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4.15.3 Authorities responsible for the return procedure

In Denmark, a new government agency, the Return Agency (*Hjemrejsestyrelsen*), became operational under the Ministry of Immigration and Integration on 1 August 2020. With the aim to increase the return of rejected asylum applicants, the agency has taken over several tasks which were formerly carried out by the police and has partially taken over return counselling of rejected applicants which was previously outsourced to the Danish Refugee Council. Tasks related to forced returns will remain under the responsibility of the police, who will work closely with the newly-established agency.[1208]

In Austria, efforts towards fully setting up the BBU progressed in 2020. The responsibility for return counselling and return assistance shifted to the agency on 1 January 2021.[1209] Regional offices of the Czech Return Unit were established in Brno and in detention centres in Bělá–Jezová, Balková and Vyšní Lhoty.

[1208] Ministry of Immigration and Integration | Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet. (2020, April 15). *Regeringen opretter ny Hjemrejsestyrelse [The government establishes a new Return Agency]*. https://uim.dk/nyheder/2020/2020-04/regeringen-opretter-ny-hjemrejsestyrelse; Ministry of Immigration and Integration | Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet. (2020, June 25). *Tesfaye opsiger kontrakt med Dansk Flygtningehjælp om hjemrejserådgivning [Tesfaye terminates contract with Danish Refugee Council for return travel counselling]*. https://uim.dk/nyheder/2020/2020-07/tesfaye-opsiger-kontrakt-med-dansk-flygtningehjaelp-om-hjemrejseradgivning ; Danish Refugee Council Greece. (2021). *Input to the EASO Asylum Report 2021*. https://easo.europa.eu/sites/default/files/Danish-Refugee-Council-Greece_Input.pdf

[1209] Federal Ministry for the Interior | Bundesministerium für Inneres. (2020, December 1). *Bundesagentur für Betreuungs- und Unterstützungsleistungen startet am 1. Dezember 2020 [The Federal Agency for Reception and Support Services will start on 1 December 2020]*. https://bmi.gv.at/news.aspx?id=4B39496B4D4E57542F36383D

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