

## AVRR from Belgium

The Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) programme offers a free return option for migrants, including asylum seekers and stranded migrants who have chosen to return to their country of origin. It is conducted by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), in close cooperation with governmental institutions, civil society, embassies and migrant communities, working together to uphold a comprehensive migration management system that is built on a voluntary return framework embodying human rights and dignity of migrants.

**Financed by:** The voluntary return and reintegration programme receives national and European funds, among which the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF).

**Coordination:** Fedasil, the Federal Agency for the reception of asylum seekers in Belgium, is responsible for the reception of applicants for international protection and other target groups and guarantees high-quality reception and conformity within the various reception structures. It also coordinates the voluntary return programme for migrants from Belgium to their country of origin.

**Partners:** In Belgium, IOM has developed an extensive network of partners covering the whole territory of Belgium. The voluntary return network consists of a combination of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), local authorities (cities and communes), governmental structures for reception of asylum seekers such as Fedasil, Red Cross reception centres, Caritas, migrant associations and the Immigration Office.



IOM Belgium and Luxembourg alongside its extensive network of partners continue to ensure that access to information and voluntary return activities are accessible to migrants during their stay in Belgium.

Reintegration assistance is also important to migrants during the return to their country of origin. This assistance is tailored to the needs of the returnees and comprises of different types of support such as the development of micro-business, training and education, renovation or housing needs, and referral to specialized services (e.g. medical follow-up, psychosocial support).

## Beneficiaries of the AVRR Programme

Voluntary return, unlike forced return, is done at the free and informed choice of migrants who require assistance to return to their country or origin.

The Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) can be requested by:

- Individuals whose application for asylum was rejected or withdrawn
- Stranded migrants
- Other vulnerable groups, including Unaccompanied Migrant Children, Victims of Trafficking or migrants with health-related needs.



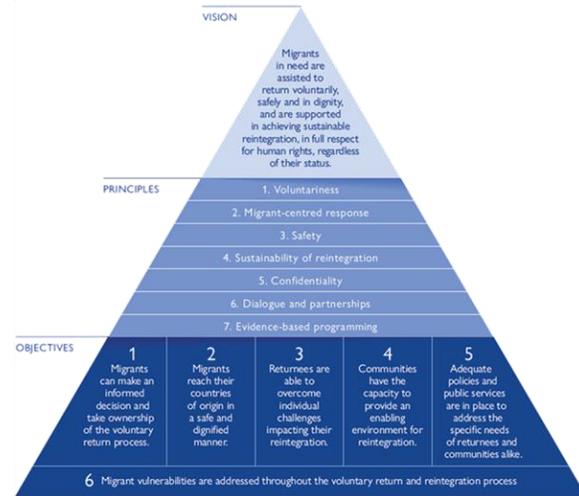
At any stage of the voluntary return process, migrants can change their decision to return to their country of origin. All organized voluntarily returns are done with strictest confidentiality in both Belgium and the country of origin.

## Vision, Principles and objectives of the AVRR programme

As a core activity of IOM, AVRR activities provide vital assistance to thousands of migrants every year. Building on experience and a world-wide network of offices and partners, IOM's AVRR programmes strive to ensure that migrants in need are assisted to return voluntarily, safely and in dignity, and are supported in achieving sustainable reintegration, in full respect for human rights, regardless of their status.

IOM's AVRR-related activities are guided by the Framework for Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration. The Framework outlines seven principles and six concrete objectives applied throughout the voluntary return and reintegration process. These principles and objectives underpin IOM's commitment to facilitate orderly, safe, and responsible migration and to contribute to migrants' socioeconomic well-being, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Global Compact for Migration and the Migration Governance Framework (MiGOF).

This project supports the implementation of the following Sustainable Development Goals



### COVID-19 RESPONSE

*In response to the global pandemic, IOM established the COVID-19 Return Task Force to strengthen the exchange between IOM missions to respond to COVID-19 related needs and to coordinate with stakeholders (partners, embassies, migrants, etc.). With the support of its partner organizations, IOM Belgium and Luxembourg have been able to provide ongoing support to migrants in Belgium and continued to organize return and reintegration support in a safe and dignified manner.*

## Return and reintegration assistance under the Belgian AVRR programme

Voluntary return aims to provide comprehensive care and support to migrants before their return by ensuring that they are provided with support from social workers who listen to their expectations and offer them guidance in their decision. Assistance can be:

- Information and counselling about voluntary return in the migrant's own language
- Logistical support to help prepare the journey, including flight ticket
- Assistance to obtain a travel document (in the case the need arises) as well as full reimbursement of associated costs by the IOM
- Assistance during departure, transits and arrival
- Financial assistance to cover immediate expenses when migrants arrive at their country of origin (onward transportation by bus, train, taxi, etc.)
- Additional support for unaccompanied minors, victims of trafficking and migrants with health needs
- Reintegration support



Counselling entails providing migrants with complete information about the journey home and what to expect in their country of origin upon arrival. This can extend to potential opportunities for reintegration support that aims to develop and support returnees with a long-term reintegration project in their country of origin.

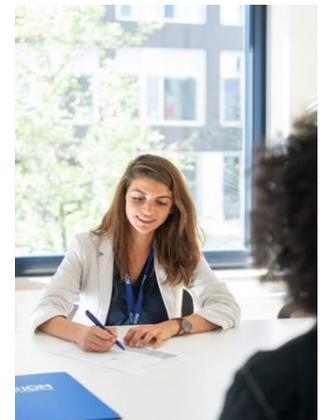
### Reintegration support

Reintegration assistance is designed to support a sustainable return and reintegration of migrants in their countries of origin and local communities. It comprises of different types of support such as the development of a micro-business, training and education, renovation or housing needs, referral to specialized services, medical assistance, and other possible types of assistance and referral.

IOM missions in countries of return assist returnees with the implementation of their individual reintegration plan and monitor the reintegration process on the longer term, in coordination with IOM Belgium.

### Pre-departure return and reintegration counselling

To ensure that migrants have the possibility to make an independent and well-informed decision, IOM and its return partners provide extensive pre-departure return and reintegration counselling. The aim of this counselling is to give accurate and objective information on the return and reintegration process whilst assessing the individual needs of the applicant.



For more information:

<https://belgium.iom.int/assisted-voluntary-return-and-reintegration-avrr>

IOM Belgium and Luxembourg  
Rue Montoyerstraat, 40, 1st Floor  
B-1000 Brussels  
T: +32 2 287 77 12 | E: [iombrussels@iom.int](mailto:iombrussels@iom.int)