

# RETURN AND REINTEGRATION KEY HIGHLIGHTS

2020



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Cover: Dudu and his family taking some selfie pictures before departing to Georgia.  
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# RETURN AND REINTEGRATION KEY HIGHLIGHTS

2020





## FOREWORD

2020 was a year like no other. The global pandemic caused by the novel coronavirus resulted in large-scale border closures as well as unprecedented mobility restrictions imposed by governments worldwide to curb the spread of the virus. In a September 2020 [report on the impact of COVID-19 on migrants](#), IOM detailed the plight of nearly 3 million migrants stranded worldwide by mid-July. Many more migrants are believed to have been stranded in the subsequent months. IOM quickly adapted to the changing and fast-evolving circumstances in the first months of the pandemic to ensure the continuation of its return and reintegration activities. This included, among other things, the establishment at IOM Headquarters of the COVID-19 Return Task Force to respond to the complex challenge of organizing returns during the pandemic and to support country offices in addressing these challenges effectively. That way, IOM has been able to continue providing much needed support and assistance to tens of thousands of migrants wishing to return home. Despite a significant decrease caused by the mobility restrictions in place, in 2020 IOM assisted a total of 42,181 migrants in their safe and dignified return home.

Just like in 2019, the Niger remained the top host country of migrants willing to return, followed by Germany and Libya.<sup>1</sup> This presents a continuation of the trend of decreasing returns taking place from the European Economic Area and an increase from other regions, particularly West and Central Africa. The main countries of origin were Guinea, Mali and Tajikistan, to which a large number of nationals returned from Kazakhstan.

The number of reintegration services provided by IOM to returnees remained at a high level, with a total of 106,230 activities carried out by 121 country offices in 2020. IOM reintegration assistance encompassed counselling and social, psychosocial, and economic support at the pre-departure and post-arrival stages.

In addition to providing direct support to migrants during the pandemic, IOM continued expanding the activities, functionality and reach of its [Return and Reintegration Platform](#), which contributes to the dissemination of knowledge and good practices in the field of return and reintegration. The Platform operates under the umbrella of the EU–IOM 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. Moreover, in collaboration with UNICEF, IOM developed a module that complements its *Reintegration Handbook* and focuses on the reintegration of children and their families. The module is conceived as a hands-on tool to promote reintegration practices for children returning to their countries of origin. It emphasizes the importance of strengthening child protection and social welfare systems, as well as case management and referrals to appropriate services.

This year's report is accompanied by an [executive summary](#) in an interactive layout. It is structured along five sections: the first section presents an overview of global trends of returns supported by IOM, which are further elaborated by region in the second chapter. The third and fourth sections present reintegration assistance provided to returnees at the global and regional levels. The final section features some of the most significant initiatives and practices in the field of return and reintegration that IOM offices worldwide took in response to the pandemic, as well as the key results in 2020 of two global projects, ORION, funded by the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom, and the EU–IOM Knowledge Management Hub.

We wish you a pleasant reading!



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<sup>1</sup> In the humanitarian settings of Yemen and Libya IOM operates Voluntary Humanitarian Return (VHR) programmes. VHR often represents a life-saving measure for migrants who are stranded or in detention.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors Yitna Getachew, Nicola Graviano, Noëlle Darbellay, Gerard Tosserams, Marina Cacic and Silvan Lange would like to thank IOM colleagues Rosilyne Borland, Joselito Cabaña, Sacha Chan Kam, Nassima Clerin, Laurence Hunzinger, Nimo Ismail, Rana Jaber, Sarah Knight, Peppi Kiviniemi-Siddiq, Alem Makonnen, Agueda Marin, Daniel Redondo, Irina Todorova, Nazanine Nozarian, Aleksandra Izydorczyk and Joy Paone, and all the IOM colleagues in the field for their valuable contributions to this report.

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# INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting lockdowns and mobility restrictions, such as border closures and the suspensions of flights, had severe impacts on migrants in 2020. In a report published in September 2020, IOM detailed the plight of nearly 3 million migrants stranded worldwide by mid-July. Many more migrants are believed to have been stranded in the subsequent months. This situation posed unprecedented challenges to IOM return and reintegration activities and resulted in a number of adaptations, allowing it to continue providing return and reintegration support to migrants in need despite health and travel restrictions. The specific changes and innovative practices adopted by IOM offices worldwide in the field of return and reintegration are further discussed in the last chapter of this report.



A group of 81 returnees and community members renovate a school in Bouaké, Côte d'Ivoire. This has allowed hundreds of children to return to their school in better conditions. © IOM 2020/Mohamed DIABATÉ

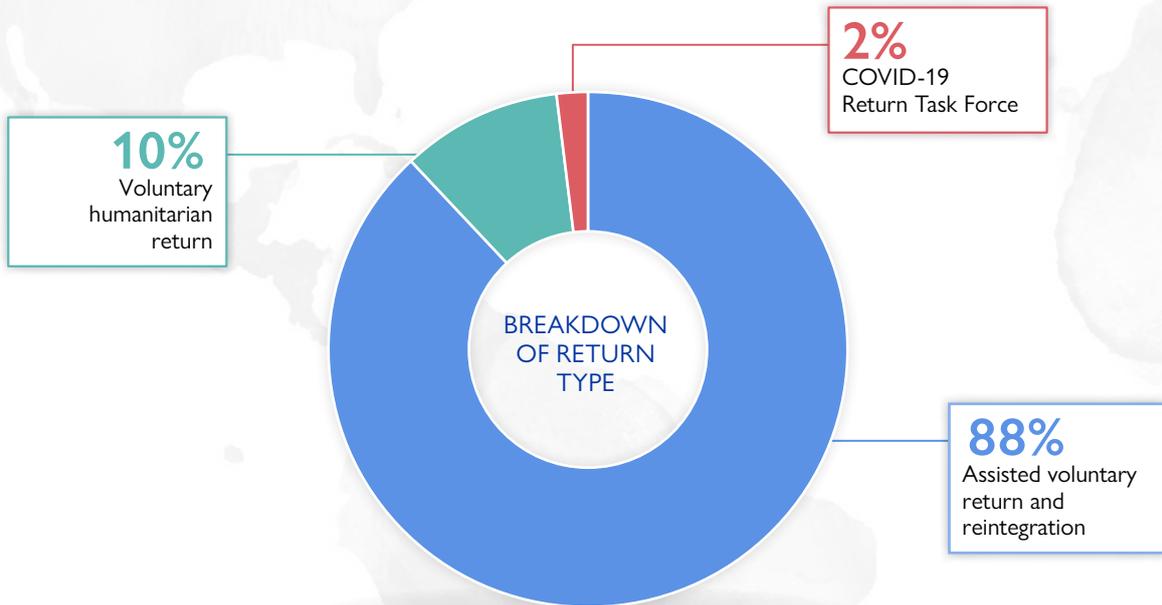
# 2020 AT A GLANCE

## Return Overview

### TOTAL MIGRANTS ASSISTED

42,181

### Types of returns

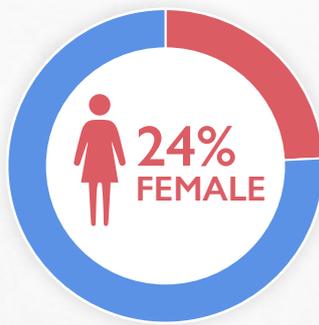
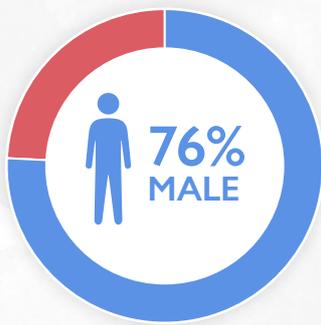


Unless specified otherwise, the data presented in the following graphs includes all three types of assisted returns: assisted voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR), voluntary humanitarian return (VHR) and return organized with the support of the COVID-19 Return Task Force.

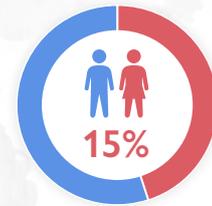
# 2020 AT A GLANCE

## Return Overview

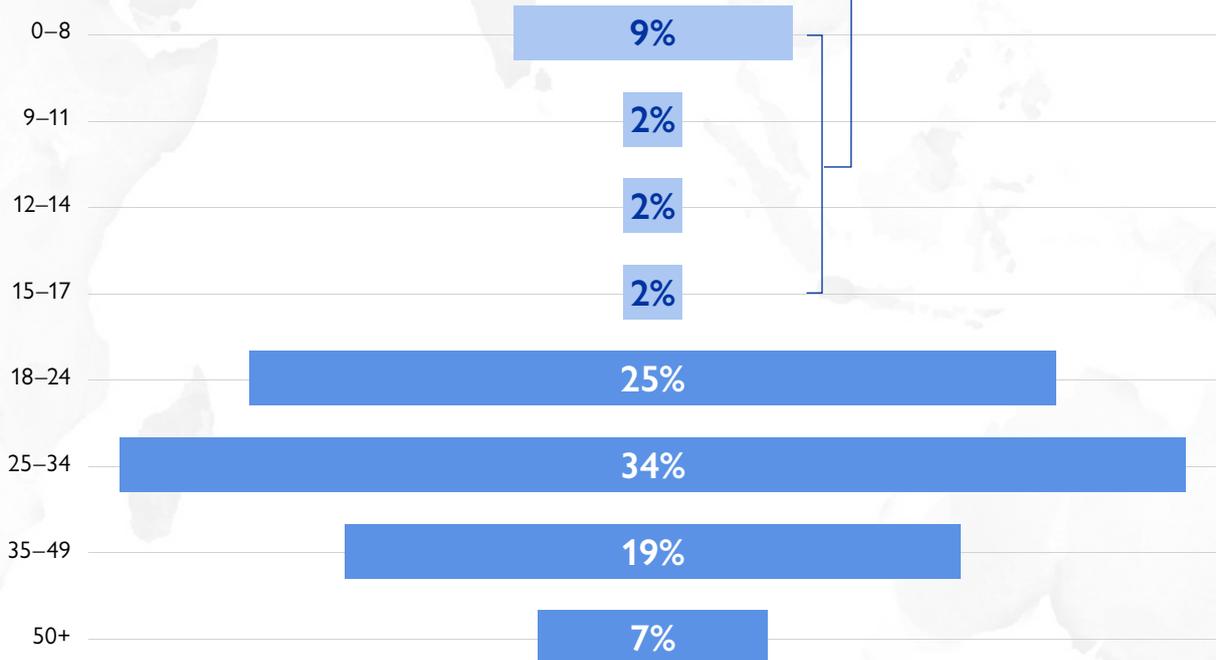
### Sex breakdown



### Percentage of children



55% boys 45% girls



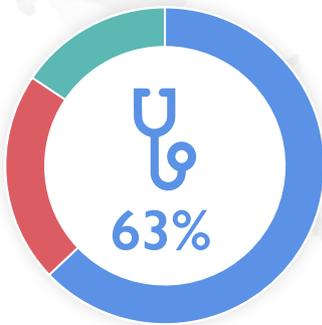
# 2020 AT A GLANCE

## Return Overview

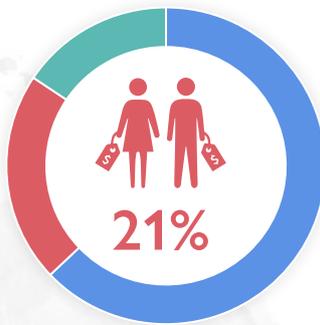
### MIGRANTS IN VULNERABLE SITUATIONS

2,386

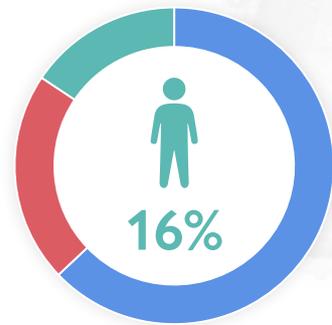
#### Types of vulnerabilities



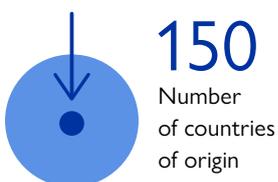
63% Migrants with health-related needs



21% Identified victims of trafficking



16% Unaccompanied or separated children



# 2020 AT A GLANCE

## Reintegration Overview

### TOTAL NUMBER OF REINTEGRATION SERVICES PROVIDED

106,230

Number of IOM offices involved in reintegration activities

121

#### Provision of the reintegration assistance

The categories of reintegration support presented in the following graphs reflect the total number of services provided, which are not mutually exclusive. The beneficiaries of IOM reintegration assistances can receive multiple types of support at different levels and return stages (e.g. pre-departure counselling in the host country and economic assistance in the country of origin).

#### Pre-departure or post-arrival assistance provided



Pre-departure



Post-arrival

#### Reintegration assistance directly provided by IOM or through referral



IOM direct assistance

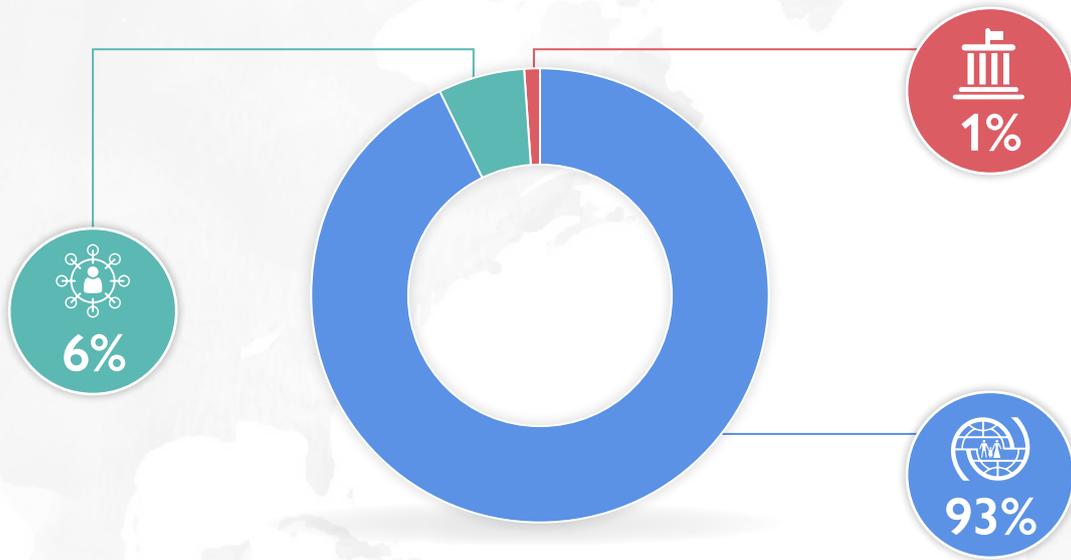


Referral

# 2020 AT A GLANCE

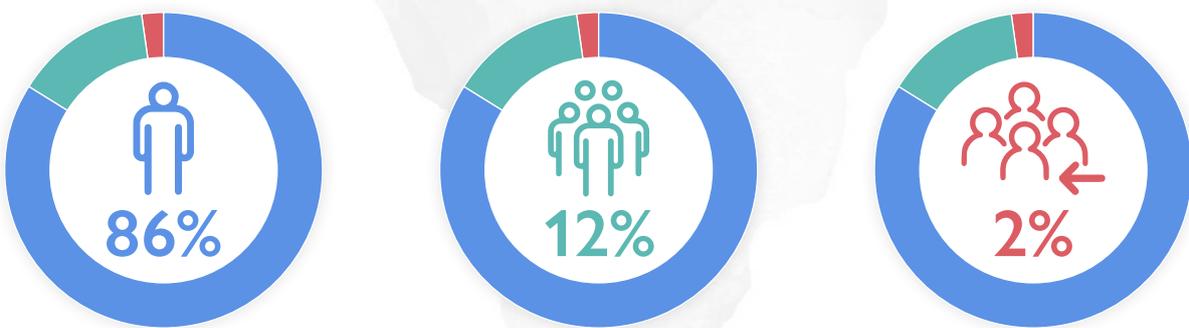
## Reintegration Overview

### Types of beneficiaries



IOM returnees | Forced returnees  
Returns assisted through programmes considered voluntary by other actors

### Levels of assistance

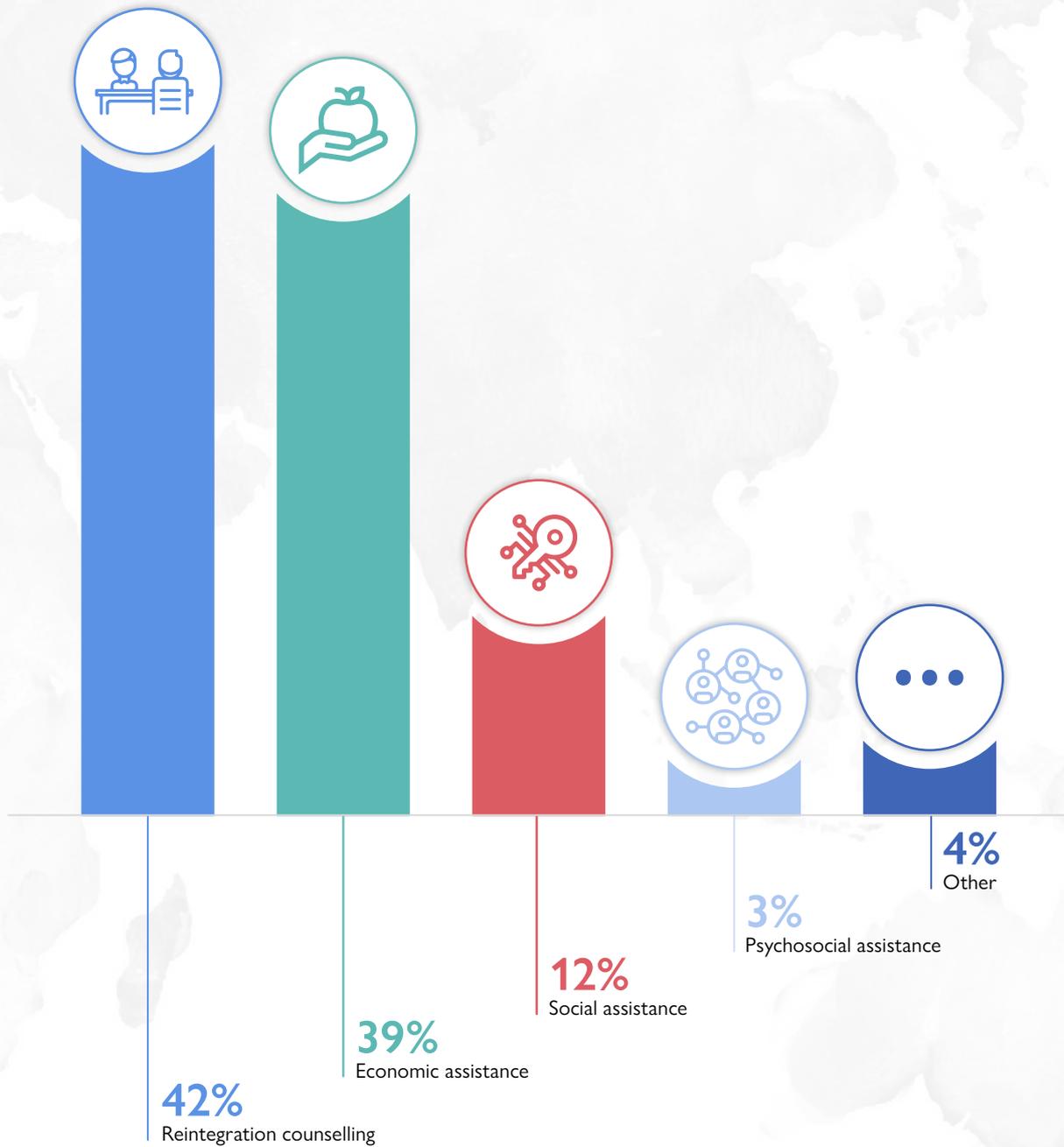


Individual | Collective | Community

# 2020 AT A GLANCE

## Reintegration Overview

Types of services provided





# CHAPTER 1

## RETURN OVERVIEW



## Return and reintegration

---

### **Assisted voluntary return and reintegration**

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. AVRR assistance can also be provided to migrants in vulnerable situations (such as victims of trafficking, unaccompanied and separated children, and/or migrants with health-related needs), for whom strict safeguards are applied throughout the whole return and reintegration process. It should be noted that the acronym AVRR is used throughout although the level of reintegration assistance varies from programme to programme.

