

AVRR BULLETIN

ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMME (AVRR) IN WESTERN BALKANS



AS THE LEADING INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION IN THE AREA OF MIGRATIONS, IOM ACTS WITH PARTNERS IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO:

- Assist in meeting the growing operational challenges of migration
- Advance understanding of migration issues
- Encourage social and economic development through migration
- Uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants



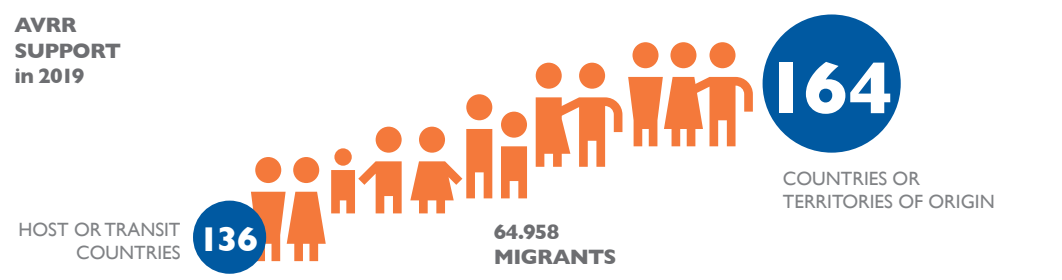
IOM programs aim to address irregular migrations, stop human trafficking, contribute to national development and assist the governments in managing migration activities. One of such programmes is the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR). IOM has been implementing this programme since 1979, outlining the value of AVRR as an essential pillar of migration management, and as a preferred option for migrants to return in a voluntary, safe, and dignified manner.

Assisted voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR) programmes provide administrative, logistical, financial support, including reintegration assistance, to migrants unable or unwilling to remain in the host/transit country and who decide to return to their country of origin.

AVRR PROGRAM WORLDWIDE

In 2018, AVRR support was provided to 63.316 migrants returning from 128 host or transit countries to 169 countries or territories of origin.

In 2019, a total of 64.958 migrants from 136 host countries returned to 164 countries or territories of origin.





It is important to emphasize that Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration programme is implemented through collaboration with governmental institutions and migrant communities, as an example of multi-sector approach to voluntary return and creating a comprehensive migration management system for the benefit of all stakeholders.

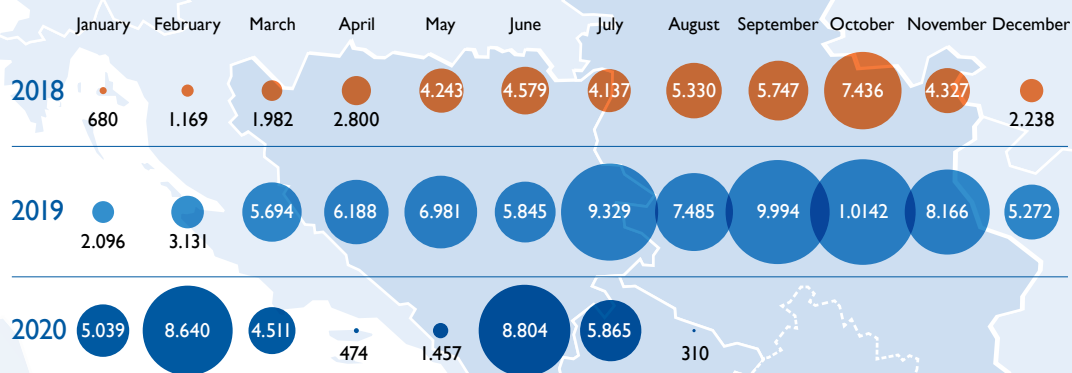
For those looking to return home, the AVRR programme project offers the following:

- Information and counseling on voluntary return in the migrant’s native language, as well as logistic and financial support in travel planning;
- Support in procuring the travel document and covering all expenses related to this process;
- Support at the airport upon arrival and, if necessary, during the transit and arrival;
- For the vulnerable categories, a monetary compensation is provided for reintegration, in order to cover expenses in the initial period upon return. The IOM office in the country of origin enables support that may be used for the purpose of education, initiating business or business investments, medical requirements or, if necessary, partial coverage of accommodation costs. Additional support is provided to specific categories of vulnerable migrants.

As part of its comprehensive approach to voluntary return, IOM recognizes that return and reintegration policies are more effective when linked with the protection of migrant rights and development of opportunities in the country of origin, particularly those policies that address the drivers of irregular and forced migration.

