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Countries continued their efforts to enhance voluntary returns through partnerships, reintegration programmes and personalised counselling to third-country nationals.

Belgium made substantial efforts to intensify voluntary returns. By 2022, 80 new staff members are expected to be recruited as return counsellors to organise interviews and information sessions with migrants and rejected asylum seekers living in private housing, who have recently received a return decision. This will enable proper and personalised information and assistance to be given, while minimising potential obstacles for the return.

At the beginning of 2021, the IOM and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Netherlands launched the Cooperation on Migration and Partnerships for Sustainable Solutions initiative (COMPASS).1270 The project is a global initiative in cooperation with 12 countries (Afghanistan, Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria and Tunisia), which adopts a whole-of-society approach to combating human trafficking and facilitating voluntary returns in a sustainable manner. The ICMPD aimed at supporting and further strengthening the newly-established National Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration mechanism in Turkey. This project will be implemented from 2021-2024 with financial support from the governments of Denmark, the Netherlands and Norway.1271

A new assisted voluntary return and reintegration programme was also launched in Hungary by the IOM. A similar approach was followed by Spain, which developed a voluntary return programme in collaboration with NGOs and the IOM. The EUR 3.9 million programme helped 1,501 persons to return to their country of origin.

The ”Migration Policy of the Slovak Republic: Perspective until 2025” sets the priorities for the coming years, with an emphasis on voluntary returns rather than forced returns.

The Swedish Migration Agency updated the list of countries whose citizens are eligible for reintegration assistance in cash when returning to these countries from Sweden. In addition, the government commissioned the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) to map Sweden's work with returns and sustainable reintegration.

- 1270International Organization for Migration. (2022, May 6). COMPASS. https://www.iom.int/compass
- 1271International Centre for Migration Policy Development. (2022, May 6). Supporting the Implementation and further Strengthening of Turkey’s National Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration System (NAVRR). https://www.icmpd.org/our-work/projects/supporting-the-implementation-and-further-strengthening-of-turkey-s-national-assisted-voluntary-return-and-reintegration-system-navrr

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