

2019

RETURN AND REINTEGRATION KEY HIGHLIGHTS



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Cover photo: The cover features Touareg women who are part of a community-based reintegration project in Bamako, Mali. © IOM 2018/Geoffrey REYNARD

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2019

RETURN AND
REINTEGRATION
KEY HIGHLIGHTS

FOREWORD

In 2019, return and reintegration, which form an integral part of human mobility, remained key topics in the national and international political agenda. Based on its longstanding experience, and following the 2018 release of *A Framework for Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration*¹ in 2019, IOM worked towards the operationalization of its integrated approach to reintegration² through the launch of the *Reintegration Handbook*,³ and the development of a related training curriculum. These tools provide practical guidance on the design, implementation and monitoring of reintegration assistance for IOM staff, policymakers and other reintegration practitioners globally.

To contribute to the dissemination of knowledge and good practices in the field of return and reintegration, in 2019 IOM also launched the Return and Reintegration Platform.⁴ The Platform was developed by the Knowledge Management Hub, established by IOM in 2017 and funded by the European Union under its Pilot Action for Voluntary Return and Sustainable, Community-Based Reintegration.

In 2019 IOM assisted 64,958 migrants to return voluntarily to their countries of origin. Interestingly, although this number is consistent with the number of migrants assisted in 2018, it also confirms the trends of a continued decrease of voluntary returns from the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland and a continued increase of assisted voluntary returns from regions outside the EEA and Switzerland, in particular West and Central Africa. In fact, for the first time since the inception of the assisted voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR) programmes, Germany was overtaken by the Niger as the main host country.

This year, the report also presents voluntary humanitarian return (VHR) figures. VHR, which is based on the AVRR approach, is provided to migrants in humanitarian contexts such as Libya and Yemen. In 2019, 15,263 migrants from Libya and Yemen benefitted from VHR assistance.

In parallel, IOM country offices continued to promote the sustainable reintegration of migrants through the provision of a wide range of services at the pre-departure and post-arrival stages, including reintegration counselling and economic, social, and psychosocial assistance at the individual, collective and community levels. In total, 126,442 reintegration assistance services were provided by 112 IOM country offices.

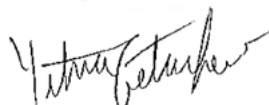
This publication showcases some of the most significant global, regional and national initiatives of IOM. The report is structured along six chapters: the first chapter presents an overview of current AVRR global trends, which are further elaborated by region in the second chapter. The third chapter covers VHR. The fourth and fifth chapters then specifically present reintegration assistance provided to returnees at the global and regional levels. Albeit non-exhaustive, the last chapter features some key IOM global, regional and national initiatives in the area of return and reintegration.

We wish you a pleasant reading.



Renate Held

Director, Department of Migration Management, IOM



Yitna Getachew

Head, Migrant Protection and Assistance Division, IOM

1 The document is available at www.iom.int/sites/default/files/our_work/DMM/AVRR/a_framework_for_avrr_online_pdf_optimized_20181112.pdf.

2 See www.iom.int/sites/default/files/our_work/DMM/AVRR/Towards-an-Integrated-Approach-to-Reintegration.pdf.

3 The Handbook is available at https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iom_reintegration_handbook.pdf.

4 See <https://returnandreintegration.iom.int/en>.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AVRR	assisted voluntary return and reintegration
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
DEVCO	DG DEVCO, The European Commission's Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development
EEA	European Economic Area
EHA	East and Horn of Africa
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NGO	non-governmental organization
PARA	post-arrival reintegration assistance
SEECA	South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia
UASC	unaccompanied and separated children
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VHR	voluntary humanitarian return
VoT	victim of trafficking
WCA	West and Central Africa

Ahmed, a returnee from Libya, was in detention for two years before he decided to return home. "My mother kept crying and begging me to come home," he said. "I was too proud to come back after having failed to reach Europe, but my friends and family were very supportive. I now have a small business and hope to grow it. It is challenging to make a decent living here, but it is better than being stuck in a detention centre with no future."

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INTRODUCTION AND KEY CONCEPTS

1 | Return and reintegration

Return migration is an integral part of human mobility. **Return is the act or process of going back or being taken back to the point of departure. It is also often associated with the process of going back to one's own culture, family and home. This could be within the territorial boundaries of a country, as in the case of a person who has been internally displaced returning home, or across international boundaries, between a host country and a country of origin.** This might be the case for regular or irregular migrants, refugees or asylum seekers.

Reintegration is generally understood as a multidimensional process enabling individuals to re-establish the economic, social and psychosocial relationships needed to maintain life, livelihood and dignity and achieve inclusion in civic life (IOM, 2019a). In recent years, there has been greater recognition of the challenges that confront returning migrants. There is more awareness of the need for support to make reintegration sustainable and beneficial for returnees and their families and for their communities and countries of origin (IOM, 2019a).

1.1. Assisted voluntary return and reintegration⁵

IOM AVRR programmes provide a human rights-based, migrant-friendly and cost-effective option to migrants whose journey had often taken a different route than what was initially expected and who desire or need to return home but lack the means to do so. For this reason, AVRR is an integral part of a comprehensive approach to migration management.

As per the IOM *A Framework for Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration*, AVRR programmes are guided by an objective, seven key principles as well as six objectives to be applied throughout the voluntary return and reintegration process.

AVRR programmes aim to provide administrative, logistical and 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. They are often implemented in cooperation with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and diaspora communities. Beneficiaries of the IOM AVRR programmes may include stranded migrants in host or transit countries, irregular migrants, regular migrants, and asylum seekers who decide to not pursue their claims or who are found not to be in need of international protection. AVRR assistance can also be provided to migrants in vulnerable situations (such as victims of trafficking (VoTs), unaccompanied and separated children (UASC), and/or migrants with health-related needs), for whom strict safeguards are applied throughout the whole return and reintegration process.⁶

5 It should be noted that the acronym AVRR is used throughout although the level of reintegration assistance varies from programme to programme.

6 For more information, please see objective 6 of the IOM *A Framework for Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration* (pp. 17–19) as well as the IOM *Reintegration Handbook*.

1.2. Voluntary humanitarian return

More recently, the AVRR approach has also found application in humanitarian settings, such as Yemen and Libya, in the form of voluntary humanitarian return (VHR). VHR often represents a life-saving measure for migrants who are stranded or in detention. Similar to AVRR principles and objectives, the IOM approach to VHR is based on the respect of migrants' rights, including the right to return, and the provision of timely, unbiased and reliable information on the return and reintegration process to ensure migrants can make an informed decision on whether to return or not. It is also accompanied by vulnerability and medical screenings to ensure appropriate safeguards are put in place throughout the whole return and reintegration process.

1.3. Sustainable reintegration

While there is no universally agreed definition of sustainable reintegration, as part of its integrated approach to reintegration (IOM, 2017), IOM defines sustainable reintegration as follows:

Reintegration can be considered sustainable when returnees have reached levels of economic self-sufficiency, social stability within their communities and psychosocial well-being that allow them to cope with (re)migration drivers. Having achieved sustainable reintegration, returnees are able to make further migration decisions a matter of choice, rather than a necessity.

IOM asserts that reintegration support can only be successful if there is a level of re-inclusion across the economic, social and psychosocial dimensions. Hence, the Organization, in coordination with a wide range of government and non-governmental stakeholders, intervenes at different levels in its reintegration programmes:

- At the **individual level**, it focuses on addressing the specific needs and vulnerabilities of returnees (and when relevant, family members or households).
- At the **community level**, it addresses the needs, vulnerabilities and concerns of communities to which migrants return, including families and the non-migrant population.
- At the **structural level**, the Organization implements initiatives that seek to promote good governance of migration through engagement with local and national authorities and stakeholders as well as support continuity of assistance through adequate local public services (IOM, 2019a).

More specifically, in this report, reintegration assistance builds upon three levels of assistance across the economic, social and psychosocial dimensions:

- The **economic dimension** covers aspects of reintegration that contribute to re-entering the economic life and sustained livelihoods.
- The **social dimension** addresses returning migrants' access to public services and infrastructure in their countries of origin, including access to health, education, housing, justice and social protection schemes.
- The **psychosocial dimension** encompasses the reinsertion of returning migrants into personal support networks (friends, relatives, neighbours) and civil society structures (associations, self-help groups, other organizations and civic life generally). This also includes the re-engagement with the values, ways of living, language, moral principles and traditions of the country of origin's society.

1.3.1. Post-arrival reintegration assistance

Reintegration assistance is equally relevant to those migrants who are assisted to return through programmes considered as voluntarily by other stakeholders or are forcibly returned by governments and who may find themselves in a vulnerable situation due to extended periods of time spent abroad, lack of preparedness before return and stigmatization linked to deportation. These migrants, and the communities to which they return, need post-arrival support through comprehensive reintegration assistance. For this reason, under very specific conditions, IOM, in cooperation with the governments of both origin and host countries, has also been providing post-arrival reintegration assistance (PARA) to migrants returned by other actors, voluntarily or involuntarily, after they were formally admitted to their countries, that is, after the process of return concluded.

However, it should be noted that IOM strongly believes that voluntary returns should be the preferred option and should be promoted over forced returns, as it gives migrants a choice and allows them to prepare for their return, thus positively impacting their reintegration process.

This report provides an overview of reintegration assistance provided by IOM under either AVRR, VHR or PARA programmes.

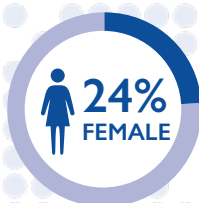
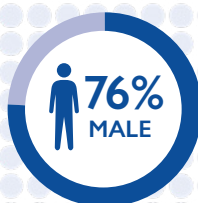
2019 AT A GLANCE

Assisted voluntary return and reintegration

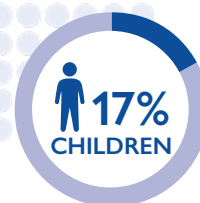
Migrants assisted

64,958

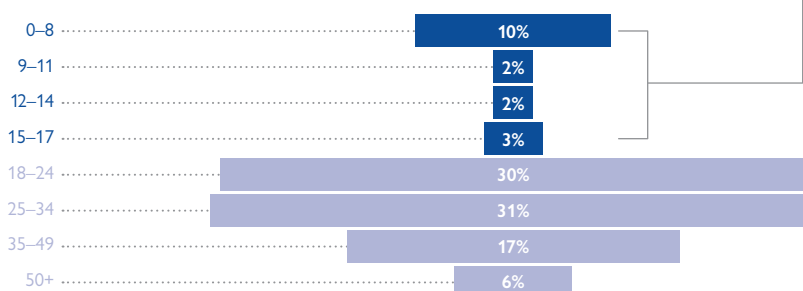
| Sex breakdown



| Percentage of children

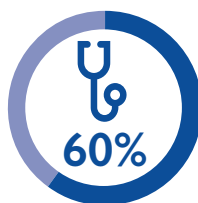
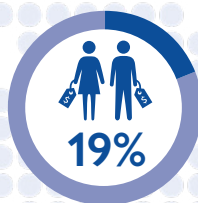
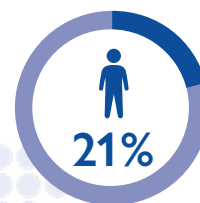


| Age breakdown

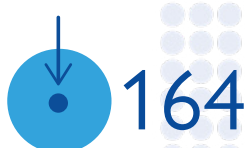


Migrants in vulnerable situations

4,943

Migrants with
health-related needsIdentified victims
of traffickingUnaccompanied and
separated children

Number of host countries



Number of countries of origin

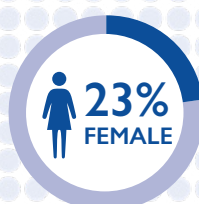
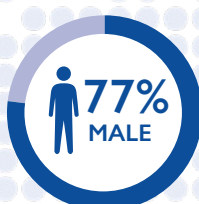
Number of countries that are both
host countries and countries of origin

Voluntary humanitarian return

Migrants assisted

15,263

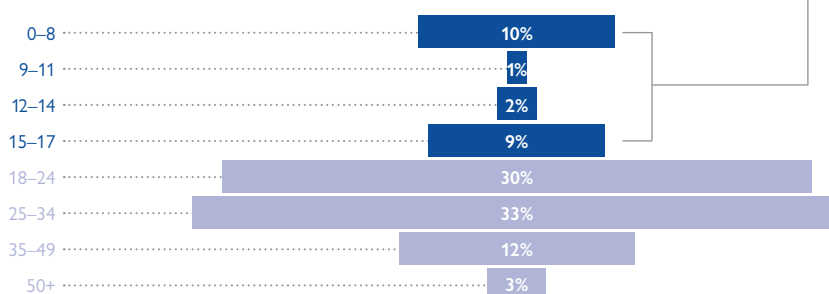
| Sex breakdown



| Percentage of children

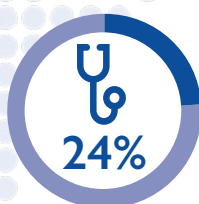


| Age breakdown



Migrants in vulnerable situations

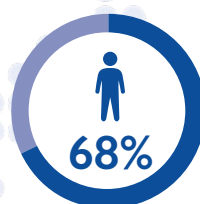
2,051



Migrants with
health-related needs



Identified victims
of trafficking



Unaccompanied and
separated children



Number of host countries



Number of countries of origin

Reintegration

126,442

Number of services
provided

Number of IOM country offices
involved in reintegration activities

112

| Pre-departure or post-arrival reintegration assistance provided



Pre-departure



Post-arrival

| Reintegration assistance provided directly by IOM or through referral

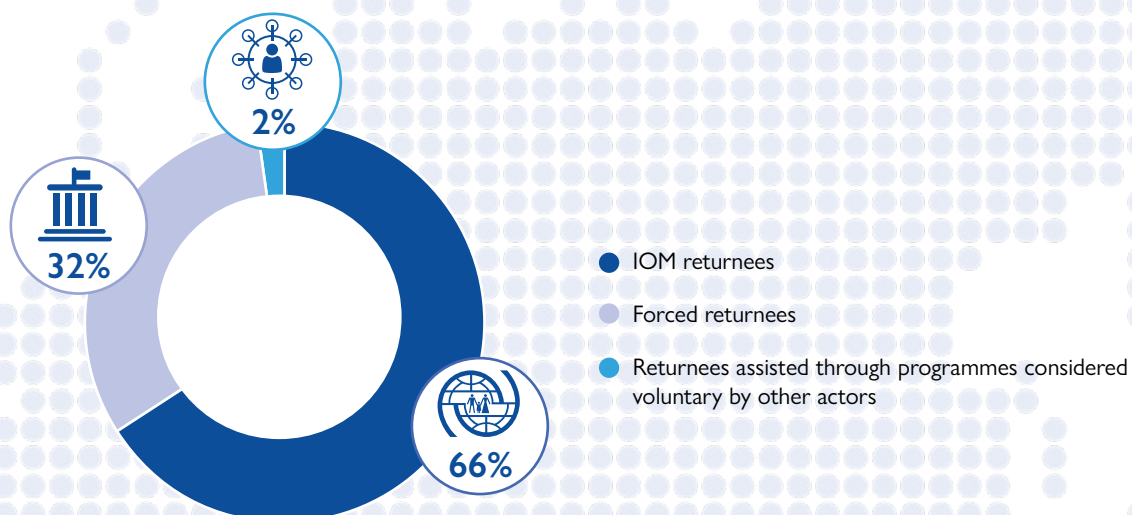


Direct assistance

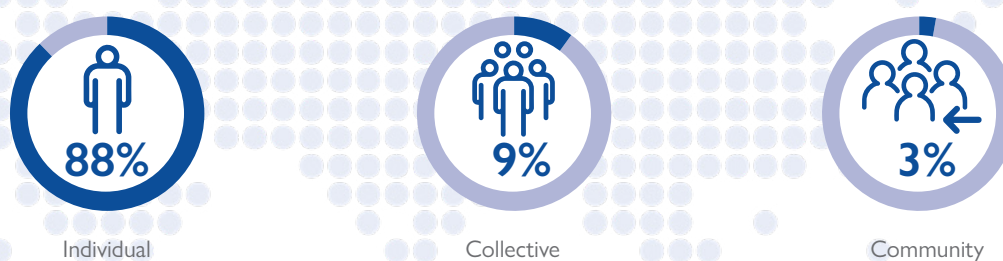


Referral

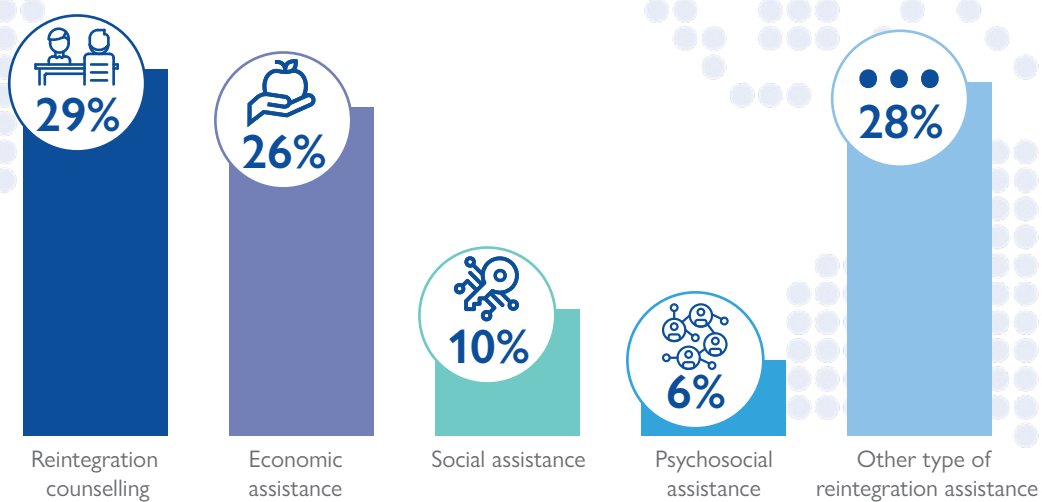
| Types of returns



| Levels of assistance



| Types of services provided



CHAPTER 1

Assisted voluntary return and reintegration overview 2019



Departure of the assisted voluntary return and reintegration programme beneficiaries from Brussels airport. © IOM 2019 /Wouter Van VAERENBERGH/FEDASIL

1.1. Assisted voluntary return: Main trends

The number of **migrants assisted to return increased slightly by 2.6 per cent**, from 63,316 in 2018 to 64,958 in 2019.

There is a **growing trend of increased AVRR from transit countries** like the Niger and Djibouti as opposed to AVRR from the European Economic Area (EEA) region, Germany, Greece and Austria.

For the first time, Germany was overtaken by **the Niger** as the **main host country**.

In 2019, **44.6 per cent of AVRR beneficiaries returned within the same region** (compared to 37% in 2018). Migrants assisted to return within West and Central Africa (WCA) alone accounted for 64.4 per cent of such flows (68% in 2018), also mainly due to increased assisted voluntary returns from the Niger.

The **number of host countries increased** from 128 to 136 in 2019. However, the **number of countries of origin decreased** from 169 to 164. In the same year, 123 countries were both host countries and countries of origin.

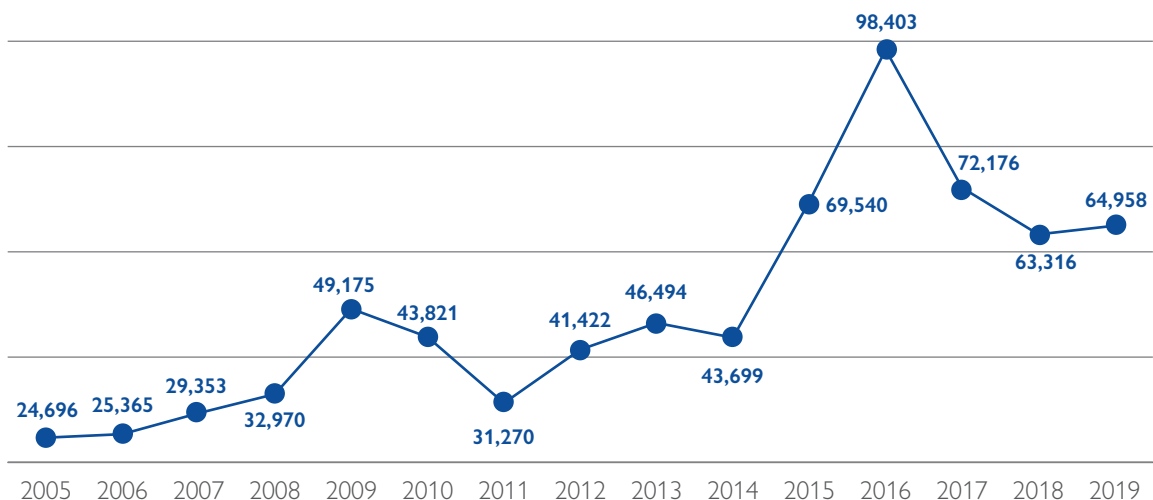
Ethiopia experienced 27 per cent increase in the number of voluntary returns, making it the **largest country of origin**.

Iraq dropped from being the **largest country** of origin in 2018 to the fourth largest country of origin in 2019, recording **29 per cent decrease**.

The **number of migrants in vulnerable situations** assisted to return to their countries of origin **continued to increase** in 2019.

Assisted voluntary return and reintegration throughout the years

Number of assisted voluntary return and reintegration beneficiaries, 2005–2019



Breakdown of beneficiaries by sex and age

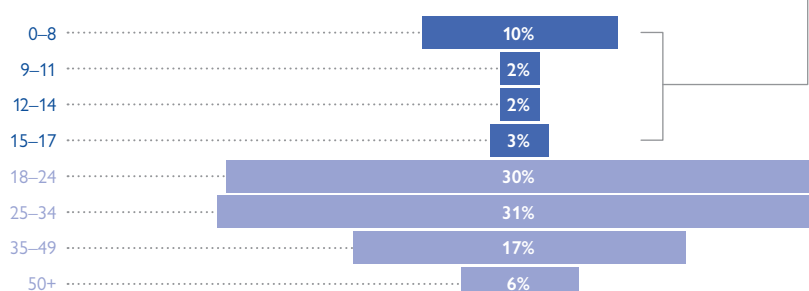
| Sex breakdown



| Percentage of children



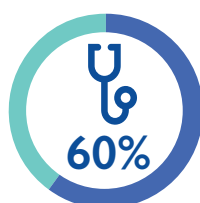
| Age breakdown



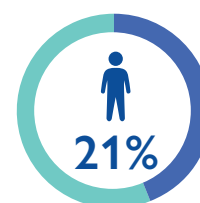
Beneficiaries identified as migrants in vulnerable situations



Identified victims
of trafficking

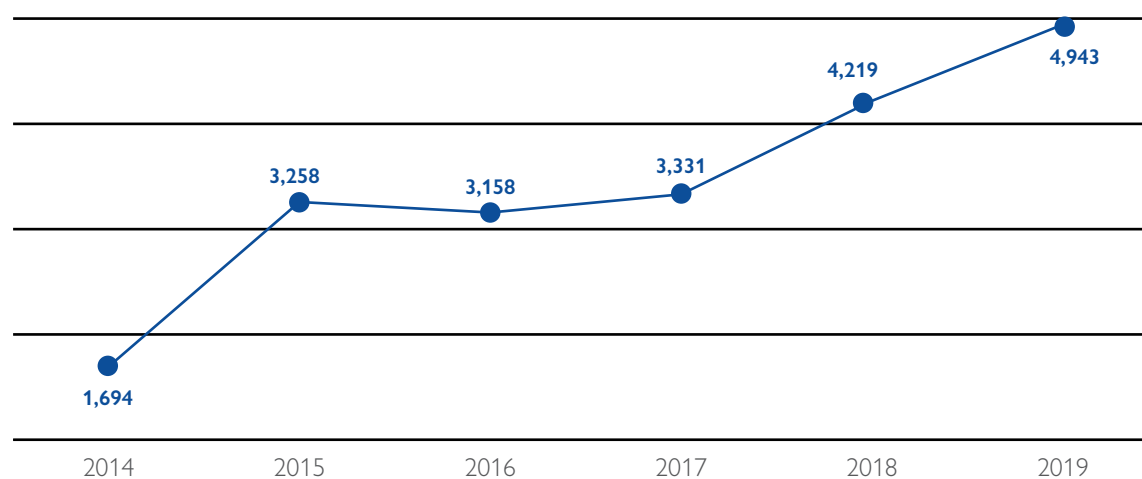


Migrants with
health-related needs

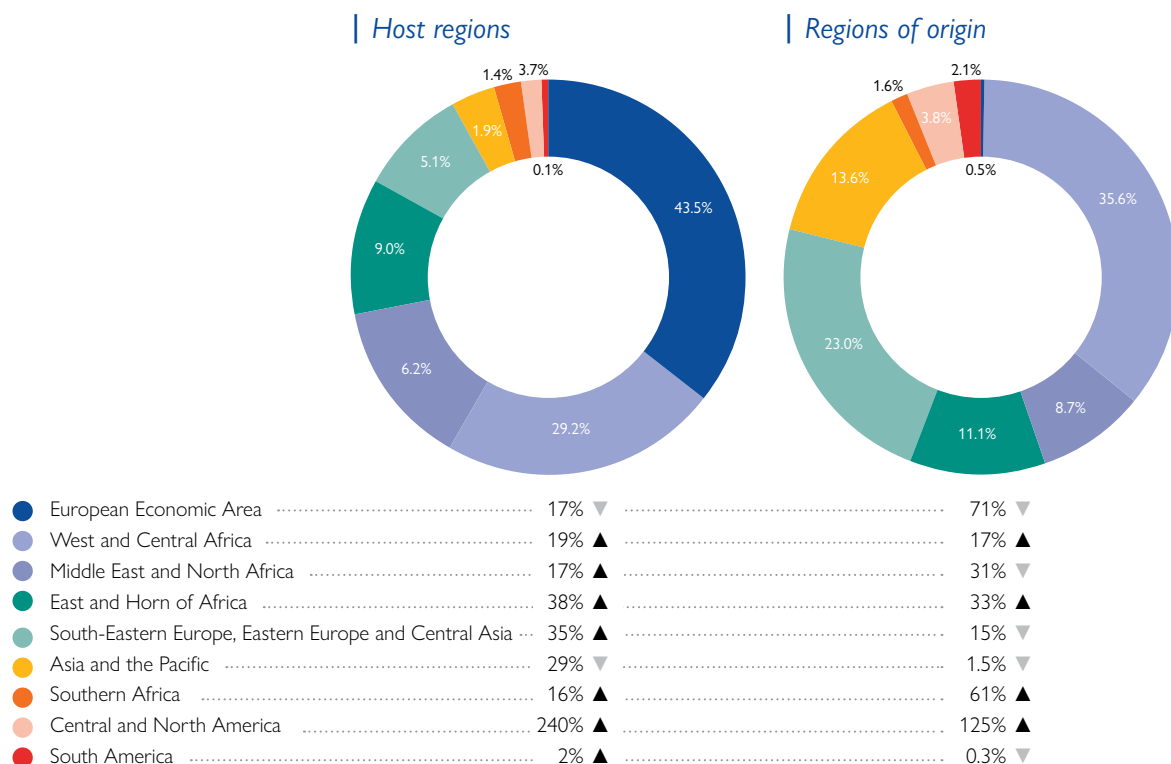


Unaccompanied and
separated children

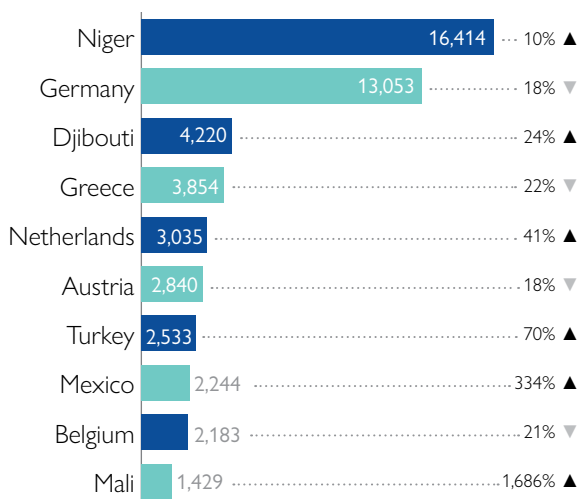
Migrants in vulnerable situations assisted through voluntary return and reintegration, 2014–2019



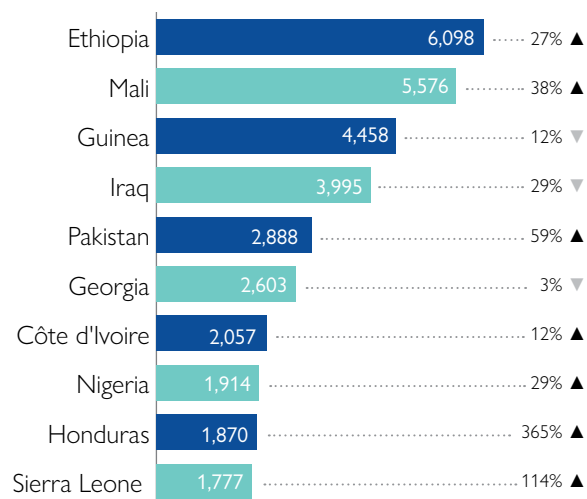
Host and origin regions for assisted voluntary return and reintegration, 2019



Top 10 host/transit countries for assisted voluntary return and reintegration, 2019



Top 10 countries of origin for assisted voluntary return and reintegration, 2019



Dialogue and/or capacity-building activities on return management



Fifty-eight IOM country offices facilitated dialogue and/or capacity-building activities on return management. These activities focused, among others, on legislative review, adoption of guidelines, set-up of interministerial committees, establishment of a referral mechanism, and capacity-building on return assistance and returnees' vulnerabilities and needs.