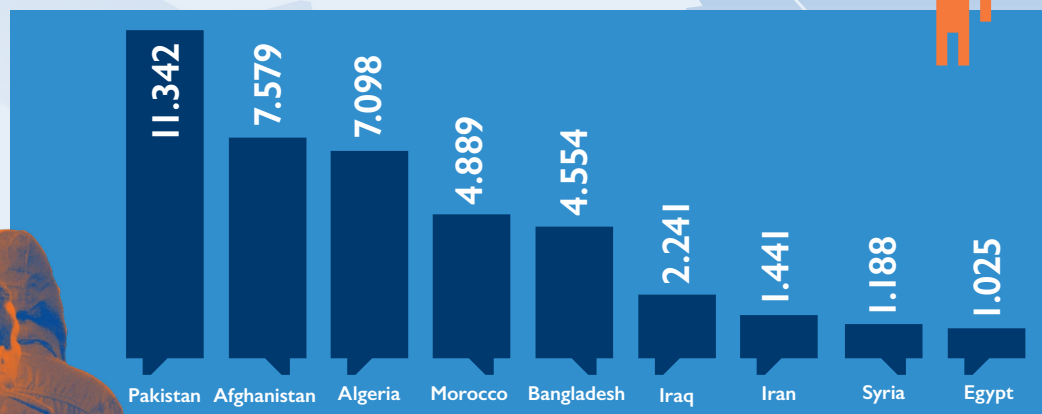
MIGRATION FLOW AND MIGRANT PRESENCE IN THE WB REGION

Reported arrivals for 2018–2020



Source: DTM IOM

Total number of informed migrants for 2019–2020 per country of origin

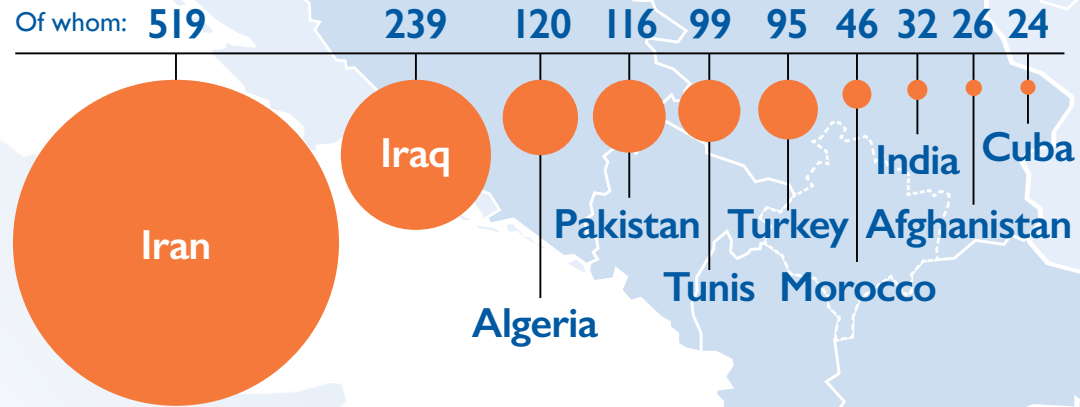


Source: IOM outreach database



The number of realized voluntary returns to countries of origin from 2018 to date

1448 RETURNEES - WESTERN BALKANS



The graph contains 2018-2020 data, excluding results for countries w/ below 20 returns.

Source: MiMOSA DATABASE IOM

INFORMATION CAMPAIGN ON AVRR PROGRAM AND RESPONSE TO COVID-19

As a part of the AVRR programme, an informatin campaign is implemented, aiming to additionally strengthen the presence of the assisted voluntary return and reintegration programme in the Western Balkans territory. The campaign messages are mostly sent through digital communication channels and are directed to migrants present in six Western Balkan beneficiaries.

The campaign aims to enable migrants with better access to AVRR programme, as well as provide an overall support and information provision for migrants in need, travelling through or currently residing in the Western Balkans territory.



The messages and visuals of the campaign are translated into the native languages of the migrants present in the Western Balkans region, namely Arabic, Bengali, Farsi, Pashto and Urdu.



Contact: IOM AVRR staff in orange jackets

Albania: +355 69 209 0152
 Bosnia and Herzegovina: +387 61 964 575
 Montenegro: +382 68 806 907
 Kosovo*: +383 38 600 521
 North Macedonia: +389 70 393147
 Serbia: +381 63 624 016

In parallel with the information campaign on AVRR, additional campaign is being implemented for provision of useful information, as response to COVID-19, with messages on prevention, protection, security measures and psychosocial support.

The communication strategy, primarily based on digital campaign, is using multiple web platforms for informing migrants, such as the app Support for Migrants www.supportformigrants.com and the AVRR website for the Western Balkans www.avrr-wb.com as well as advertising on Facebook, Instagram and Google ads.



On Return and Reintegration – online meeting for the Western Balkans

The AVRR virtual meeting was organized on July 1, 2020 and it reflected on the current status of the assisted voluntary return and reintegration in the Western Balkans.

The event outlined the main opportunities and challenges in the future, i.e. to streamline return process and reinforce links with Countries of Origin, to further embed the AVRR approach within beneficiaries' administrative structures, to reinforce the reintegration spectrum both at individual and community level. In order to strengthen return management, it is necessary to ensure the availability of assisted return and enable reintegration assistance in the EU countries, as well as reintegration assistance in Countries of Origin.