### **Voluntary humanitarian return**

VHR is based on the AVRR approach but applied in humanitarian settings. 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.

### **Return supported through the COVID-19 Return Task Force**

The COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting travel restrictions, border closures and lockdown measures have left migrants stranded all over the world. Different entities as well as migrants themselves have approached IOM, seeking support for organizing the return of stranded migrants to their countries of origin as well as for providing assistance with migrants' basic needs. In response, IOM established the COVID-19 Return Task Force to ensure a coherent approach within the Organization and to leverage the expertise of the relevant IOM thematic divisions and units to adequately address challenges in return support.

## Main trends 2020

As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, **the number of beneficiaries of AVRR in 2020 decreased by 43 per cent** (from 64,958 in 2019 to 37,043 in 2020). In addition, **the number of beneficiaries of VHR decreased by 73 per cent** (from 15,248 in 2019 to 4,038 in 2020). A total of 1,100 migrants were assisted to return to their countries of origin by the COVID-19 Return Task Force.

**The Niger remained the main host country of migrants assisted to return** with a total of 9,069 migrants, confirming the trend of increasing numbers of beneficiaries returning from transit countries. **Germany was the second largest host country** with a total of 5,723 migrants who were assisted to return to their countries of origin.

**For the first time, Kazakhstan figured among the top 5 host countries.** This was the case because 3,006 Tajik migrant workers who had been stranded in Kazakhstan due to COVID-19 mobility restrictions were assisted to return to their country of origin.

**The European Economic Area remained the main host region** with a share of 39.4 per cent of the total number of migrants assisted to return in 2020 (compared to 43.5% in 2019).

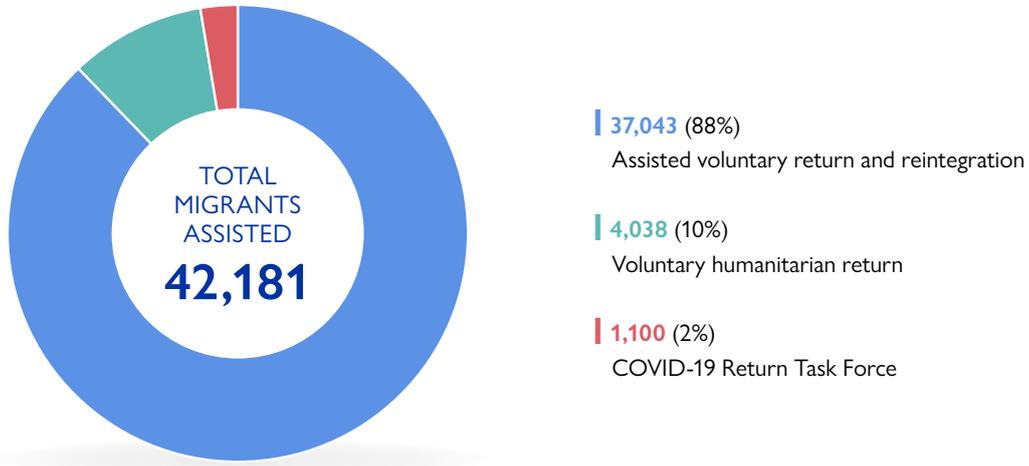
**Mali was the main country of origin** with a total of 3,249 nationals assisted to return. It replaced last year's top country of origin Ethiopia, which saw a decrease of 75 per cent in nationals returning and consequently dropped to the fifth place in 2020.

**West and Central Africa remained the main region of origin** with a share of 35.9 per cent of the total number of migrants assisted to return in 2020 (which reflects a 0.3% increase from 2019).

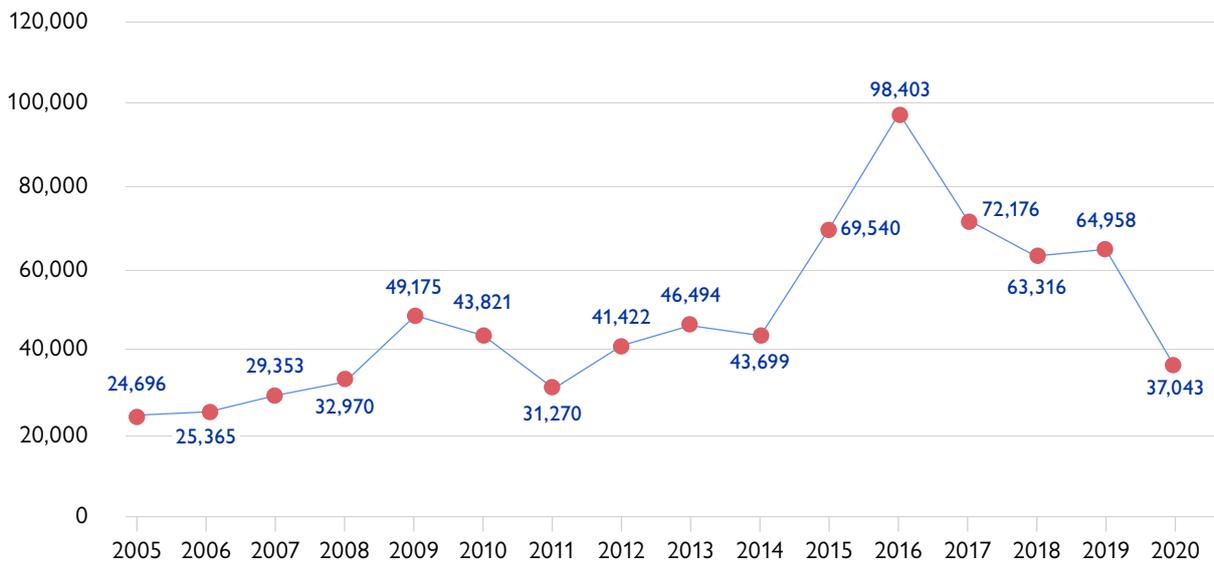
**Migrants assisted to return within the same region made up 40 per cent of the total.** The majority of those movements took place within West and Central Africa (65%).

Unless specified otherwise, the data presented in the following graphs includes all three types of assisted returns: AVRR, VHR and return organized with the support of the COVID-19 Return Task Force.

### Breakdown of return type



### Number of assisted voluntary return and reintegration beneficiaries, 2005–2020<sup>2</sup>

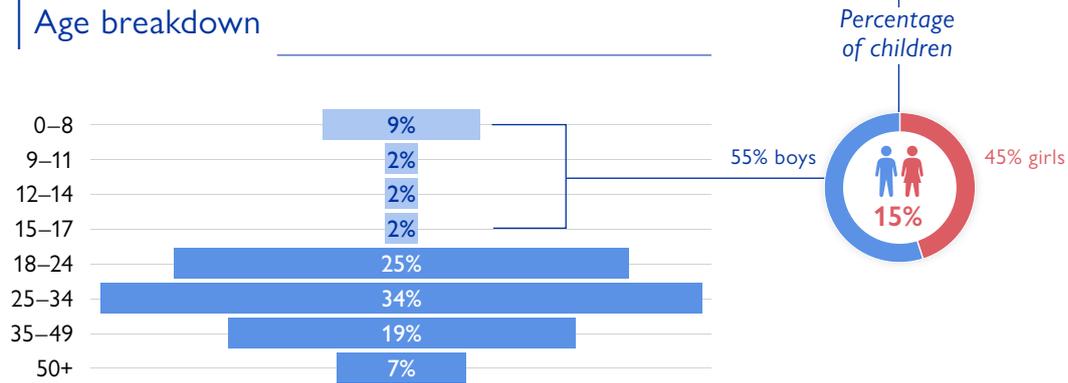


<sup>2</sup> These figures only refer to beneficiaries of AVRR and do not include migrants who were assisted to return under VHR or the COVID-19 Task Force.

## Sex breakdown



## Age breakdown



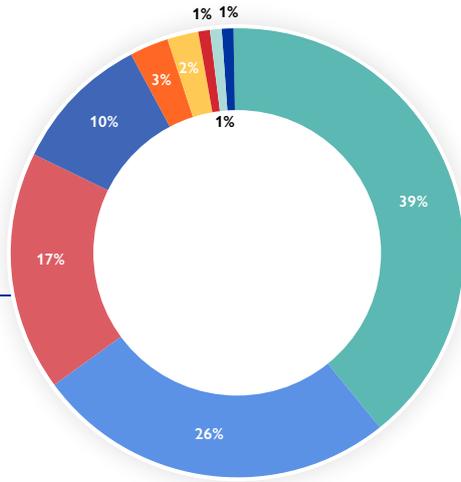
## Vulnerabilities



## Migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to return, 2014-2020

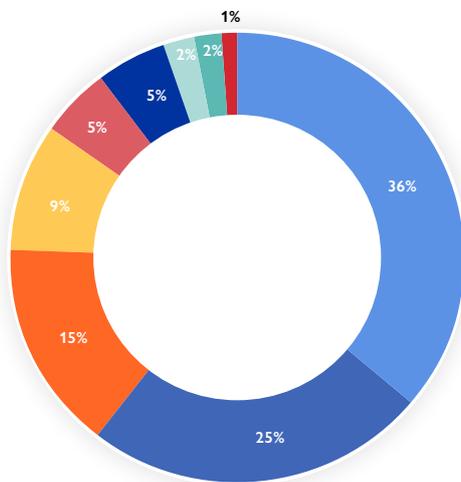


Host regions



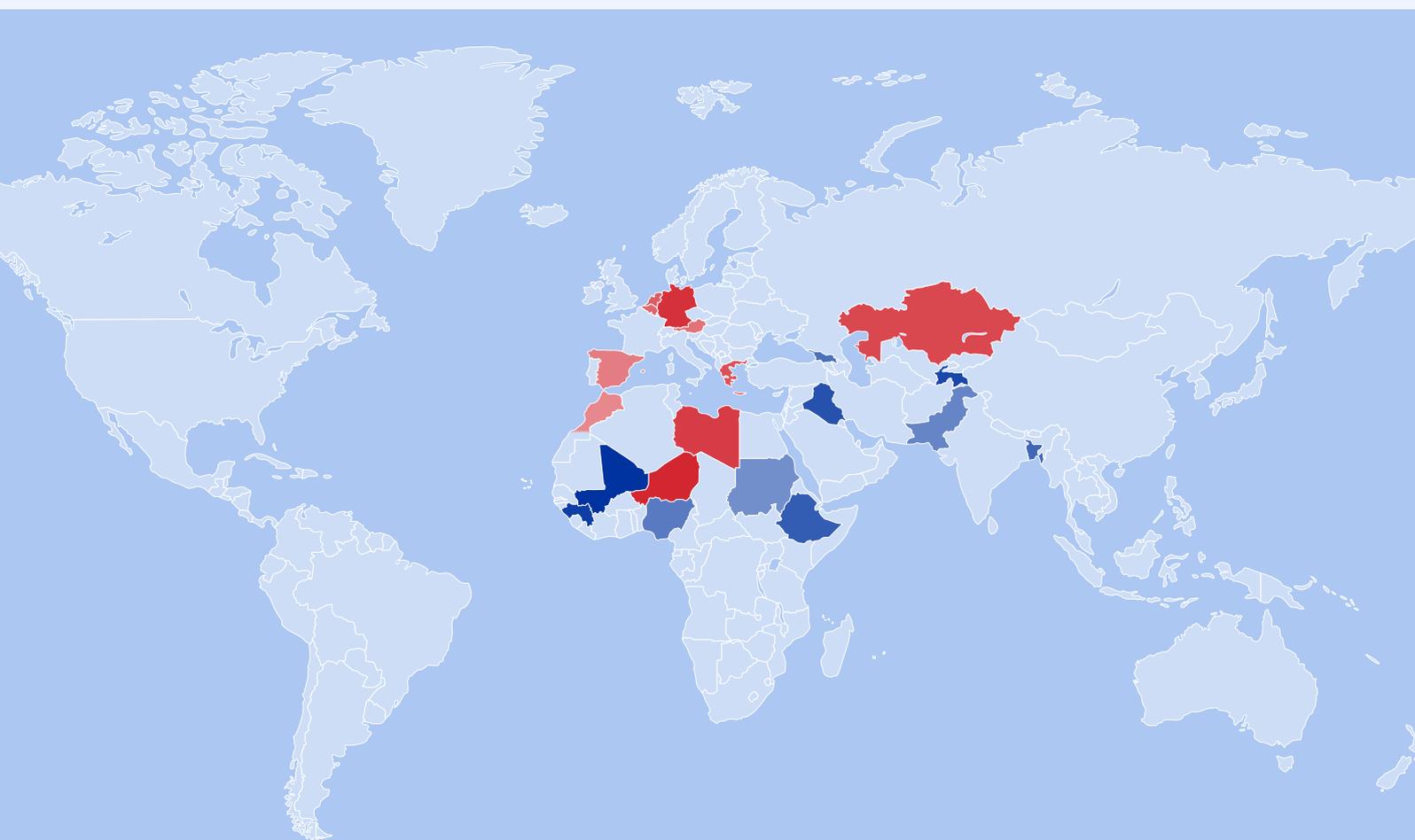
| HOST REGIONS | Percentage | Region  | Percentage | REGIONS OF ORIGIN |
|--------------|------------|---|------------|-------------------|
|              | 39%        | European Economic Area                                | 2%         |                   |
|              | 26%        | West and Central Africa                               | 36%        |                   |
|              | 17%        | Middle East and North Africa                          | 5%         |                   |
|              | 10%        | South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia | 25%        |                   |
|              | 3%         | Asia and the Pacific                                  | 15%        |                   |
|              | 2%         | East and Horn of Africa                               | 9%         |                   |
|              | 1%         | Southern Africa                                       | 1%         |                   |
|              | 1%         | Central and North America and the Caribbean           | 2%         |                   |
|              | 1%         | South America   | 5%         |                   |

Regions of origin



|    | Main country of origin | Number of returns |
|----|------------------------|-------------------|
| 1  | Mali                   | 3 249             |
| 2  | Guinea                 | 3 145             |
| 3  | Tajikistan             | 3 106             |
| 4  | Iraq                   | 1 602             |
| 5  | Ethiopia               | 1 479             |
| 6  | Bangladesh             | 1 473             |
| 7  | Georgia                | 1 465             |
| 8  | Nigeria                | 1 449             |
| 9  | Pakistan               | 1 402             |
| 10 | Sudan                  | 1 303             |

|    | Main host/ transit country | Number of returns |
|----|----------------------------|-------------------|
| 1  | Niger                      | 9 069             |
| 2  | Germany                    | 5 723             |
| 3  | Libya                      | 3 391             |
| 4  | Kazakhstan                 | 3 037             |
| 5  | Greece                     | 2 565             |
| 6  | Netherlands                | 1 815             |
| 7  | Belgium                    | 1 728             |
| 8  | Austria                    | 1 321             |
| 9  | Spain                      | 876               |
| 10 | Morocco                    | 796               |



Source: IOM, 2019 Return and Reintegration Key Highlights, 2020.

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.