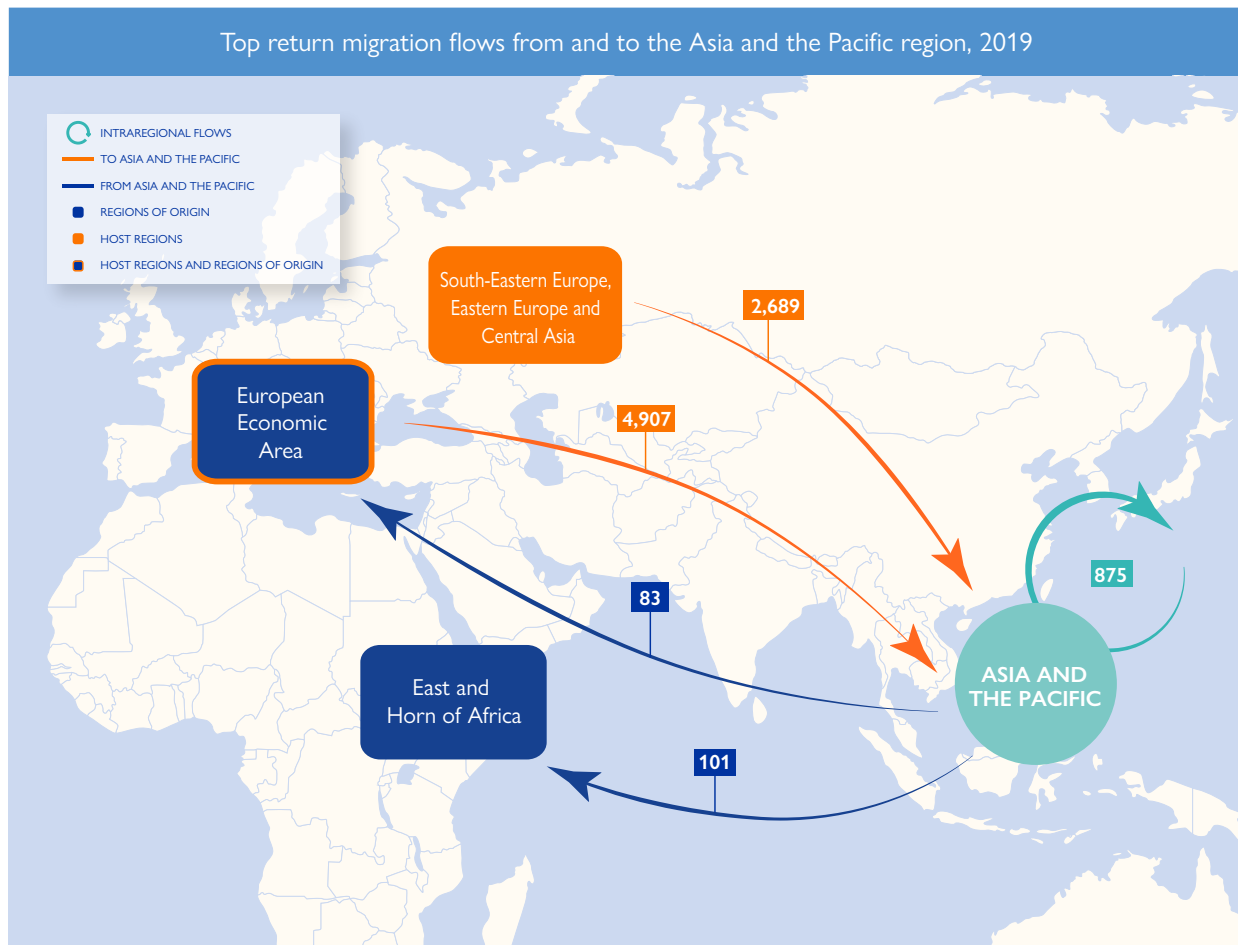
CHAPTER 2

Assisted voluntary return and reintegration regional highlights



An IOM official assists a wounded returnee migrant from Libya in Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka. IOM, in close coordination with the Government of Bangladesh, supports his return to his home country safely through the Voluntary Humanitarian Return and Reintegration programme. © IOM 2019/Md Sariful ISLAM

2.1. Asia and the Pacific



Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

Asia and the Pacific is home to the largest share of the world's population, including 45 per cent of the world's youth, and contains 17 of its 31 megacities. An estimated 77.2 million people born in the region now live outside of their countries of origin. The majority of the people live in neighbouring countries within the region, but migrants from the region are also an increasingly significant proportion of migrant populations elsewhere. Regional connectivity and regional integration are contributing to greater mobility. Temporary, circular and irregular migration is widespread in the region, with almost half of the migrants being women. Migrants are predominantly semi- and low-skilled workers in informal sectors looking for work, and the region also experiences complex mixed migration flows, including asylum seekers, stateless persons, and people displaced by conflict, natural disasters and/or environmental change.

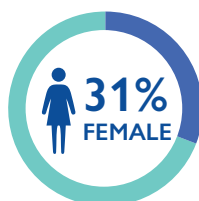
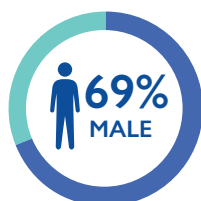
► Assisted voluntary return and reintegration *from* Asia and the Pacific

Migrants assisted to return from Asia and the Pacific

1.9%
of the total
caseload
of AVRR

1,230

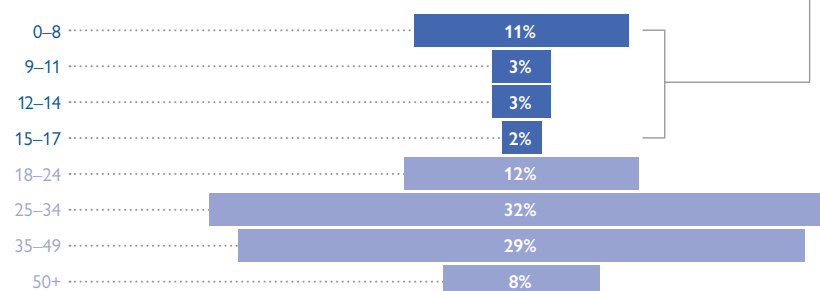
| Sex breakdown



| Percentage of children

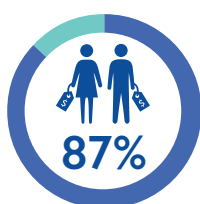


| Age breakdown

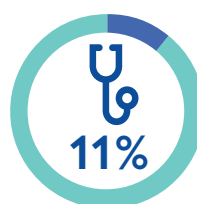


Migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to return from Asia and the Pacific

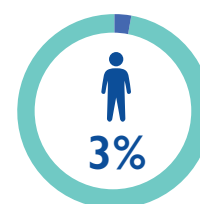
191



Identified victims
of trafficking



Migrants with
health-related needs



Unaccompanied and
separated children

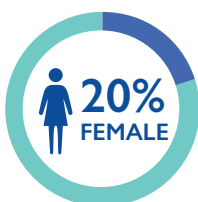
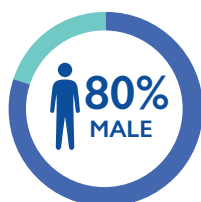
Top 5 host countries in 2019/2018, with number of migrants assisted

2019		2018	
Australia	689	Australia	821
Indonesia	266	Indonesia	465
Vanuatu	85	Thailand	207
Thailand	37	Malaysia	80
Malaysia	34	Philippines	12

► Assisted voluntary return and reintegration to Asia and the Pacific

Migrants assisted to return to Asia and the Pacific

| Sex breakdown



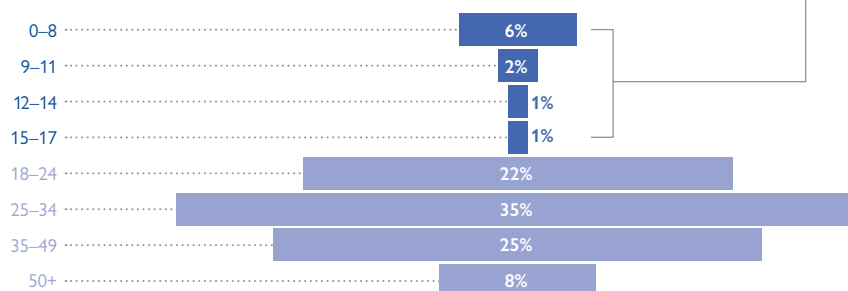
| Percentage of children



13%
of the total
caseload
of AVRR

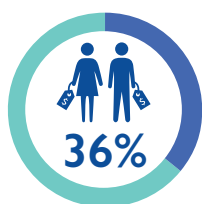
8,717

| Age breakdown

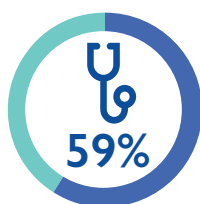


Migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to return to Asia and the Pacific

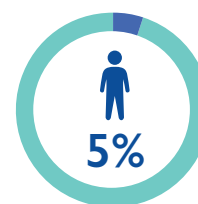
494



Identified victims
of trafficking



Migrants with
health-related needs



Unaccompanied and
separated children

Top 5 countries of origin in 2019/2018, with number of migrants assisted

2019

2018

Pakistan

2 888

Afghanistan

2 232

Afghanistan

1 477

Pakistan

1 817

Islamic Republic of Iran

1 327

Islamic Republic of Iran

1 510

India

527

India

689

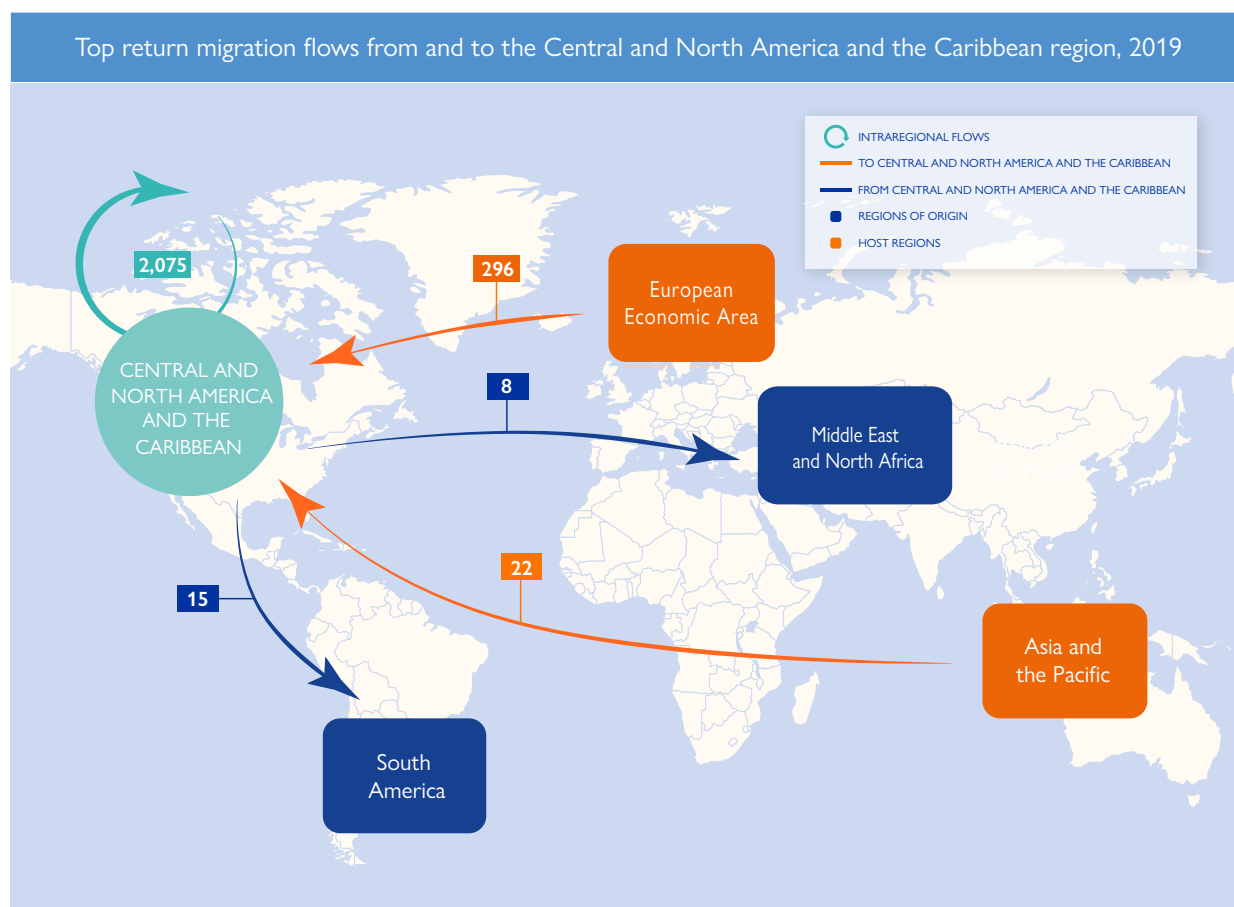
China

521

Sri Lanka

505

2.2. Central and North America and the Caribbean



Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

The region of Central and North America and the Caribbean (CNAC) is one of diverse and historic migration flows, with 70.3 million international migrants, around half of whom are women, according to the latest data from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. While migration fuels the development of many countries in the region, including through high levels of remittances sent home by workers abroad, the region is also home to large flows of irregular migration. Migrants transiting irregularly through Central America and Mexico towards the United States and Canada have a perilous journey, risking violence, exploitation and abuse at the hands of criminal networks. Many of those who manage to reach the United States arrive irregularly, without documentation or legal status and are therefore detained and returned to their countries of origin. AVRR remains a priority for governments in the region, a topic discussed for example in the context of the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM). The majority of returns continue to be forced returns by governments in the region, such as by the United States and Mexico: 251,778 migrants were deported back to the Northern Triangle of Central America in 2019 by these two countries, according to official statistics (NTMI, 2019). As a result, programmes in countries of origin to receive and reintegrate returnees are particularly important. There is great diversity of movements in the region (south–north, south–south, interregional, extraregional) as well as varying conditions of these migration processes, ranging from irregular migration under dangerous conditions to formal migration of highly qualified workers. Migrants' profiles themselves are diverse, and the flows in the region are dynamic.

► Assisted voluntary return and reintegration *from* Central and North America and the Caribbean

Migrants assisted to return from Central and North America and the Caribbean

3.7%
of the total
caseload
of AVRR

2,394

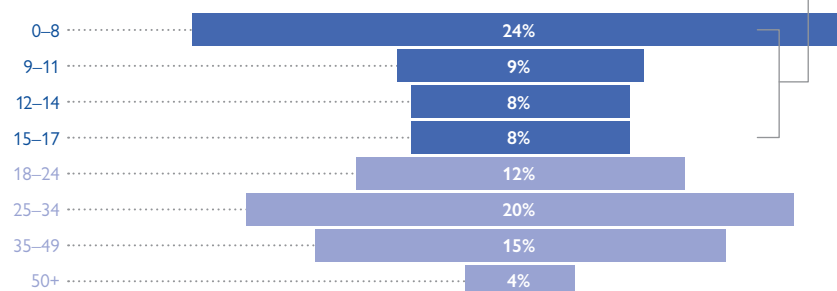
| Sex breakdown



| Percentage of children

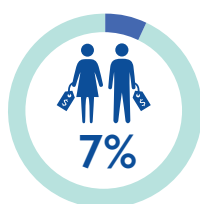


| Age breakdown

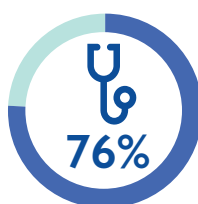


Migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to return from Central and North America and the Caribbean

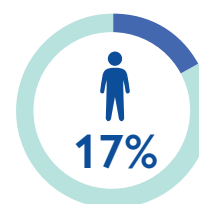
467



Identified victims
of trafficking



Migrants with
health-related needs



Unaccompanied and
separated children

Top 5 host countries in 2019/2018, with number of migrants assisted

2019		2018	
Mexico	2 244	Mexico	571
Guatemala	57	Cuba	84
Dominican Republic	24	Guatemala	73
Panama	20	United States	9
Honduras	16	Panama	7

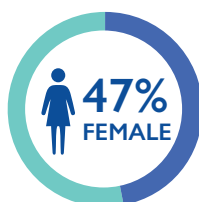
► Assisted voluntary return and reintegration **to** Central and North America and the Caribbean

Migrants assisted to return to Central and North America and the Caribbean

4%
of the total
caseload
of AVRR

2,447

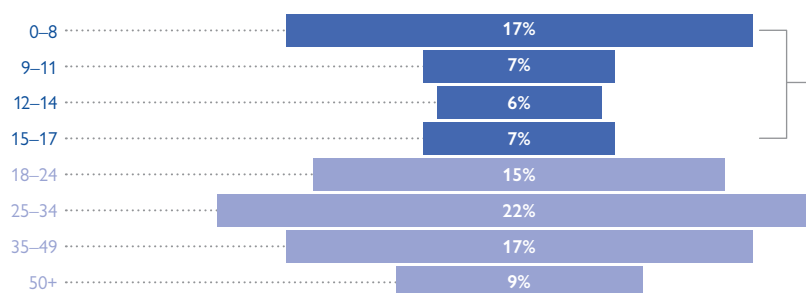
| Sex breakdown



| Percentage of children



| Age breakdown

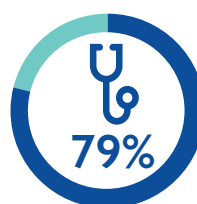


Migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to return to Central and North America and the Caribbean

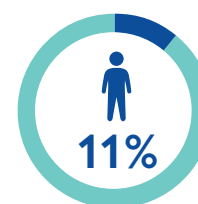
412



Identified victims
of trafficking



Migrants with
health-related needs

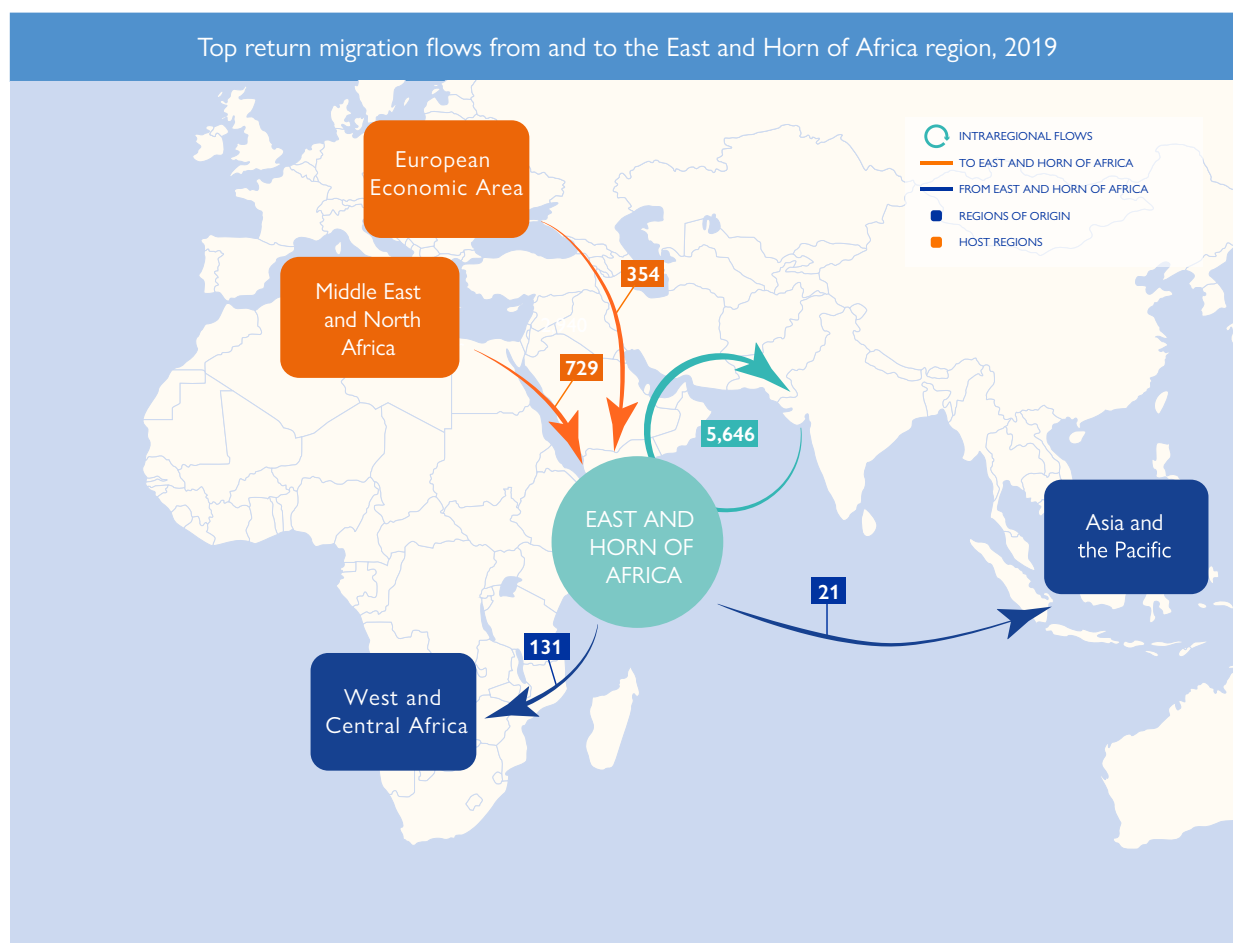


Unaccompanied and
separated children

Top 5 countries of origin in 2019/2018, with number of migrants assisted

2019		2018	
Honduras	1 870	Honduras	402
United States	189	El Salvador	244
El Salvador	158	Haiti	78
Mexico	55	Cuba	75
Suriname	34	United States	71

2.3. East and Horn of Africa



Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

Migration in the East and Horn of Africa region is characterized by mixed migration flows and underpinned by multiple drivers, including socioeconomic factors, conflict and political instability. Migrant smuggling is particularly prominent in the region as people use the services of smugglers to reach their intended destinations. The Middle East, Europe and Southern Africa are the three major destinations for migrants from Eastern Africa, who use four main routes, including the western route via Sudan, into Libya and across the Mediterranean; the northern route via Egypt to Israel; the southern route down the Eastern Corridor towards South Africa; and the eastern route transiting through Yemen to Saudi Arabia and beyond. Most migrants from the East and Horn of Africa originate from Ethiopia and Somalia (IOM, 2018b). As an increasing trend, migrants become more frequently stranded in transit countries, including in some cases by being detained for illegal entry. In 2019, the IOM AVR has been an instrumental element in assisting many of the most vulnerable migrants stranded en route, including many children and migrants with health-related needs.

