Reintegration Assistance: Best-Practice Study.* Written in the framework of IOM Vilnius pilot project “Reintegration - A New Opportunity in the Homeland” (only available in Lithuanian).
- 2010c *Return Home: AVRR Best Practices Study.*
- 2011 *Analysis of voluntary return assistance provided by IOM Vilnius since 2010* (in Lithuanian).

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- 1992a An international programme for assisted voluntary return of rejected Asylum-Seekers. Background paper for full round of consultations, 1992.
- 1992b Assisted return for rejected asylum-seekers: Some examples of implementation. Background paper for full round of consultations, 1992
- 1994 Return migration: Observations of the mandate and activities of IOM.
- 1999 *Joint Fact-finding Mission to Somaliland.*
- 2000a *International Workshop on Voluntary Return to Kosovo.*
- 2000b Irregular migration and return procedures in Central and Eastern Europe. In: *Journey of Hope or Despair.*
- 2000c *Nordic Conference on Somaliland – Final Report.*

- 2000d *Return and Reintegration Project for Unsuccessful Asylum-Seekers from Finland: Final Report.*
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- 2002a *IOM return programmes including vulnerable groups.*
- 2002b *The Return and Reintegration of Migrants to the South Caucasus: An Exploratory Study.*
- 2003a *Angola: Needs Assessment and Opportunities in Luanda.*
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- 2005 *Compilation of Best Practice in Return Management in Selected EU Countries and Romania.*
- 2010a *Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration.*
- 2010b *Practical Guide on Information Provision regarding Return and Reintegration in Countries of Origin* (part of Enhanced and Integrated Approach regarding Information on Return and Reintegration in Countries of Origin (IRRICO)).
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- 2009b *Understanding the Return and Reintegration Process of Afghan Returnees from the UK.*

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- 2009 *The Prospects of Assisted Voluntary Return among the Sudanese Population in Greater Cairo.*

Black, R.

- 2004 *Understanding Voluntary Return.*

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- 2006 Sustainable return in post-conflict contexts

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- 2010 Pay-to-go-schemes and other coercive return programs: Is scale possible?

Benattig, R.

- 1988 Le devenir des Algériens rentrés avec l'aide de réinsertion.

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- 2004 Theorizing return migration: A revisited conceptual approach to return migrants.
- 2008 Return of migrants to the MAGHREB countries – reintegration and development challenges.

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- 2008 *Return in Dignity, Return to What? Review of the Voluntary Return Programme to Afghanistan.*
- 2011 *Return in Dignity, Return to What? Review of the Voluntary Return Programme to Iraq.*