# CHAPTER 2

## REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS



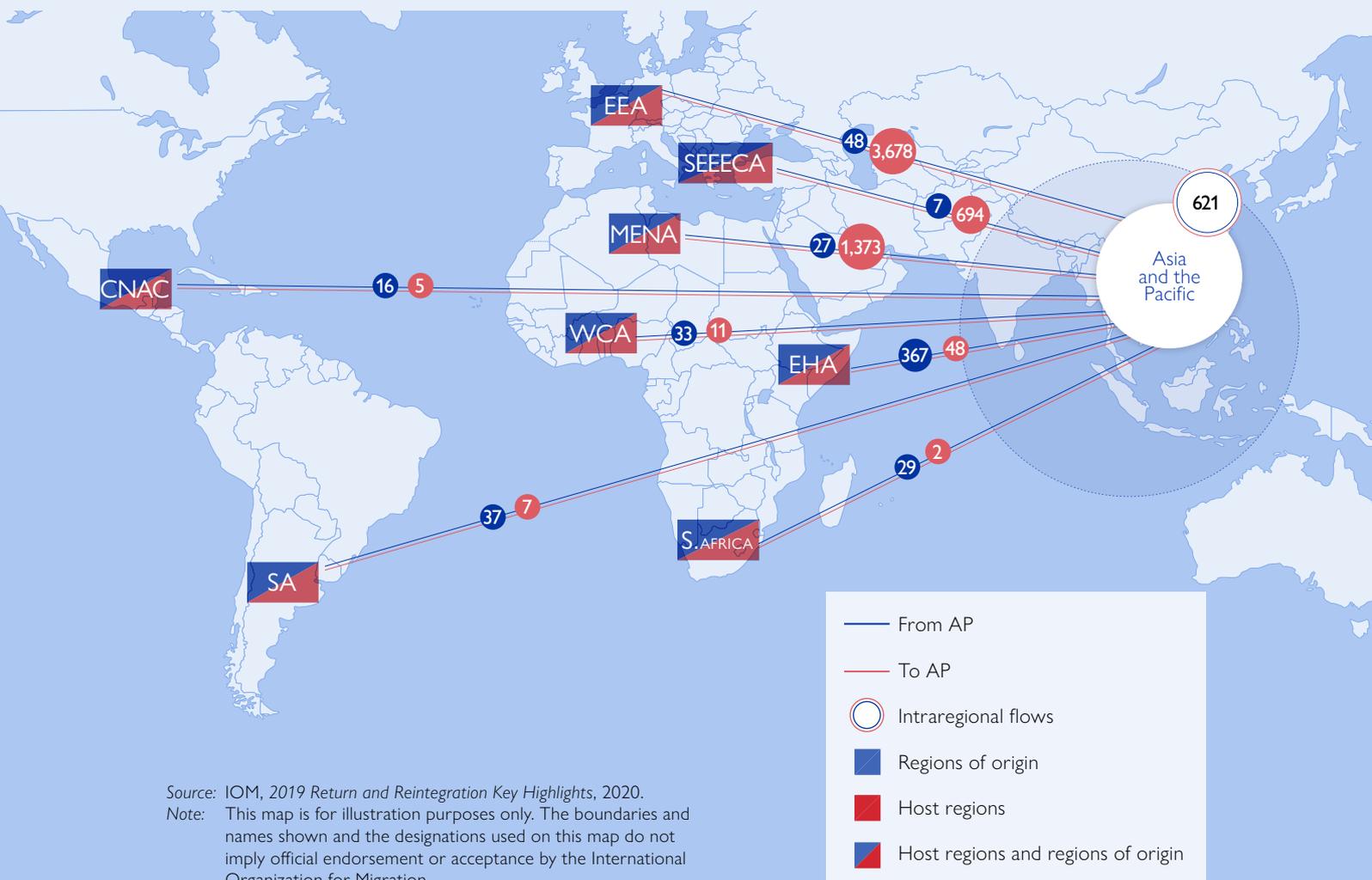
## ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

### RETURNS FROM ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

| Region of origin   | Number of returns |
|--|-------------------|
| Asia and the Pacific (AP)                                      | 621               |
| East and Horn of Africa (EHA)                                  | 367               |
| European Economic Area (EEA)                                   | 48                |
| South America (SA)   | 37                |
| West and Central Africa (WCA)                                  | 33                |
| Southern Africa (S. Africa)                                    | 29                |
| Middle East and North Africa (MENA)                            | 27                |
| Central and North America and the Caribbean (CNAC)             | 16                |
| South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SEEECA) | 7                 |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>1 185</b>      |

### RETURNS TO ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

| Host region  | Number of returns |
|--|-------------------|
| European Economic Area (EEA)                                   | 3 678             |
| Middle East and North Africa (MENA)                            | 1 373             |
| South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SEEECA) | 694               |
| Asia and the Pacific (AP)                                      | 621               |
| East and Horn of Africa (EHA)                                  | 48                |
| West and Central Africa (WCA)                                  | 11                |
| South America (SA)   | 7                 |
| Central and North America and the Caribbean (CNAC)             | 5                 |
| Southern Africa (S. Africa)                                    | 2                 |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>6 439</b>      |



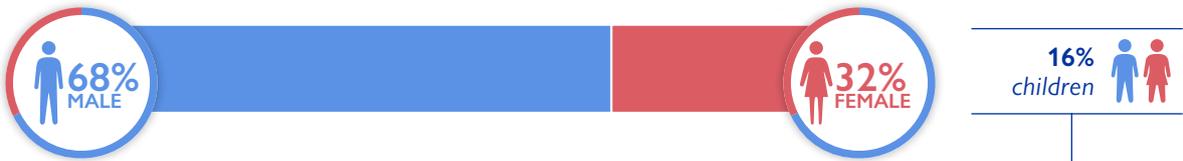
## RETURNS FROM ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Migrants assisted **from** Asia and the Pacific

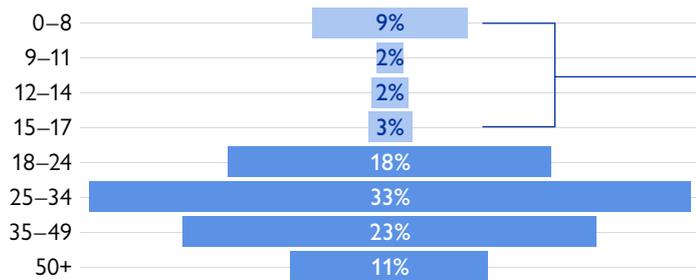
**1,185**

99.1% of the total caseload

| Sex breakdown



| Age breakdown



Total number of migrants in vulnerable situations assisted **from** Asia and the Pacific

**60**

| Vulnerability breakdown



Top 5 host countries

|           |     |                   |
|-----------|-----|-------------------|
| Australia | 467 | Migrants assisted |
| India     | 325 |                   |
| Indonesia | 147 |                   |
| Thailand  | 47  |                   |
| Japan     | 40  |                   |

## RETURNS TO ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Migrants assisted to Asia and the Pacific

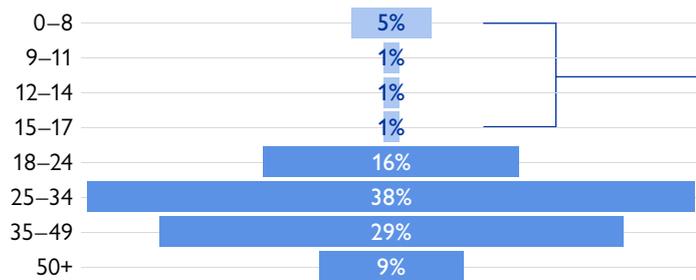
6,439

99% of the total caseload

Sex breakdown



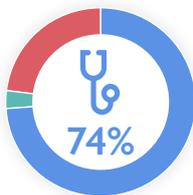
Age breakdown



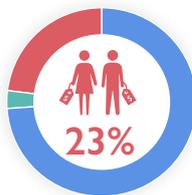
Total number of migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to Asia and the Pacific

282

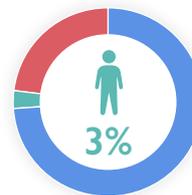
Vulnerability breakdown



Migrants with health-related needs



Identified victims of trafficking



Unaccompanied or separated children

Top 5 countries of origin

| Country                    | Migrants assisted |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Bangladesh                 | 1 473             |
| Pakistan                   | 1 402             |
| Afghanistan                | 887               |
| Iran (Islamic Republic of) | 650               |
| Mongolia                   | 528               |

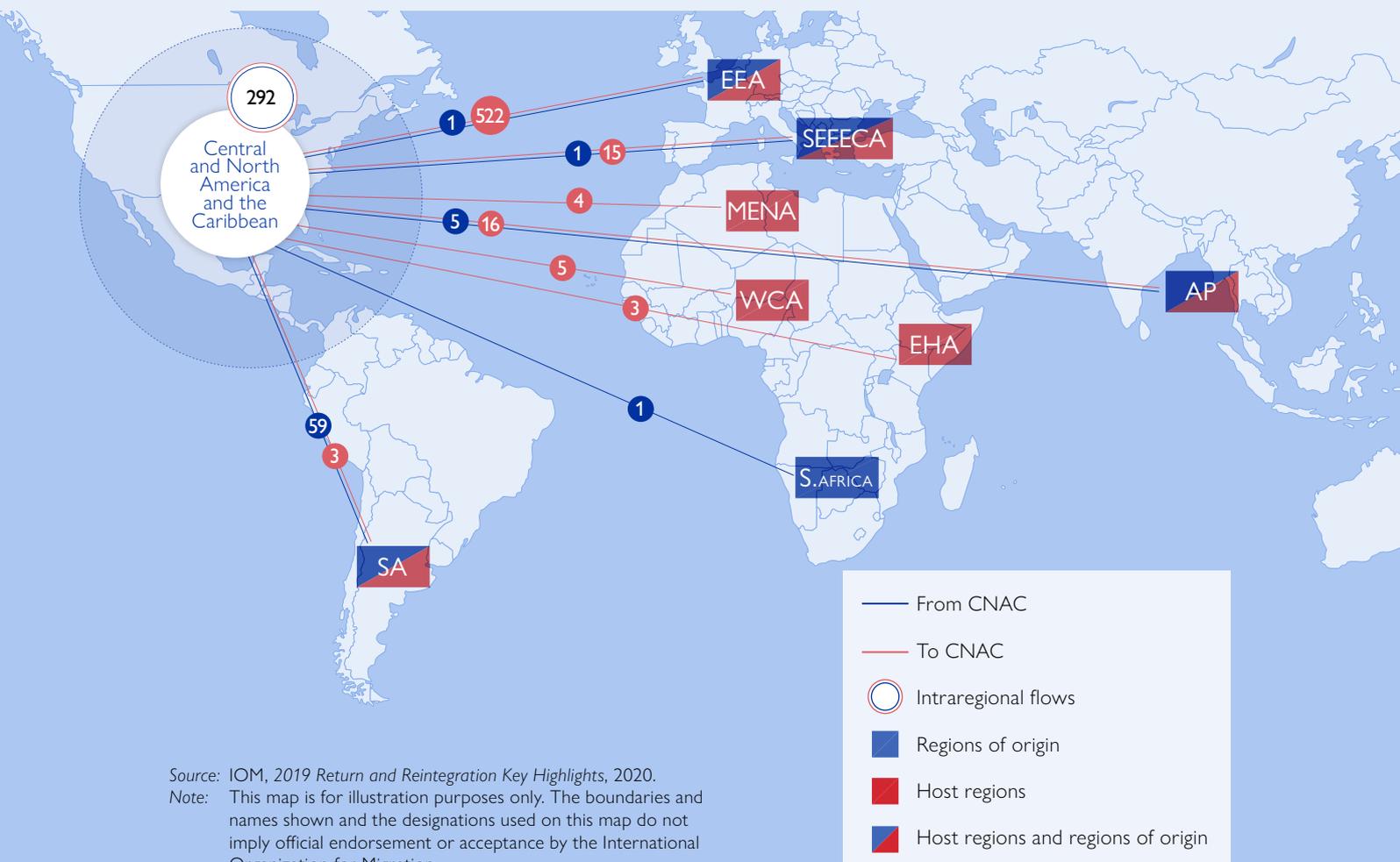
## CENTRAL AND NORTH AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

### RETURNS FROM CENTRAL AND NORTH AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

| Region of origin   | Number of returns |
|--|-------------------|
| Central and North America and the Caribbean (CNAC)             | 292               |
| South America (SA)   | 59                |
| Asia and the Pacific (AP)                                      | 5                 |
| South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SEEECA) | 1                 |
| Southern Africa (S. Africa)                                    | 1                 |
| European Economic Area (EEA)                                   | 1                 |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>359</b>        |

### RETURNS TO CENTRAL AND NORTH AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

| Host region  | Number of returns |
|--|-------------------|
| European Economic Area (EEA)                                   | 522               |
| Central and North America and the Caribbean (CNAC)             | 292               |
| Asia and the Pacific (AP)                                      | 16                |
| South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SEEECA) | 15                |
| West and Central Africa (WCA)                                  | 5                 |
| Middle East and North Africa (MENA)                            | 4                 |
| South America (SA)   | 3                 |
| East and Horn of Africa (EHA)                                  | 3                 |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>860</b>        |



## RETURNS FROM CENTRAL AND NORTH AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Migrants assisted **from** Central and North America and the Caribbean

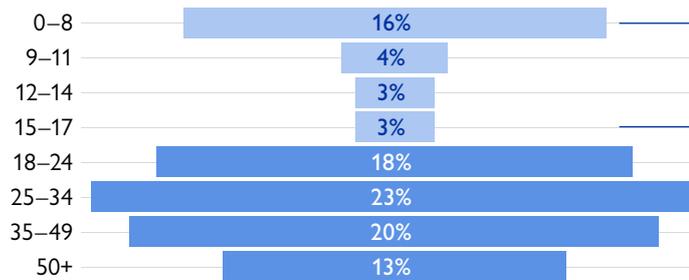
359

1% of the total caseload

Sex breakdown



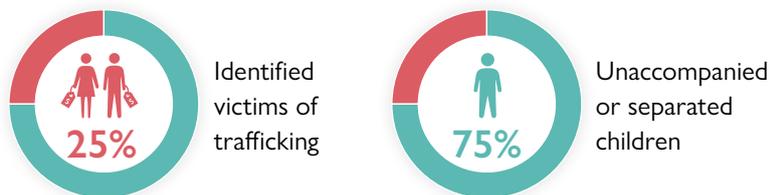
Age breakdown



Total number of migrants in vulnerable situations assisted **from** Central and North America and the Caribbean

8

Vulnerability breakdown



Top 5 host countries

| Country     | Migrants assisted |
|-------------|-------------------|
| Mexico      | 186               |
| Belize      | 42                |
| Guatemala   | 33                |
| El Salvador | 28                |
| Honduras    | 23                |

## RETURNS TO CENTRAL AND NORTH AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Migrants assisted to Central and North America and the Caribbean

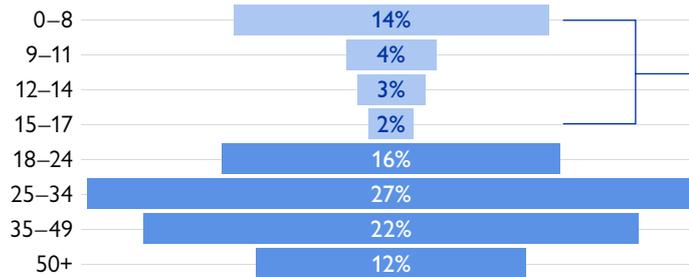
860

2% of the total caseload

Sex breakdown



Age breakdown



Total number of migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to Central and North America and the Caribbean

32

Vulnerability breakdown



Top 5 countries of origin

| Country     | Migrants assisted |
|-------------|-------------------|
| El Salvador | 293               |
| Honduras    | 217               |
| Nicaragua   | 66                |
| Costa Rica  | 38                |
| Belize      | 38                |

## EAST AND HORN OF AFRICA

### RETURNS FROM EAST AND HORN OF AFRICA

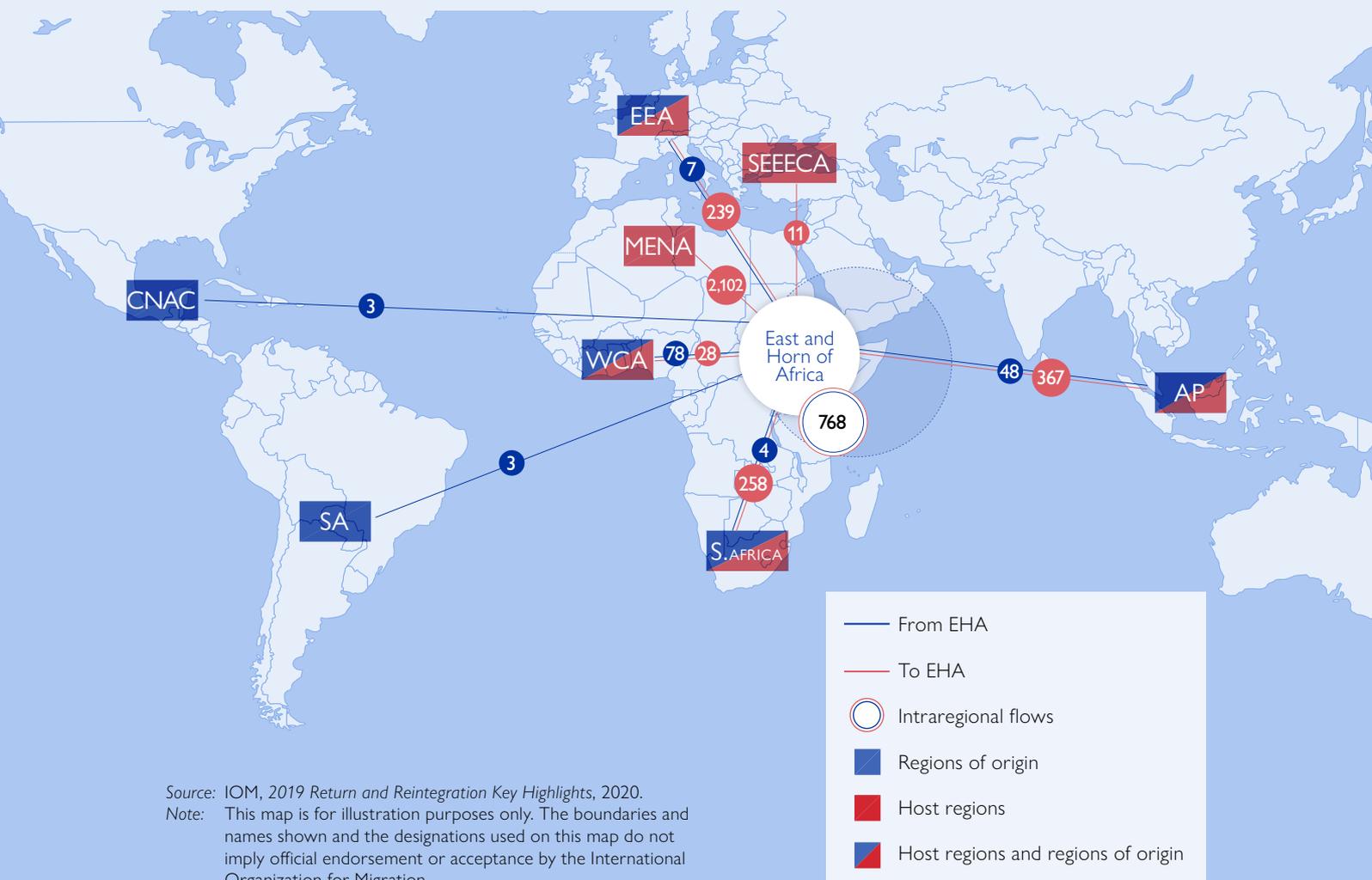
| Region of origin                                   | Number of returns |
|--|-------------------|
| East and Horn of Africa (EHA)                      | 768               |
| West and Central Africa (WCA)                      | 78                |
| Asia and the Pacific (AP)                          | 48                |
| European Economic Area (EEA)                       | 7                 |
| Southern Africa (S. Africa)                        | 4                 |
| Central and North America and the Caribbean (CNAC) | 3                 |
| South America (SA)                                 | 3                 |

**Total** 911

### RETURNS TO EAST AND HORN OF AFRICA

| Host region  | Number of returns |
|--|-------------------|
| Middle East and North Africa (MENA)                            | 2 102             |
| East and Horn of Africa (EHA)                                  | 768               |
| Asia and the Pacific (AP)                                      | 367               |
| Southern Africa (S. Africa)                                    | 258               |
| European Economic Area (EEA)                                   | 239               |
| West and Central Africa (WCA)                                  | 28                |
| South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SEEECA) | 11                |

**Total** 3 773



Source: IOM, 2019 Return and Reintegration Key Highlights, 2020.  
 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.