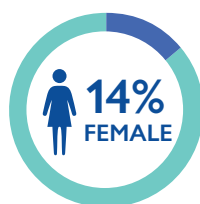
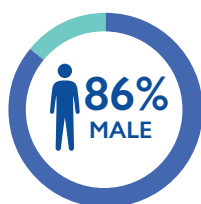
► Assisted voluntary return and reintegration *from* the East and Horn of Africa

Migrants assisted to return from the East and Horn of Africa

9.1%
of the total
caseload
of AVRR

5,826

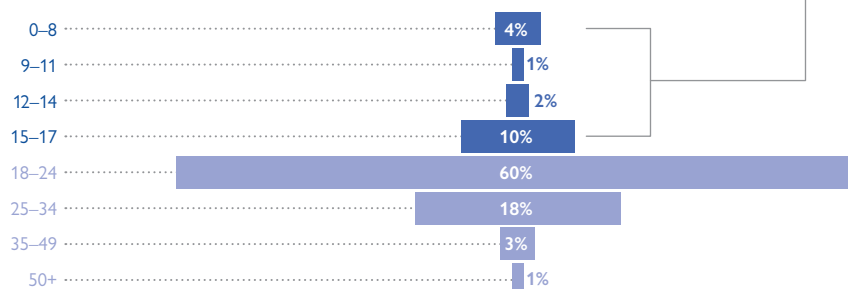
| Sex breakdown



| Percentage of children



| Age breakdown

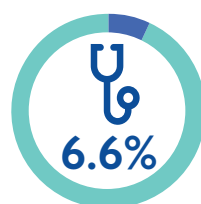


Migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to return from the East and Horn of Africa

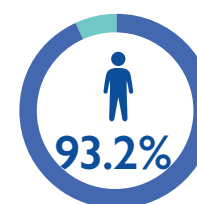
666



Identified victims
of trafficking



Migrants with
health-related needs



Unaccompanied and
separated children

Top 5 host countries in 2019/2018, with number of migrants assisted

2019		2018	
Djibouti	4 220	Djibouti	3 392
Somalia	691	United Republic of Tanzania	531
Sudan	559	Somalia	225
United Republic of Tanzania	290	Kenya	25
Kenya	31	South Sudan	21

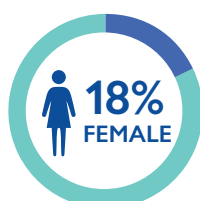
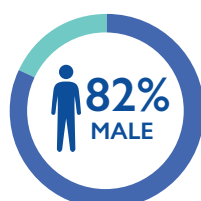
► Assisted voluntary return and reintegration **to** the East and Horn of Africa

Migrants assisted to return to the East and Horn of Africa

11%
of the total
caseload
of AVRR

7,118

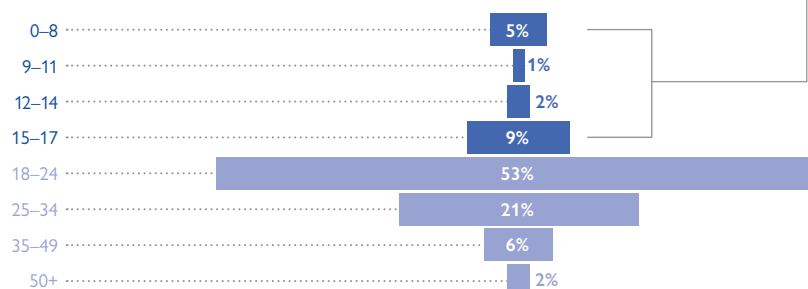
| Sex breakdown



| Percentage of children

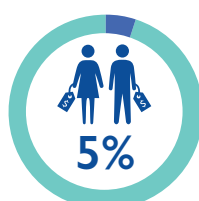


| Age breakdown

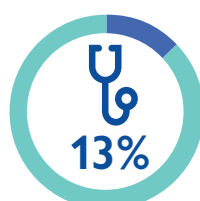


Migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to return to the East and Horn of Africa

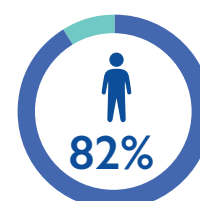
760



Identified victims
of trafficking



Migrants with
health-related needs

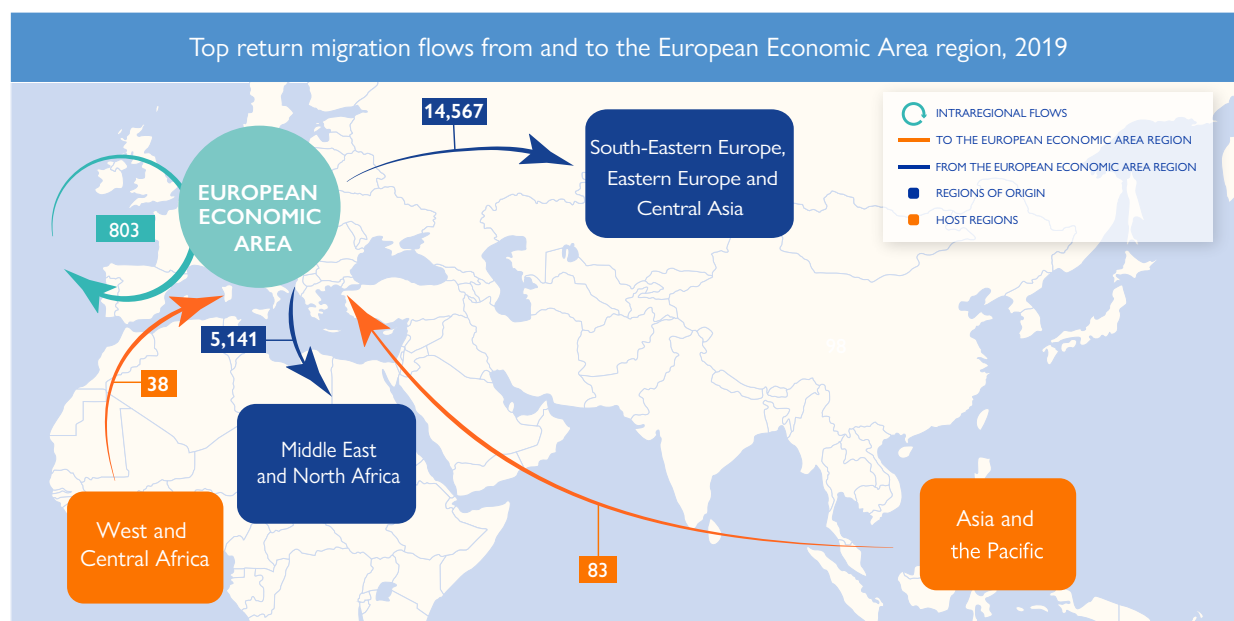


Unaccompanied and
separated children

Top 5 countries of origin in 2019/2018, with number of migrants assisted

2019		2018	
Ethiopia	6 098	Ethiopia	4 792
Sudan	589	Somalia	297
Somalia	222	Uganda	87
Uganda	67	Burundi	54
Kenya	57	Kenya	52

2.4. European Economic Area



Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

The overwhelming majority of people migrate internationally to Europe for reasons related to work, family and study, involving migration processes that largely occur without fundamentally challenging either migrants or the countries they enter. The legal entry channels statistics recorded by Eurostat provide a snapshot of the main entry channels into Europe. Overall, family formation or reunification is the prime channel of entry concerning approximately one third of all non-European immigrants. Education and immigration for reasons of employment fall behind the categories of first permits pertaining to applicants for international protection, refuge, subsidiary protection, unaccompanied migrant or separated children, or victims of trafficking (VoTs).

In 2019, arrivals to the EEA of people leaving their homes and countries for compelling reasons and/or prosecution reached 128,536 according to the IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix data and occurred primarily through the eastern Mediterranean route. On a country level, Greece is the leading country in the number of newly registered migrants and refugees in Europe in 2019, with 71,386 arrivals or 56 per cent of all arrivals.

IOM has been implementing AVRR programmes in Europe since 1979 and is advocating the broadest access to AVRR. Beneficiaries of the IOM AVRR programmes may include stranded migrants in host or transit countries, irregular migrants, regular migrants and asylum seekers who decide not to pursue their claims or who are found not to be in need of international protection. AVRR assistance can also be provided to migrants in vulnerable situations, such as VoTs, unaccompanied and separated children (UASC), or migrants with health-related needs. Particular emphasis is placed on providing targeted and comprehensive support.

AVRR trends from Europe have been influenced over the years by many changes: accession of traditional countries of return to the European Union; regularization schemes of certain categories of migrants residing in irregular situation in European Union Member States, or the expectations that migrants will benefit from such a process in the future (e.g. due to a change in government or relevant legislation); and policy changes in eligibility to AVRR. The latter implies a wide range of measures pertaining to nationalities entitled to AVRR, legal status, access to reintegration, security, policy developments in countries of origin and increased number of returns organized directly by the national administration in light of the European Union policy framework or by other stakeholders (e.g. municipalities and NGOs). For instance, in 2019 IOM did not implement AVRR from Spain or Italy.

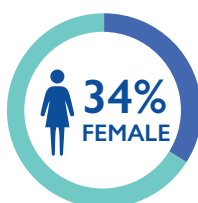
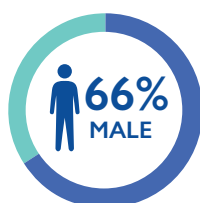
► Assisted voluntary return and reintegration *from* the European Economic Area

Migrants assisted to return from the European Economic Area

43.5%
of the total
caseload
of AVRR

28,256

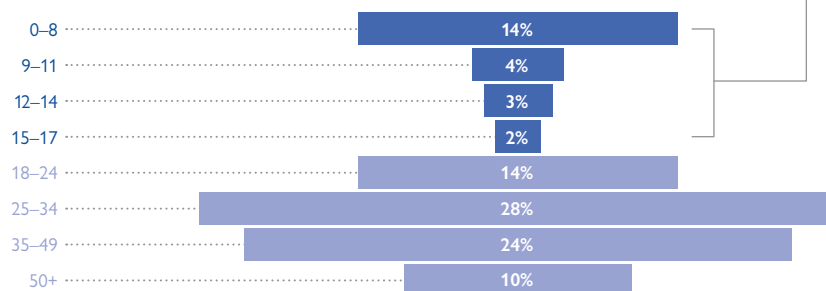
| Sex breakdown



| Percentage of children

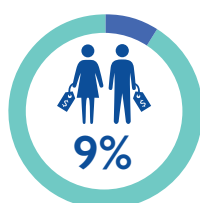


| Age breakdown

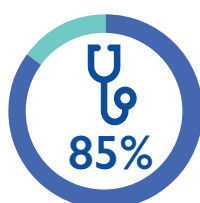


Migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to return from the European Economic Area

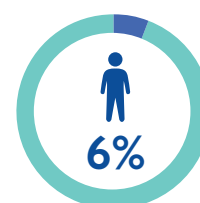
1,926



Identified victims
of trafficking



Migrants with
health-related needs



Unaccompanied and
separated children

Top 5 host countries in 2019/2018, with number of migrants assisted

2019		2018	
Germany	13 053	Germany	15 942
Greece	3 854	Greece	4 968
Netherlands	3 035	Austria	3 469
Austria	2 840	Belgium	2 795
Belgium	2 183	Netherlands	2 149

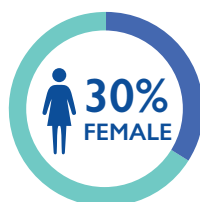
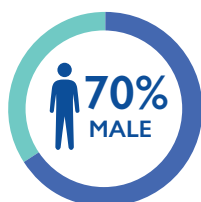
► Assisted voluntary return and reintegration to the European Economic Area

Migrants assisted to return to the European Economic Area

1.5%
of the total
caseload
of AVRR

946

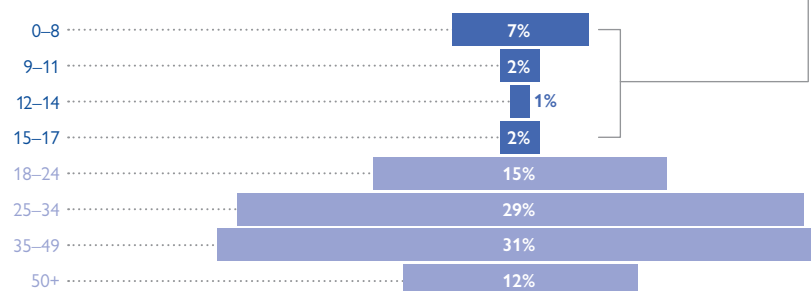
| Sex breakdown



| Percentage of children

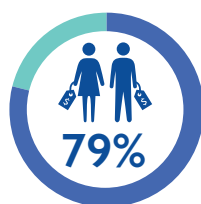


| Age breakdown

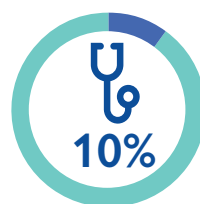


Migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to return to the European Economic Area

136



Identified victims
of trafficking



Migrants with
health-related needs

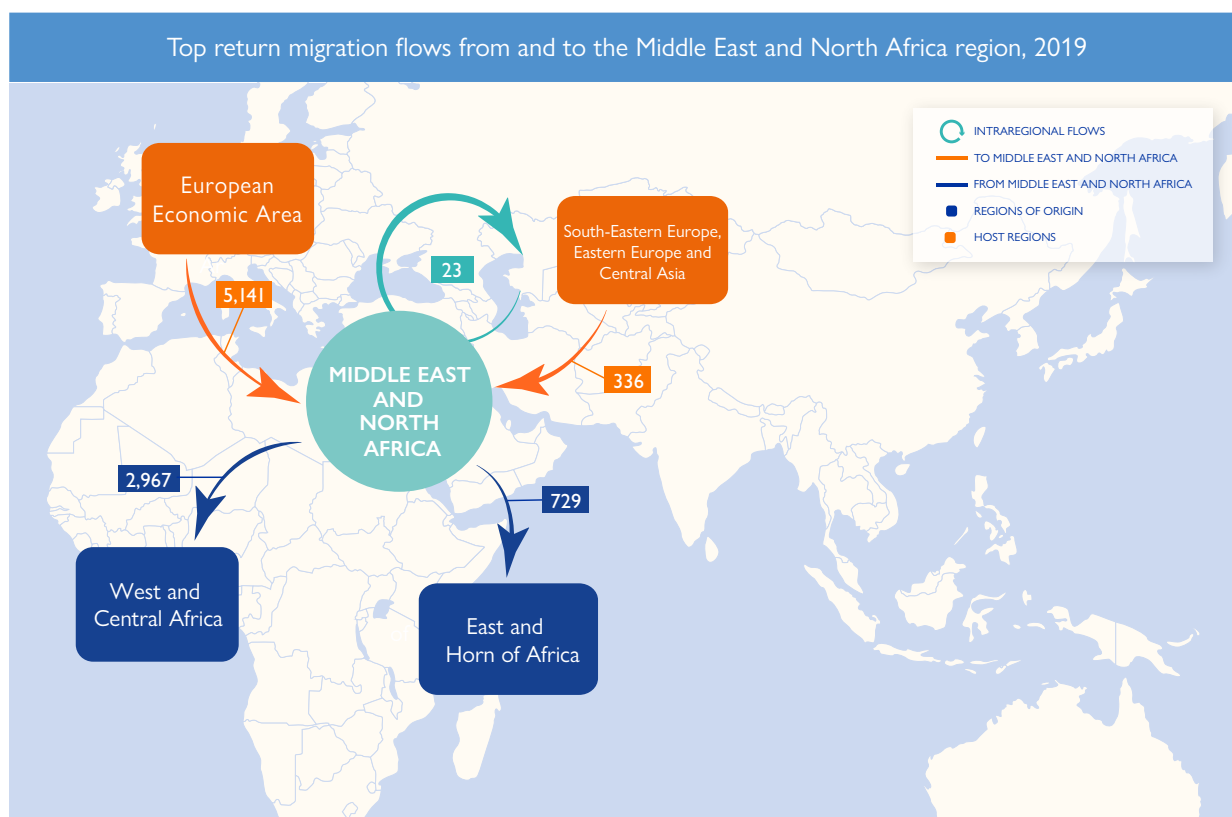


Unaccompanied and
separated children

Top 5 countries of origin in 2019/2018, with number of migrants assisted

2019		2018	
Romania	533	Romania	538
Bulgaria	77	Bulgaria	118
Slovakia	44	Slovakia	42
United Kingdom	42	Italy	36
Luxembourg	35	United Kingdom	33

2.5. Middle East and North Africa



Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

In the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, migration patterns and trends have been affected by subregional specific context. In North Africa, countries have been facing growing mobility trends in past years. The region hosts millions of migrants including displaced populations and is also confronted with protection challenges associated with irregular migration. Additionally, the conflict in Libya and the politically unstable situation in Sudan have had a significant impact on the political, economic and social situations in the MENA region as a whole. The Middle East region hosts the largest group of displaced populations originating from the protracted conflict mainly from the Syrian Arab Republic, Iraq and Yemen. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries draw large numbers of migrant workers on a yearly basis originating mainly from North Africa and South-East Asia, with a notable presence of female migrants. Migration patterns and the situation of migrants, displaced populations, and returnees across the three subregions entail a comprehensive approach to address migration management. The number of international migrants, including registered refugees, residing in the MENA region reached 39.9 million in 2019 (75% from outside the region). In the same year, 25.7 million individuals from MENA countries, including registered refugees, were living outside their countries of birth (38% of them travelled to a country within the region). Close to 22 million individuals in the MENA region are affected by forced migration worldwide: 14 million internally displaced persons, close to 8 million refugees and asylum seekers, and almost 50 million people in need of humanitarian assistance (IOM, 2019b). In this context, IOM works with and for a diverse set of beneficiary groups, reflecting the complexity of migration in the region. These include international migrants, internally displaced persons, refugees, returnees and diaspora groups, as well as communities of origin and return, communities hosting migrant and displaced populations, and communities affected by crises (IOM, 2018c).

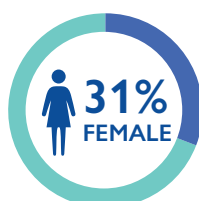
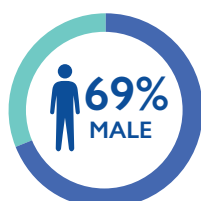
► Assisted voluntary return and reintegration *from* the Middle East and North Africa

Migrants assisted to return from the Middle East and North Africa

6.3%
of the total
caseload
of AVRR

4,005

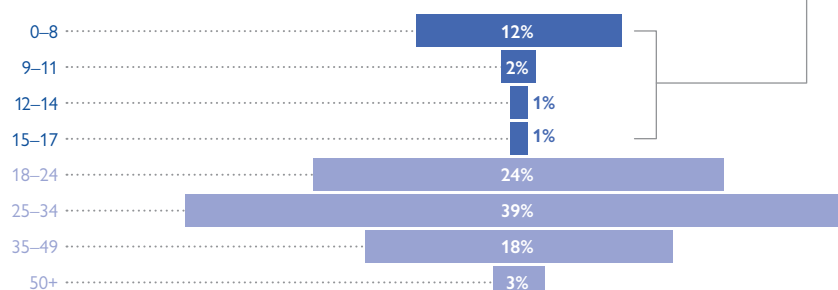
| Sex breakdown



| Percentage of children

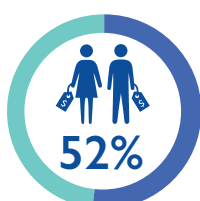


| Age breakdown

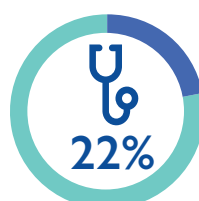


Migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to return from the Middle East and North Africa

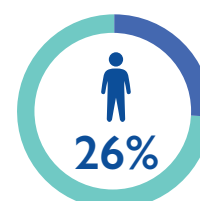
151



Identified victims
of trafficking



Migrants with
health-related needs



Unaccompanied and
separated children

Top 5 host countries in 2019/2018, with number of migrants assisted

2019		2018	
Morocco	1 370	Morocco	1 508
Indonesia	1 021	Tunisia	584
Egypt	904	Egypt	501
Tunisia	630	Sudan	337
Iraq	32	Kuwait	224

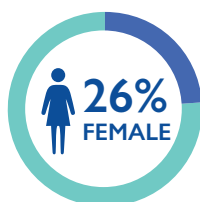
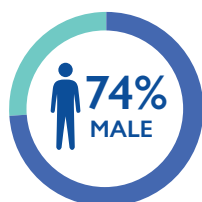
► Assisted voluntary return and reintegration **to** the Middle East and North Africa

Migrants assisted to return to the Middle East and North Africa

9%
of the total
caseload
of AVRR

5,588

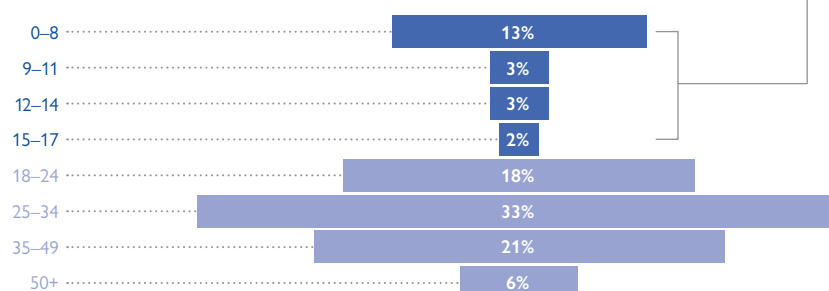
| Sex breakdown



| Percentage of children

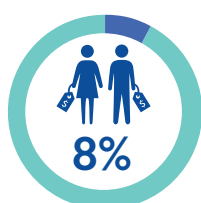


| Age breakdown

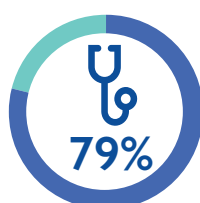


Migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to return to the Middle East and North Africa

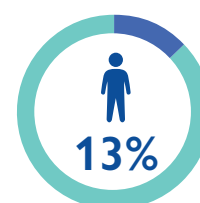
297



Identified victims
of trafficking



Migrants with
health-related needs

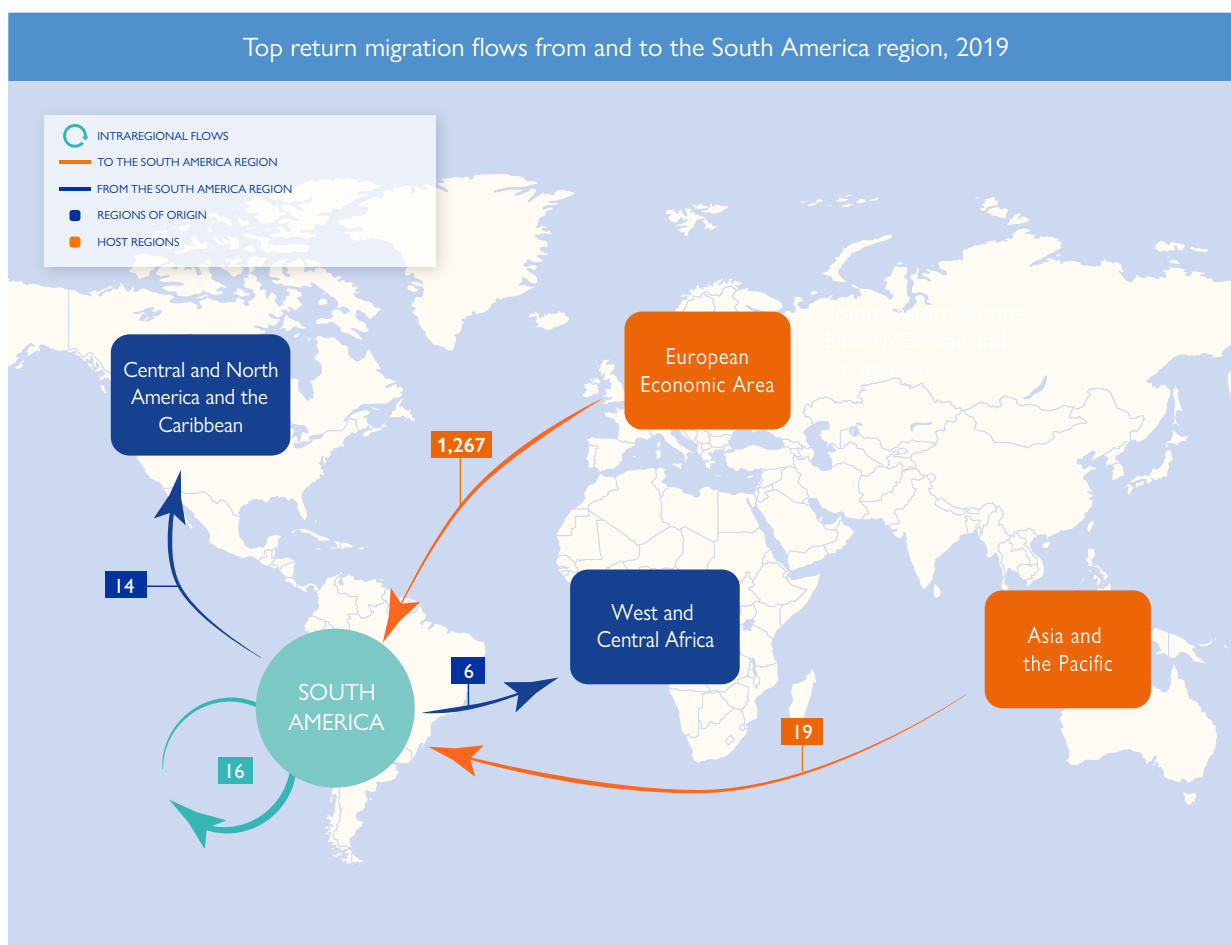


Unaccompanied and
separated children

Top 5 countries of origin in 2019/2018, with number of migrants assisted

2019		2018	
Iraq	3 995	Iraq	5 661
Algeria	590	Algeria	711
Morocco	309	Sudan	495
Egypt	217	Lebanon	406
Lebanon	192	Morocco	348

2.6. South America



Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

Migration dynamics in South America are marked by intraregional and interregional patterns. Overall, the number of intraregional migrants in South America increased by 11 per cent between 2010 and 2015, and approximately 70 per cent of all immigration in the region is intraregional. The region saw a significant increase of the Venezuelan migrants and refugees in 2018. In this context, neighbouring countries have made notable efforts to liberalize intraregional migration, particularly to support the Venezuelan nationals. Also, several governments in the region have established programmes that include support for their nationals' return and reintegration.

