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4.15 Return of former applicants

While the rate of implemented returns of third-country nationals remained relatively low in many EU+ countries, a number of new legislative and policy initiatives were adopted in 2020 to improve the enforcement of returns and the cost-effectiveness of the return process. Some countries introduced more stringent rules on the obligation to cooperate, on the identification of people to be returned and on the timelines for announcing departures.

Countries also promoted voluntary returns and assistance and worked in greater cooperation with Frontex. Many developments concerned the implementation of returns with due consideration to the principle of non-refoulement and humanitarian aspects, including the dignified return of unaccompanied minors.

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