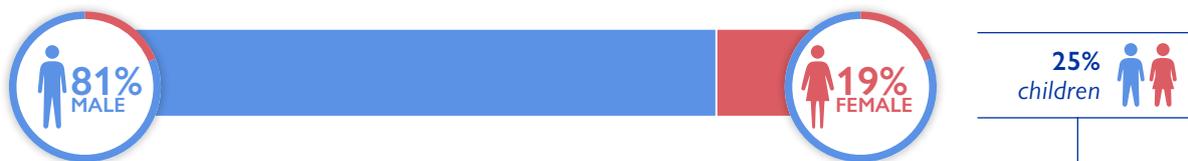
## RETURNS FROM EAST AND HORN OF AFRICA

Migrants assisted from East and Horn of Africa

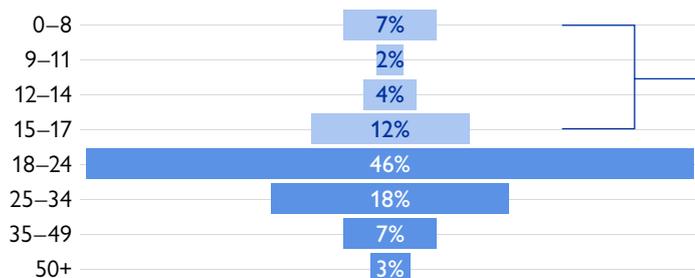
**911**

2% of the total caseload

Sex breakdown



Age breakdown



Total number of migrants in vulnerable situations assisted from East and Horn of Africa

**201**

Vulnerability breakdown



Top 5 host countries

| Country                     | Migrants assisted |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Djibouti                    | 534               |
| Somalia                     | 161               |
| Sudan                       | 135               |
| United Republic of Tanzania | 34                |
| Kenya                       | 20                |

## RETURNS TO EAST AND HORN OF AFRICA

Migrants assisted to East and Horn of Africa

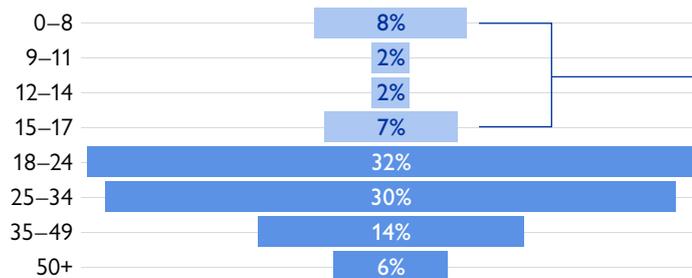
**3,773**

9% of the total caseload

Sex breakdown



Age breakdown



Total number of migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to East and Horn of Africa

**465**

Vulnerability breakdown



Top 5 countries of origin

| Country                     | Migrants assisted |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Ethiopia                    | 1 479             |
| Sudan                       | 1 303             |
| Somalia                     | 511               |
| Uganda                      | 270               |
| United Republic of Tanzania | 119               |

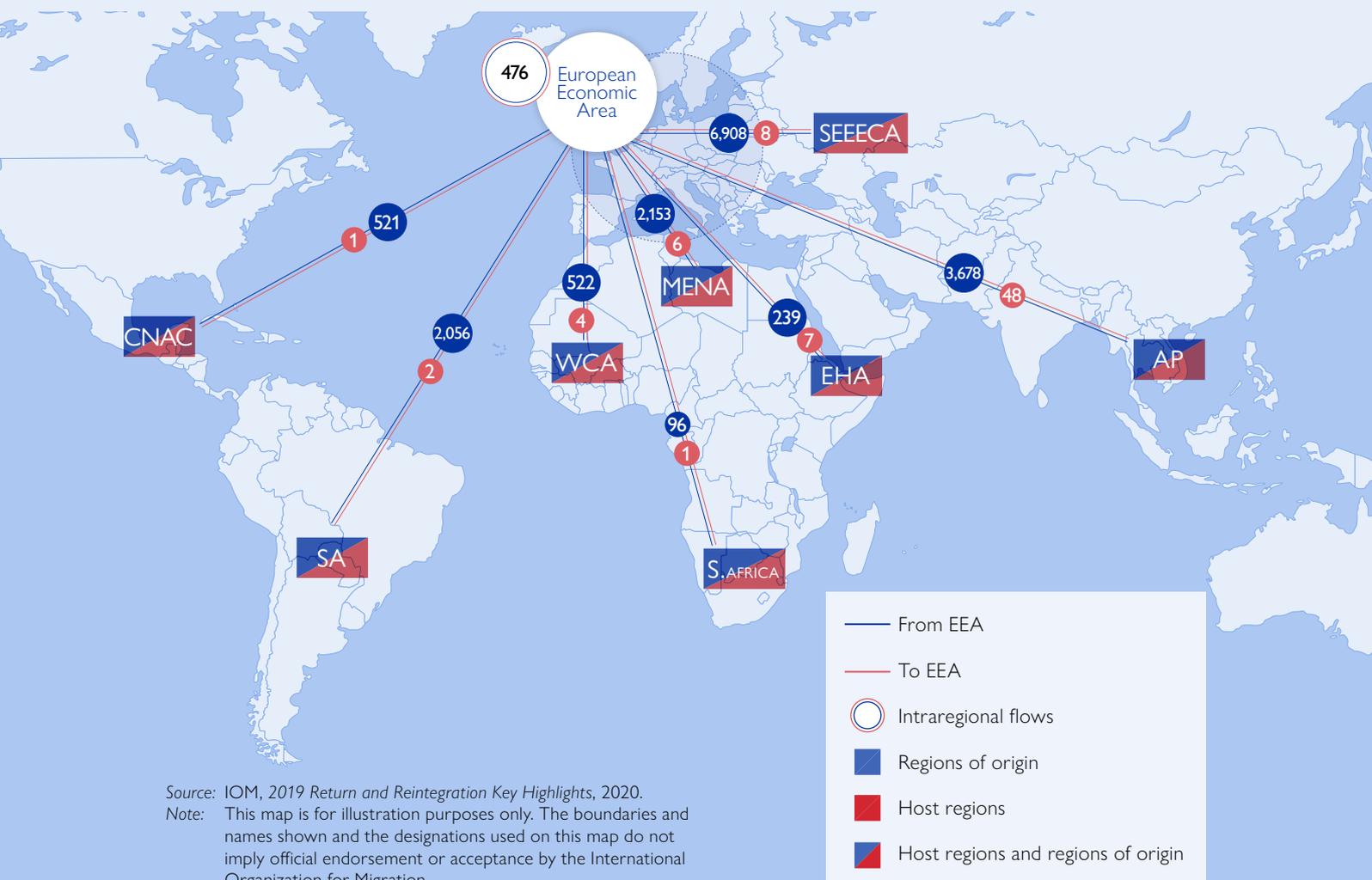
## EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA

### RETURNS FROM EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA

| Region of origin   | Number of returns |
|--|-------------------|
| South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SEEECA) | 6 908             |
| Asia and the Pacific (AP)                                      | 3 678             |
| Middle East and North Africa (MENA)                            | 2 153             |
| South America (SA)   | 2 056             |
| West and Central Africa (WCA)                                  | 522               |
| Central and North America and the Caribbean (CNAC)             | 521               |
| European Economic Area (EEA)                                   | 476               |
| East and Horn of Africa (EHA)                                  | 239               |
| Southern Africa (S. Africa)                                    | 96                |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>16 649</b>     |

### RETURNS TO EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA

| Host region  | Number of returns |
|--|-------------------|
| European Economic Area (EEA)                                   | 476               |
| Asia and the Pacific (AP)                                      | 48                |
| Middle East and North Africa (MENA)                            | 6                 |
| South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SEEECA) | 8                 |
| East and Horn of Africa (EHA)                                  | 7                 |
| West and Central Africa (WCA)                                  | 4                 |
| South America (SA)   | 2                 |
| Central and North America and the Caribbean (CNAC)             | 1                 |
| Southern Africa (S. Africa)                                    | 1                 |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>556</b>        |



## RETURNS FROM EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA

Migrants assisted **from** European Economic Area

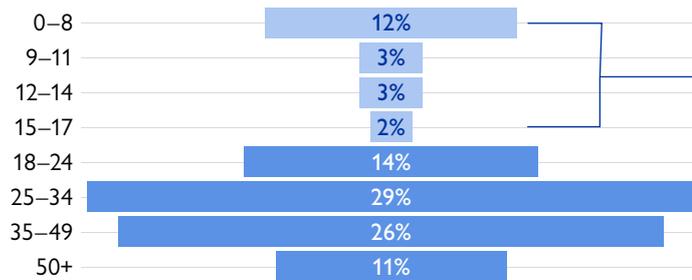
16,649

39% of the total caseload

Sex breakdown



Age breakdown



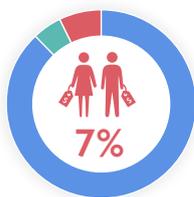
Total number of migrants in vulnerable situations assisted **from** European Economic Area

1,100

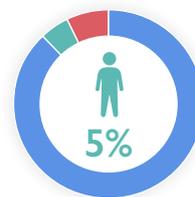
Vulnerability breakdown



Migrants with health-related needs



Identified victims of trafficking



Unaccompanied or separated children

Top 5 host countries

| Country     | Migrants assisted |
|-------------|-------------------|
| Germany     | 5 723             |
| Greece      | 2 565             |
| Netherlands | 1 815             |
| Belgium     | 1 728             |
| Austria     | 1 321             |

## RETURNS TO EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA

Migrants assisted to European Economic Area

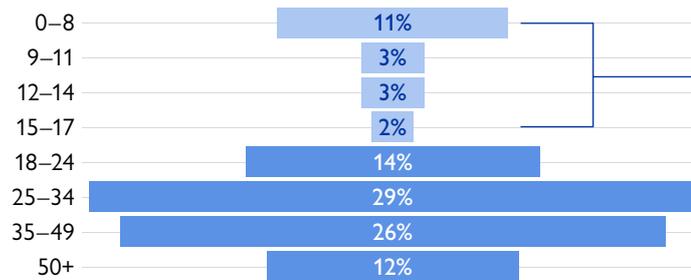
556

2% of the total caseload

Sex breakdown



Age breakdown



Total number of migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to European Economic Area

77

Vulnerability breakdown



Top 5 countries of origin

| Country  | Migrants assisted |
|----------|-------------------|
| Romania  | 223               |
| Bulgaria | 64                |
| Poland   | 39                |
| Spain    | 28                |
| Greece   | 27                |

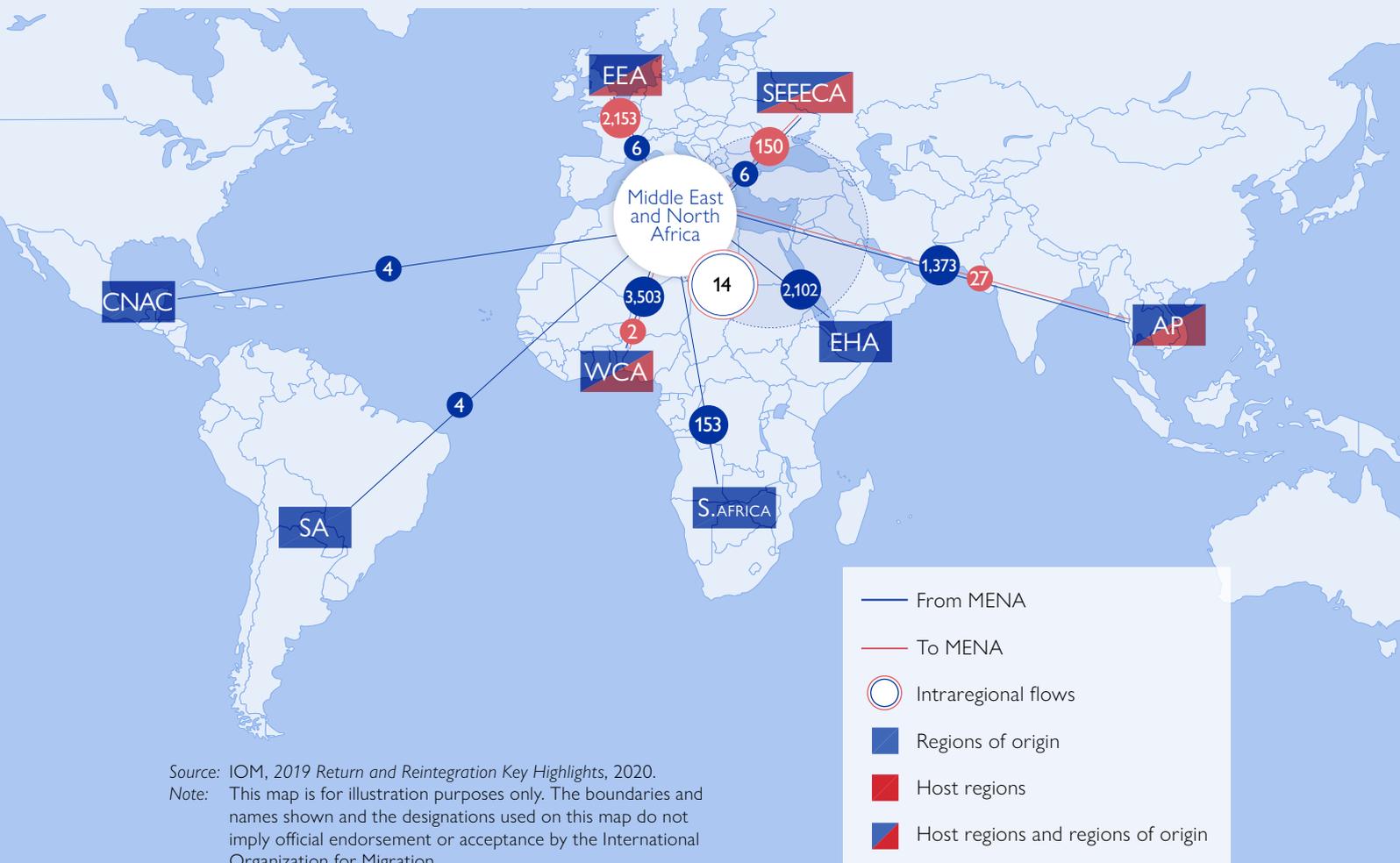
## MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

### RETURNS FROM MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

| Region of origin  | Number of returns |
|---|-------------------|
| West and Central Africa (WCA)                                 | 3 503             |
| East and Horn of Africa (EHA)                                 | 2 102             |
| Asia and the Pacific (AP)                                     | 1 373             |
| Southern Africa (S. Africa)                                   | 153               |
| Middle East and North Africa (MENA)                           | 14                |
| European Economic Area (EEA)                                  | 6                 |
| South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SEECA) | 6                 |
| Central and North America and the Caribbean (CNAC)            | 4                 |
| South America (SA)  | 4                 |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>7 168</b>      |

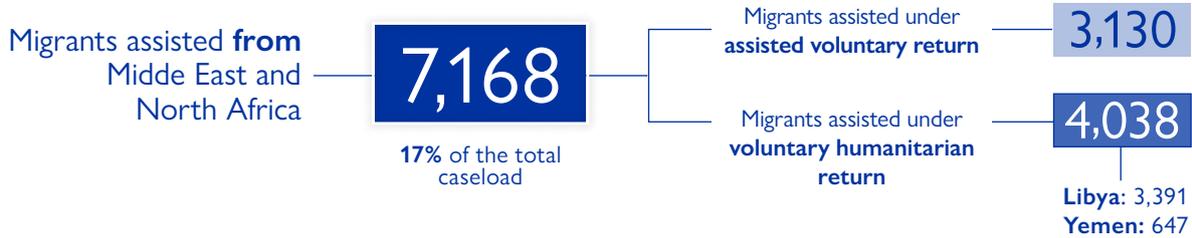
### RETURNS TO MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

| Host region   | Number of returns |
|---|-------------------|
| European Economic Area (EEA)                                  | 2 153             |
| South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SEECA) | 150               |
| Asia and the Pacific (AP)                                     | 27                |
| Middle East and North Africa (MENA)                           | 14                |
| West and Central Africa (WCA)                                 | 2                 |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>2 346</b>      |

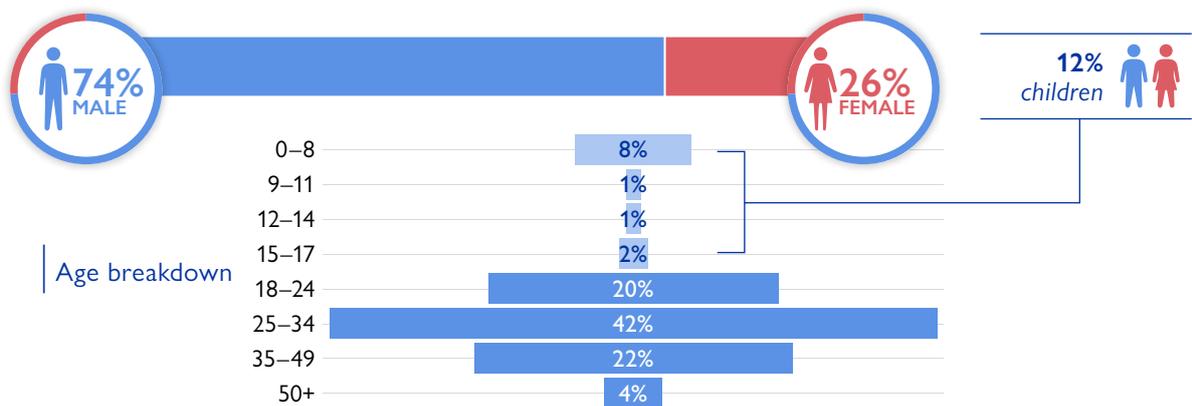


Source: IOM, 2019 Return and Reintegration Key Highlights, 2020.  
 Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

## RETURNS FROM MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA



### Sex breakdown



Total number of migrants in vulnerable situations assisted from Middle East and North Africa

**606**

### Vulnerability breakdown



### Top 5 host countries

| Country | Migrants assisted |
|---------|-------------------|
| Libya   | 3 391             |
| Morocco | 796               |
| Algeria | 763               |
| Yemen   | 647               |
| Egypt   | 497               |

## RETURNS TO MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Migrants assisted to Middle East and North Africa

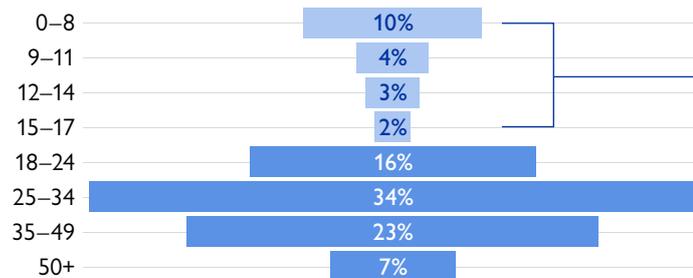
**2,346**

6% of the total caseload

Sex breakdown



Age breakdown



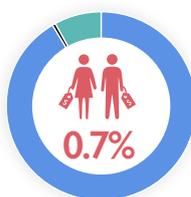
Total number of migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to Middle East and North Africa