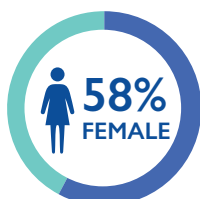
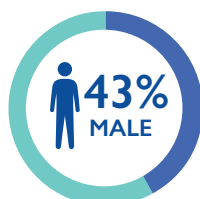
► Assisted voluntary return and reintegration *from* South America

Migrants assisted to return from South America

0.1%
of the total
caseload
of AVRR

47

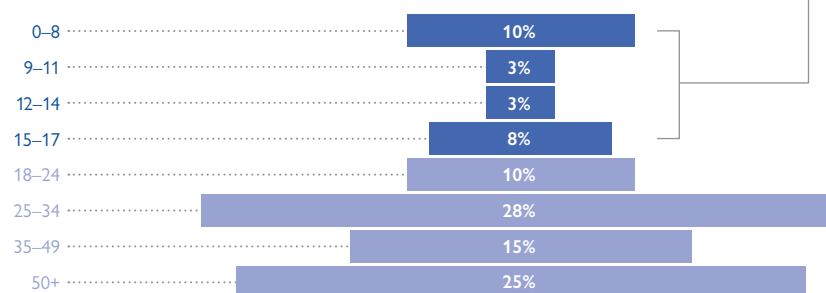
| Sex breakdown



| Percentage of children

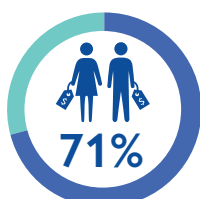


| Age breakdown

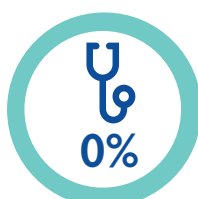


Migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to return from South America

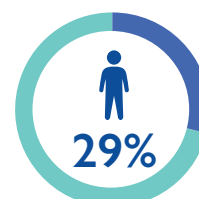
7



Identified victims
of trafficking



Migrants with
health-related needs



Unaccompanied and
separated children

Top 5 host countries in 2019/2018, with number of migrants assisted

2019		2018	
Uruguay	15	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	15
Peru	11	Ecuador	7
Brazil	9	Peru	7
Ecuador	4	Colombia	5
Argentina	3	Argentina	4

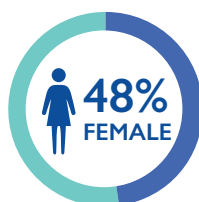
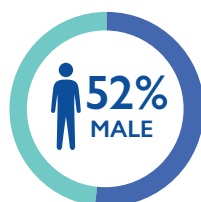
► Assisted voluntary return and reintegration to South America

Migrants assisted to return to South America

2%
of the total
caseload
of AVR

1,325

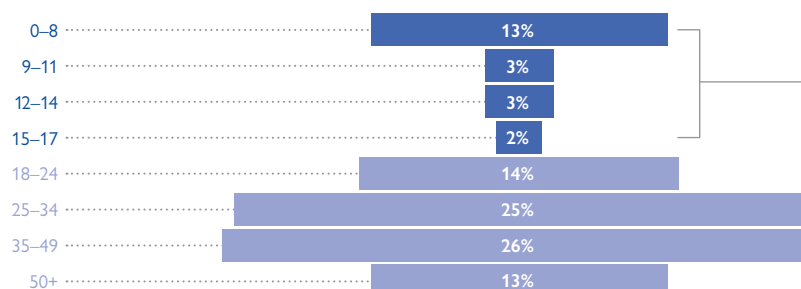
| Sex breakdown



| Percentage of children



| Age breakdown

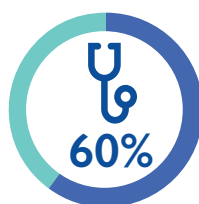


Migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to return to South America

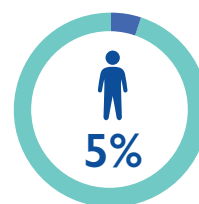
82



Identified victims
of trafficking



Migrants with
health-related needs

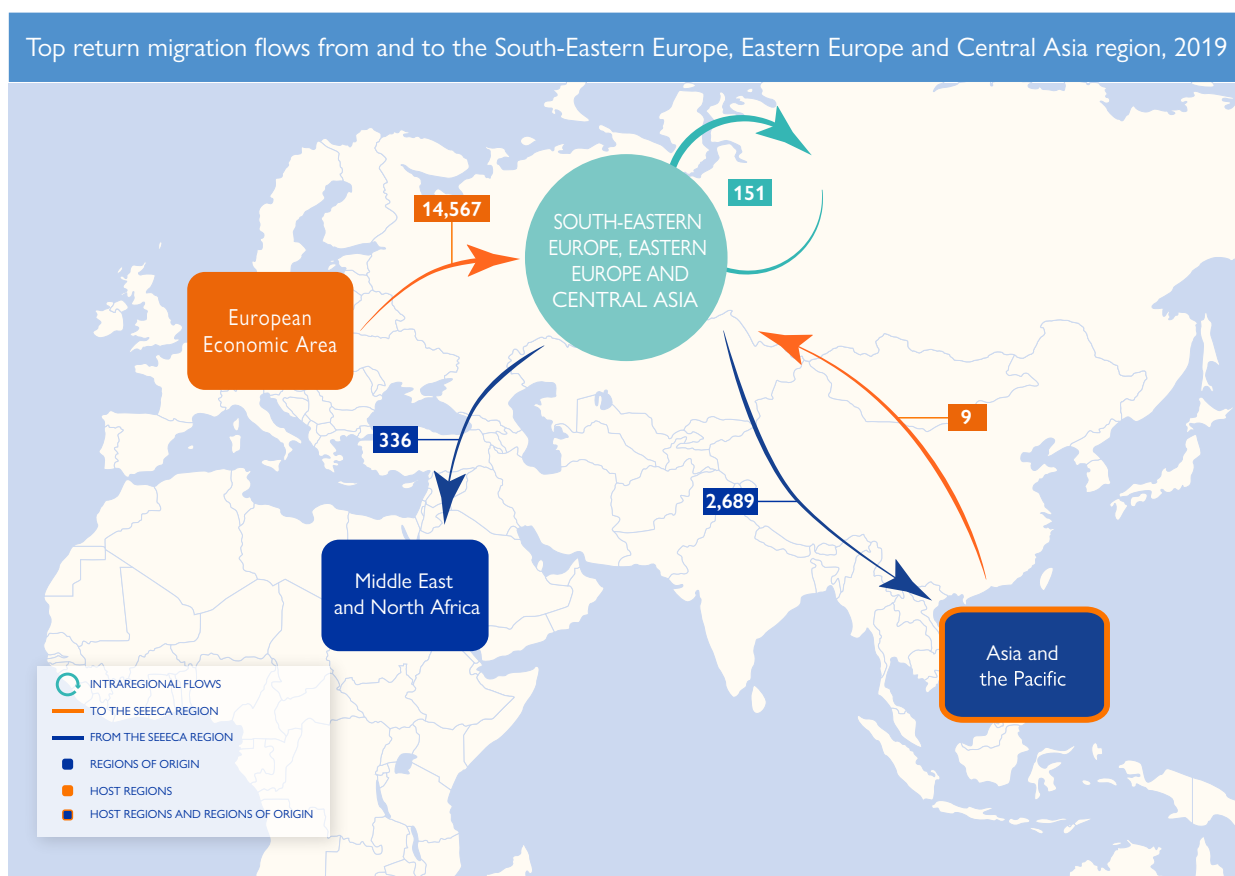


Unaccompanied and
separated children

Top 5 countries of origin in 2019/2018, with number of migrants assisted

2019		2018	
Brazil	815	Brazil	810
Colombia	240	Colombia	149
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	63	Peru	108
Peru	62	Chile	69
Chile	45	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	62

2.7. South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia



Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

The countries and territories in the South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SEECA) region feature diverse economic, environmental, demographic, political, social, and migratory contexts and adopt varied approaches to address the migratory trends in the region. SEECA lies on the crossroads of active migratory movements with significant migration from, within and through the region, and with growing inflows to the region itself. The region itself comprises several subregions formed according to geographical or political priorities and settings with different and varying migration contexts. Many of the countries in the region have traditionally been countries of origin. However, the patterns of movement have diversified, making most SEECA countries today simultaneously, albeit to a different extent, countries of origin, transit and destination. Legal pathways for migration towards Europe are limited, and this contributes to thousands of migrants stranded in countries of transit, especially UASC. With no safe and regular avenues to proceed in their journey, stranded migrants remain exposed to risks of violence, exploitation and abuse. In recent years, an unprecedented number of migrants and refugees from the Middle East and Asia have transited the region, especially the Western Balkans, on their way to Western Europe. As such, return migration is projected to increase to and from the region. AVRr will be critical, specifically in the context of transit migration, as it provides assistance to stranded migrants who are in distress and often destitute, or who lack the means to continue their journey, be they in a regular or in an irregular situation. Outward migration from the region, especially from the Western Balkans and Eastern Europe, is directed primarily towards the European Union, although intraregional migration remains a key feature in the region with the Russian Federation as a top destination country.

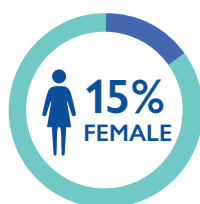
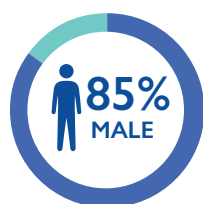
► Assisted voluntary return and reintegration *from* South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Migrants assisted to return from South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia

5%
of the total
caseload
of AVRR

3,314

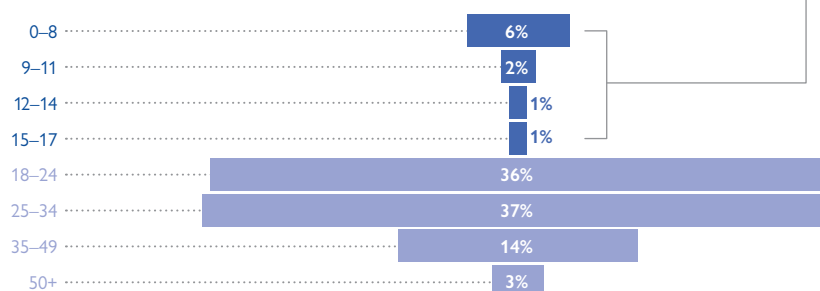
| Sex breakdown



| Percentage of children

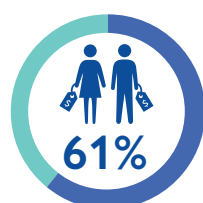


| Age breakdown

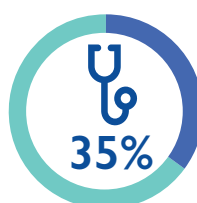


Migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to return from South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia

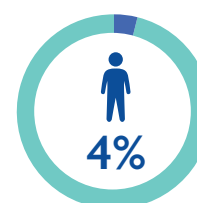
154



Identified victims
of trafficking



Migrants with
health-related needs



Unaccompanied and
separated children

Top 5 host countries in 2019/2018, with number of migrants assisted

2019		2018	
Turkey	2 533	Turkey	1 494
Bosnia and Herzegovina	348	Bosnia and Herzegovina	412
Serbia	193	Serbia	278
Georgia	110	Georgia	109
Belarus	29	Azerbaijan	55

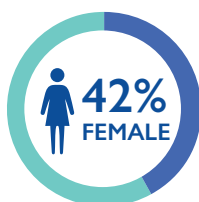
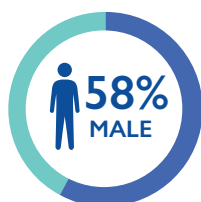
► Assisted voluntary return and reintegration to South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Migrants assisted to return to South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia

23%
of the total
caseload
of AVRR

14,743

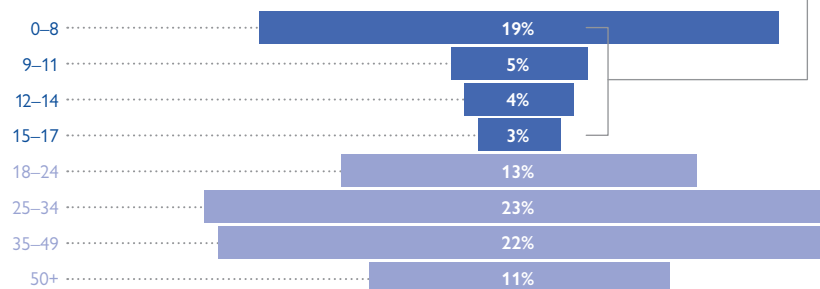
| Sex breakdown



| Percentage of children

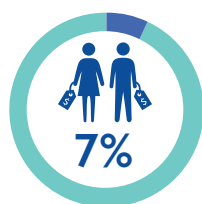


| Age breakdown

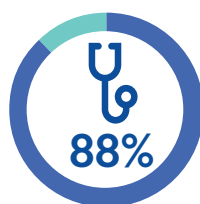


Migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to return to South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia

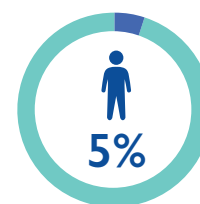
1,128



Identified victims
of trafficking



Migrants with
health-related needs

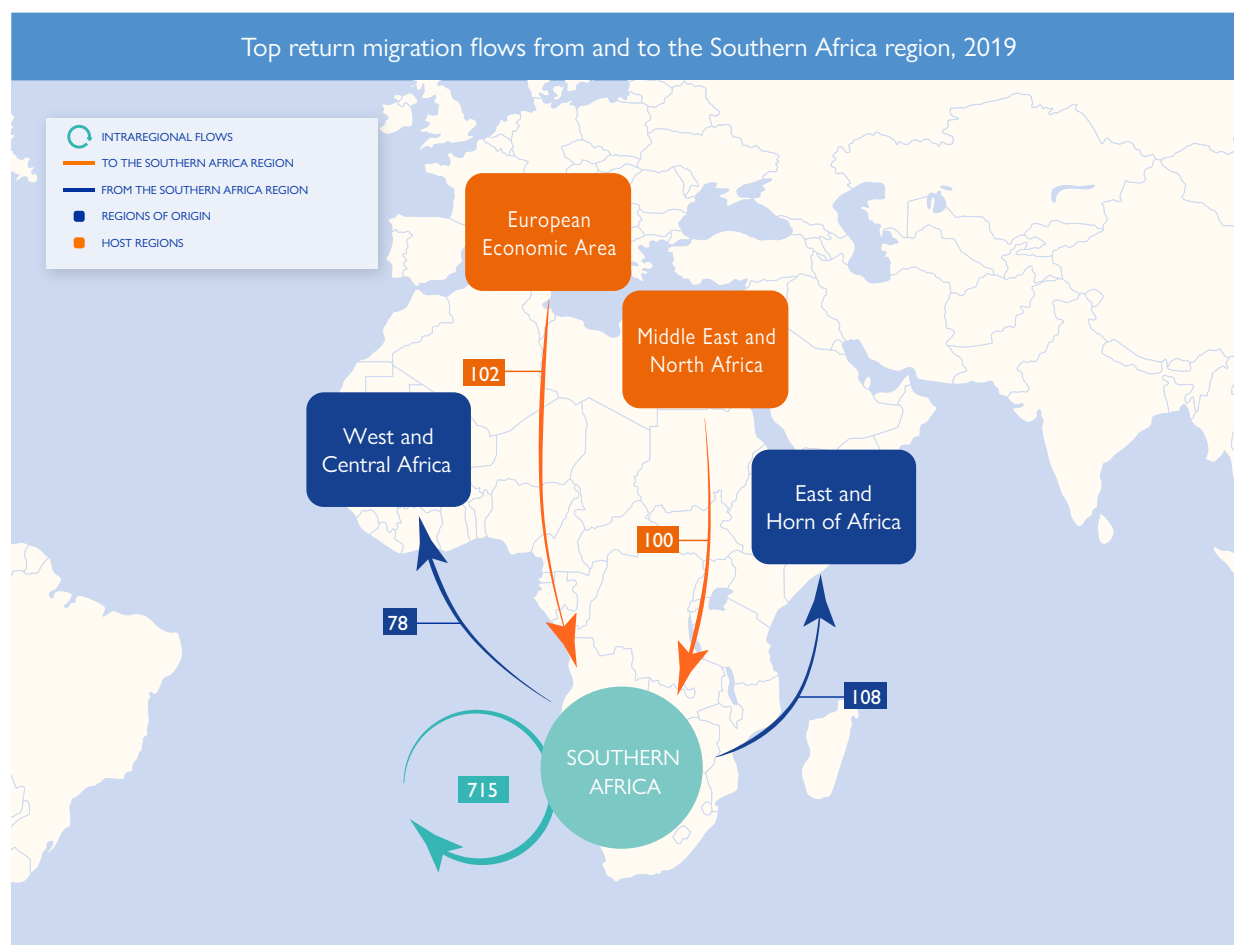


Unaccompanied and
separated children

Top 5 countries of origin in 2019/2018, with number of migrants assisted

2019		2018	
Georgia	2 603	Georgia	2 681
Ukraine	1 604	Albania	2 167
Albania	1 539	Russian Federation	1 952
Russian Federation	1 414	Ukraine	1 901
Serbia	1 313	Serbia	1 681

2.8. Southern Africa



Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

Irregular migration is on the rise in Southern Africa, a region characterized by vast differences in employment opportunities and levels of economic development, and circular migration patterns. Available data shows that intraregional movement accounts for the highest migration type, followed by migration from the rest of Africa and Asia (2%). The industrial developments; the mining sectors in South Africa, Botswana and Zambia; and the oil and mineral wealth of Angola are the main magnets for both skilled and unskilled labour migrants. A quarter of all migrants in the region are now from African countries. A further 7 per cent of migrants originate from Europe. Regional initiatives to pave a common approach to migration management seem promising, but States in the region are generally not favourable to ratify instruments that appear to encroach on their sovereign rights or the perceived interests of their respective citizens.

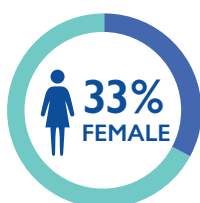
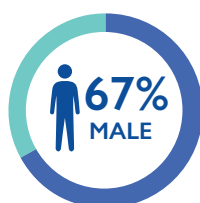
► Assisted voluntary return and reintegration *from* Southern Africa

Migrants assisted to return from Southern Africa

1.4%
of the total
caseload
of AVRR

911

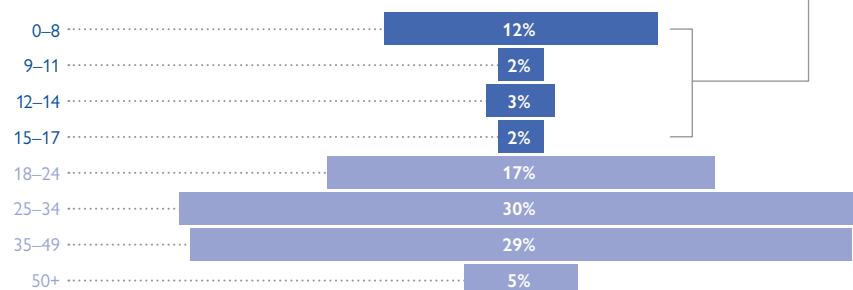
| Sex breakdown



| Percentage of children

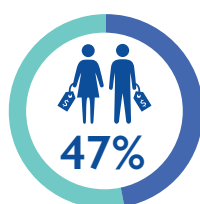


| Age breakdown

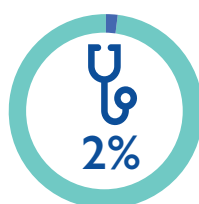


Migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to return from Southern Africa

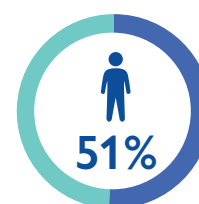
45



Identified victims
of trafficking



Migrants with
health-related needs



Unaccompanied and
separated children

Top 5 host countries in 2019/2018, with number of migrants assisted

2019

South Africa	717
Angola	66
Zambia	51
Malawi	34
Zimbabwe	23

2018

South Africa	348
Mozambique	239
Zambia	168
Zimbabwe	17
Angola	6

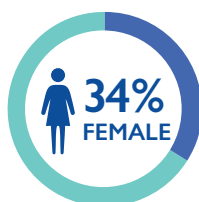
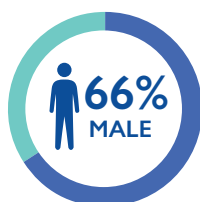
► Assisted voluntary return and reintegration to Southern Africa

Migrants assisted to return to Southern Africa

1.5%
of the total
caseload
of AVRR

999

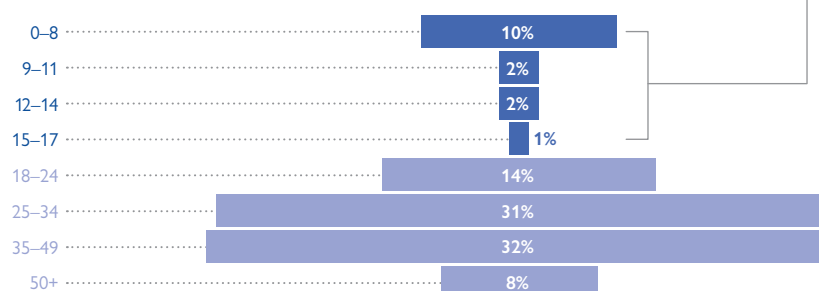
| Sex breakdown



| Percentage of children

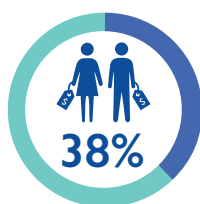


| Age breakdown

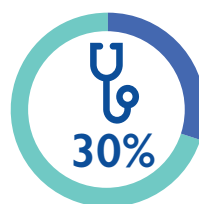


Migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to return to Southern Africa

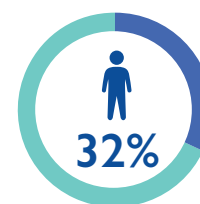
63



Identified victims
of trafficking



Migrants with
health-related needs

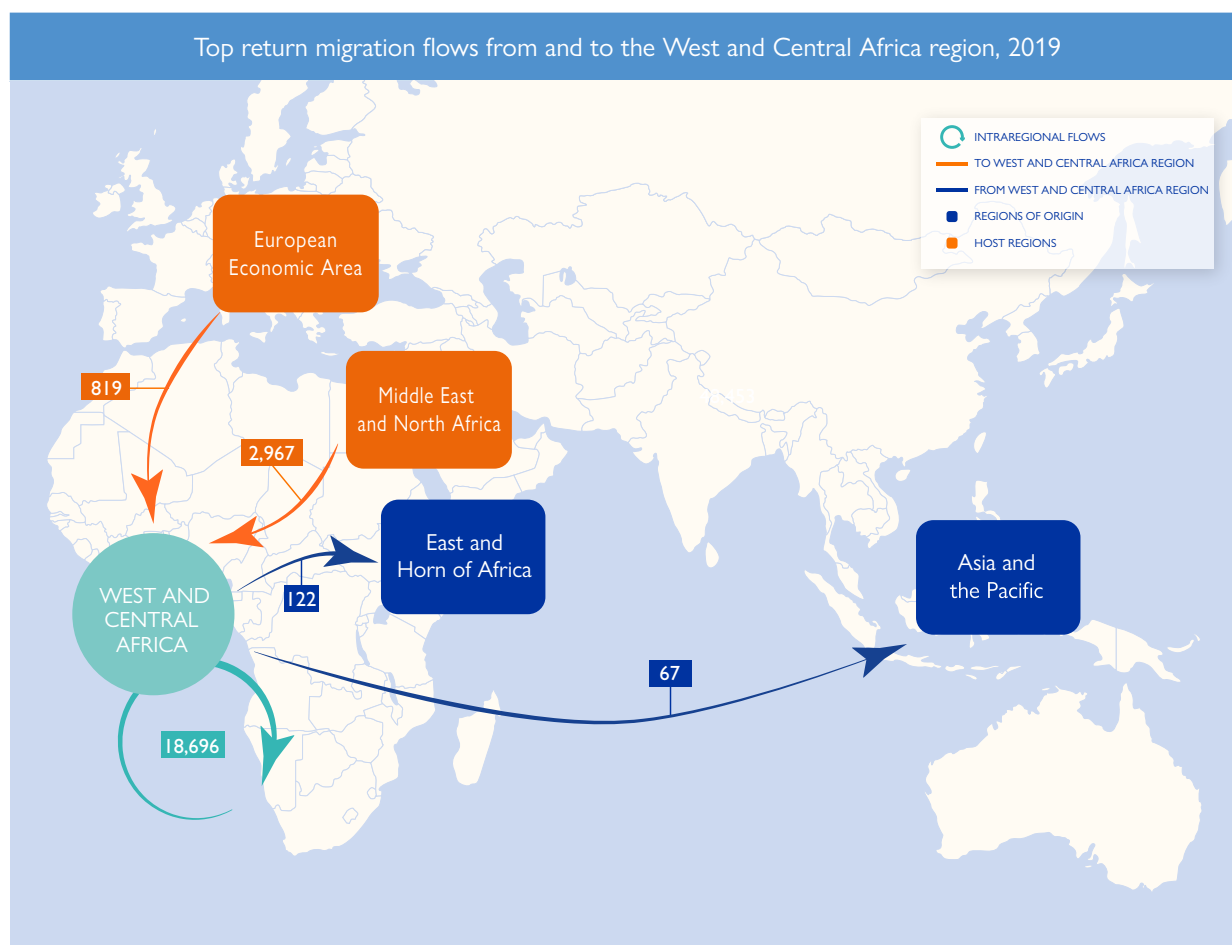


Unaccompanied and
separated children

Top 5 countries of origin in 2019/2018, with number of migrants assisted

2019		2018	
Malawi	348	Democratic Republic of the Congo	176
Mozambique	331	Malawi	127
Democratic Republic of the Congo	179	Mozambique	92
Comoros	37	Madagascar	91
South Africa	37	Zimbabwe	40

2.9. West and Central Africa



Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

Intraregional migration, which is significant in WCA, is characterized by mixed migration flows influenced by multiple drivers. Recent estimates reflect that the majority of international migrants in WCA move within the subregion (UNCTAD, 2018). In 2018, the majority of international migrants in WCA continued to be intraregional; however, movements between WCA and the North African countries varied when compared to the trends in the previous year. The most significant change in such flows was a sharp increase in the number of third-country nationals being forcibly returned from Algeria to neighbouring countries such as Mali and the Niger.

Irregular migration towards Europe from West Africa is characterized by a fast-changing landscape of routes through which migrants journey, either from sub-Saharan Africa or from West Africa.

In 2019, IOM offices in WCA assisted a rapidly growing number of beneficiaries with return and reintegration assistance mainly within the framework of the EU–IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration.⁷

⁷ The [joint initiative](#) was launched in December 2016 to strengthen migration governance and to respond to the urgent need to protect and save the lives of migrants along the Central Mediterranean migration route. It covers 13 countries: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger, Nigeria and Senegal. See Chapter 3, for more details.

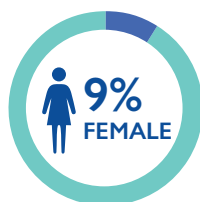
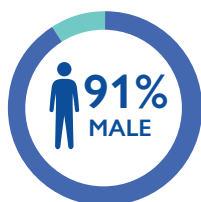
► Assisted voluntary return and reintegration *from* West and Central Africa

Migrants assisted to return from West and Central Africa

29%
of the total
caseload
of AVRR

18,975

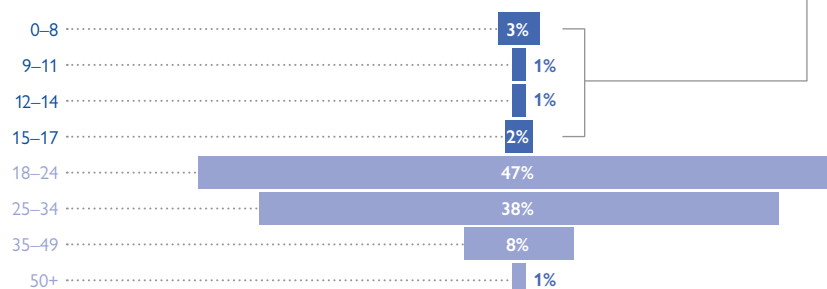
| Sex breakdown



| Percentage of children

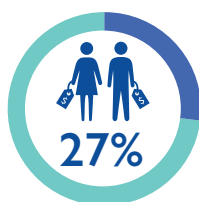


| Age breakdown

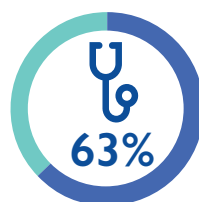


Migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to return from West and Central Africa

1,336



Identified victims
of trafficking



Migrants with
health-related needs



Unaccompanied and
separated children

Top 5 host countries in 2019/2018, with number of migrants assisted

2019		2018	
Niger	16 414	Niger	14 977
Mali	1 429	Mali	547
Mauritania	444	Mauritania	155
Burkina Faso	360	Nigeria	71
Chad	127	Burkina Faso	56

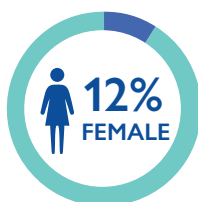
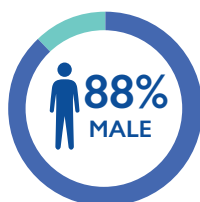
► Assisted voluntary return and reintegration to West and Central Africa

Migrants assisted to return to West and Central Africa

35%
of the total
caseload
of AVRR

22,785

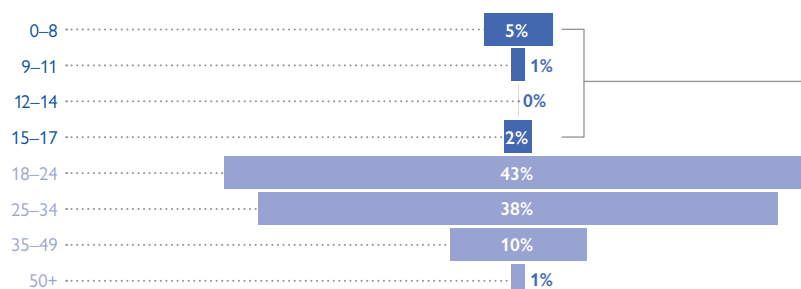
| Sex breakdown



| Percentage of children



| Age breakdown

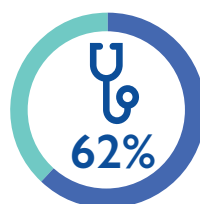


Migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to return to West and Central Africa

1,482



Identified victims
of trafficking



Migrants with
health-related needs



Unaccompanied and
separated children

Top 5 countries of origin in 2019/2018, with number of migrants assisted

2019		2018	
Mali	5 576	Guinea	5 088
Guinea	4 458	Mali	4 041
Côte d'Ivoire	2 057	Côte d'Ivoire	1 834
Nigeria	1 914	Cameroon	1 671
Sierra Leone	1 777	Senegal	1 495

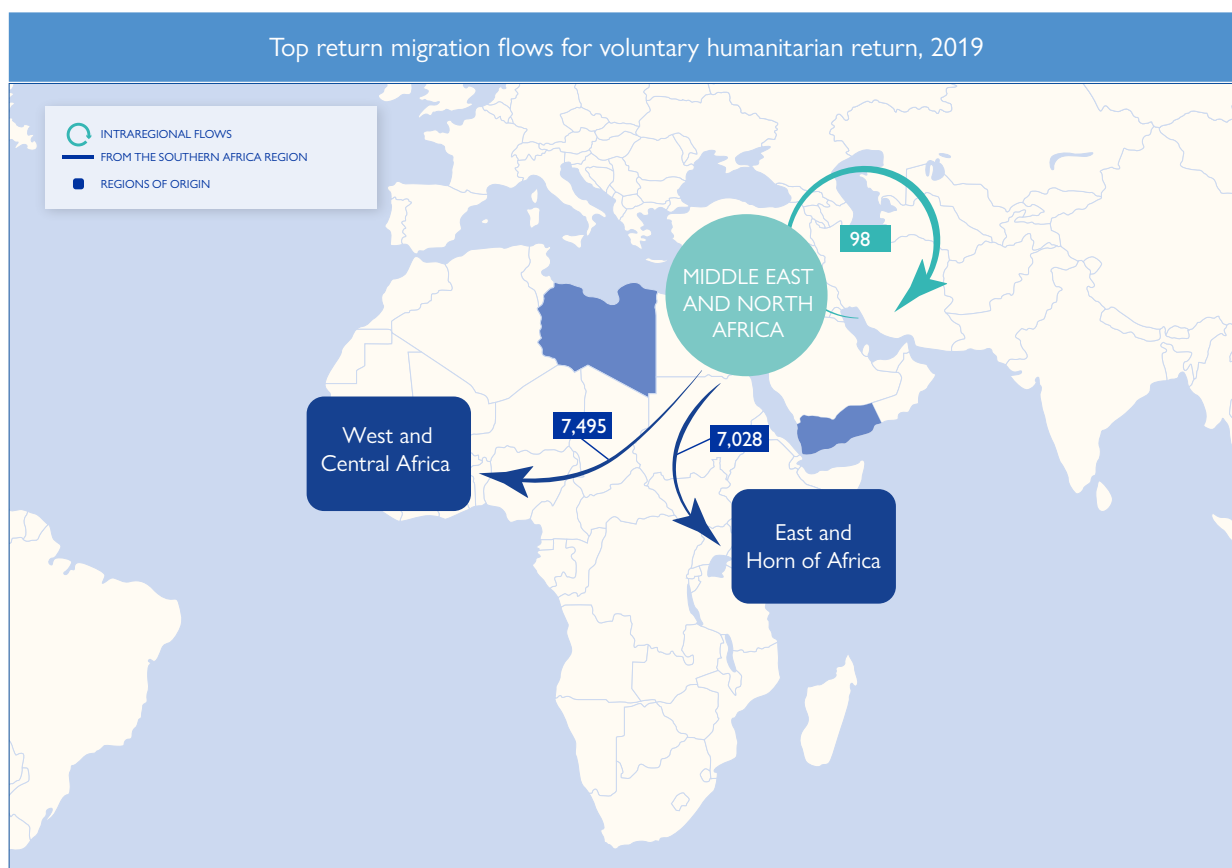
CHAPTER 3

Voluntary humanitarian return



Migrants returning from Libya to Bangladesh on a charter flight organized by IOM on 27 November 2019. © IOM 2019/Moayad ZAGHDANI

3.1. Voluntary humanitarian return: Main trends



Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

The AVRR approach has also found application in humanitarian settings, in particular in Yemen and Libya, in the form of VHR. In 2019, IOM assisted 15,263 migrants to return to their countries of origin through VHR programmes implemented in Yemen and Libya. Migrants returning from Libya make up 64 per cent (9,782 beneficiaries) of the VHR caseload, whereas migrants from Yemen are the remaining 36 per cent (5,466 beneficiaries including 3,785 under VHR and 1,681 under assisted spontaneous return).