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ANNEX I

Overview of AVRR to countries of origin, 2000–2011*

Country of origin	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total
Afghanistan	73	1	557	609	777	1,192	1,018	628	514	981	1,308	834	8,492
Albania	433	876	747	976	831	777	619	414	173	205	224	85	6,360
Algeria	51	72	94	127	146	158	234	140	103	120	127	118	1,490
Angola	15	21	58	333	539	580	629	253	173	181	144	108	3,034
Antigua and Barbuda								1	4		2		7
Argentina	5	6	4	22	52	69	88	148	227	228	162	123	1,134
Armenia	546	435	603	584	708	508	441	289	376	276	377	504	5,647
Aruba											1		1
Australia	699	299	195	242	129	157	212	259	232	140	103		2,667
Austria	2	28		5	4	1	6	6	2	5	3	1	63
Azerbaijan	136	153	172	200	300	377	316	226	176	233	248	180	2,717
Bahamas						1	1						2
Bahrain		2						6	1	1	1	0	11
Bangladesh	39	12	30	35	45	149	121	97	262	127	226	126	1,269
Barbados									1		1	0	2
Belarus	76	175	186	302	345	259	184	130	80	101	120	281	2,239
Belgium			1		1			1	5	3	1	2	14
Belize						2	1					2	5
Benin	3	11	10	10	14	20	20	17	8	22	44	7	186
Bermuda		1											1
Bhutan												2	2
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	7	10	16	36	97	163	209	486	648	506	429	300	2,907
Bosnia and Herzegovina	8,840	2,087	1,981	1,640	1,381	468	317	140	86	149	146	221	17,456
Botswana				4	2		3	5	5	3	7	1	30
Brazil	58	149	169	469	889	1,200	1,776	2,304	2,331	2,637	2,448	1,903	16,333
Bulgaria	185	329	647	768	700	536	371	129	92	244	90	76	4,167
Burkina Faso	4	4	6	3	14	2	5	4	3	50	73	21	189
Burundi	7	24	5	12	10	9	16	23	22	22	38	103	291
Cambodia	2		12	10	3	15	12	2	1	4	11	15	87
Cameroon	28	14	19	26	57	73	96	87	58	175	107	111	851
Cape Verde	9	2	9	2	9	14	18	11	17	6	24	18	139
Central African Republic	1	1	2	2				10	1	11			28
Chad			2	2	3	8	7	1	1	4	4	16	48
Chile	14	17	22	48	74	88	83	92	126	147	163	113	987
China	92	72	124	348	320	401	443	488	544	1,019	1,276	873	5,999
Hong Kong				1	6	3	2	6	9	4	13	4	48
Taiwan								1	2	1	1		5
Colombia	50	51	62	103	156	144	176	184	122	177	278	207	1,710
Comoros (the)							2	1			1		4
Congo (the)	3	1		2	8	8	5	24	18	122	40	26	257
Costa Rica				1		3	15	17	21	29	11	12	109
Côte d'Ivoire	11	10	2	14	10	7	20	39	20	269	133	154	689
Croatia	1,404	2,406	3,934	1,693	808	108	80	60	59	51	44	42	10,689
Cuba	2	4	2	1	5	2	6	9	4	8	8	13	64
Cyprus		3		17	5	1	6	4	1		5		42
Czech Republic	365	338	474	572	108	75	10	24	37	32	9	7	2,051
Democratic Republic of the Congo (the)	28	21	29	53	60	63	111	86	81	121	74	82	809

Country of origin	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total
Denmark	2	3	1	2					1	1	1	8	19
Djibouti	3	5	2	2	1	4	1	1	1		1	3	24
Dominica						1	1	1	4	1	1		9
Dominican Republic	6	5	10	1	16	33	32	29	17	127	200	71	547
Ecuador	180	165	148	368	402	348	740	813	1,118	503	702	752	6,239
Egypt	43	28	34	67	100	83	136	66	77	74	100	93	901
El Salvador		4		4	14	12	14	27	29	21	81	19	225
Equatorial Guinea						2	3	2	2	1	4	4	18
Eritrea	13	21	19	15	25	17	20	9	14	9	7	11	180
Estonia	14	36	40	34	14	3		2			2	8	153
Ethiopia												1,127	1127
Fiji								2	16	6	14	16	54
Finland	3	1		1	2			1	1				9
France	9	3	3	2		5	3	28	7	2	2	6	70
Gabon			1			3		3	2	1	1	2	13
Gambia	1	4	7	11	18	14	16	85	28	61	50	56	351
Georgia	379	268	296	316	519	435	412	289	256	723	1,001	595	5,489
Germany	12	15	4	2	1	8	5	21	12	19	52	16	167
Ghana	23	26	38	55	152	157	157	146	205	345	192	226	1,722
Greece	9	3		5		2			1	2	2	3	27
Grenada							2				2		4
Guadeloupe	2												2
Guatemala		1	1	1	18	7	9	29	36	12	54	19	187
Guinea	33	21	21	27	64	70	66	97	80	146	110	161	896
Guinea-Bissau	164	12	4	3	4	9	7	8	6	14	9	15	255
Guyana		1	2	1		2	5	8	10	6	1	4	40
Haiti	7	2		1			3	1		2	6	1,211	1,233
Honduras				1	12	89	36	100	132	89	112	35	606
Hungary	58	49	54	57	57	31	9	29	24	54	38	30	490
India	146	115	128	111	158	265	342	320	455	511	700	515	3,766
Indonesia	12	14	17	36	56	68	107	94	137	158	232	175	1,106
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	580	1,068	841	1,016	1,016	899	737	530	430	475	223	431	8,246
Iraq	5	14	16	541	2,075	1,952	2,921	939	2,000	2,748	2,347	2,667	18,225
Ireland	1			2	4	3		1		9	6	10	36
Israel	15	70	31	92	60	57	53	47	33	32	23	39	552
Italy	8		2	7	5	5		1	3	4	1	26	62
Jamaica	2	1	1	7	9	36	105	84	101	85	56	14	501
Japan	4			1	1			3		3	2	2	16
Jordan	98	81	62	442	74	157	169	119	96	104	132	51	1,585
Kazakhstan	168	210	144	149	122	78	112	81	63	42	50	58	1,277
Kenya	13	11	6	24	23	27	75	39	59	71	69	53	470
Kuwait			6				5		1	1	1	0	14
Kyrgyzstan	81	107	78	81	96	65	73	48	66	51	40	80	866
Lao People's Democratic Republic (the)		1	2		1	1	4	4	1	2			16
Latvia	42	29	84	118	109	12	13	13	1	5	2	2	430
Lebanon	256	128	152	221	245	213	175	144	156	221	132	103	2,146
Lesotho	2	5						3	1	2		0	13
Liberia	1	1	3	3	7	12	22	6	8	23	10	19	115
Libya	3	3	2	26	51	35	61	38	39	26	22	27	333
Lithuania	89	155	111	144	112	19	15	2	6	2	8	12	675
Madagascar	1	2		1		1		1	10	2	1	5	24