**133**

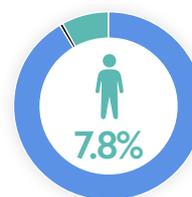
Vulnerability breakdown



Migrants with health-related needs



Identified victims of trafficking



Unaccompanied or separated children

Top 5 countries of origin

| Country | Migrants assisted |
|---------|-------------------|
| Iraq    | 1 602             |
| Egypt   | 189               |
| Morocco | 184               |
| Tunisia | 123               |
| Algeria | 115               |

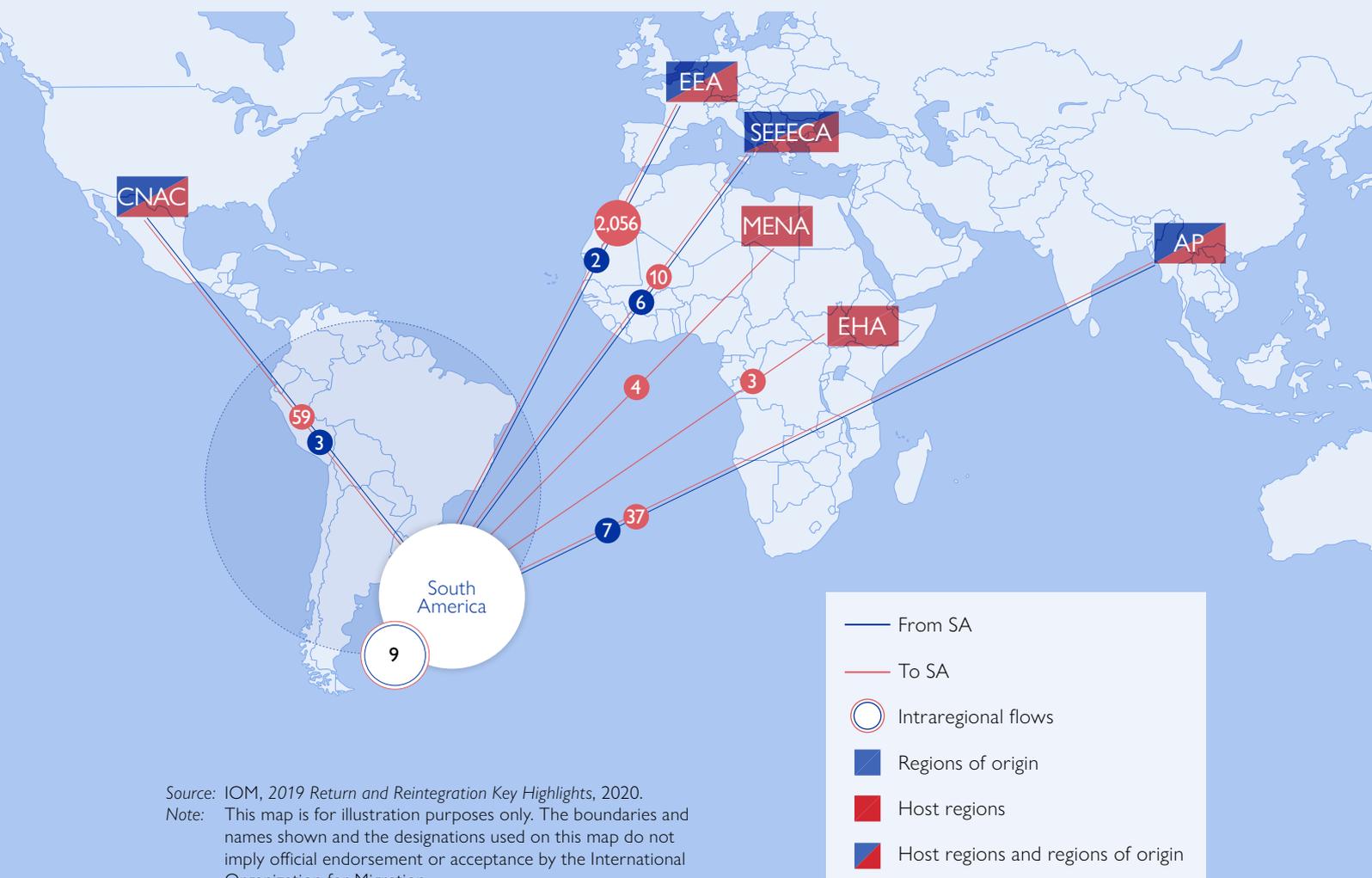
## SOUTH AMERICA

### RETURNS FROM SOUTH AMERICA

| Region of origin   | Number of returns |
|--|-------------------|
| South America (SA)   | 9                 |
| Asia and the Pacific (AP)                                      | 7                 |
| South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SEEECA) | 6                 |
| Central and North America and the Caribbean (CNAC)             | 3                 |
| European Economic Area (EEA)                                   | 2                 |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>27</b>         |

### RETURNS TO SOUTH AMERICA

| Host region  | Number of returns |
|--|-------------------|
| European Economic Area (EEA)                                   | 2 056             |
| Central and North America and the Caribbean (CNAC)             | 59                |
| Asia and the Pacific (AP)                                      | 37                |
| South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SEEECA) | 10                |
| South America (SA)   | 9                 |
| Middle East and North Africa (MENA)                            | 4                 |
| East and Horn of Africa (EHA)                                  | 3                 |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>2 178</b>      |



## RETURNS FROM SOUTH AMERICA

Migrants assisted **from** South America

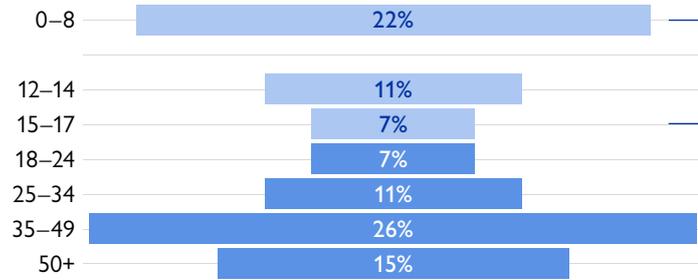
**27**

1% of the total caseload

Sex breakdown



Age breakdown



Top 5 host countries

| Country                          | Migrants assisted |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Brazil                           | 10                |
| Uruguay                          | 5                 |
| Peru                             | 5                 |
| Argentina                        | 4                 |
| Bolivia (Plurinational State of) | 1                 |

## RETURNS TO SOUTH AMERICA

Migrants assisted to South America

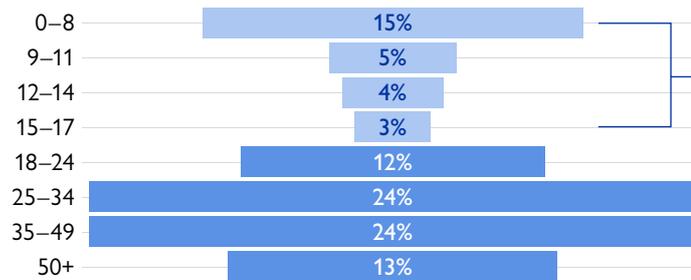
**2,178**

5% of the total caseload

Sex breakdown



Age breakdown



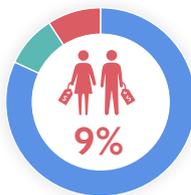
Total number of migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to South America

**69**

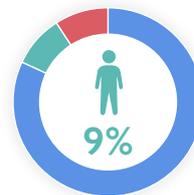
Vulnerability breakdown



Migrants with health-related needs



Identified victims of trafficking



Unaccompanied or separated children

Top 5 countries of origin

| Country   | Migrants assisted |
|-----------|-------------------|
| Brazil    | 1 249             |
| Colombia  | 480               |
| Peru      | 124               |
| Paraguay  | 76                |
| Argentina | 73                |

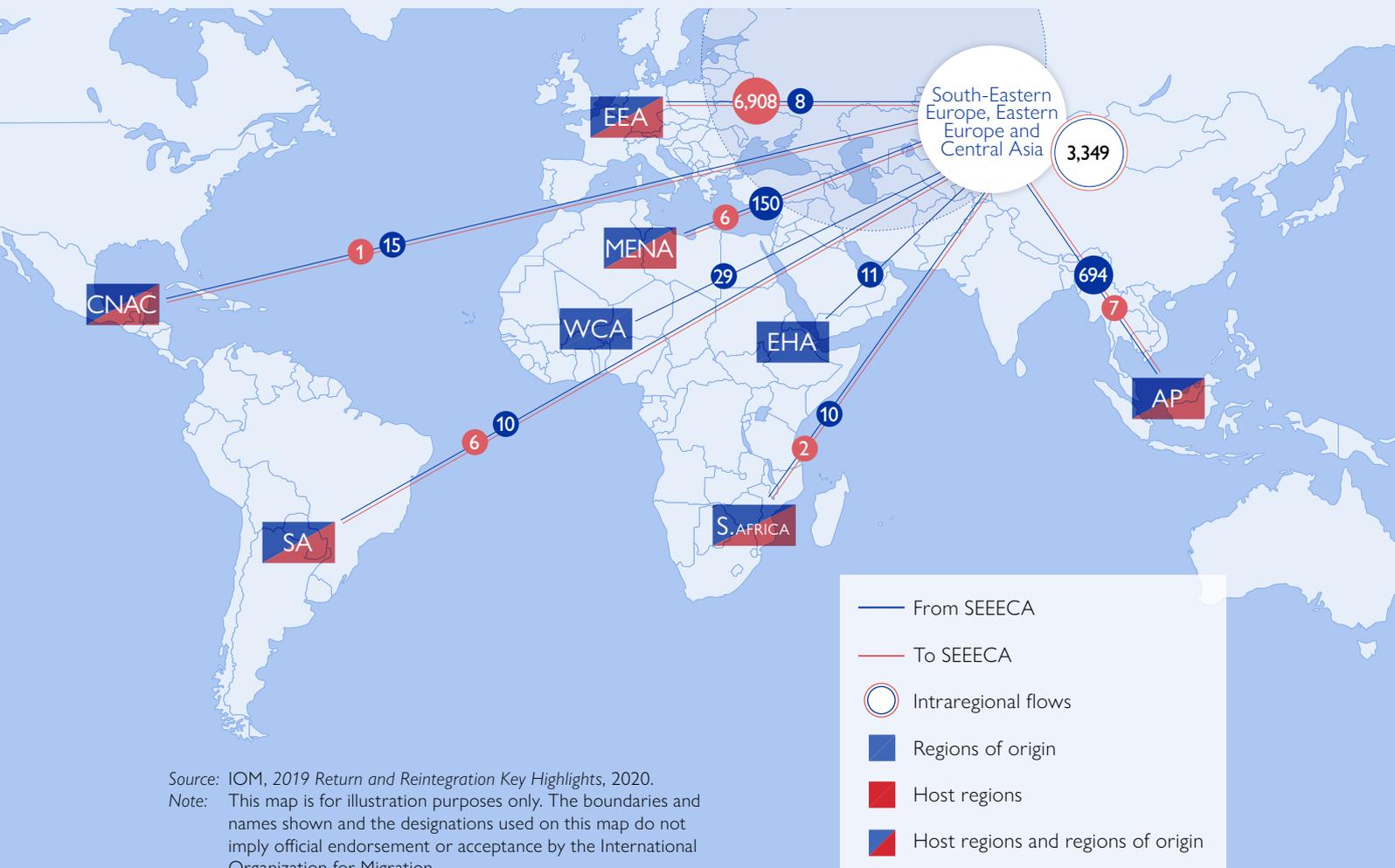
## SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE, EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

### RETURNS FROM SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE, EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

| Region of origin   | Number of returns |
|--|-------------------|
| South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SEEECA) | 3 349             |
| Asia and the Pacific (AP)                                      | 694               |
| Middle East and North Africa (MENA)                            | 150               |
| West and Central Africa (WCA)                                  | 29                |
| Central and North America and the Caribbean (CNAC)             | 15                |
| East and Horn of Africa (EHA)                                  | 11                |
| Southern Africa (S. Africa)                                    | 10                |
| South America (SA)   | 10                |
| European Economic Area (EEA)                                   | 8                 |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>4 276</b>      |

### RETURNS TO SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE, EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

| Host region  | Number of returns |
|--|-------------------|
| European Economic Area (EEA)                                   | 6 908             |
| South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SEEECA) | 3 349             |
| Asia and the Pacific (AP)                                      | 7                 |
| South America (SA)   | 6                 |
| Middle East and North Africa (MENA)                            | 6                 |
| Southern Africa (S. Africa)                                    | 2                 |
| Central and North America and the Caribbean (CNAC)             | 1                 |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>10 279</b>     |



Source: IOM, 2019 Return and Reintegration Key Highlights, 2020.  
 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.

## RETURNS FROM SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE, EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

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

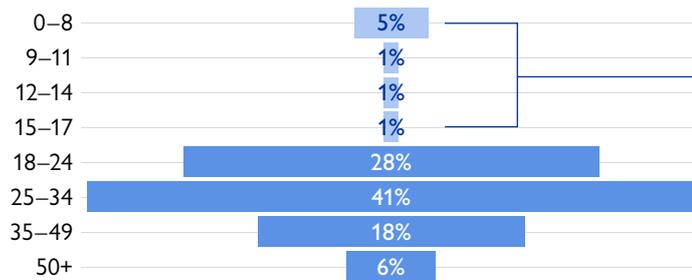
**4,276**

10% of the total caseload

Sex breakdown



Age breakdown



Total number of migrants in vulnerable situations assisted from South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia

**31**

Vulnerability breakdown



Top 5 host countries

| Country                | Migrants assisted |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Kazakhstan             | 3 037             |
| Turkey                 | 494               |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | 232               |
| Georgia                | 144               |
| Russian Federation     | 124               |

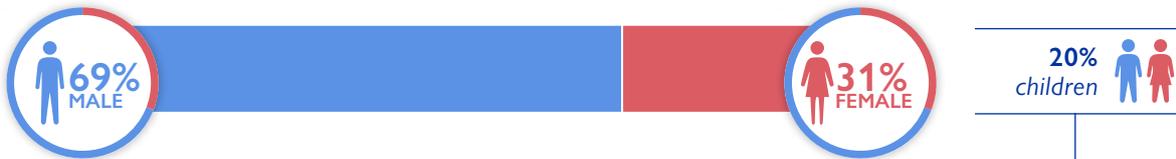
## RETURNS TO SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE, EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

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

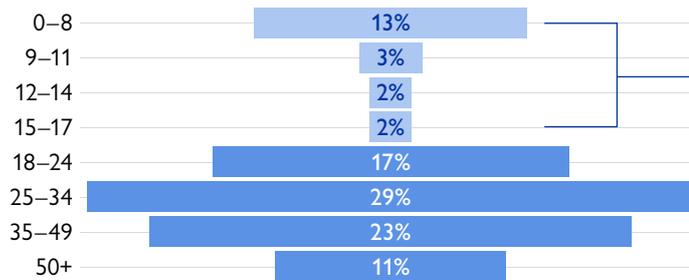
**10,279**

25% of the total caseload

Sex breakdown



Age breakdown



Total number of migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia

**563**

Vulnerability breakdown



Top 5 countries of origin

| Country             | Migrants assisted |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| Tajikistan          | 3 106             |
| Georgia             | 1 465             |
| Albania             | 834               |
| Republic of Moldova | 807               |
| Ukraine             | 778               |

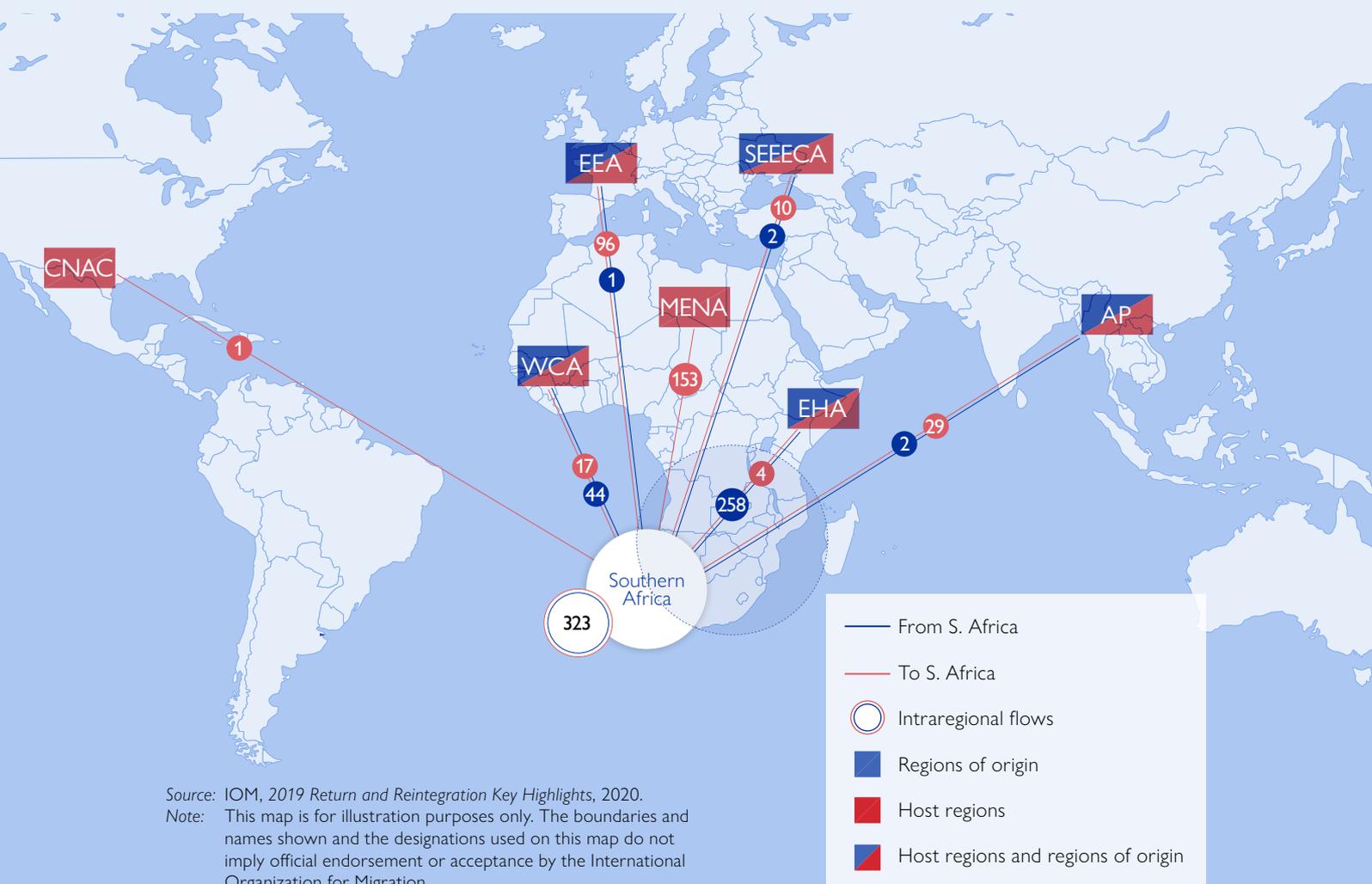
## SOUTHERN AFRICA

### RETURNS FROM SOUTHERN AFRICA

| Region of origin   | Number of returns |
|--|-------------------|
| Southern Africa (S. Africa)                                    | 323               |
| East and Horn of Africa (EHA)                                  | 258               |
| West and Central Africa (WCA)                                  | 44                |
| South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SEEECA) | 2                 |
| Asia and the Pacific (AP)                                      | 2                 |
| European Economic Area (EEA)                                   | 1                 |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>630</b>        |