Libya was the main host country for VHR.

68% of all migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to return through VHR programmes were UASC. Vulnerable migrants assisted to return from Yemen were only UASC.

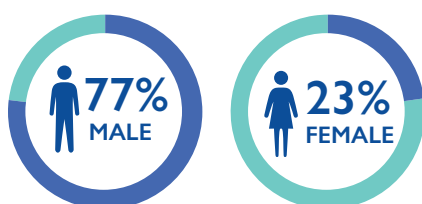
The **majority of beneficiaries** assisted to return through VHR programmes **returned to Ethiopia, Nigeria and Somalia.**

► Voluntary humanitarian return from Libya and Yemen

Migrants assisted to return to their countries of origin through VHR programmes

15,263

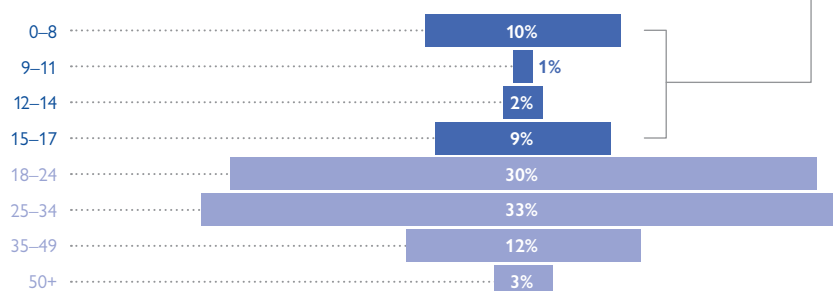
| Sex breakdown



| Percentage of children



| Age breakdown

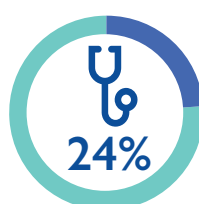


Migrants in vulnerable situations

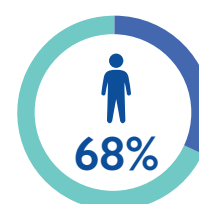
2,051



Identified victims of trafficking

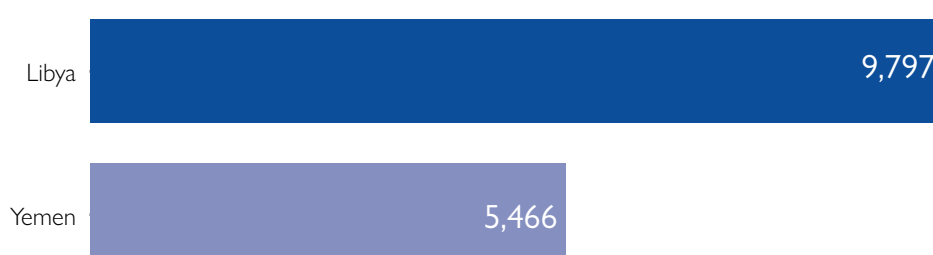


Migrants with health-related needs

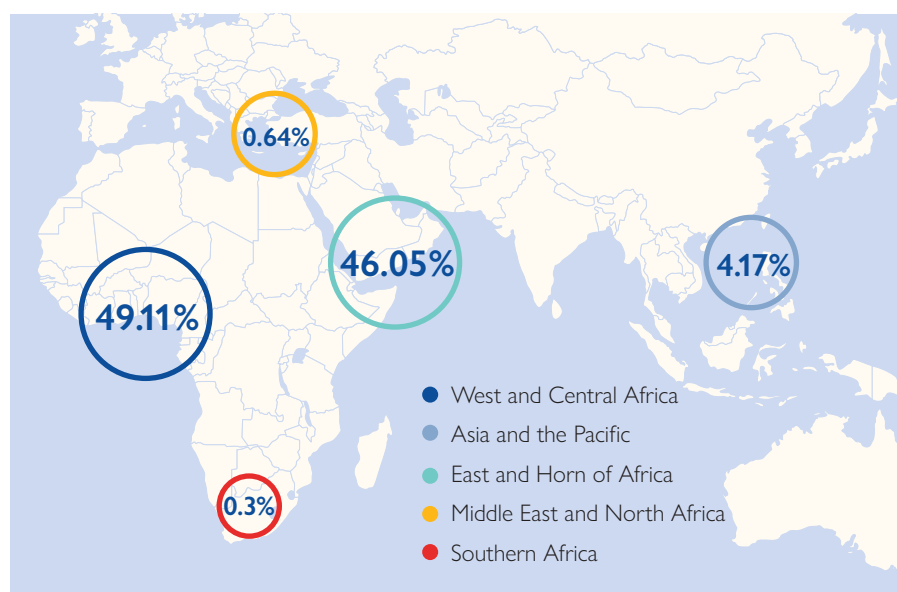


Unaccompanied and separated children

Host /Transit countries for voluntary humanitarian return in 2019, with number of migrants assisted

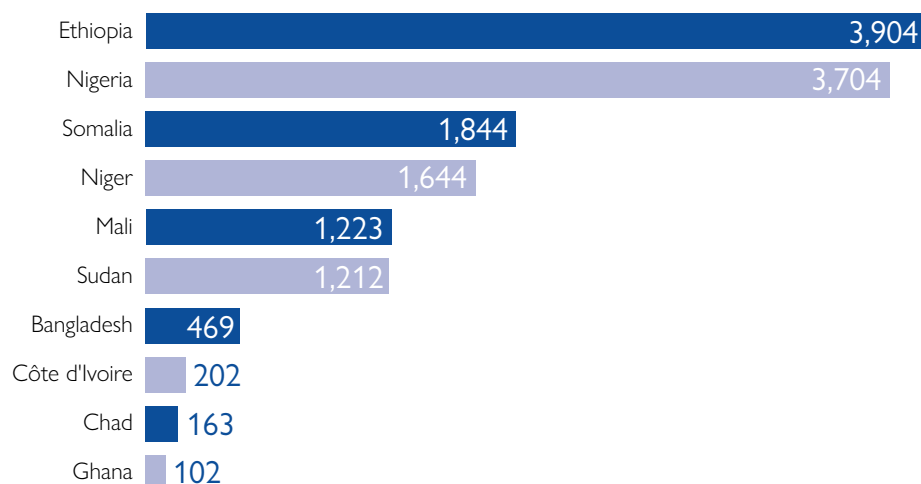


Regions of origin for voluntary humanitarian return in 2019



Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

Top 10 countries of origin for voluntary humanitarian return in 2019



► Dialogue and/or capacity-building activities on return management



The IOM country office in Libya facilitated dialogue and/capacity-building activities on return management. These activities focused on the adoption of guidelines, contributing towards the establishment of a referral mechanism, and building the capacity of IOM staff and government stakeholders on return assistance and returnees' vulnerabilities and needs.

CHAPTER 4

Reintegration overview



In Côte d'Ivoire, returning migrants receive professional training at the Abel Community centre. © IOM 2019/Mohammed DIABATÉ

4.1. Reintegration: Main trends

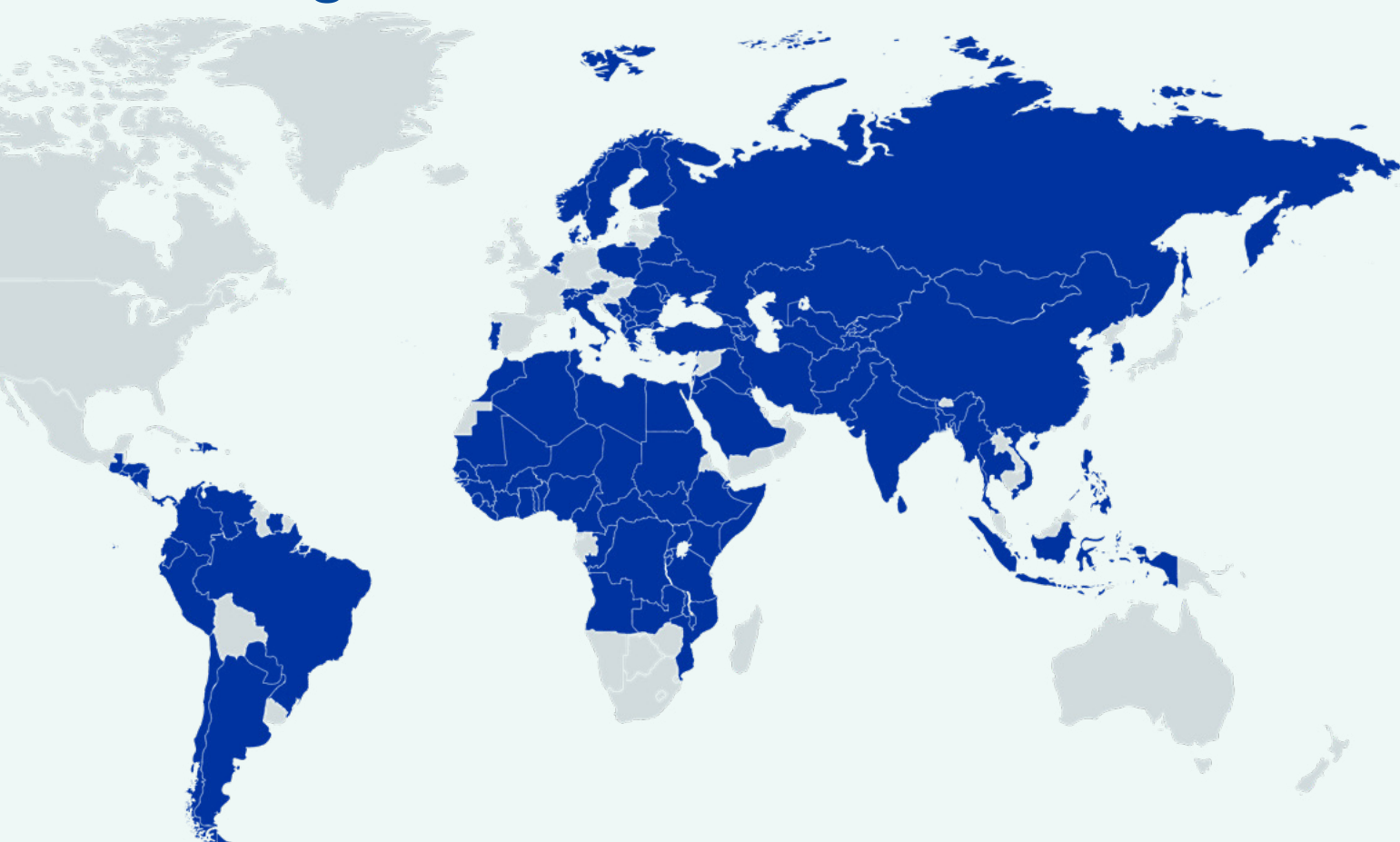
112 IOM country offices provided **reintegration assistance** to returnees either prior to departure or after arrival.

**Pre-departure
reintegration assistance
was provided mainly
by country offices in the EEA,
the main host region.**

Post-arrival reintegration assistance was provided mainly by country offices in WCA (47%), the main region of origin.

23 per cent of all post-arrival services provided by IOM were in Honduras, only mainly in the context of PARA programmes.

Countries providing reintegration assistance



Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

► Reintegration assistance in *host countries*

39

IOM country offices in host or transit countries provided

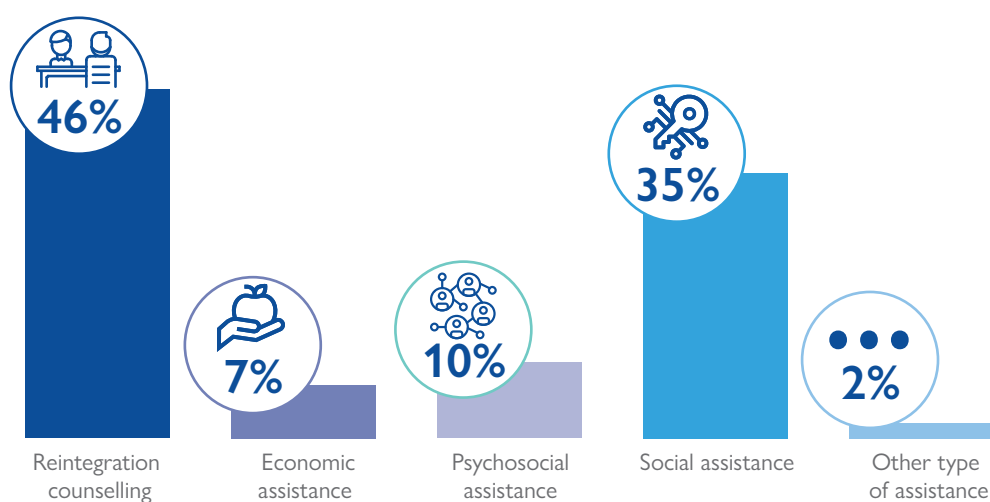
9,532

reintegration assistance services to IOM returnees

99.5%

of the services were delivered at the individual level

| Types of reintegration assistance provided in host countries



| Reintegration assistance provided directly by IOM or through referral



| Top 5 host countries for pre-departure reintegration assistance

Country	Number of services provided
Djibouti	3 984
Greece	1 375
Netherlands	1 171
Switzerland	898
Belgium	596

► Reintegration assistance in *countries of origin*

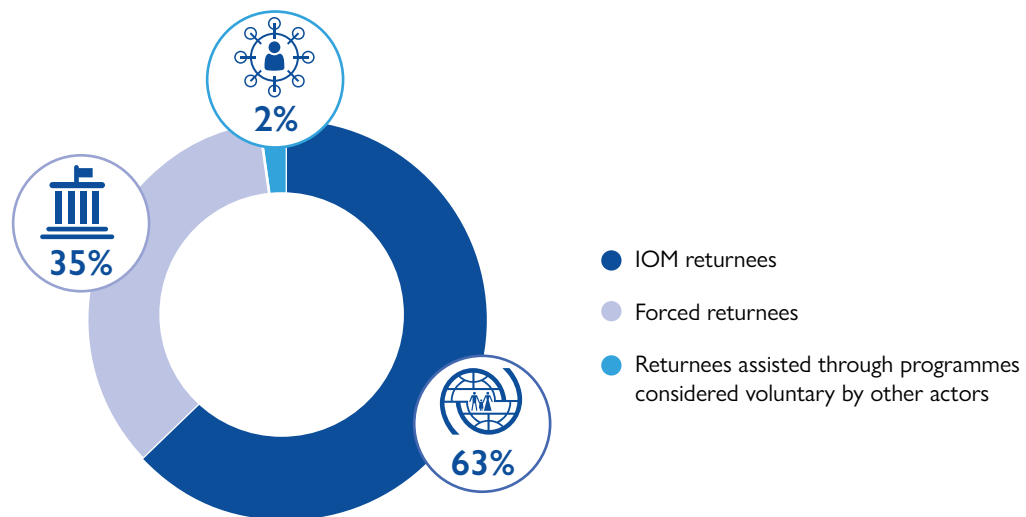
102

IOM country offices
in countries of origin
provided

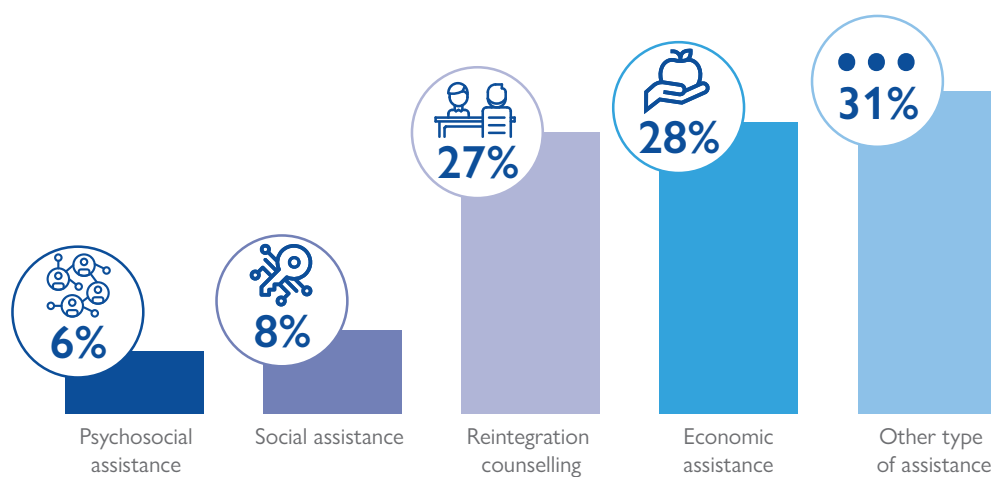
116,910

reintegration assistance services

| Types of beneficiaries



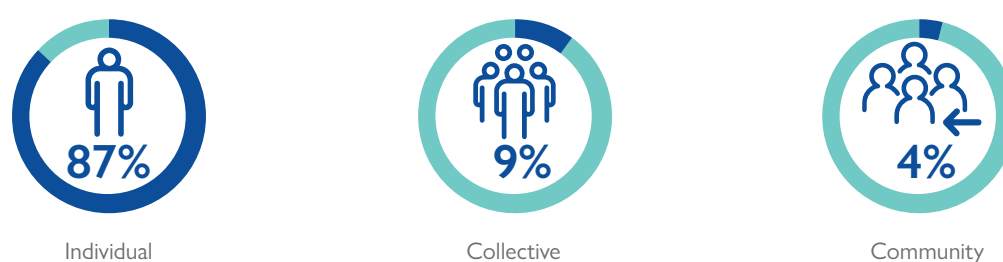
| Types of reintegration assistance provided in countries of origin



| Reintegration assistance provided directly by IOM or through referral



| Levels of assistance



| Top 5 countries of origin for post-arrival reintegration assistance

Country	Number of services provided
Honduras	27 021
Mali	18 593
Nigeria	8 637
El Salvador	8 400
Guinea	8 378

► Dialogue and/or capacity-building activities on reintegration management



Seventy-seven IOM country offices facilitated dialogue and/or capacity-building activities at the national, regional and international levels. The activities focused, among other, on legislative review, set-up of interministerial committee, capacity-building workshops on reintegration and returnees' needs and the establishment of referral mechanisms.

CHAPTER 5

Regional highlights – reintegration



IOM organizes the creation of an artistic mural on Cultural Day in Honduras to celebrate diversity and inclusion of returnees. © IOM 2019/ I. CRUCETA

5.1. Asia and the Pacific

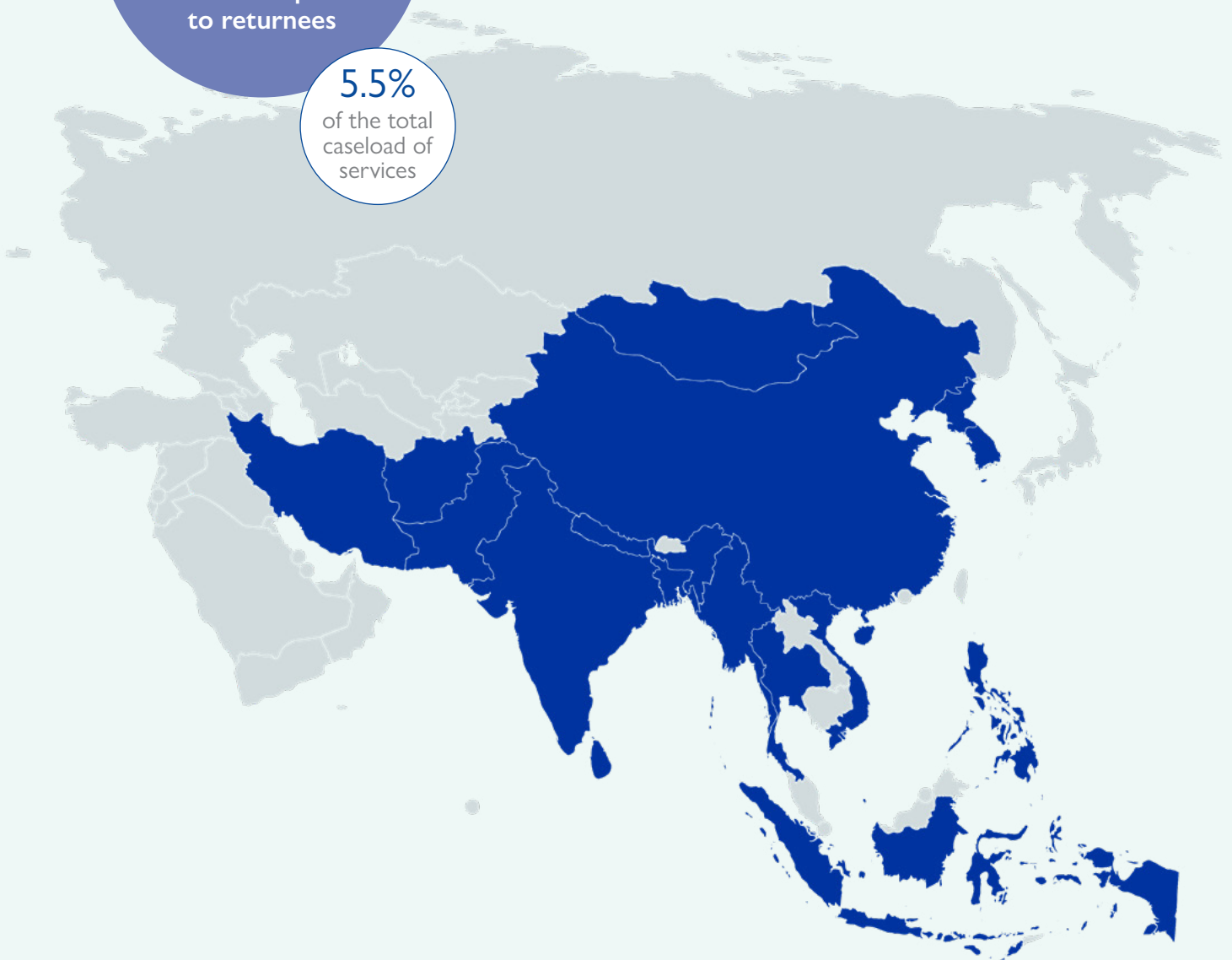
6,906

reintegration assistance
services were provided
to returnees

5.5%

of the total
caseload of
services

Countries involved in reintegration assistance



Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

| Pre-departure and post-arrival reintegration assistance

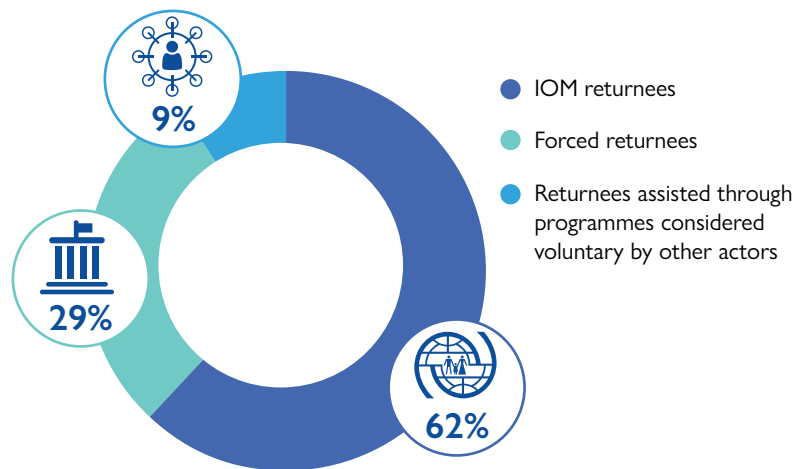


Pre-departure



Post-arrival

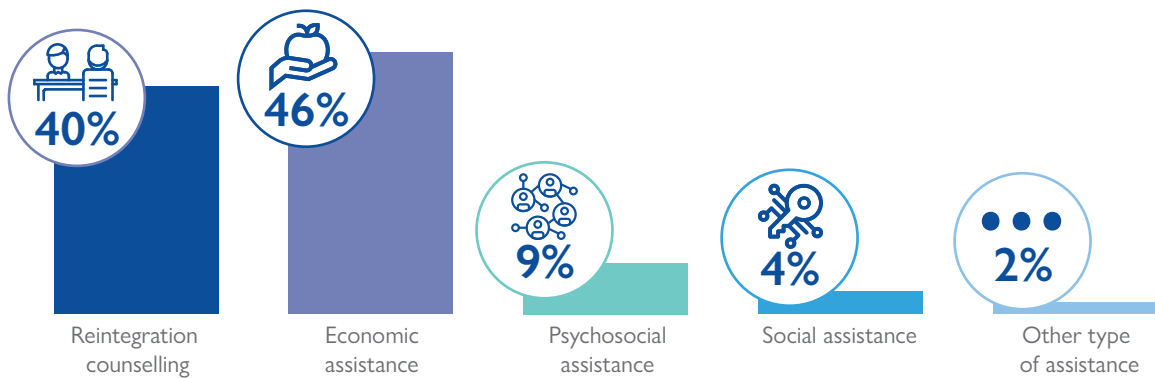
| Types of beneficiaries



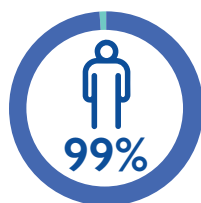
| Reintegration assistance provided directly by IOM or through referral