Country of origin	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total
Malawi		1			6	5	32	37	34	71	110	38	334
Malaysia	1		1	2	5	33	11	24	56	91	91	44	359
Mali			1	2	4	225	12	132	83	317	215	55	1,046
Malta	4	5			1				1				11
Martinique	4												4
Mauritania	12			1	3	8	3	2	5	2	25	8	69
Mauritius			6	1	8	3	27	38	43	41	96	77	340
Mexico		2	1	3	2	7	17	84	24	22	55	20	237
Mongolia	74	149	242	269	245	338	436	337	322	1,932	774	632	5,750
Montenegro								38	43	32	56	29	198
Morocco	11	11	18	19	43	45	59	90	100	179	111	135	821
Mozambique	8	5	1		3	1	5	11	1	6		12	53
Myanmar	1			4	3	2	4	3	3	4	5	15	44
Namibia	7		3	1		1	5	13	22	30	12	2	96
Nepal	19	20	21	26	31	35	82	140	114	152	175	147	962
Netherlands	1	1		1	1	6		5	2		1	11	29
New Zealand		1	2	3	6	4	9	10	6	6	2	2	51
Nicaragua		1	1			7	8	54	39	392	279	14	795
Niger	8	4	18	20	59	58	40	29	111	127	190	15	679
Nigeria	86	55	81	158	297	349	394	369	407	762	807	623	4,388
Norway	3	2	2	2	4					8	9	5	35
Occupied Palestinian Territory	1	1			3	2	2	3	2			84	98
Oman								1					1
Pakistan	140	431	165	199	196	280	395	366	415	430	743	586	4,346
Panama			4	1	4		1	12	7	12	12	5	58
Papua New Guinea						1			1	16	13	31	62
Paraguay	1	1		3	10	14	12	38	72	72	52	74	349
Peru	27	51	22	19	23	64	56	149	134	123	96	149	913
Philippines	13	2	8	4	16	22	30	52	94	76	104	92	513
Poland	1,051	146	115	241	80	10	28	9	5	8	5	34	1,732
Portugal	1						1			4	1	2	9
Qatar									7	4	8		19
Republic of Korea			5	2			4	8	54	42	27	41	183
Republic of Moldova (the)	174	498	358	363	347	286	344	360	297	342	337	248	3,954
Reunion												1	1
Romania	233	255	331	332	377	434	379	107	74	90	91	198	2,901
Russian Federation	1,171	1,360	1,118	1,347	1,202	993	966	820	1,111	2,456	2,436	2,561	17,541
Rwanda	5	3	6	9	20	12	28	22	21	12	9	32	179
Saint Kitts and Nevis							1		1		2		4
Saint Lucia						1		5	3	1			10
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines					3	1	3			8	1		16
Samoa									1	1	1	1	4
Sao Tome and Principe	11	3	1		6	14	5	3	2	2	10	16	73
Saudi Arabia		2		2	2	1	4	10	1	2	1	1	26
Senegal	10	2	22	12	10	16	26	443	31	300	235	124	1,231
Serbia								1,359	1,172	588	1,639	2,921	7,679
Kosovo/UNSC 1244		25	115	7	31	21	23	26	140	1,727	1,984	1,569	5,668