### RETURNS TO SOUTHERN AFRICA

| Host region  | Number of returns |
|--|-------------------|
| Southern Africa (S. Africa)                                    | 323               |
| Middle East and North Africa (MENA)                            | 153               |
| European Economic Area (EEA)                                   | 96                |
| Asia and the Pacific (AP)                                      | 29                |
| West and Central Africa (WCA)                                  | 17                |
| South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SEEECA) | 10                |
| East and Horn of Africa (EHA)                                  | 4                 |
| Central and North America and the Caribbean (CNAC)             | 1                 |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>633</b>        |



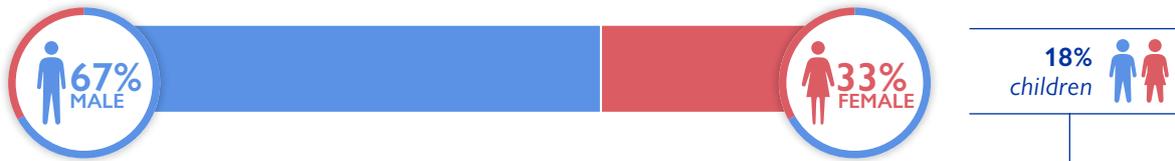
## RETURNS FROM SOUTHERN AFRICA

Migrants assisted from Southern Africa

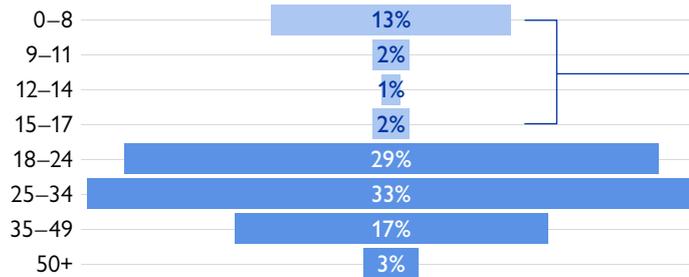
630

1% of the total caseload

Sex breakdown



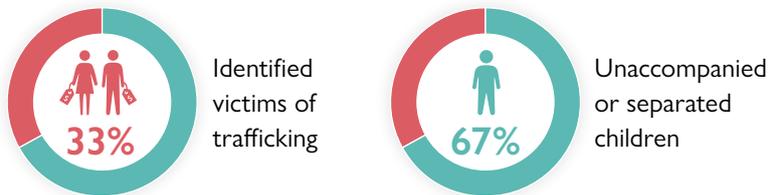
Age breakdown



Total number of migrants in vulnerable situations assisted from Southern Africa

9

Vulnerability breakdown



Top 5 host countries

| Country      | Migrants assisted |
|--------------|-------------------|
| South Africa | 419               |
| Zambia       | 86                |
| Zimbabwe     | 71                |
| Mozambique   | 29                |
| Namibia      | 9                 |

## RETURNS TO SOUTHERN AFRICA

Migrants assisted to Southern Africa

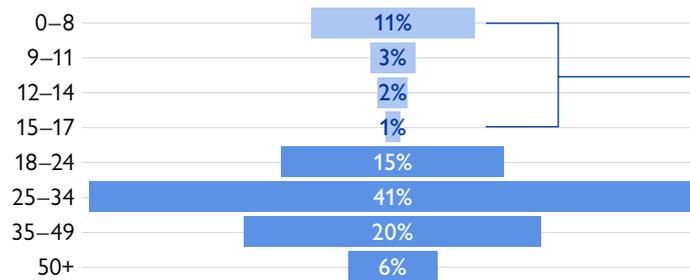
633

1% of the total caseload

Sex breakdown



Age breakdown



Total number of migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to Southern Africa

12

Vulnerability breakdown



Top 5 countries of origin

| Country                          | Migrants assisted |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Malawi                           | 175               |
| Zimbabwe                         | 164               |
| Democratic Republic of the Congo | 106               |
| Madagascar                       | 79                |
| South Africa                     | 37                |

## WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

### RETURNS FROM WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

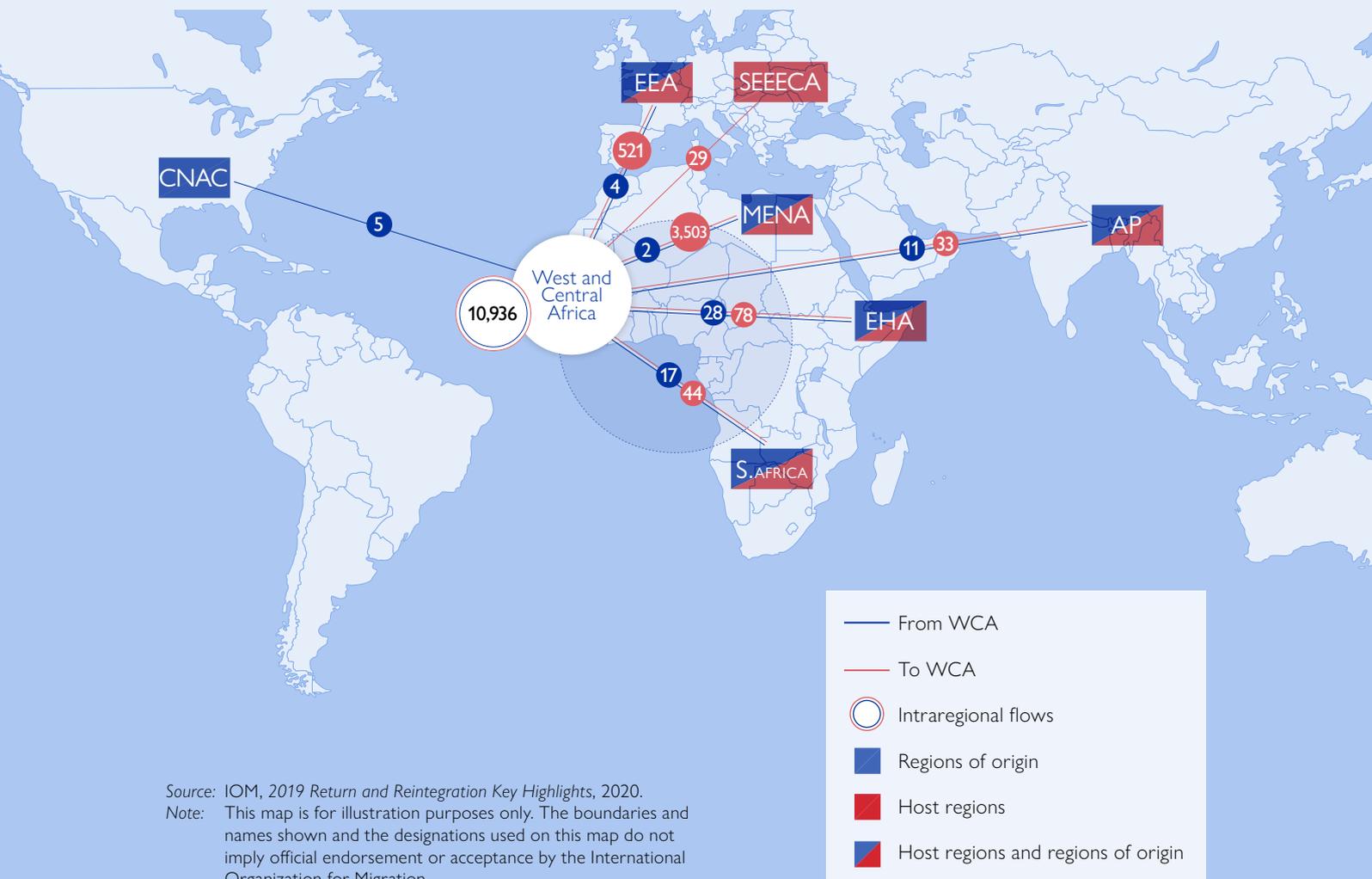
| Region of origin                                   | Number of returns |
|--|-------------------|
| West and Central Africa (WCA)                      | 10 936            |
| East and Horn of Africa (EHA)                      | 28                |
| Southern Africa (S. Africa)                        | 17                |
| Asia and the Pacific (AP)                          | 11                |
| Central and North America and the Caribbean (CNAC) | 5                 |
| European Economic Area (EEA)                       | 4                 |
| Middle East and North Africa (MENA)                | 2                 |

**Total** 11 003

### RETURNS TO WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

| Host region  | Number of returns |
|--|-------------------|
| West and Central Africa (WCA)                                  | 10 936            |
| Middle East and North Africa (MENA)                            | 3 503             |
| European Economic Area (EEA)                                   | 521               |
| East and Horn of Africa (EHA)                                  | 78                |
| Southern Africa (S. Africa)                                    | 44                |
| Asia and the Pacific (AP)                                      | 33                |
| South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SEEECA) | 29                |

**Total** 15 144



Source: IOM, 2019 Return and Reintegration Key Highlights, 2020.

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.

## RETURNS FROM WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

Migrants assisted from West and Central Africa

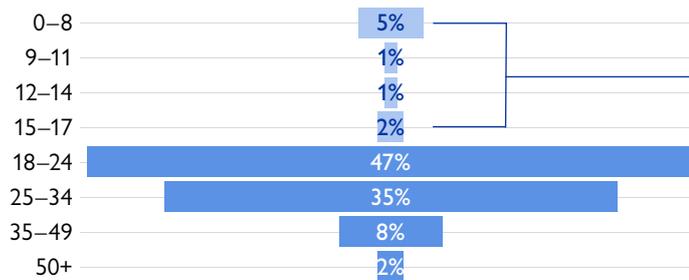
11,003

26% of the total caseload

Sex breakdown



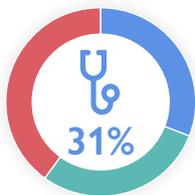
Age breakdown



Total number of migrants in vulnerable situations assisted from West and Central Africa

374

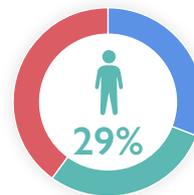
Vulnerability breakdown



Migrants with health-related needs



Identified victims of trafficking



Unaccompanied or separated children

Top 5 host countries

| Country       | Migrants assisted |
|---------------|-------------------|
| Niger         | 9 069             |
| Chad          | 423               |
| Mali          | 412               |
| Mauritania    | 373               |
| Côte d'Ivoire | 326               |

## RETURNS TO WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

Migrants assisted to West and Central Africa

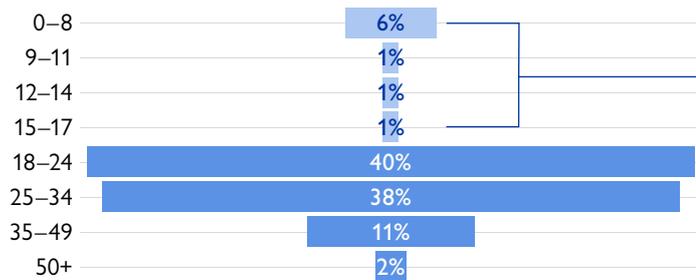
**15,144**

36% of the total caseload

Sex breakdown



Age breakdown



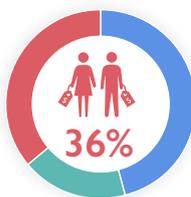
Total number of migrants in vulnerable situations assisted to West and Central Africa

**753**

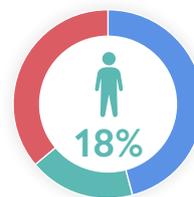
Vulnerability breakdown



Migrants with health-related needs



Identified victims of trafficking



Unaccompanied or separated children

Top 5 countries of origin

| Country       | Migrants assisted |
|---------------|-------------------|
| Mali          | 3 249             |
| Guinea        | 3 145             |
| Nigeria       | 1 449             |
| Sierra Leone  | 1 259             |
| Côte d'Ivoire | 981               |

# CHAPTER 3

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## REINTEGRATION OVERVIEW



Jewel Khondokar, a returned migrant, struggled to reintegrate into society. The Prottasha project supported him with financial and social reintegration assistance. © IOM 2019/Sariful ISLAM



Source: IOM, *2019 Return and Reintegration Key Highlights*, 2020.

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

Reintegration is generally understood as a multidimensional process enabling individuals to reestablish the economic, social and psychosocial relationships needed to maintain life, livelihood, and dignity and achieve inclusion in civic life.

### Sustainable reintegration

As part of its integrated approach to reintegration (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's integrated approach to reintegration is further operationalized in the [Reintegration Handbook](#).

## Provision of reintegration assistance

The categories of reintegration support presented in the following graphs reflect the total number of services provided, which are not mutually exclusive. The beneficiaries of IOM reintegration assistance can receive multiple types of support at different levels and return stages (e.g. pre-departure counselling in the host country and economic assistance in the country of origin).

## Main trends 2020

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

**The total number of reintegration services decreased by 16 per cent** (from 126,442 in 2019 to 106,230 in 2020) but remained on a high level.

**The majority of pre-departure services (88%) were provided by country offices in the European Economic Area**, the main host region.

**The majority of post-arrival reintegration services (66%) were provided by country offices in West and Central Africa**, the main region of origin.

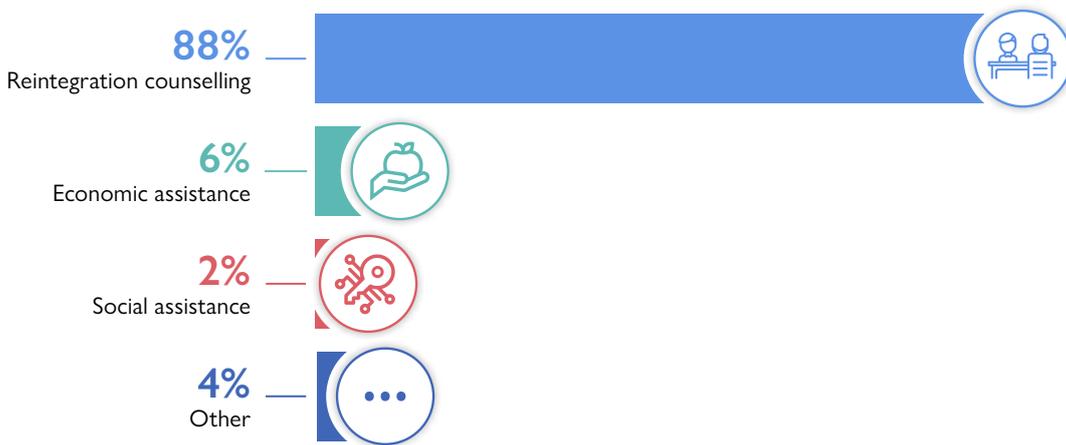
**The top 3 countries for the provision of reintegration assistance are Guinea (13%), Senegal (12%) and Ethiopia (9.5%).** The support consisted mainly of reintegration counselling and economic assistance.

## REINTEGRATION ASSISTANCE IN HOST COUNTRIES

Number of IOM country offices in host countries



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 |
|-------------|-----------------------------|
| Switzerland | 3 285                       |
| Greece      | 2 100                       |
| Germany     | 1 531                       |
| Belgium     | 675                         |
| Netherlands | 621                         |

## REINTEGRATION ASSISTANCE IN COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

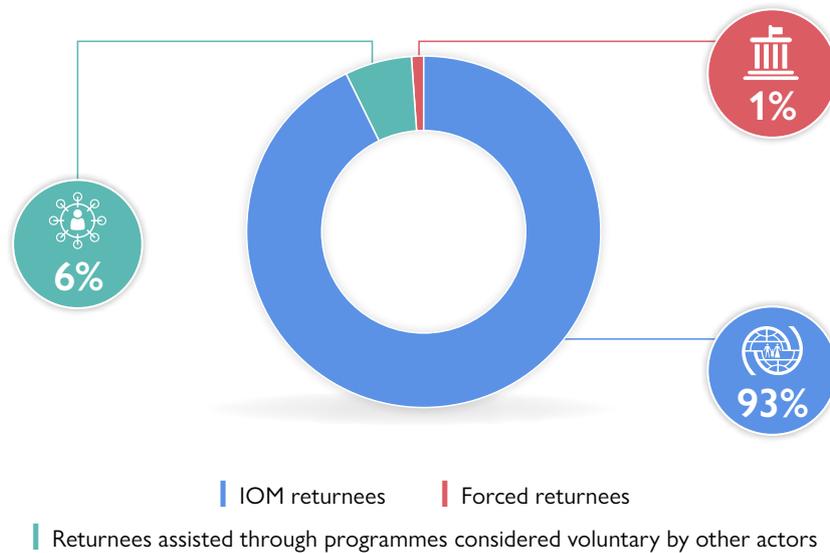
Number of IOM country offices in countries of origin