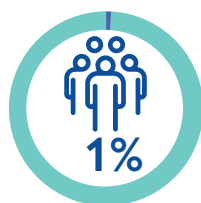
| Types of reintegration assistance



| Levels of assistance



Individual



Collective

Top 5 countries providing reintegration assistance

Bangladesh

Afghanistan

Sri Lanka

Myanmar

Pakistan

5.2. Central and North America and the Caribbean

37,881

reintegration assistance
services were provided
to returnees

30%

of the total
caseload of
services

Countries involved in
reintegration assistance

Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

| Pre-departure and post-arrival reintegration assistance

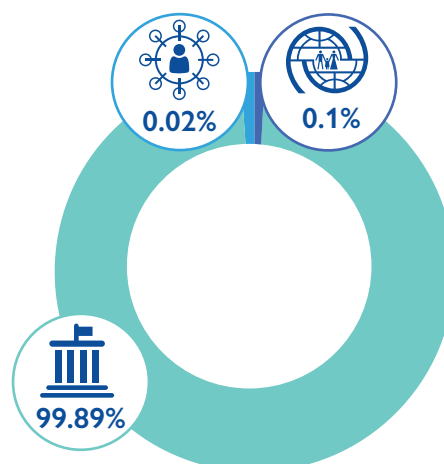


Pre-departure



Post-arrival

| Types of beneficiaries



- IOM returnees
- Forced returnees
- Returnees assisted through programmes considered voluntary by other actors

| Reintegration assistance provided directly by IOM or through referral



Direct assistance



Referral

| Types of reintegration assistance



Reintegration counselling



Economic assistance



Social assistance

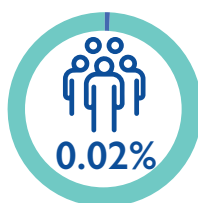


Other type of assistance

| Levels of assistance



Individual



Collective



Community

Top 5 countries providing reintegration assistance

Honduras

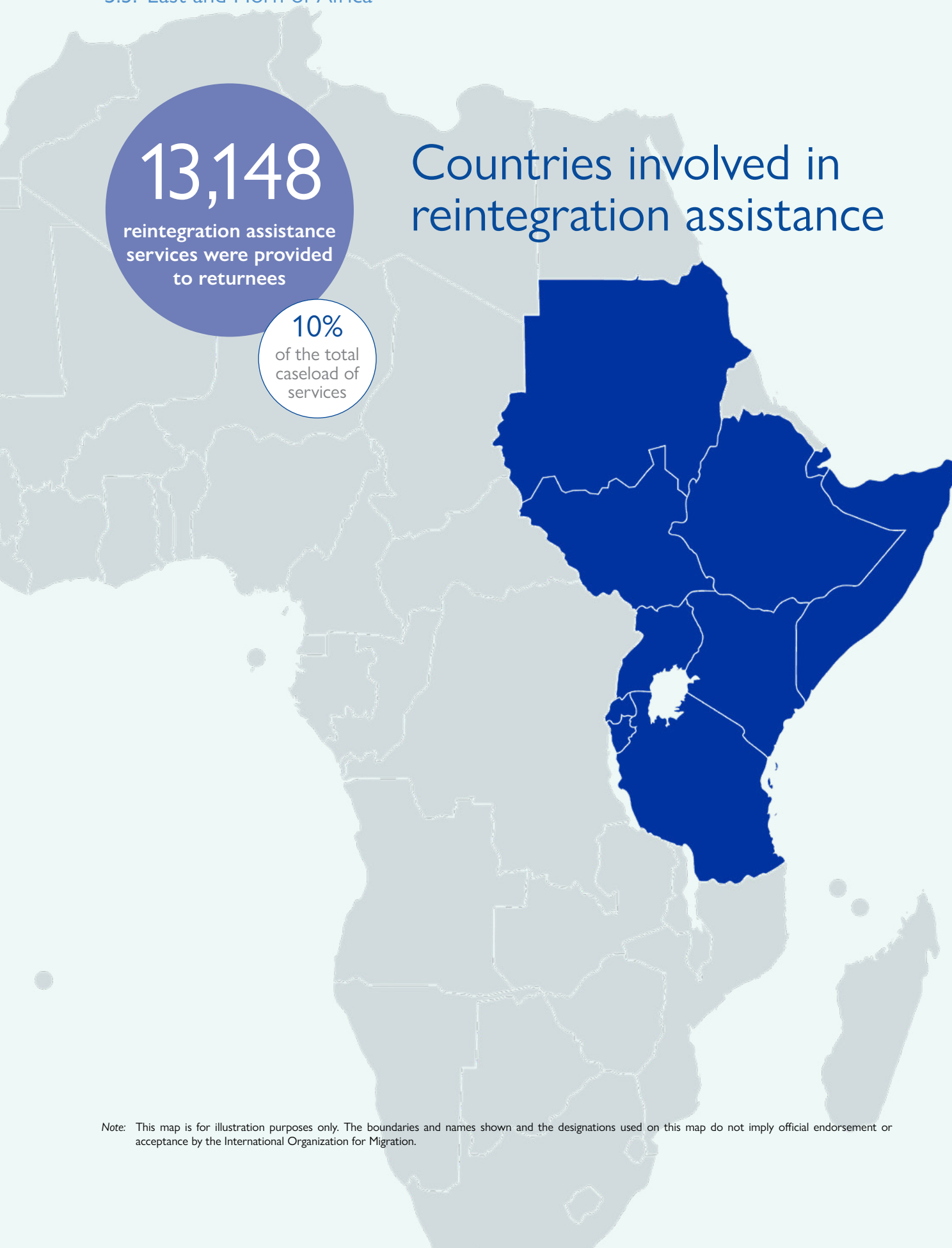
El Salvador

Guatemala

Dominican Republic

Panama

5.3. East and Horn of Africa



Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

| Pre-departure and post-arrival reintegration assistance

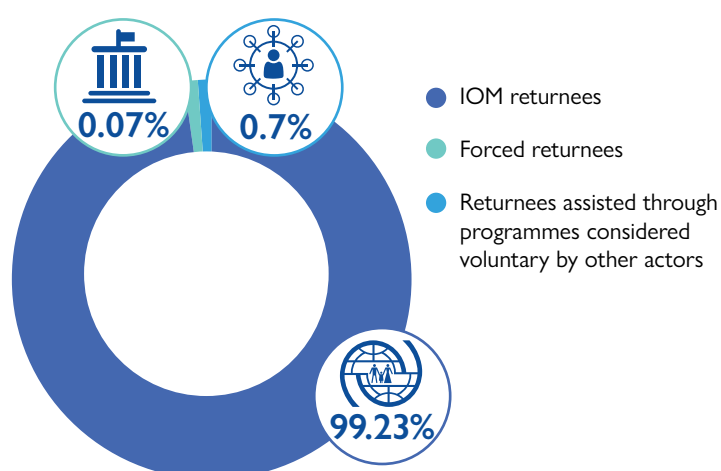


Pre-departure



Post-arrival

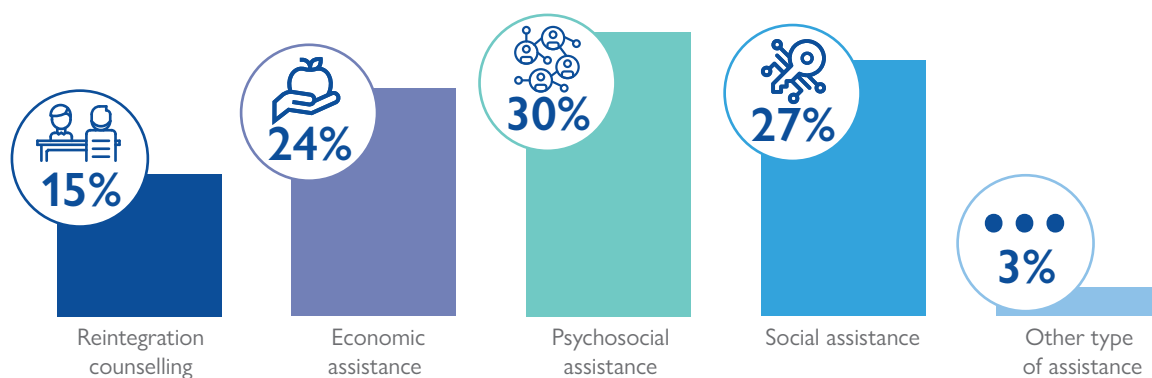
| Types of beneficiaries



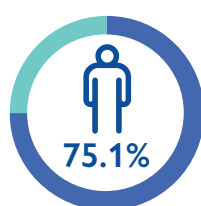
| Reintegration assistance provided directly by IOM or through referral



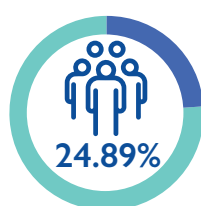
| Types of reintegration assistance



| Levels of assistance



Individual



Collective



Community

Top 5 countries providing reintegration assistance

Ethiopia

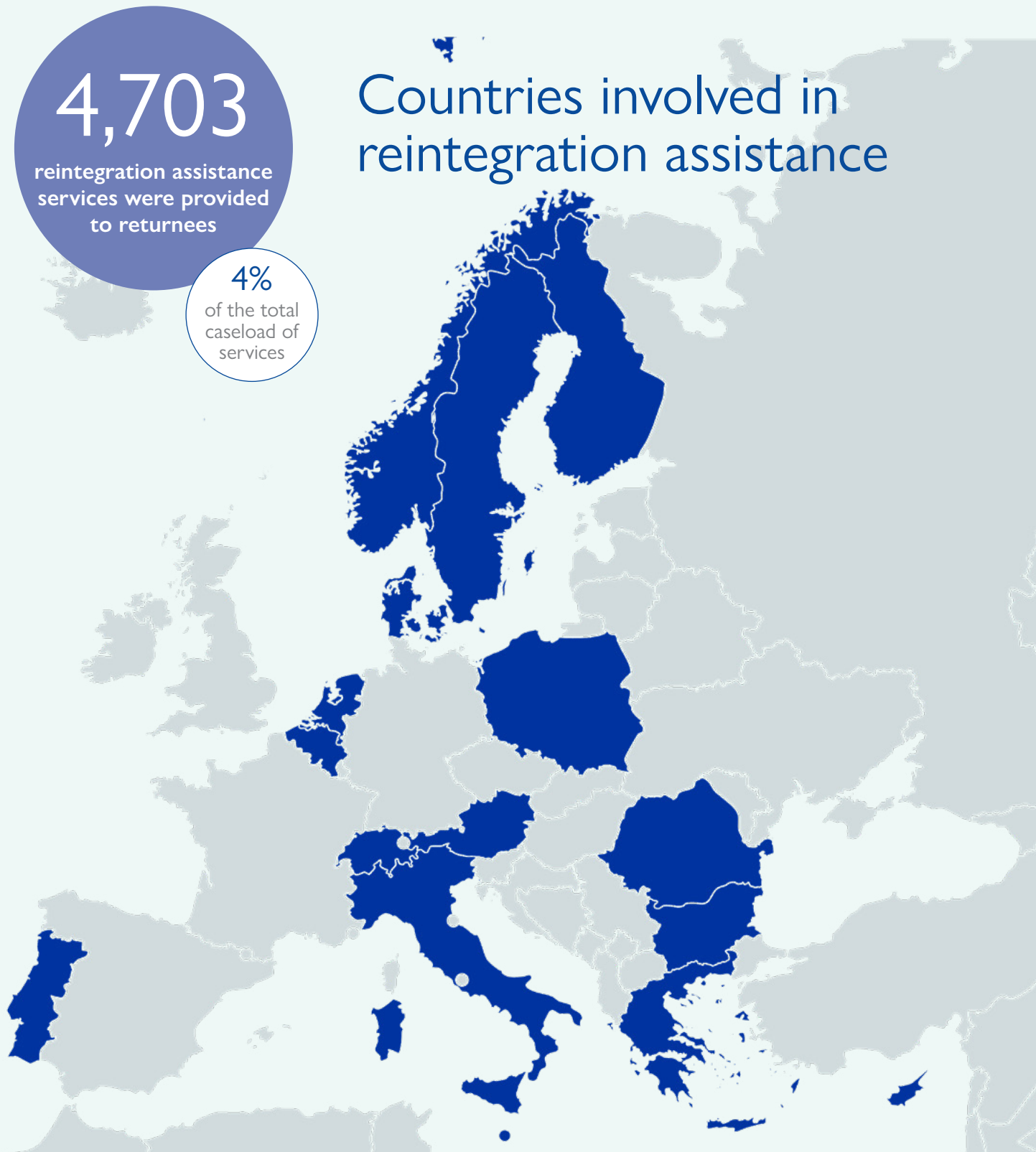
Djibouti

Sudan

Somalia

Kenya

5.4. European Economic Area

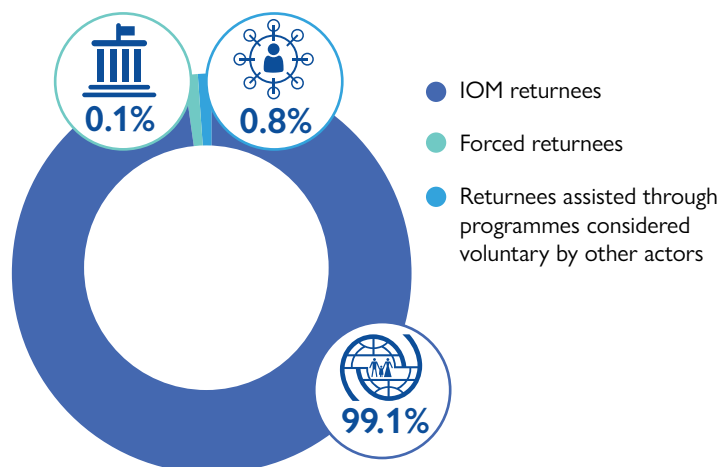


Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

| Pre-departure and post-arrival reintegration assistance



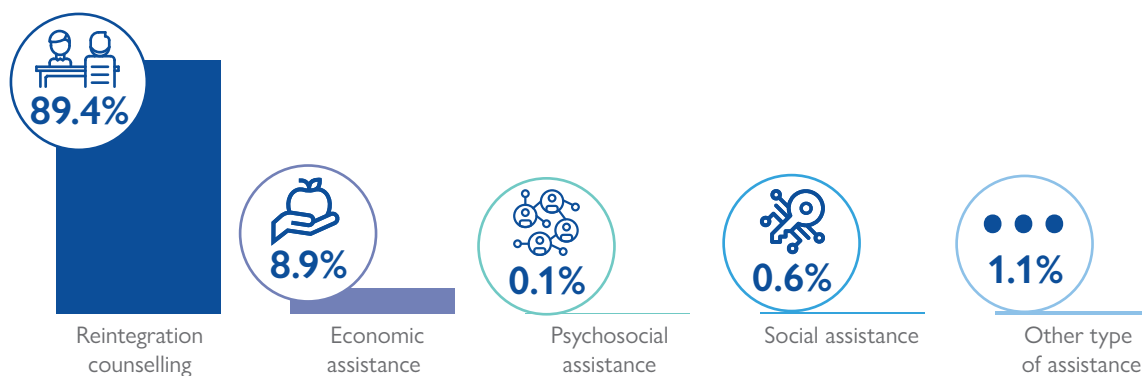
| Types of beneficiaries



| Reintegration assistance provided directly by IOM or through referral



| Types of reintegration assistance



| Levels of assistance



Top 5 countries providing reintegration assistance

Greece

Netherlands

Switzerland

Belgium

Finland

5.5. Middle East and North Africa

2,952

reintegration assistance
services were provided
to returnees

2.25%

of the total
caseload of
services

Countries involved in
reintegration assistance

Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

| Pre-departure and post-arrival reintegration assistance

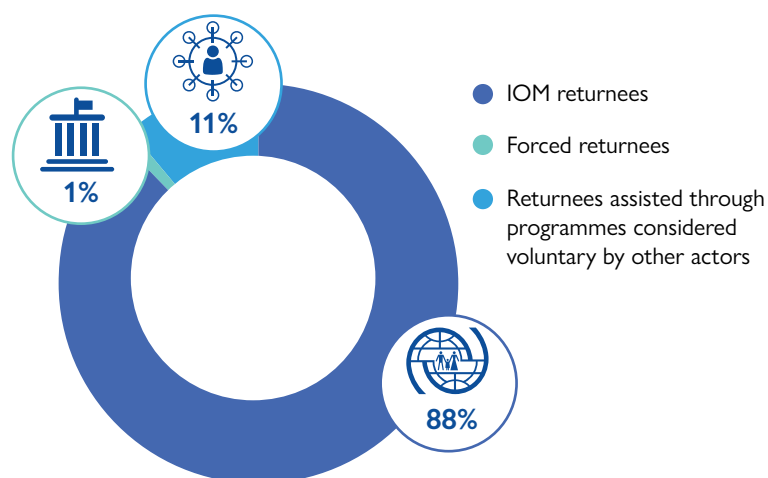


Pre-departure



Post-arrival

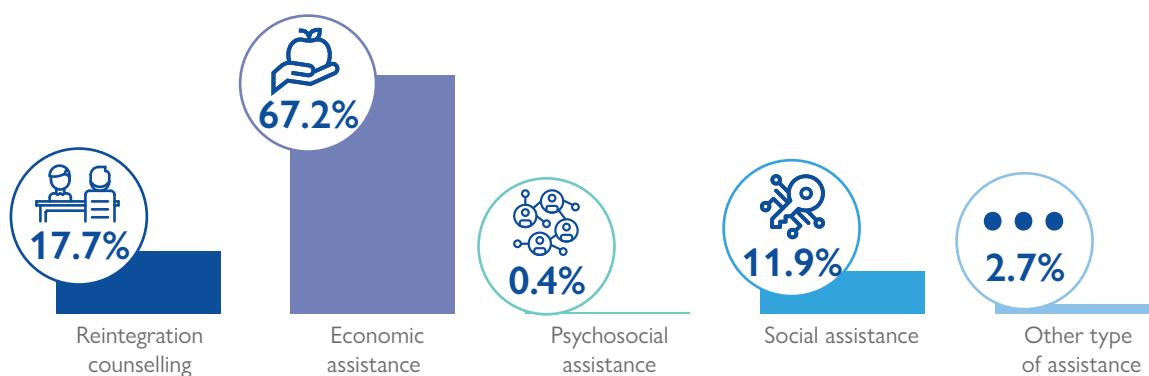
| Types of beneficiaries



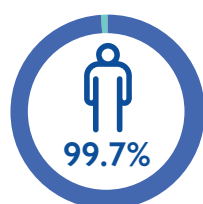
| Reintegration assistance provided directly by IOM or through referral



| Types of reintegration assistance



| Levels of assistance



Individual

Top 5 countries providing reintegration assistance

Iraq

Lebanon

Morocco

Libya

Algeria

5.6. South America

285

reintegration assistance
services were provided
to returnees

0.2%

of the total
caseload of
services

Countries involved in reintegration assistance



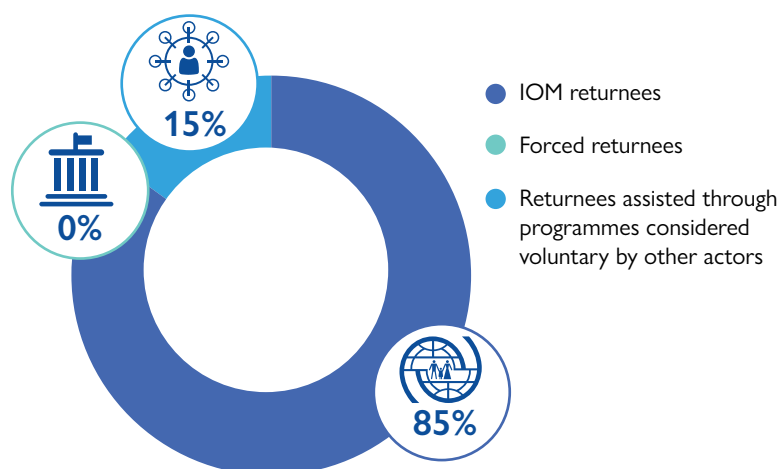
Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

| Pre-departure and post-arrival reintegration assistance



Post-arrival

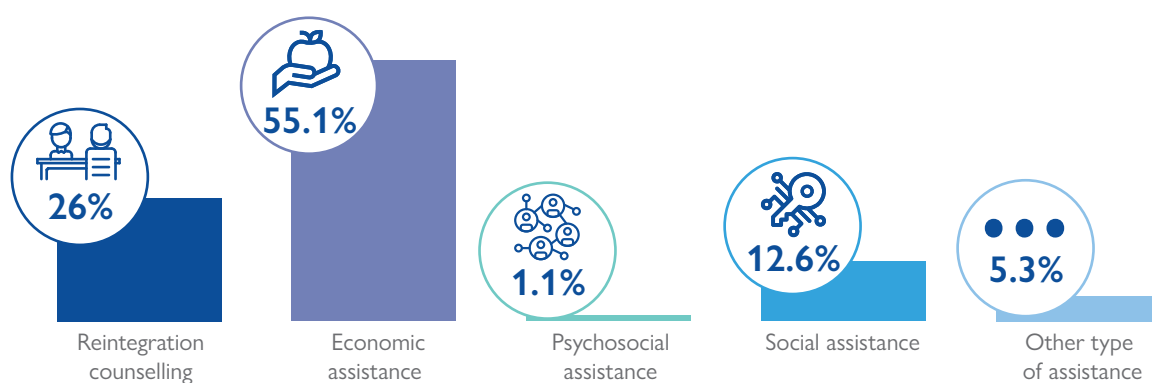
| Types of beneficiaries



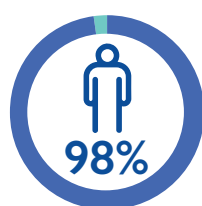
| Reintegration assistance provided directly by IOM or through referral



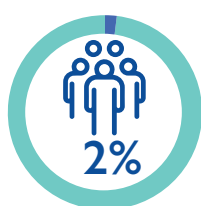
| Types of reintegration assistance



| Levels of assistance



Individual



Collective

Top 5 countries providing reintegration assistance

Brazil
Colombia
Ecuador
Paraguay
Peru

5.7. South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia

4,749

reintegration assistance
services were provided
to returnees

4%

of the total
caseload of
services

Countries involved in reintegration assistance



Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

| Pre-departure and post-arrival reintegration assistance

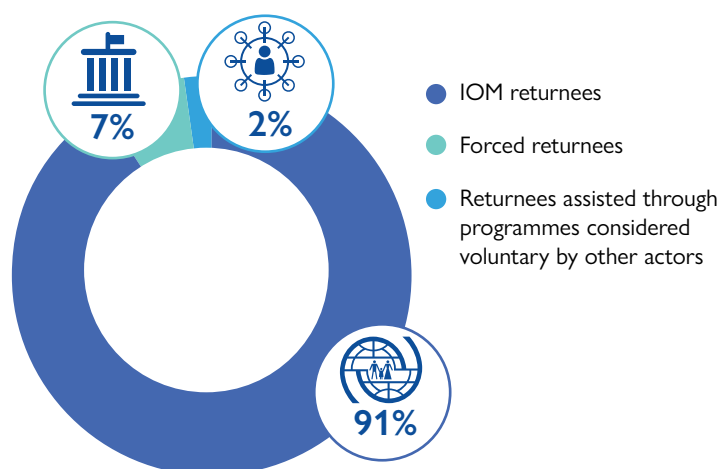


Pre-departure



Post-arrival

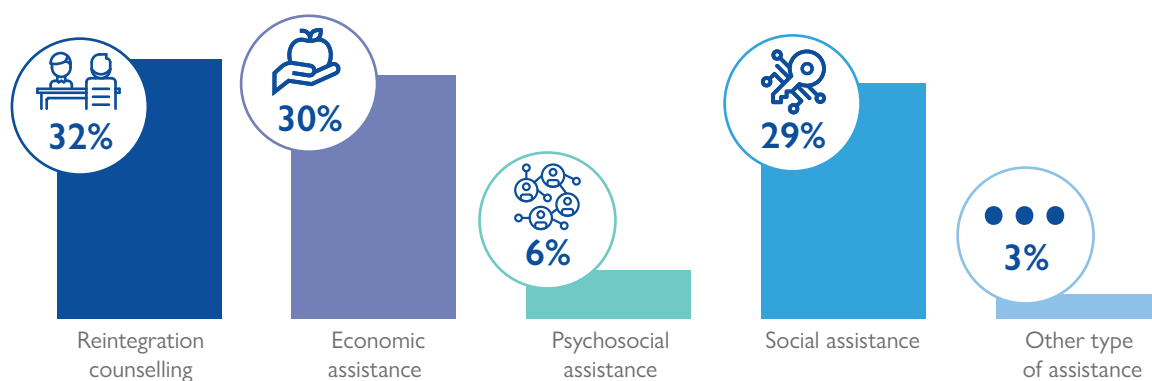
| Types of beneficiaries



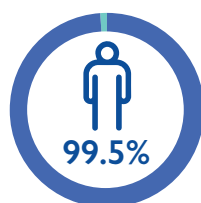
| Reintegration assistance provided directly by IOM or through referral



