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Section 4.15. Return of former applicants

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The EU legal framework on the return of former applicants for international protection falls within the remit of general immigration law. An effective and humane return of rejected asylum seekers is an integral part of a credible asylum system, as is the possibility to return to a country of origin voluntarily if an application for international protection is withdrawn. For the practical functioning of CEAS, returning a rejected asylum applicant effectively to the country of origin is essential, since an inability to return such a person in an efficient and sustainable way may corrode confidence in the system and stigmatise migration.

Return options include:

- Voluntary return and departure: when a person opts to withdraw a claim and voluntarily returns to the country of origin (voluntary return) or a person complies with a return decision (voluntary departure); and
- Forced return/removal: the return of persons who are required by law to leave but have not consented to do so and who are subject to coercion in order to carry out their removal.

In many cases, returnees can receive support under assisted return schemes prior to departure. In addition, reintegration support is available after arrival to the country of return in various forms.

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