104

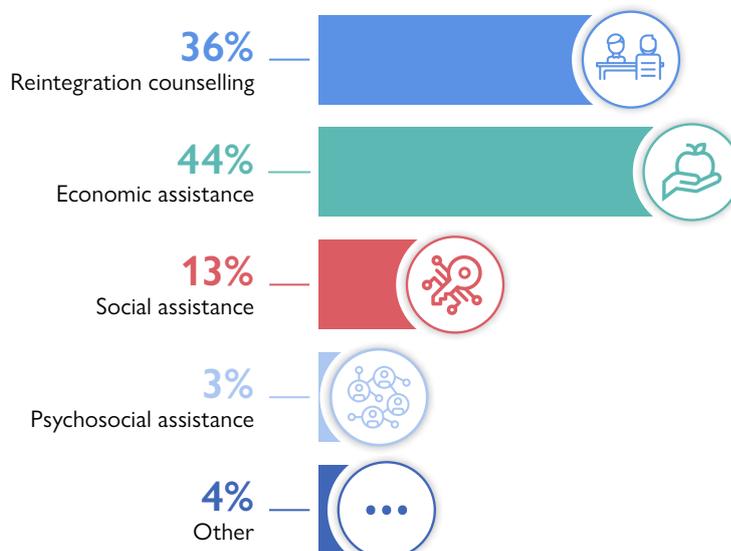
95,156

services provided

Types of beneficiaries



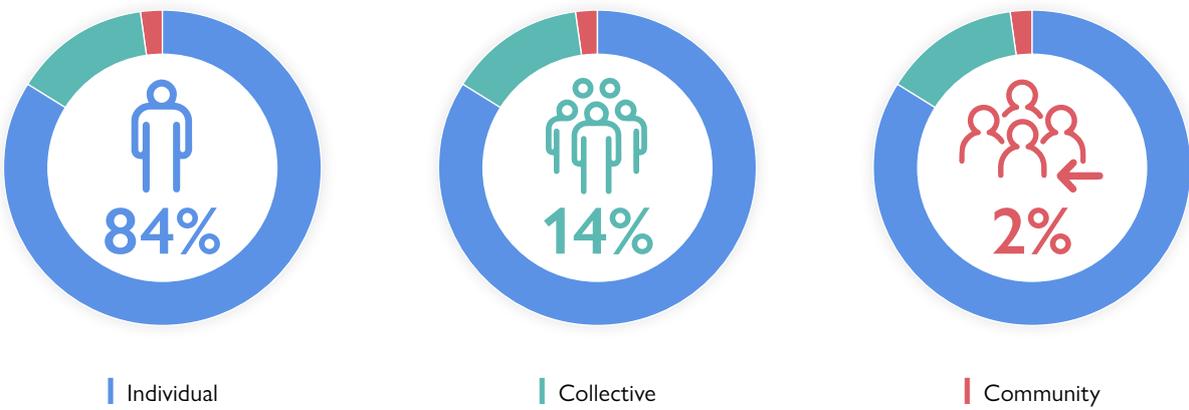
Types of reintegration assistance provided in countries of origin



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 |
|----------|-----------------------------|
| Guinea   | 14 004                      |
| Senegal  | 12 725                      |
| Ethiopia | 10 161                      |
| Nigeria  | 9 057                       |
| Mali     | 7 696                       |

# CHAPTER 4

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## REGIONAL REINTEGRATION HIGHLIGHTS



Through IOM Afghanistan's Reintegration and Development Assistance (RADA) and Connecting Return with Development (CRD) programmes, Afghan returnees are supported to attend a tailoring school in Herat run by a young female entrepreneur. The programme helps these women to reintegrate, enhance their professional skills and eventually gain new livelihood opportunities. © IOM 2020/Muse MOHAMMED

## ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Reintegration assistance services provided to returnees

4,801

4.3%

of the total caseload of services



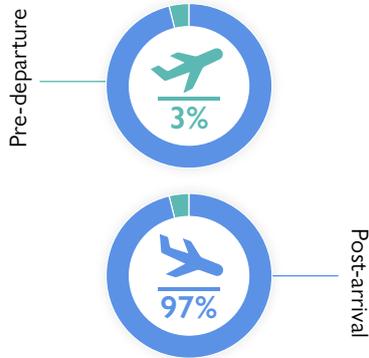
### Countries involved in reintegration assistance

- |             |                            |          |             |
|-------------|----------------------------|----------|-------------|
| Afghanistan | Indonesia                  | Mongolia | Philippines |
| Bangladesh  | Iran (Islamic Republic of) | Myanmar  | Sri Lanka   |
| China       | Japan                      | Nepal    | Thailand    |
| India       | Malaysia                   | Pakistan | Viet Nam    |

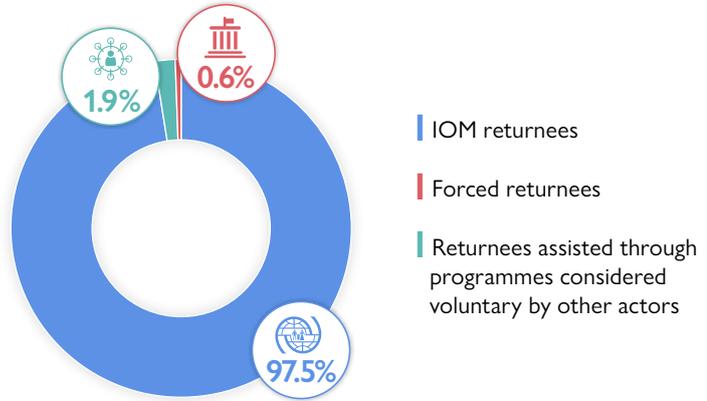
Source: IOM, 2019 Return and Reintegration Key Highlights, 2020.

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



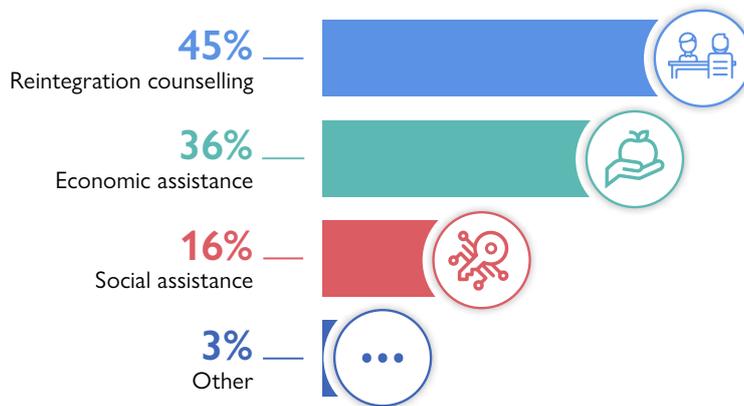
Types of beneficiaries



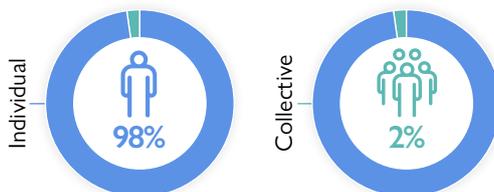
Reintegration assistance directly provided by IOM or through referral



Types of reintegration assistance



Levels of assistance



Top 5 countries providing reintegration assistance

- Bangladesh
- Pakistan
- Iran (Islamic Republic of)
- Afghanistan
- Sri Lanka

## CENTRAL AND NORTH AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Reintegration assistance services provided to returnees

783

0.7%

of the total caseload of services

### Countries involved in reintegration assistance

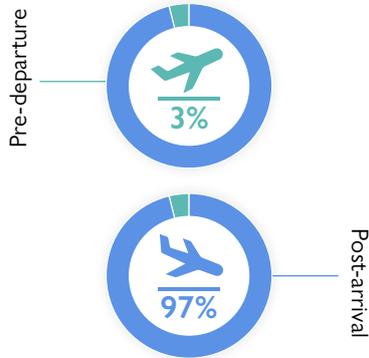
Belize  
Dominican Republic  
El Salvador  
Guatemala

Honduras  
Mexico  
Panama

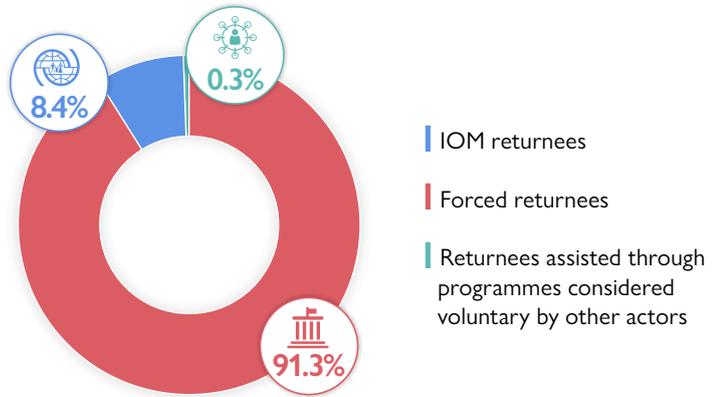
Source: IOM, 2019 Return and Reintegration Key Highlights, 2020.

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



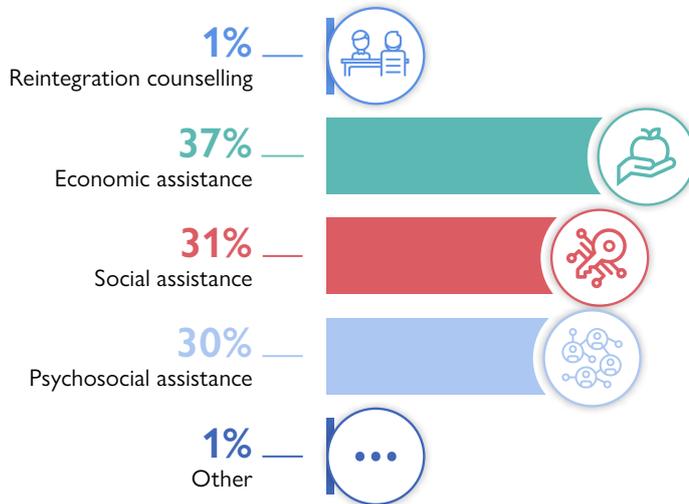
Types of beneficiaries



Reintegration assistance directly provided by IOM or through referral



Types of reintegration assistance



Levels of assistance



Top 5 countries providing reintegration assistance

- El Salvador
- Panama
- Honduras
- Belize
- Guatemala

## EAST AND HORN OF AFRICA

Reintegration assistance services provided to returnees

**11,320**

**10.6%** of the total caseload of services

### Countries involved in reintegration assistance

Burundi  
Djibouti

Eritrea  
Ethiopia

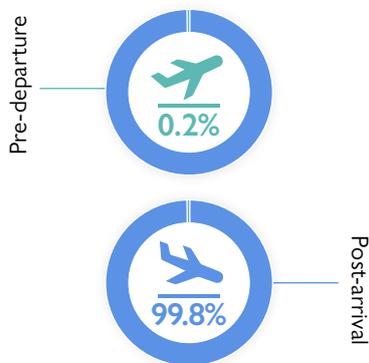
Somalia  
South Sudan

Uganda

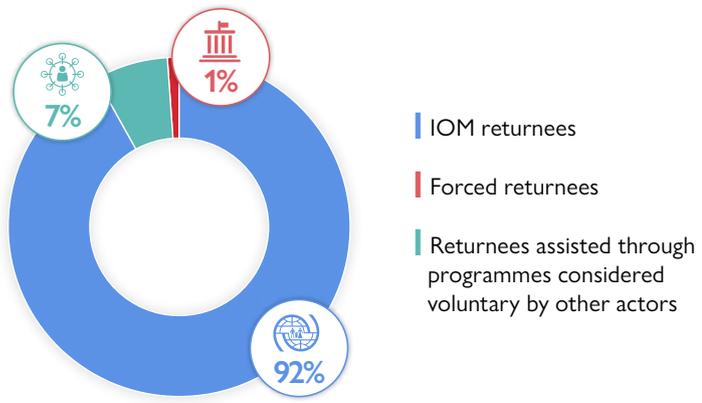
Source: IOM, 2019 Return and Reintegration Key Highlights, 2020.

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



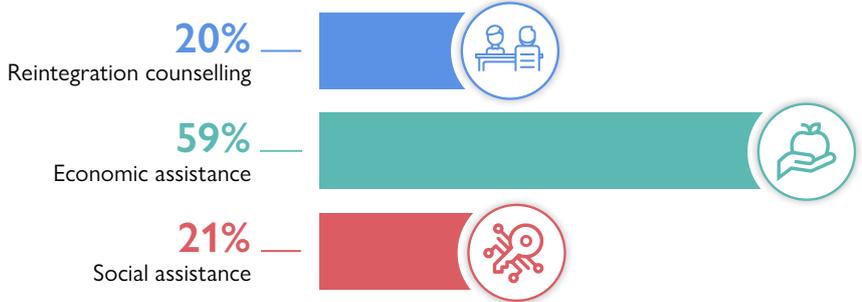
Types of beneficiaries



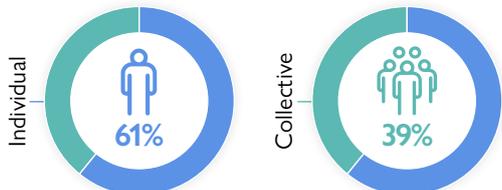
Reintegration assistance directly provided by IOM or through referral



Types of reintegration assistance



Levels of assistance

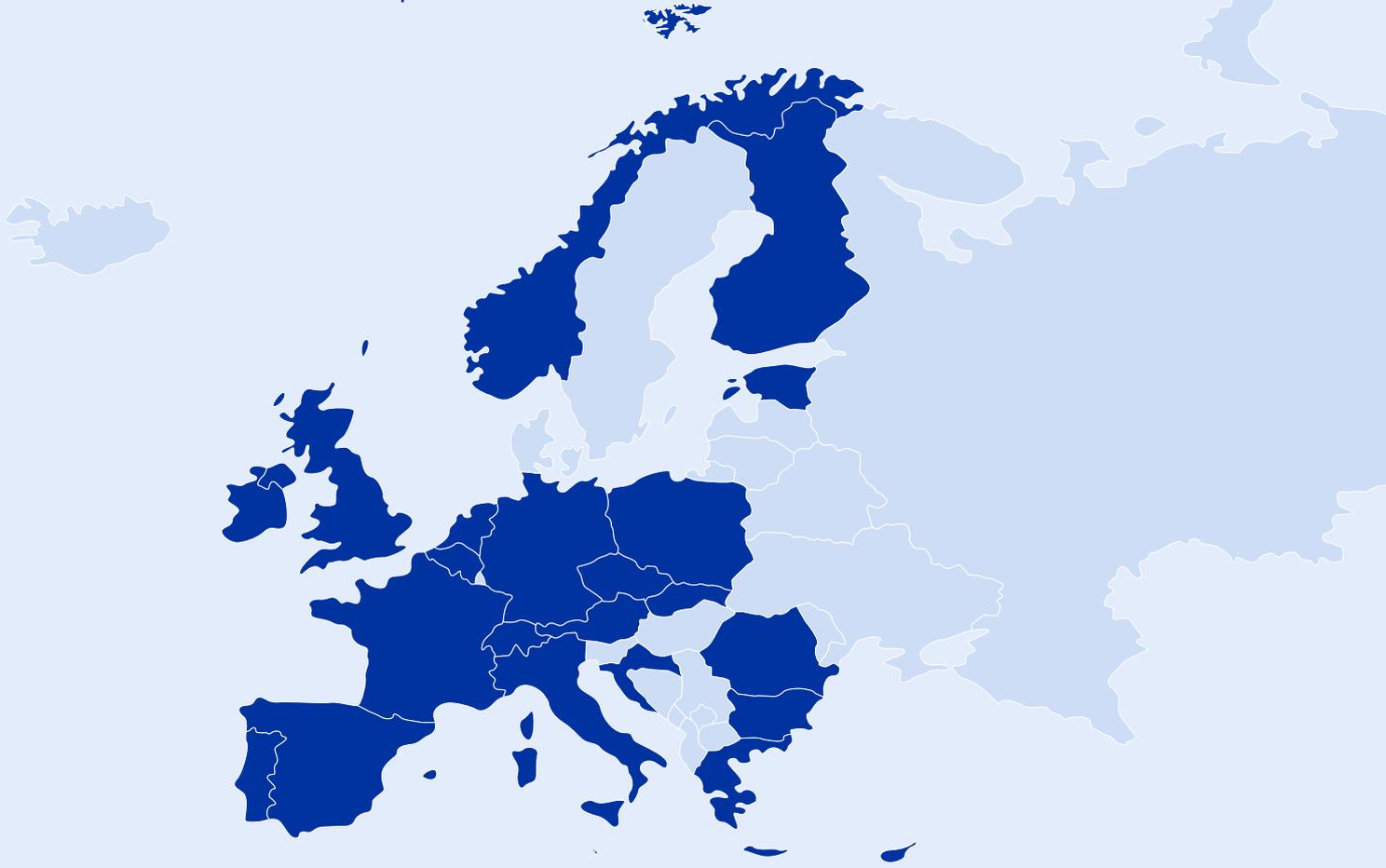


Top 5 countries providing reintegration assistance

- Ethiopia
- Somalia
- South Sudan
- Uganda
- Djibouti

## EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA

Reintegration assistance services provided to returnees **9,811** of the total caseload of services **9.2%**



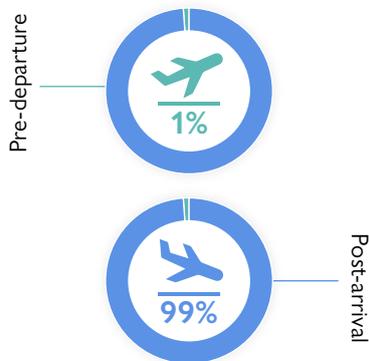
### Countries involved in reintegration assistance

- |          |         |             |                |
|----------|---------|-------------|----------------|
| Austria  | Estonia | Italy       | Romania        |
| Belgium  | Finland | Malta       | Slovakia       |
| Bulgaria | France  | Netherlands | Spain          |
| Croatia  | Germany | Norway      | Switzerland    |
| Cyprus   | Greece  | Poland      | United Kingdom |
| Czechia  | Ireland | Portugal    |                |

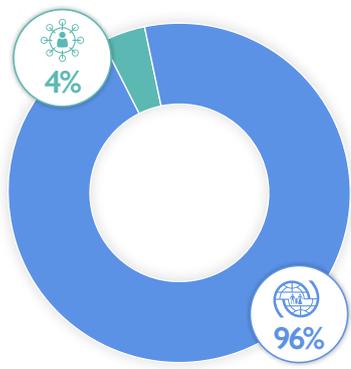
Source: IOM, 2019 Return and Reintegration Key Highlights, 2020.