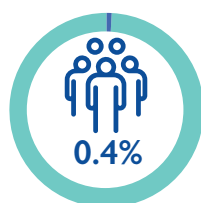
| Types of reintegration assistance



| Levels of assistance



Individual



Collective



Community

Top 5 countries providing reintegration assistance

Georgia

North Macedonia

Albania

Serbia

Tajikistan

5.8. Southern Africa

70

reintegration assistance
services were provided
to returnees

0.05%

of the total
caseload of
services

Countries involved in reintegration assistance

Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

| Pre-departure and post-arrival reintegration assistance

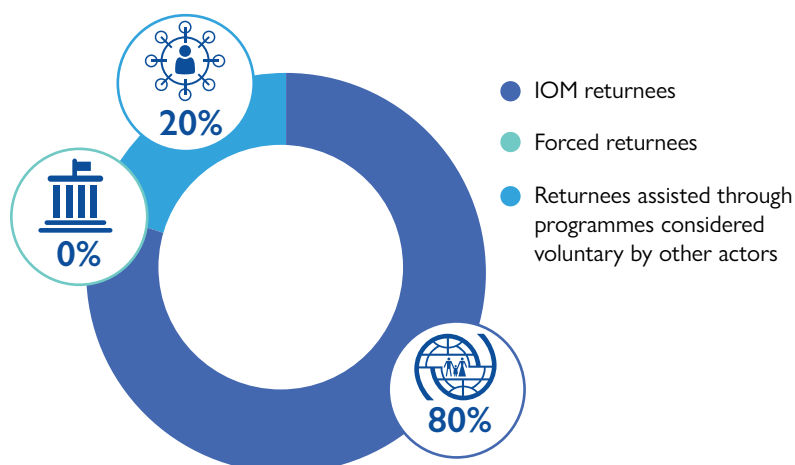


Pre-departure



Post-arrival

| Types of beneficiaries

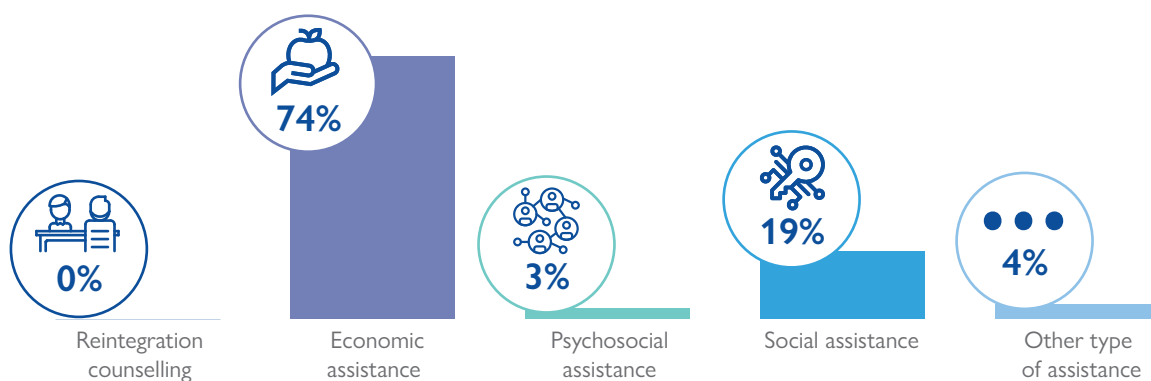


| Reintegration assistance provided directly by IOM or through referral



Direct assistance

| Types of reintegration assistance



| Levels of assistance



Individual

Top 5 countries providing reintegration assistance

Comoros

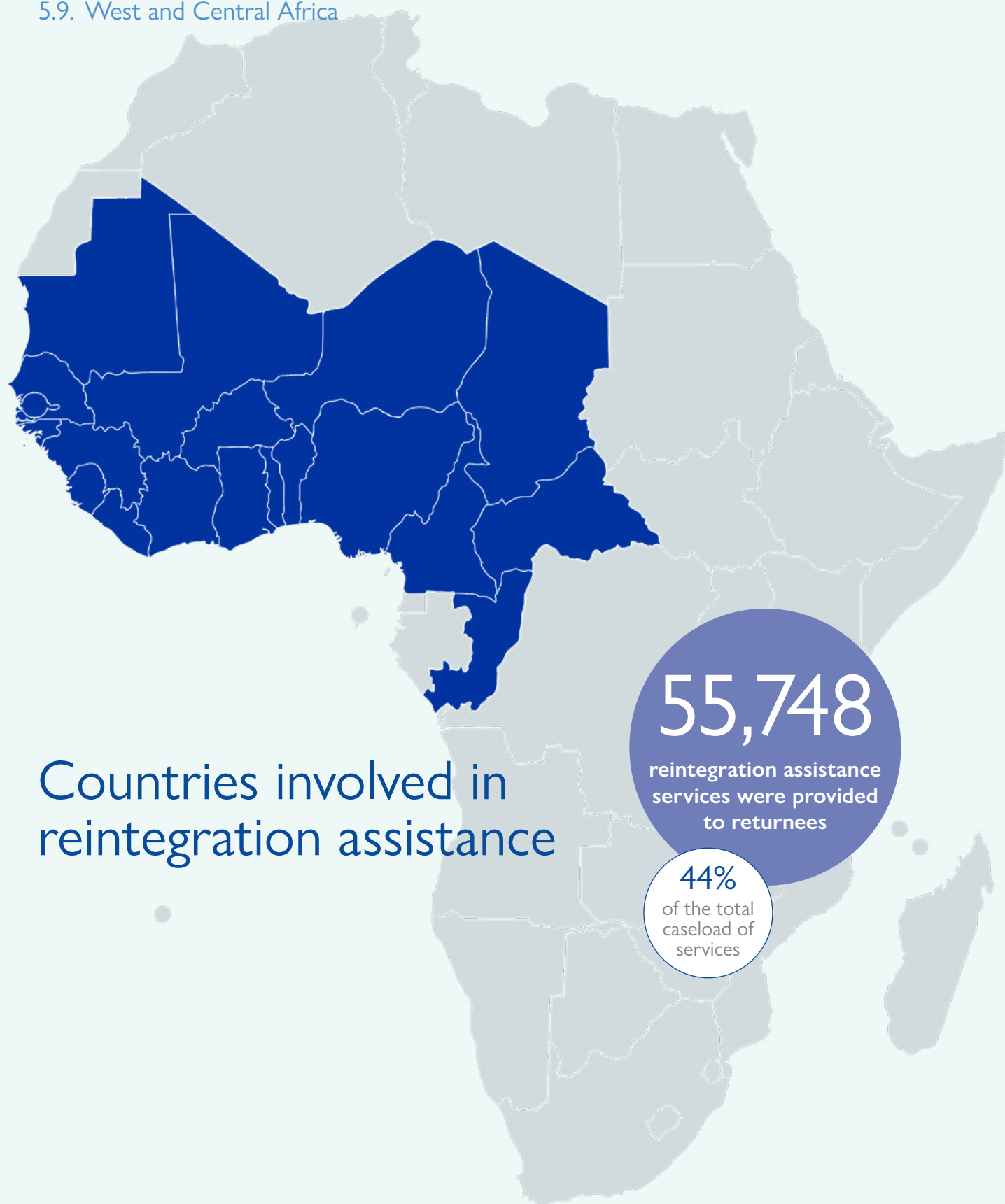
Democratic Republic of the Congo

Zambia

Mozambique

Angola

5.9. West and Central Africa



Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

| Pre-departure and post-arrival reintegration assistance

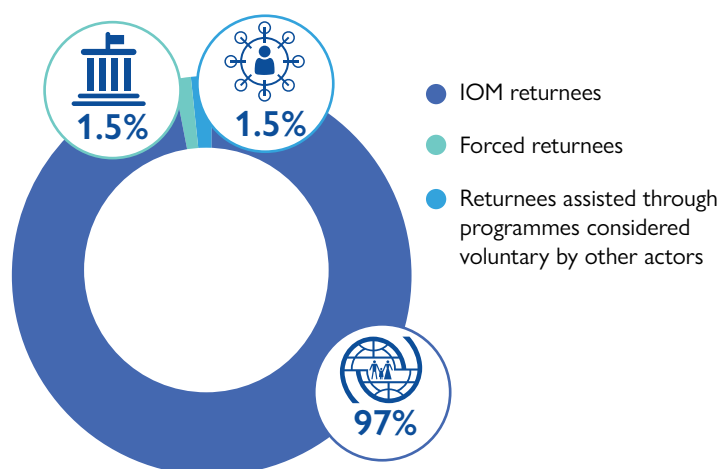


Pre-departure



Post-arrival

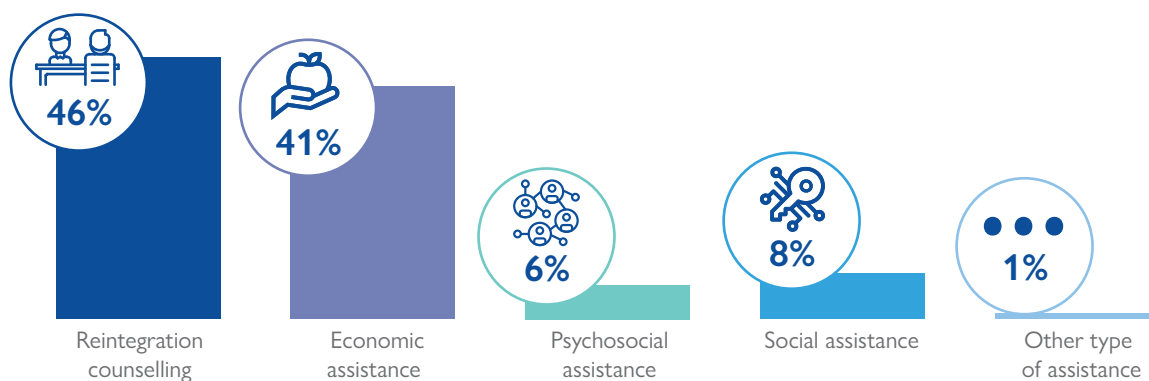
| Types of beneficiaries



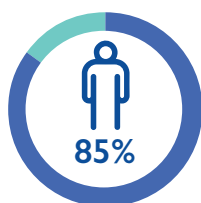
| Reintegration assistance provided directly by IOM or through referral



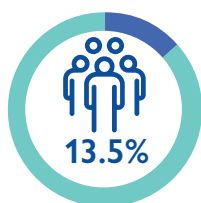
| Types of reintegration assistance



| Levels of assistance



Individual



Collective



Community

Top 5 countries providing reintegration assistance

Mali

Nigeria

Guinea

Cameroon

Côte d'Ivoire

CHAPTER 6

Global, regional and national initiatives




In Narsingdi, Bangladesh, artists perform a pot song – a storytelling performing art through singing and unfurling of a painting – on safe migration. © IOM 2020/Md Sariful ISLAM

Nurtured by the long-lasting experience of IOM in the field of AVRR and reintegration, the global, regional and national initiatives presented in this chapter illustrate the commitment of the Organization towards assisting migrants in need to return voluntarily, safely and in dignity as well as supporting returnees, whether assisted to return by IOM or not, in achieving sustainable reintegration.

The first section presents three initiatives carried out at the global level. The second section focuses on regional and national initiatives through a selection of press briefing notes and articles. It should be noted that the purpose of the second section is to present an overview of key voluntary return and reintegration achievements carried out by IOM, and the summary is by no means exhaustive.

6.1. Global

6.1.1. Reintegration Handbook

The image shows the cover of the 'REINTEGRATION HANDBOOK'. The top half has a dark blue background with a graphic on the left consisting of three overlapping circles in orange, red, and light blue. The title 'REINTEGRATION HANDBOOK: Practical guidance on the design, implementation and monitoring of reintegration assistance' is written in white text on the right.

REINTEGRATION HANDBOOK: Practical guidance on the design, implementation and monitoring of reintegration assistance

What is the Reintegration Handbook about?

The Reintegration Handbook provides practical guidance for designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating reintegration assistance programmes.

Reintegration can take place in various return contexts, for example following spontaneous, forced or assisted voluntary returns or internal displacement. The Handbook focuses on assistance, in the context of migration management, provided to migrants who are unable or unwilling to remain in host countries.

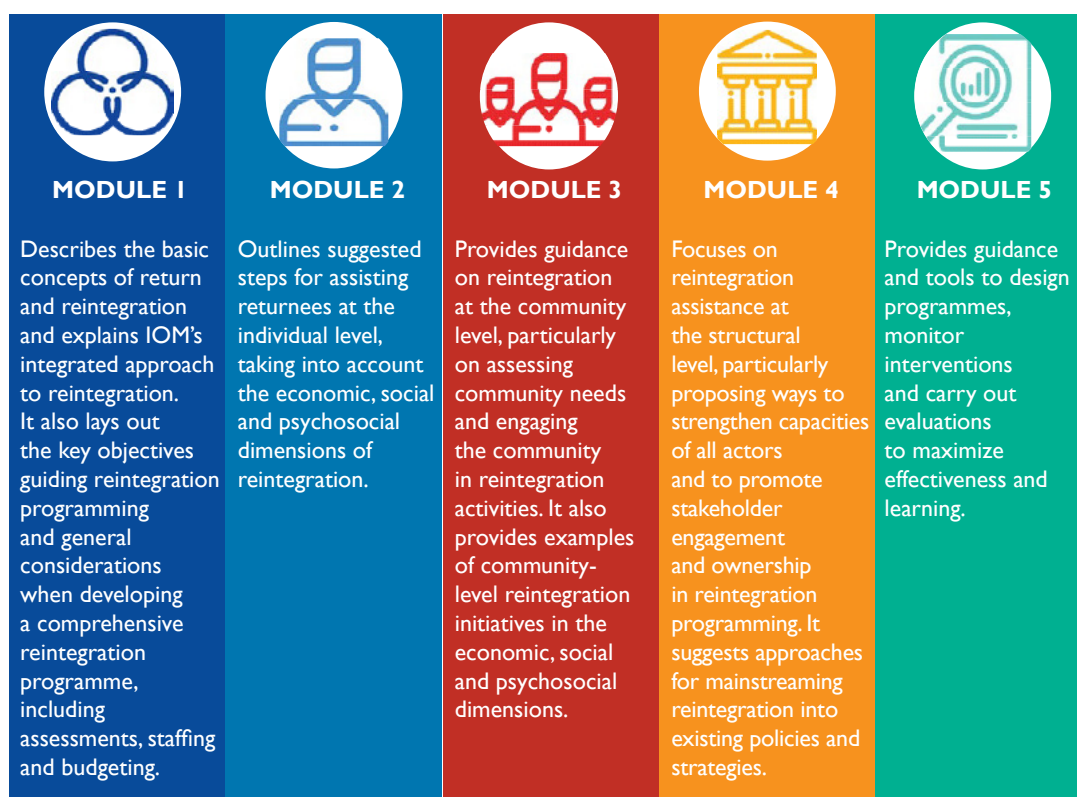
The Handbook is written on the premise that the goal of reintegration assistance is to foster the sustainable reintegration of returnees and that this requires a government-wide approach. In practice, this occurs through the adoption of coordinated policies and in harmonization with practices by relevant stakeholders at the international, regional, national and local levels.

Who is the Reintegration Handbook for?

The Handbook is a hands-on tool.

It is designed for various stakeholders involved in providing reintegration-related support at different levels and at different stages: project developers, project managers and case managers – but also policymakers and other reintegration practitioners.

While many actors might have an interest in all proposed modules, each module indicates the specific target audience for which it is aimed.



An integrated approach to reintegration



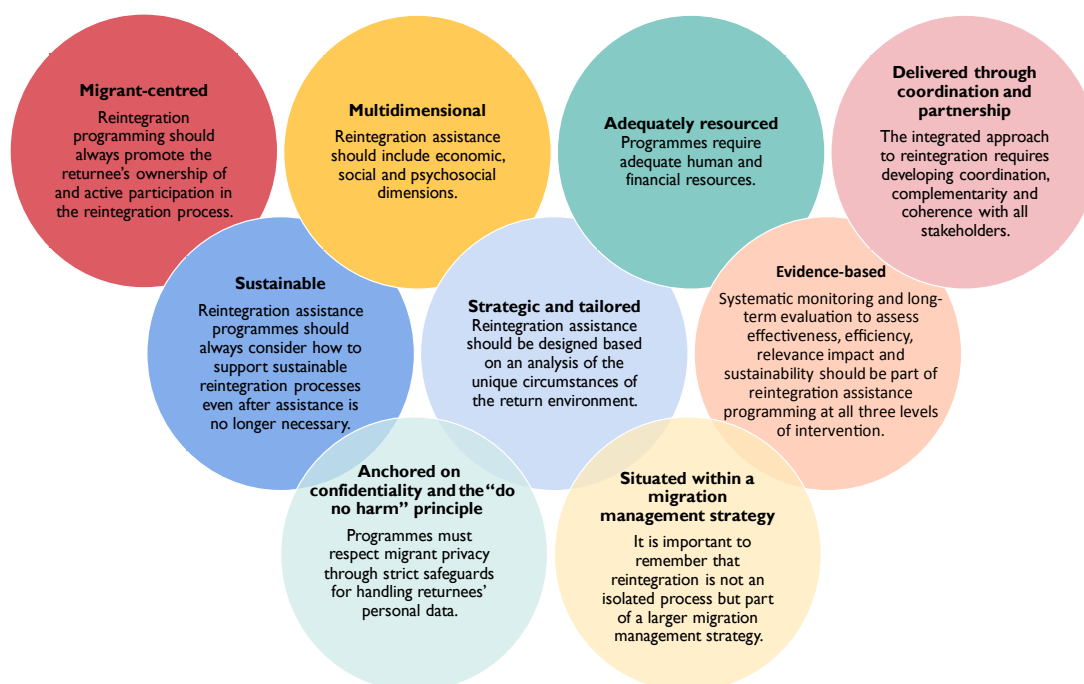
What is the Reintegration Handbook based on?

IOM's integrated approach to reintegration is the basis for the Reintegration Handbook. It asserts that: "reintegration can be considered sustainable when returnees have reached levels of economic self-sufficiency, social stability within their communities, and psychosocial well-being that allow them to cope with (re)migration drivers. Having achieved sustainable reintegration, returnees are able to make further migration decisions a matter of choice, rather than necessity".

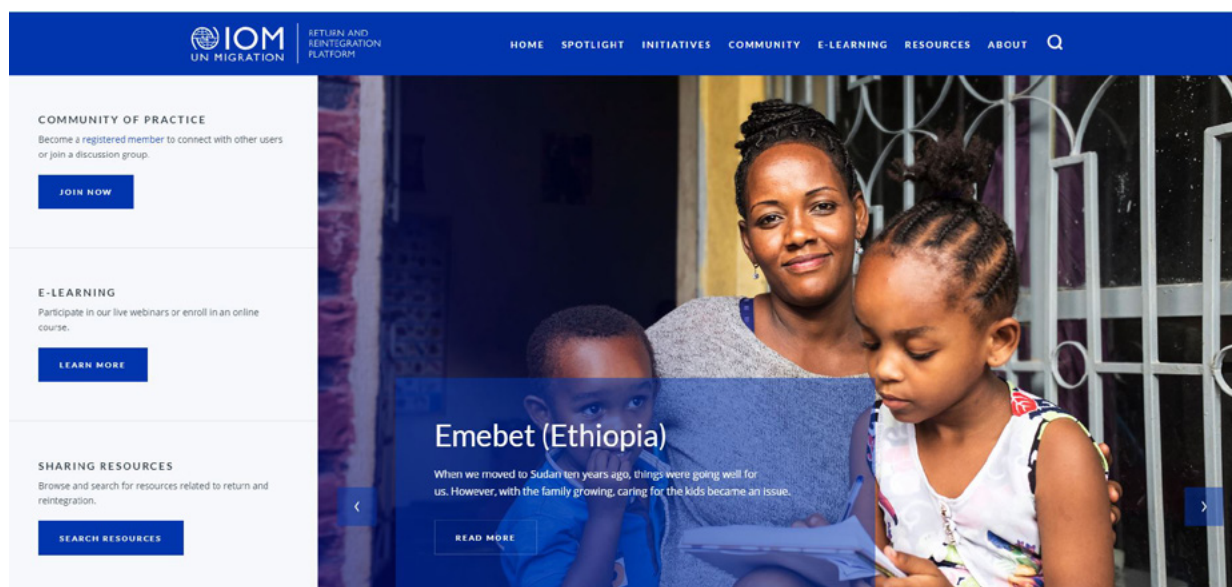
To achieve this objective, it is necessary to approach migrant reintegration in a comprehensive manner, considering the factors that can affect reintegration and addressing them in a way to respond to the needs of the individual returnees as well as the communities to which they return in a mutually beneficial way, and address the structural factors at play.

Key considerations of the Reintegration Handbook

Reintegration assistance should be:



6.1.2. Launch of the Return and Reintegration Platform



IOM, with support from the European Union, launched the [Return and Reintegration Platform](#), a global tool that aims at disseminating knowledge and good practices in the field of migrant return and reintegration.

The Platform was developed and launched by the Knowledge Management Hub (KMH), established in late 2017 under the European Union-funded Pilot Action on Voluntary Return and Sustainable, Community-Based Reintegration. The KMH aims at supporting the implementation of the [EU-IOM Actions](#)⁸ in support of migrant protection and reintegration by strengthening information-sharing and harmonization of approaches, processes and tools relating to return and reintegration, and by centralizing and disseminating the knowledge gained from these programmes and beyond.



8 For details, see <https://returnandreintegration.iom.int/en/about/eu-iom-actions>.

Foreseen to serve as a catalyst, the Platform allows sharing knowledge, expertise and lessons learned among practitioners in host, transit and origin countries. The Platform also acts as a depository of knowledge, gathering for the first time relevant publications and resources on return and reintegration in one place.

Users are invited to take part in online discussions through thematic groups, attend online courses and webinars, and also to contribute to this community of practice by sharing additional resources and publications and showcasing flagship initiatives.

The Platform is built on three main features: a virtual community of practice, webinars and proposed e-courses, and a repository of resources providing access to hundreds of IOM and external publications related to return and reintegration (reports, manuals, guidelines, studies, etc.), published from year 2000 onwards.

Complementary information can also be found in the Spotlight section of the Platform, regularly updated with articles and news related to the KMH, the EU–IOM Actions and other reintegration initiatives.

In addition, an interactive map allows users to view and search for reintegration initiatives implemented across the globe.

The screenshot displays the IOM UN Migration Platform interface, which is divided into three main sections: E-Courses, Community of Practice, and Resources.

E-COURSES: This section features three course cards:

- IOM Reintegration Handbook Online Course:** A course designed to provide practical guidance on the design, implementation and monitoring of reintegration interventions.
- Psychosocial Support for Migrants:** A course aimed at providing practical guidance on the design, implementation and monitoring of psychosocial support interventions for migrants.
- Specialised course on migrant children in the Americas:** A course aimed at providing practical guidance on the design, implementation and monitoring of specialised interventions for migrant children in the Americas.

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: This section is titled "Welcome to the Community of the Return and Reintegration Platform!" and describes it as a community area where users can connect with experts and peers around the world and participate in online discussions through thematic groups by sharing knowledge and finding innovative solutions. It includes statistics:

- TOTAL MEMBERS: 124
- TOTAL GROUPS: 2
- TOTAL TOPICS: 3
- TOTAL POSTS: 9

RESOURCES: This section is titled "RESOURCES" and includes a search bar and filters for KEYWORDS, TYPE, AUTHOR, ORGANIZATION, LANGUAGE, YEAR, COUNTRY, and REGION. It also features a "SUGGEST A NEW RESOURCE" button. Below the filters, it displays a list of resources:

- Reintegration Handbook: Practical guidance on the design, implementation and monitoring of reintegration interventions** (International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2015) with a "Download" button.
- AU EU Technical Workshop on Sustainable Reintegration: Workshop Report** (African Union, European Union, International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2015) with "ENGLISH" and "FRENCH" buttons.
- Migration Policy Practice: Special Issue on Return and Reintegration** (IOM, 2015) with a "Download" button.

6.1.3. United Nations Network on Migration – Working Group on Return and Reintegration



Following the endorsement of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration on 19 December 2018, in 2019 the United Nations system established the Network on Migration to ensure effective, timely and coordinated system-wide support to Member States in the implementation, follow up and review of the Global Compact for Migration. The United Nations Network on Migration aims to support coherent action by the United Nations system at the country, regional and global levels, where such actions add value and provide leadership to mobilize coordinated and collaborative action on migration, including speaking with one voice. In carrying out its mandate, the Network

engages with external partners, including migrants, civil society, migrant and diaspora organizations, faith-based organizations, local authorities and communities, the private sector, employers' and workers' organizations, trade unions, parliamentarians, national human rights institutions, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, academia, the media, and other relevant stakeholders at the global, regional and national levels.

As part of its operational modalities, a number of working groups (two core working and six thematic groups) have been created under the Network, which focus on specific issues. All working groups are results oriented and offer technical advice and inputs to the Network as a whole by providing tools and guidelines and by facilitating joint action at the regional and country levels.

Working Group 5 is focused on return and reintegration, with the aim of ensuring safe and dignified return of migrants and sustainable reintegration in their home countries. This working group is co-led by IOM, UNICEF and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, while members of the group include other United Nations agencies, civil society organizations, academia, International Committee of the Red Cross and experts in the field of return and reintegration.

The Working Group has prioritized three areas of work, with specific deliverables under each priority area. These are as follows:

- (1) Analyse return and reintegration initiatives in priority countries to document how returns are carried out and how reintegration measures are implemented, including gaps in human rights protection and cross-border cooperation at the regional, country and local levels, and also identifying good practices and promising examples that can be replicated in different contexts. The specific deliverables include:
 - (a) Joint analysis of gaps in human rights protection, good practices and promising examples in priority countries and corridors.
 - (b) Collect, consolidate, and share relevant resources and positive practices for the capacity-building mechanism of the Network.
 - (c) Develop a common United Nations position on safe and dignified returns and sustainable reintegration.

- (2) Identify pilot countries/corridors in which the working group can advise United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) and States on safe and dignified return initiatives and associated sustainable reintegration strategies. The specific deliverables include the development of a draft checklist for governments, UNCTs and other relevant stakeholders to assess return practices and reintegration measures, including human rights compliance.
- (3) Based on the above two priorities, support the establishment of a cross-regional, peer-learning platform for relevant stakeholders composed of States and relevant experts from civil society.

6.2. National and regional initiatives: Key achievements presented through press briefing notes and articles

6.2.1. Asia and the Pacific

Bangladeshi migrants return home from Libya with IOM's assistance

29 November 2019

Dhaka – More than 150 Bangladeshi migrants, including conflict-wounded survivors of failed sea crossings to Europe and former detainees, returned home from Libya Thursday morning with the assistance of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Voluntary Humanitarian Return (VHR) programme.

The flight with 152 men aboard left Misrata on Wednesday bound for Dhaka's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport where they were met by IOM Bangladesh staff. The Organization worked closely

with the Government of Bangladesh and the Libyan authorities to facilitate their safe return.

Mohammed Akmal, 38, who suffered shrapnel wounds during an airstrike on the factory where he worked earlier this month, told IOM staff that he wanted to thank his former employer for paying his hospital bills and IOM for getting him home.

"When I woke up in the hospital, I could not believe I was still alive. I could only think about my wife and children in Bangladesh," he said.



IOM, in close coordination with the Government of Bangladesh, has organized the voluntary return of 152 Bangladeshi migrants from Libya. © IOM 2019/Moayad ZAGHDANI

The IOM team in Dhaka provided food, health screenings, psychosocial support, information and cash assistance for onward travel from the airport.

Supported by the European Union Trust Fund, returnees will also receive reintegration assistance to help them restart their lives. Since 2015, over 1,400 Bangladeshi migrants have returned home through the VHR programme.

Mohammed Rahman, a former student who quit his studies in Bangladesh to find work in Libya, said friends persuaded him to try and reach Europe. After surviving freezing temperatures and the terrors of the open sea, their vessel was returned to Libya by the coast guard where he and others were sent to a detention centre.

“I had no money, so I decided to return home,” he said. “I am happy that I am still alive and excited to return. I will complete my studies, graduate within a year and then start working.”

IOM Bangladesh Chief of Mission Giorgi Gigauri described voluntary humanitarian return and reintegration as “one of the most important services provided globally by IOM”, adding that the stories told by the two men were not exceptional.

“These migrants found themselves in perilous conditions in Libya and desperate to get back home. We supported their return, ensuring their safety and dignity. We will also extend our support to help them achieve sustainable reintegration.”

6.2.2. Central and North America and the Caribbean

Guatemala to triple reception capacity for its returning migrants at airport

29 January 2019

Guatemala City – Guatemala will triple its capacity to assist its migrant populations returning by air from Mexico and the United States, when a new migrant support centre under construction at La Aurora International Airport is opened later this year.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is overseeing construction of the Centre for the Reception of Returned Airborne Populations, which will then be managed by the Guatemalan Migration Institute (IGM) when it opens in June 2019.

The US Agency for International Development (USAID) has provided USD 1.2 million for the construction and sourcing of furniture and equipment adapted to the needs of those who return to the country.