Country of origin	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total
Serbia and Montenegro	88,543	10,542	3,698	7,205	4,472	3,282	2,150						119,892
Seychelles				2	8	4	2	11	2	2	12	1	44
Sierra Leone	3	13	12	21	34	47	46	27	42	44	26	25	340
Singapore				1	1		1		3	3	1	3	13
Slovakia	1,829	966	638	851	385	679	132	133	394	147	105	51	6,310
Slovenia	1	3		15			2			2	1	11	35
Solomon Islands									1			1	2
Somalia	10	15	19	23	46	51	69	24	7	1	1	1	267
South Africa	2	2	25	59	57	58	116	120	178	140	149	48	954
South Sudan												15	15
Spain		6	4	1	4	2	3	10	27	18	26	14	115
Sri Lanka	61	120	242	394	350	568	378	306	236	244	333	205	3,437
Sudan	19	40	30	65	122	134	418	336	505	69	72	66	1,876
Suriname	22	19	21	46	62	59	45	27	41	31	33	32	438
Swaziland							1	5	8	9	4		27
Sweden	7	2	5	3	3	8	3	8	3	1	2	8	53
Switzerland	7		2		1	1		2	1	2	1		17
Syrian Arab Republic	98	86	139	163	130	159	380	122	75	115	108	77	1,652
Tajikistan	75		256	1	1	3	3	10		14	38	74	475
Thailand	3		2	6	9	11	16	14	26	22	28	25	162
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	265	200	438	601	355	208	175	167	146	213	1,184	1,961	5,913
Timor-Leste	776									15	1		792
Togo	64	28	19	35	59	55	47	29	26	26	34	21	443
Tokelau				3									3
Tonga									1			6	7
Trinidad and Tobago					1	7	10	9	17	9	14		67
Tunisia	9	3	12	32	31	16	25	17	32	33	38	278	526
Turkey	1,048	739	827	1,111	1,367	1,105	1,033	610	476	438	408	384	9,546
Turkmenistan	1	2	4	1	4	1	3	4	3	32	226	18	299
Uganda	2	160	45	103	250	47	77	79	78	63	64	47	1,015
Ukraine	290	543	684	792	839	928	772	637	553	737	737	699	8,211
United Arab Emirates	5	13	7	3	2		3	2	43	3	8	0	89
United Kingdom	432	4	8	14	11	8	6	4	27	42	42	53	651
United Republic of Tanzania (the)												58	58
Uruguay	1	1		4	26	56	57	47	93	148	95	107	635
United States of America	1,285	694	152	212	166	81	95	82	53	57	106	76	3,059
Uzbekistan	44	60	73	91	66	33	52	43	35	402	73	148	1,120
Vanuatu								1				1	2
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	7	3	2	11	18	41	50	47	48	40	32	34	333
Viet Nam	162	139	244	391	419	394	401	292	205	600	356	371	3,974
Yemen	10	14	18	60	51	50	72	161	26	27	18	11	518
Zambia	1	1		2	4	2	11	12	14	15	40	20	122
Zimbabwe	6	3	7	40	65	118	259	199	171	233	264	90	1,455
Total	113,841	27,781	22,846	28,685	26,729	24,396	24,710	19,972	21,048	29,697	30,827	31,134	

* For practical purposes, regions and territories were included in this list.