The centre – which is being built on Guatemalan Air Force land granted by the Ministry of National Defense – is part of efforts to dignify the return process and provides the first step towards successful reintegration in the communities of origin.

“This is an important step for Guatemala, especially a significant step in the restitution of the rights of migrants, national security, the protection of returnees and dignifying migration processes,” said Jorge Peraza Breedy, Chief of IOM Mission for El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras.

The building will include recreational areas adapted to the needs of unaccompanied migrant children, adolescents and returned families, in line with the best interests of the child concept; a room for



The new centre, under construction at La Aurora International Airport, will triple the capacity of the Government of Guatemala to support migrants being returned from Mexico and the United States. © IOM 2019

breastfeeding; medical clinics; [an area for] telephone calls; a psychosocial interview room; a checkpoint; and a waiting area for those who arrive to receive their relatives, among others.

The initiative will help Guatemala meet the growing challenges of managing human mobility, encourage social and economic development through migration and ensure respect for human dignity and the well-being of migrants.

During the first semester of the year, IOM will implement actions that facilitate the integration of other government institutions to offer services and services for the returned migrant population.

The construction of the centre is part of IOM's Return and Reintegration Project in the Northern Triangle of Central America, supported by USAID.

Between January and November 2017, 60,073 people were returned to Guatemala from Mexico and the United States; in 2018, in the same period, 87,560 returns were recorded, representing an increase of 45.8 per cent. The departments with the highest number of returnees are (in order): Huehuetenango, San Marcos, Quiché, Quetzaltenango and Guatemala.

6.2.3. East and Horn of Africa

IOM partners with Save the Children to assist 600 children in Ethiopia

20 August 2019

Addis Ababa – Six hundred vulnerable children in Ethiopia are the focus of a new partnership between the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Save the Children.

The partnership agreement provides for direct service provision, capacity-building and a multisectoral approach to ensure the protection and sustainable reintegration of migrant children while providing a safe and nurturing family environment for children generally.

It seeks to build on available structures, simultaneously strengthening the capacity of government and grassroot structures to respond to the protection concerns of child returnees and other children.

Over the next 18 months, 400 migrant returnees and 200 other vulnerable children will be earmarked for assistance in eight subregions in East Hararghe, Oromia and Amhara's North Wollo Zones.

Families will receive support in parenting skills development and will be supported to engage in income-generating activities so that they can provide for their children.

Child returnees will themselves be supported with skills training, including soft skills development – such as self-confidence and self-awareness – in order to strengthen their transition to adulthood.

This is the fourth such partnership under the EU–IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration focusing [on] Ethiopia's regional states prone to irregular migration.

IOM already is collaborating with three other local organizations to reach vulnerable children: the Mary Joy Development Association, Facilitator for Change and the Forum on Sustainable Child Empowerment.

Ultimately, over 1,000 children will be reached through these four partnerships.



Supporting children is among the priorities of the EU–IOM Joint Initiative. © IOM Ethiopia 2019

Children on the move are a particularly vulnerable group, with the Horn of Africa seeing significant numbers. Ethiopia, which is Africa's second most populous country, accounts for the largest migrant movements in a region that also includes the countries of Djibouti, Eritrea, Somalia and Sudan.

To date, IOM has provided voluntary return and reintegration assistance to 5,000 Ethiopian migrants under the EU–IOM Joint Initiative, of whom 20 per cent are children. Some 1,300 children have received needs-based reintegration assistance since 2017.

Under the EU–IOM Joint Initiative, assistance is tailor-made for returning migrants seeking to restart their lives in their countries of origin. This is done through an integrated approach that supports both migrants and their communities, has the potential to complement local development and to mitigate some of the drivers of irregular migration.

According to Sara Basha, the coordinator of the EU–IOM Joint Initiative in Ethiopia, establishing effective partnerships is among the programme's strengths. "Addressing the needs of vulnerable population especially migrant children is a complex undertaking which requires strong partnership with various stakeholders across the board," Basha said.

Unaccompanied children are among the migrants traversing key migration routes in search of opportunities in other countries, with Saudi Arabia, Europe and South Africa being key destinations favoured by Ethiopians.

Data on child migrants are few and far between, especially on the routes to Europe and South Africa. But a 2019 IOM report [*Fatal Journeys Volume 4: Missing Migrant Children*] estimates that over 6,000 child migrants lost their lives in Africa between 2014 and 2018. Worldwide, nearly 1,600 children – an average of almost one every day – were reported

dead or missing over the same period, although many more go unrecorded.

According a 2017 report by UNICEF entitled *A Child is a Child: Protecting Children on the Move from Violence, Abuse and Exploitation*, the number of children travelling alone increased five-fold since 2010. It warned that many young refugees and migrants were taking highly dangerous routes, often at the mercy of human traffickers.

From January to July 2019, IOM's drop-in facilities for stranded migrants in the Horn of Africa – also known as Migrant Response Centres – registered 1,224 minors, amounting to 18 per cent of all registrations. Fifty-nine per cent of these children were unaccompanied and 41 per cent accompanied (unaccompanied minors are usually between 15 and 17, while younger children are usually accompanied).

Between May 2017 and July 2019, IOM recorded 21,657 Ethiopian minors returning to Ethiopia from Saudi Arabia – mostly involuntarily – which is around 8 per cent of the total number of returnees from Saudi Arabia to the Horn of Africa. In June and July 2019 alone, IOM registered 1,869 minors as having returned from Saudi Arabia.

Since May 2019, IOM assisted the voluntary humanitarian return of 2,742 migrants who were detained in a stadium in Yemen. Twenty-two chartered flights brought the returnees to Ethiopia, of which 1,180 were minors.

The EU–IOM Joint Initiative facilitates orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration management through the development of rights-based and development-focused procedures and processes on protection and sustainable reintegration. The project, funded under the European Union Trust Fund for Africa, covers and has been set up in close cooperation with a total of 26 African countries.

6.2.4. European Economic Area

Nearly 17,000 migrants returned voluntarily from Greece in past 3 years

30 August 2019

Athens – The International Organization for Migration (IOM) reported today (30/08) that 16,954 third-country nationals chose to return voluntarily from Greece to their country of origin over a three-year period from June 2016 through 28 August 2019.

Migrants from Pakistan (4,292) topped the list of 83 nationalities returning voluntarily with IOM assistance, followed by those from Iraq (4,187), Georgia (1,972), Algeria (1,308) and Afghanistan (1,295) (see chart below).

There were 12,017 male voluntary returnees, 2,817 female and 2,120 children. IOM assisted the voluntary return of 3,666 migrants who were residing on the North-Eastern Aegean islands.

Some 4,270 of the returning migrants also received assistance to support a more sustainable reintegration into their local communities. Priority for the reintegration assistance was given to candidates in situations of vulnerability, while other factors were taken into consideration like work experience, skills and willingness of the candidate to develop a sustainable reintegration plan.

Country	Total returns
Pakistan	4 292
Iraq	4 187
Georgia	1 972
Algeria	1 308
Afghanistan	1 295
Islamic Republic of Iran	1 123
Morocco	557
Bangladesh	520
Egypt	286
India	175

“I returned to Georgia in 2018 after four years of emigration in Greece. In Greece, I worked in the construction sector. This programme enabled me to do the same work at home. I purchased tools for reconstruction work, I have my own business and I have a stable income. I have an opportunity to do a job I am good at,” said Giorgi Ormotsadze from Georgia, who now works as a constructor in Georgia and has implemented his reintegration plan under the project The Implementation of Assisted Voluntary Returns, including Reintegration Measures (AVR/R).

Prior to departure and with the assistance of cultural mediators and AVR/R officers, beneficiaries received return counselling during which they were provided crucial information as well as administrative assistance for acquiring travel documents. IOM then provided flight tickets, assistance at the airport and financial support to cover immediate expenses.

Extensive reintegration counselling sessions were conducted by IOM officers for the 4,270 eligible beneficiaries and through cooperation with IOM offices in the countries of origin. Their reintegration plans were developed in the interest of safeguarding their well-being and helping to ensure that they reintegrate into the local community in a sustainable way.

The beneficiaries' work experience, their skills and willingness to follow through were key considerations in tailoring their reintegration plans. Following these counselling sessions, 3,751 returnees received in-kind reintegration assistance for starting up small businesses.

“As I am getting older, I prefer to be with my people in my hometown. I approached IOM in Athens and

received information for the in-kind reintegration assistance. One month after my arrival in my country, I managed to set up my own business. It is called ‘sari-sari store’, a grocery store in the Philippines with local products,” said Juliana Villa Sarile from the Philippines.

Through the duration of the project, IOM provided also tailored assistance for 1,345 migrants in vulnerable situations such as those with health needs (913), unaccompanied migrant children (123), elderly people (190) and pregnant women (97).

Specialized IOM staff arranged pre-departure and travel assistance appropriate to the nature of pre-existing health conditions, conducted health assessments and referred beneficiaries to adequate medical services, escorted beneficiaries when needed and ensured continuity of treatment and requirements for specific arrangements during the return journey.

An open centre for migrants registered for assisted voluntary return and reintegration (OCAVRR) is also established near the centre of Athens to provide shelter and pre-departure care to particularly vulnerable migrants in Greece who have registered for the AVR/R programme and have no place to stay until their departure. The purpose of the open centre is to ensure that migrants in vulnerable situations are enabled to prepare their return in safe conditions.

From June 2016 to the present, the open centre has provided shelter to 4,434 migrants, 4,170 of whom have departed for their country of origin.

The AVR/R project has been co-funded 75 per cent by EU funds and 25 per cent by Greek national funds.



Juliana returned to set up a “sari-sari store”, a grocery store in the Philippines. © IOM 2017

6.2.5. Middle East and North Africa

EU–IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration in North Africa – Regional Launch Event in Egypt

9 September 2019

Cairo – The European Union (EU) funded EU–IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration in North Africa (EU–IOM Joint Initiative) kicked off on Monday 9 September 2019 in a regional event hosted by the IOM Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa, in collaboration with the Government of Egypt and the European Union Delegation in Cairo. The event brought together key stakeholders, including representatives of North African governments, as well as EU and IOM officials, to establish a common understanding of the EU–IOM Joint Initiative in the region and formally kick-start the implementation of the regional programme.

The EU–IOM Joint Initiative will support stranded and vulnerable migrants in North African countries (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia) with the provision of protection services, including the possibility to return voluntarily to their country of origin and receive reintegration assistance upon return. During his opening remarks, Mr. Ibrahim Laafia, Head of Cooperation at the European Union Delegation to Egypt iterated the intention of the programme to “continue to expand the provision of sustainable solutions for migrants stranded across the North of Africa region and to foster a common approach to return and reintegration”.

Her Excellency, Ambassador Dina el Sehy, the Deputy Assistant Minister for Migration, Refugees and Combatting Human Trafficking, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Egypt, spoke of the Government of Egypt’s “commitment to protecting the most vulnerable, including victims of trafficking, sexual and gender-based violence, unaccompanied children, single women and mothers, and other vulnerable groups”.

The Programme will offer integrated support to migrants returning to Algeria, Egypt, Morocco

and Tunisia, with the aim of achieving sustainable reintegration in their communities. It follows the approach developed as part of the Joint Initiative Framework Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) offering options for individual, collective or community-based reintegration assistance that will be adapted to local contexts through a consultative process. Supported returning migrants will receive economic, social and psychosocial support following a tailored approach based on identified needs and opportunities.

Mrs. Carmela Godeau, the IOM Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa, spoke about “the opportunity for further cooperation and partnerships on the Programme across the region of North Africa” and the extension of IOM’s programming on voluntary return and reintegration into more innovative and comprehensive approaches. The Joint Initiative in North Africa will work hand in hand with the two other components of the Programme, in the Sahel and Lake Chad region and in the Horn of Africa region. Migrants returning to countries outside the geographic coverage of the Joint Initiative will also be entitled to receive reintegration assistance through the Programme.

Background

Launched in December 2016 with funding from the EU Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF) for Africa, the EU–IOM Joint Initiative on Migrant Protection and Reintegration is an innovative and comprehensive programme facilitating orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration governance through the implementation of policies focused on migrant protection and sustainable reintegration. The EU–IOM Joint Initiative is divided into three regional components, in the Sahel and Lake Chad region, in the Horn of Africa region, and now in North Africa.

6.2.6. South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia

IOM and the European Union helping thousands of vulnerable migrants to get home from Turkey

16 April 2019

Ankara – As the world's largest migrant and refugee-hosting country, Turkey hosts over 4 million migrants seeking a different life from the instability, uncertainty and poverty they have left behind. Many struggle to integrate due to legal, financial, and language barriers, or lack of support. There comes a time when they realize they cannot continue to stay in Turkey and that going home is the best option.

Today (16 April), IOM Turkey and the EU Delegation, in partnership with the Government of Turkey, launched a new phase of a project that provides assistance to migrants living in Turkey who opt to return to their country of origin. The Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVR/R) of Irregular Migrants in Turkey project helps migrants get home and settled in a safe and dignified way.

This was true for Zarghona Balkhi and her young daughter Raihan whom IOM helped return from Turkey to Afghanistan. After a two-week ordeal organized by smugglers crossing Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkey, they arrived in Istanbul with Zarghona's son (Raihan's older brother) who later disappeared just weeks later. "I tried to find work here but without speaking Turkish and not having an education, it is too difficult for me. My son was my only livelihood and without him it is impossible to stay," said Zarghona. With IOM assistance, Zarghona and Raihan returned to their home city of Mazar-i-Sharif and were reunited with their family.

"Safe options for migrants to return home are crucial, without the stigma of deportation. AVR/R



Zarghona and her daughter took shelter in this small room behind a car wash stand in Istanbul where two Afghan friends were working. © IOM 2018/Nadine AL LAHHAM

assistance brings a complementary option for stranded or vulnerable migrants to return home in dignity and safety with the opportunity to reintegrate sustainably in their home communities,” says Lado Gvilava, IOM Turkey’s Chief of Mission.

Through the programme, migrants can make an informed decision and take ownership of the voluntary return process. In addition, through IOM’s vast network of offices worldwide, returnees can receive tailored support to overcome challenges relating to their reintegration or address specific vulnerabilities that they face.

The new phase of the project will be implemented together with the Turkish Ministry of Interior, the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM), and the Central Financing and Contracting Unit (CFCU) and will aim to assist a minimum of 3,500 migrants to be provided with assistance, with approximately 20 per cent of the most vulnerable to be provided with reintegration support.

IOM will also implement a series of capacity-building activities and study visits, to support DGMM’s efforts to strengthen the national AVR/R mechanism in line with national and international standards.

IOM has a long history and extensive experience implementing AVR/R programmes since 1979, running projects in all regions of the world. In 2015, IOM assisted 69,540 migrants to return (the highest level for the past 15 years) from 97 host/transit countries to 156 countries of origin.

In Turkey, specifically, IOM helped 8,098 stranded migrants with assisted voluntary return and 438 with reintegration assistance from 2009 to 2018. Working alongside government partners, IOM AVR/R programming is guided by the principles of voluntariness, migrant-centred response, safety, sustainability of reintegration, confidentiality and evidence-informed programming.

6.2.7. South America

Joint Complementary Mechanism for a Sustainable Reintegration in Brazil (SURE)**What is it?**

This 24-month project aims to contribute to a more informed and sustainable reintegration process in Brazil, through a complementary joint reintegration model. This mechanism reinforces the support provided by existing Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration programmes implemented in Portugal, Belgium and Ireland.

Strengthening the connection between pre-departure and post-arrival counselling, the project sets up a referral and coordination mechanism that promotes a more sustainable reintegration for returning migrants in Brazil. The mechanism is based on returning migrants' needs identified in host countries during the pre-departure counselling phase – as well as the referrals made to local actors with relevant support programmes in Brazil.

The project focuses on the three main Brazilian States to which migrants have returned to in the past years, namely Goiás, Minas Gerais and São Paulo.

**Main activities**

In Brazil	In Portugal, Belgium and Ireland	Joint activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mapping local State actors and non-State actors and initiatives potentially useful for migrants returning to Goiás, Minas Gerais and São Paulo; Creating a reintegration support network with local actors identified through the mapping exercise; Organizing a training of trainers for local actors that are part of the support network, with a focus on the psychosocial impact of the return process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizing awareness sessions for AVR/R counsellors on the importance of sharing information identified by the project with returning migrants, early on during the pre-departure counselling phase, using the project's brochure, website or MigApp; Sharing the information gathered during the project's mapping exercise when providing pre-departure counselling – using the project's brochure, MigApp or the project's website – and referring migrants to local actors in Brazil whenever possible and relevant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating a working group, bringing together experts from Brazil, Portugal, Belgium and Ireland to discuss and analyse the mechanism implemented in this project, share reintegrate good practices, as well as recommendations for future initiatives. Creating a coordination and referral mechanism between host countries and local actors in Brazil, tailored to migrants' specific needs.

6.2.8. Southern Africa

Shielding the vulnerable from violence, IOM assists 57 Malawians from South Africa

16 April 2019



Returnees who were affected by the xenophobic attacks in South Africa arrive at the Kamuzu International Airport in Lilongwe under the Pilot Action on Assisted Voluntary Return and Community-based Reintegration programme. © IOM 2019/Belardino CRISTOS

Lilongwe – The terror and fear were real, the damage devastating – the response swift and effective. Over three days last week, South Africa-based staff from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), in collaboration with the Governments of Malawi and South Africa, assisted 53 Malawian nationals with voluntary return to their homes, following an outbreak of violence in the Durban area of KwaZulu-Natal.

Support for these vulnerable migrants was provided under a project funded by the European Union (EU) called Pilot Action on Voluntary Return and Sustainable Community-Based Reintegration. According to press reports and several human rights NGOs, migrants of other nationalities – notably Congolese, Burundians and Tanzanians – also were targeted by xenophobic mobs, suffering injury, theft and damage to their property.

“My house was broken into, and I was beaten, and robbed of my belongings,” said Martin to the Malawian media upon arriving at Kamuzu International Airport in Lilongwe.

Durban’s violence led to the displacement of about 300 Malawian nationals. Of those, 105 Malawians expressed willingness to voluntarily return to Malawi. Later, after noting the violence had receded, about half of those decided to return to their homes in Durban.

“This support extends our global commitment to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in need, including refugees and internally displaced people. The situation in Durban exposed migrants to violence, and we, as the UN Migration Agency, took the initiative to provide an option for those who no longer felt safe, and thus wished to voluntarily return back to Malawi,” said Lily Sanya, IOM Chief of Mission in South Africa.

While still in South Africa, returning migrants were provided with counselling to help them make informed decisions about their return, also assistance in securing travel documents in collaboration with their respective consulates and embassies in South Africa. IOM also assisted in the booking and payment of air tickets and offered transit assistance within South Africa to returnees living outside Johannesburg.

IOM assisted the returnees in batches, with the first group of 19 migrants (18 males, 1 female) leaving just over a week ago (8 April), the second group of 22 males and 1 female, 22 males departing two days later and a final group of 11 males leaving Friday, 12 April. All three groups were received by senior government officials and IOM in Malawi.

“IOM condemns the actions of the criminal elements in the community and urge the migrants in the community to respect the laws of the country. IOM is actively engaged with the Governments of South Africa and Malawi to facilitate the safe, orderly and voluntary return of the migrants affected by the violence to their home country,” said Mpilo Nkomo, IOM Head of Office in Malawi.

Kennedy Nkhoma, Chief Director for the Ministry of Homeland Security, added: “The Malawi Government is saddened by the violence that occurred in Durban, and is fully engaged with its counterpart, South Africa, to support the nationals that have been affected by the violence. We are very grateful to the IOM and the EU Delegation to Malawi for assisting the affected nationals.”

The issue of violence against foreign nationals in South Africa has engaged stakeholders including the diplomatic community, business and religious groups, community leaders, and foreign nationals themselves.

“We continue to strive for durable solutions that ensure the peaceful coexistence of our communities,” said Thenjiwe Mtintso the South African High Commissioner to Malawi. “Many Malawian nationals are visitors to – and are living in South Africa – and many more are attracted to pursuing prosperity in our country.”

Added EU Ambassador Sandra Paesen: “The EU Delegation in Malawi is a key partner of voluntary return and reintegration assistance to migrants and deplores the breach of physical integrity suffered by migrants in South Africa. The Head of EU Delegation in Malawi encourages the Government to pursue this objective in line with both national and international best practices.”

IOM, in collaboration with the Government of Malawi, has assisted a total of 231 Malawian nationals with voluntary return from South Africa, under the Pilot Action.

The Mayor of Durban and representatives from the Malawian High Commissioner in South Africa encouraged the community members to live together in peace and harmony and use the existing structures to address issues in the community instead of taking the law into their hands. The community indicated that they were ready to receive the Malawians back into the community.

6.2.9. West and Central Africa

In the path to adulthood: When unaccompanied migrant children return home

12 June 2019



In 2016, an eight-year-old Omar left with his father for Libya in an attempt to reach Italy. © IOM 2019/Miko ALAZAS

When Omar left the Gambia in 2016, he was only eight years old. His father had brought him on a long and arduous journey to Libya, with the aim of reaching Europe. Omar's mother Mali, who was told that they were visiting relatives in Nigeria, was horrified to receive a call from Algeria. "This was when I found out they were trying to reach Italy. I was mad and confused," recalls Mali. Little did she know that, at this time, her son had been walking in the Sahara Desert for days.

After intermittent communication over three months and failed attempts to convince them to return home, Mali's phone rung one day in February 2017 – her husband had drowned crossing the Mediterranean Sea. Fortunately, Omar survived, although he was left unaccompanied and stranded in Libya.

Omar and his father's story captures what is known in the Gambia as the "backway" phenomenon – a colloquial term used in the country to refer to

irregular migration to Europe. In 2016, over 12,000 Gambians trying to reach Italy were rescued at sea. This number discounts thousands more whose journeys ended on the African continent or who perished in the Mediterranean. In 2016, over 180,000 people reached Italy through the Mediterranean Sea, many of whom were from West and Central Africa.

Beneath the common narrative of the "young, working-age man" seeking greener pastures in Europe are stories of children forever impacted by their experiences on the backway. Since 2017, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has assisted 68 minors among over 4,000 Gambians to voluntarily return home, 22 of these minors returned as unaccompanied and separated children. While some return with a parent or guardian, others are not so fortunate.

"Why?" is a question Mali asks up to this day. "My husband was a barber before he left. We were not living well, but we managed. He would always tell



Now 11 years old, Omar is back in school and enjoys playing football. © IOM 2019/Miko ALAZAS



Ousman is among 68 minors who voluntarily returned to the Gambia through IOM's assistance. © IOM 2019/Miko ALAZAS

the boys in our community that the dangerous journey was not worth it," she shares with a tone of confusion. "I know he just wanted more for us."

While many children journeyed along the backway with family hoping to start anew, thanks to the money earned in Europe, many other children, short of turning 18, embarked on the journey on their own accord. Kevin made this decision at the age of 15.

Having grown up in Sierra Leone, he returned to the Gambia, his country of birth, to join his uncle when both his parents passed away. "The environment was new and strange to me. I didn't know what I was thinking. I just wanted to get out of here," recounts Kevin, who left to meet a friend in Algeria, both trying to reach Spain through Morocco.

While Kevin resorted to the backway due to the lack of friends advising him against it, Ousman tackled the same journey at 16 for the opposite reason. "A few friends and I had been thinking of leaving, and we already had friends who had made it to Italy," he says of his rationale at the time – highlighting the notable role peer pressure plays in migratory decisions. "Many boys my age often talk about the backway without telling their parents."

Ousman's father Momodou was blind to his son's contemplation. "One day, he just didn't come home from playing basketball. I asked his friends, who told me he had taken the backway. I said, 'the backway? At his age?'"

Whether 8 years of age or 16, one thing is for certain – irregular migration from West Africa to Europe is no journey for a child. "In many parts of the journey,

"I really thought I would succeed in making it to Italy."
— Ousman



Kevin now works at his uncle's electronics shop but hopes to resume his studies soon. © IOM 2019/Miko ALAZAS

bandits will suddenly attack you,” explains Kevin. “In various destinations we are forced to stop and work, to earn more money to continue along the journey. Yet many times, you simply don’t get paid.”

These difficulties happen before even reaching Libya, where stories of migrants being tortured and abused are rife. Omar narrowly escaped death – a camp he was staying in with fellow Gambians was attacked by rebels just a day after he was taken by social welfare authorities to Tripoli for his flight back home.

These stories are common for all those who took the backway. In response to this phenomenon, the African States, the European Union and IOM launched in 2016 the EU–IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration. Covering 26 African countries, the Joint Initiative is the first comprehensive programme to save lives and protect and assist migrants along key migration routes in Africa. The project supports the reintegration process of returning migrants through an integrated approach, which addresses economic, social, and



Despite the financial loss, Ousman's parents are glad he is back home. © IOM 2019/Miko ALAZAS

“It still feels strange to be back, but I’m learning how to adapt.”
—Kevin

psychological dimensions and fosters the inclusion of communities in the process.

For unaccompanied children like Omar, Kevin and Ousman, IOM conducts a family tracing procedure to confirm the individual’s age, identity and rightful guardian prior to assisting with the voluntary return. Upon arrival in the Gambia, they are provided with essential supplies and reunited with their families as soon as possible.

Due to the unique vulnerability of child returnees, IOM sets an appointment with them and their guardians within one week after their arrival. “We counsel them on possible options for reintegration support and refer them to the medical and psychosocial support colleagues if needed,” explains Pierre Jatta, IOM Reintegration Assistant in the Gambia, who works to facilitate the return



Kevin sells popcorn outside his uncle's electronics shop.
© IOM 2019/Miko ALAZAS

and reintegration of child returnees. In terms of reintegration support, the priority is to support the child’s education.

Nevertheless, many children can return home to families facing significant economic loss. In order to support Ousman along his journey, his father took loans amounting to over 50,000 Gambian dalasi (approximately USD 1,000). Mali shares that her husband, unbeknown to her, sold his barber shop



Ousman once dreamed of making it to Italy, but now he hopes of becoming a successful tailor in the Gambia. © IOM 2019 /Miko ALAZAS

“I’ve seen what the backway did to my family. I’m doing what I can to prevent others from going.”
—Mali

and car prior to leaving. Reintegration assistance can therefore consist of supporting a family business.

Certainly, reintegration needs of child returnees are not just in the economic sphere – to be sustainable, the social and psychosocial components have to be taken into account. “Until today, I still find sometimes Omar crying in front of his father’s portrait,” laments Mali. “Ousman would barely leave the house in his first three months back,” echoes Momodou.

Conversely, when asked how he felt when he returned, Ousman said he was fine, pointing to a still existing level of reluctance among child returnees to share their feelings. “Many of them are not open to talking at first. It takes time and several sessions,” says Tida Joof, IOM Reintegration Assistant also working to assist child returnees.

As children continue to suffer along the backway, Omar, Kevin and Ousman are fortunate to be back home and safe. Kevin received support to expand his uncle’s electronics business, under which he rents, sells and repairs gadgets.



Mali enjoys spending time with Omar watching TV on their couch. © IOM 2019/Miko ALAZAS

Meanwhile, Ousman received support to continue his studies, though he has since stopped. “I didn’t enjoy it, and I wanted to become a tailor,” he explains. Now working at a tailoring shop, Ousman’s parents hope he will soon pursue technical and vocational training to enhance his skills.

Now 11 years old, Omar is back in school, cheerful and happy playing football with his friends, like many boys his age. “I know Omar will never forget what he went through with his father,” says Mali. Indeed, when asked what he wanted to be when he grew up, Omar responds immediately: “I want to be a barber, just like my father.”



Today, Ousman works at a tailoring shop not far from his house. © IOM 2019/Miko ALAZAS

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