ANNEX 2

Overview of AVRR from host countries, 2001–2011

Host country	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total
Albania											2	2
Australia		342	238	47	11	48	88	275	413	446	478	2,386
Austria	427	878	1,063	1,158	1,406	2,122	2,061	2,646	3,791	3,905	2,880	22,337
Azerbaijan					3	9	1	1	8	2		24
Belarus							9	42	69	88	88	296
Belgium	3,546	3,221	2,814	3,275	3,755	2,811	2,593	2,669	2,659	2,957	3,358	33,658
Bosnia and Herzegovina	78	141	374	211	244	58	233	16	157	237	164	1,913
Bulgaria									39	5	67	111
Czech Republic	635	617	297	315	312	399	214		2,224	214	202	5,429
Denmark			252	243	89	18	8	25	25	14	64	738
Dominican Republic									9	512	1,209	1,730
Egypt											54	54
Estonia										7	8	15
Ethiopia									801	1,765		2,566
Finland			122	77	41	35	38	37	228	265	304	1,147
Germany	12,851	11,691	11,588	9,893	7,448	5,757	3,437	2,799	3,107	4,480	6,338	79,389
Greece			7	13	14	82	59	53	0	337	598	1,163
Hungary	236	204	220	146	206	220	216	169	309	435	365	2,726
Indonesia				828	58	385	318	36	423	517	297	2,862
Iraq			5,127	329	648	381	358	328	42	9		7,222
Ireland	4	113	440	396	220	175	255	452	404	376	402	3,237
Italy	76	169	134	205	237	220	212	140	248	161	515	2,317
Kenya										49		49
Latvia	38	6							26	16	73	159
Lithuania	91	40			35	3	12	15		55	47	298
Luxembourg								16	38	104	101	259
Libya							84	1,484	1,460	1,000		4,028
Malaysia							1	8	3	15		27
Malta							1	1	24	41	28	95
Mexico					390	1,164	1,504	1,261	1,084	1,442	1,141	7,986
Morocco					254	51	892	210	1,119	501	440	3,467
Netherlands	1,733	2,205	3,019	3,779	3,513	2,924	1,552	1,767	2,582	3,064	3,473	29,611
Nicaragua											12	12
Niger											78	78
Norway		954	1,458	1,072	558	434	443	568	1,019	1,446	1,812	9,764
Papua New Guinea										2	5	7
Poland				10	86	412	743	962	1,565	1,627	1,149	6,554
Portugal	362	132	115	226	321	163	278	347	381	562	594	3,481
Republic of Moldova (the)									7	18	38	63
Romania						21	9	20	75	6	131	262

Host country	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total
Russian Federation											12	
Serbia	78	141	374	211	244	58	233	16	157	237		1,749
Slovakia	46	40	104	148	119	128	153	96	139	127	95	1,195
Slovenia											11	
Somalia									33			33
South Africa		4	32	25	49	135	159	185	322	151	197	1,259
Spain			199	393	379	527	1,170	1,519	1,136	889	823	7,035
Sweden			97	86	23	3	33	99	176	78	78	673
Switzerland	25	333	479	275	401	354	305	329	659	904	1,130	5,194
Timor Leste									9	3		12
Turkey										391	200	591
Uganda							141	240	40	214		635
Ukraine					19	40	49	116	130	14	159	527
United Kingdom	1,207	1,175	2,392	2,664	3,608	6,200	4,157	4,301	4,945	4,549	874	36,072
United Republic of Tanzania (the)						6	14	20	19	24	912	995
Yemen											128	
Zambia							7,323	9,692	16,825	9,230		43,070
Zimbabwe									330	335		665



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