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



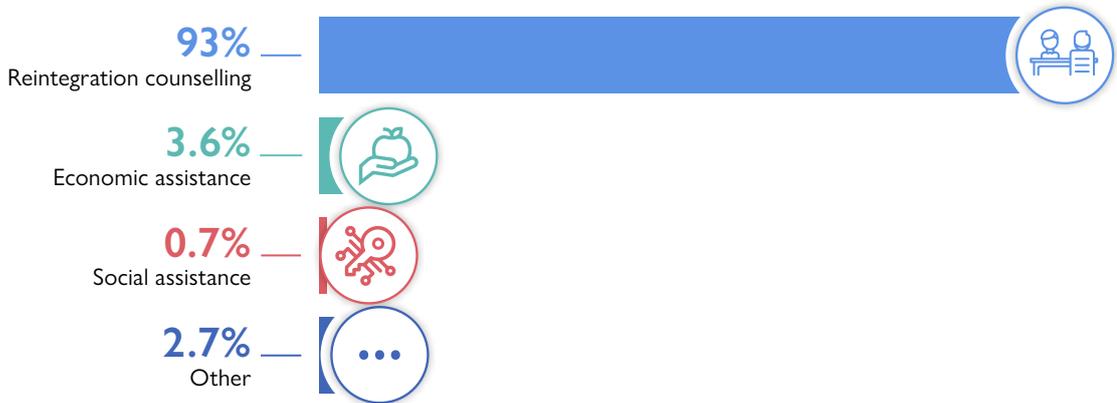
IOM returnees

Returnees assisted through programmes considered voluntary by other actors

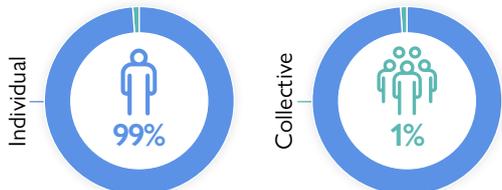
Reintegration assistance directly provided by IOM or through referral



Types of reintegration assistance



Levels of assistance



Top 5 countries providing reintegration assistance

- Switzerland
- Greece
- Germany
- Belgium
- Netherlands

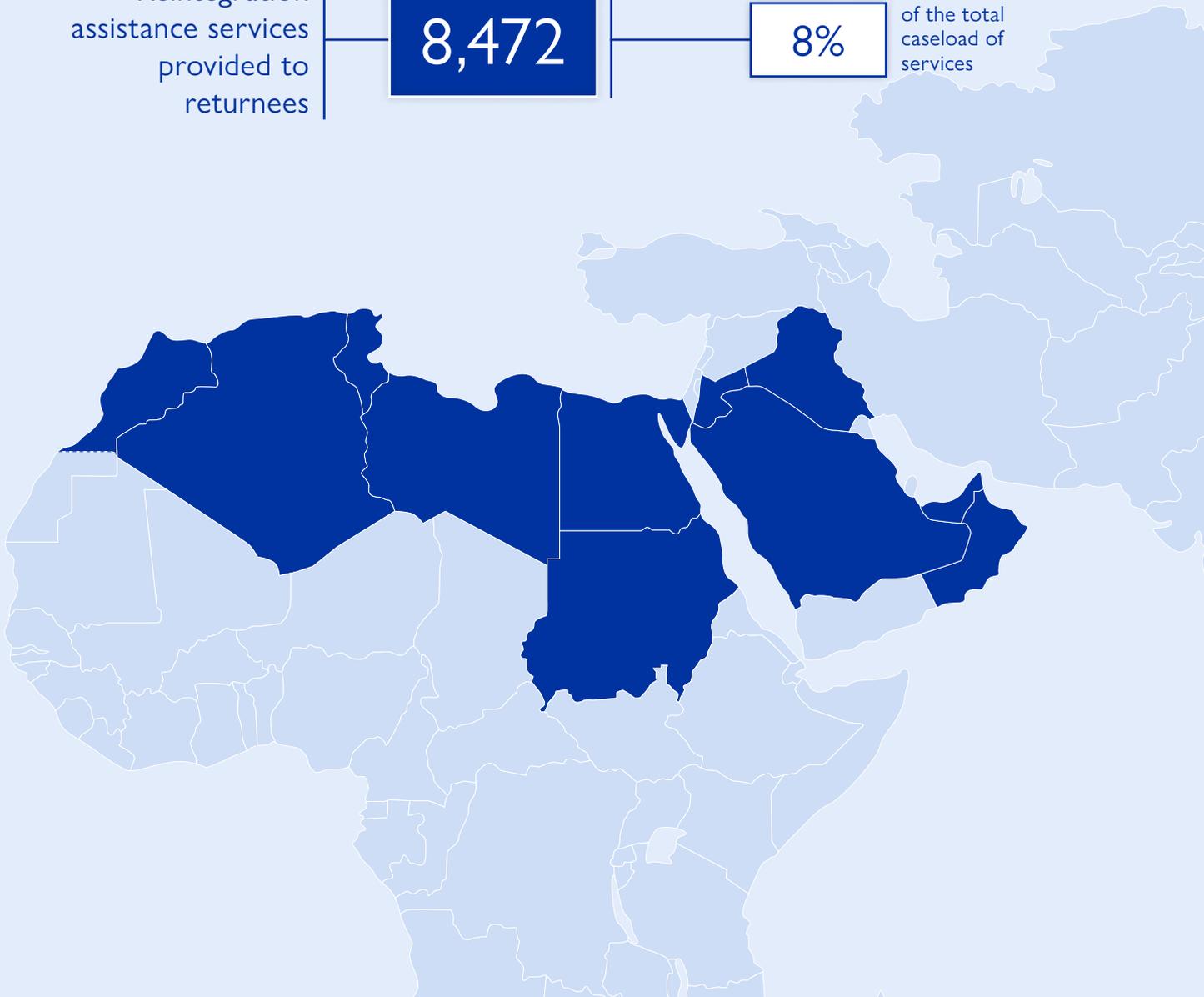
## MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Reintegration assistance services provided to returnees

8,472

8%

of the total caseload of services



### Countries involved in reintegration assistance

Algeria  
Egypt  
Iraq

Jordan  
Libya  
Morocco

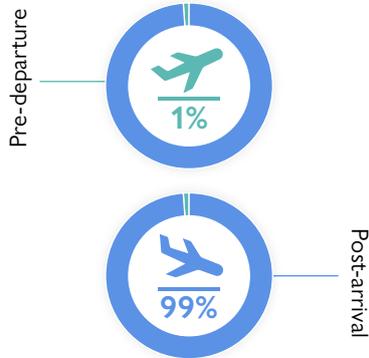
Oman  
Saudi Arabia  
Sudan

Tunisia  
United Arab Emirates

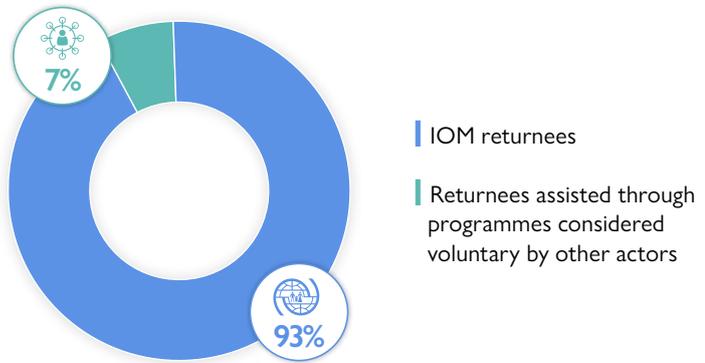
Source: IOM, 2019 Return and Reintegration Key Highlights, 2020.

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



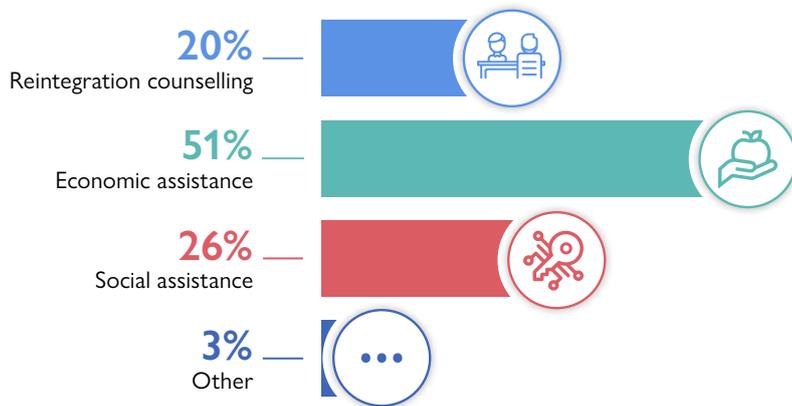
Types of beneficiaries



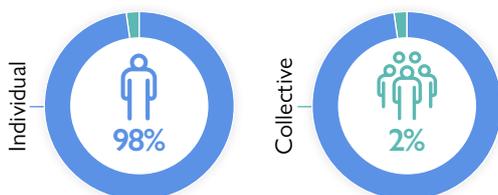
Reintegration assistance directly provided by IOM or through referral



Types of reintegration assistance



Levels of assistance



Top 5 countries providing reintegration assistance

- Sudan
- Iraq
- Egypt
- Morocco
- Algeria

## SOUTH AMERICA

Reintegration assistance services provided to returnees

471

0.4%

of the total caseload of services



### Countries involved in reintegration assistance

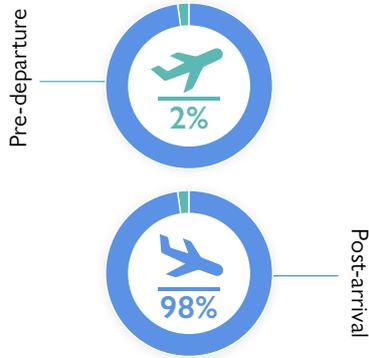
Argentina  
Brazil  
Chile

Colombia  
Peru  
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

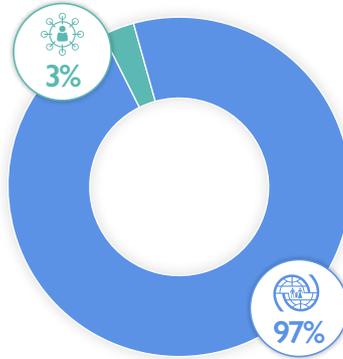
Source: IOM, 2019 Return and Reintegration Key Highlights, 2020.

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

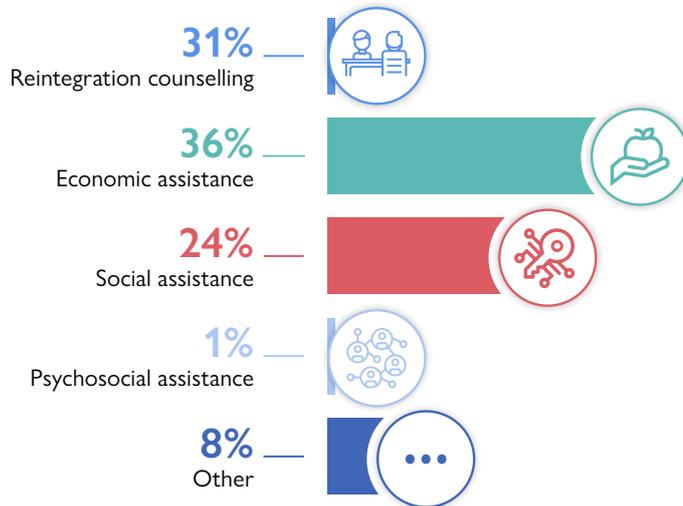


- IOM returnees
- Returnees assisted through programmes considered voluntary by other actors

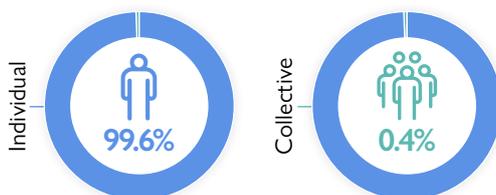
Reintegration assistance directly provided by IOM or through referral



Types of reintegration assistance



Levels of assistance



Top 5 countries providing reintegration assistance

- Brazil
- Colombia
- Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
- Peru
- Chile

## SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE, EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA



### Countries and territories involved in reintegration assistance

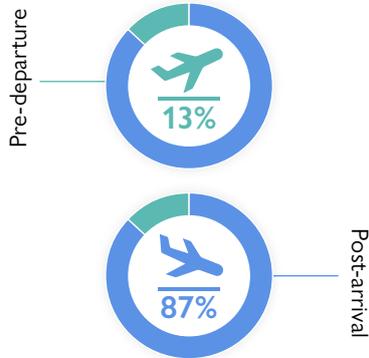
|                        |            |                     |            |
|------------------------|------------|---------------------|------------|
| Albania                | Georgia    | North Macedonia     | Turkey     |
| Armenia                | Israel     | Republic of Moldova | Ukraine    |
| Azerbaijan             | Kazakhstan | Russian Federation  | Uzbekistan |
| Belarus                | Kyrgyzstan | Serbia              | Kosovo*    |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | Montenegro | Tajikistan          |            |

Source: IOM, 2019 Return and Reintegration Key Highlights, 2020.

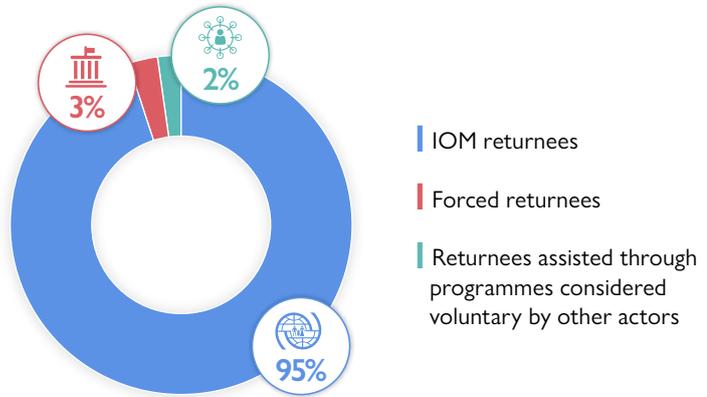
Notes: \*References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

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



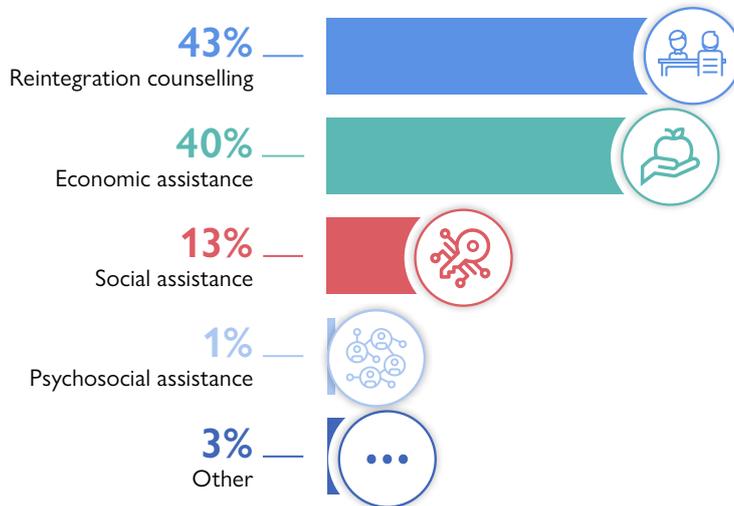
Types of beneficiaries



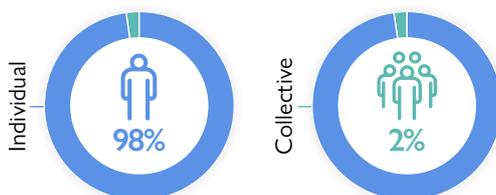
Reintegration assistance directly provided by IOM or through referral



Types of reintegration assistance



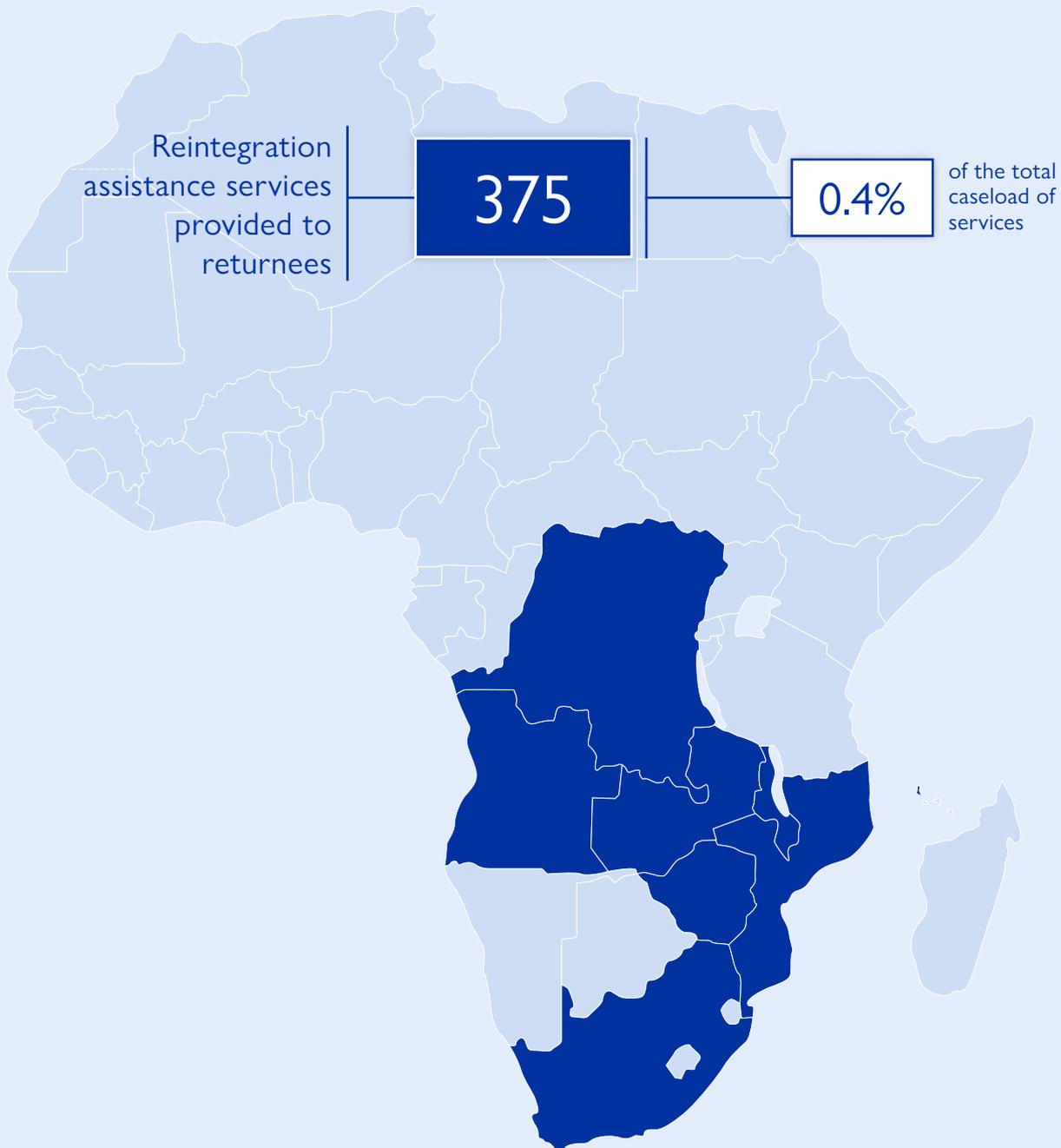
Levels of assistance



Top 5 countries providing reintegration assistance

- Russian Federation
- Georgia
- Azerbaijan
- Turkey
- Bosnia and Herzegovina

## SOUTHERN AFRICA



### Countries involved in reintegration assistance

Angola  
Comoros  
Democratic Republic  
of the Congo

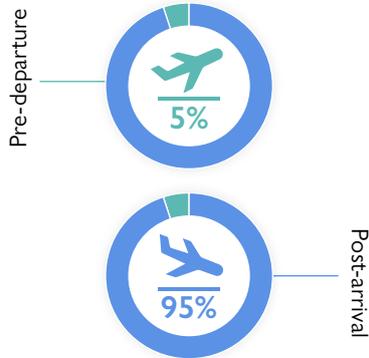
Malawi  
Mauritius  
Mozambique

South Africa  
Zambia  
Zimbabwe

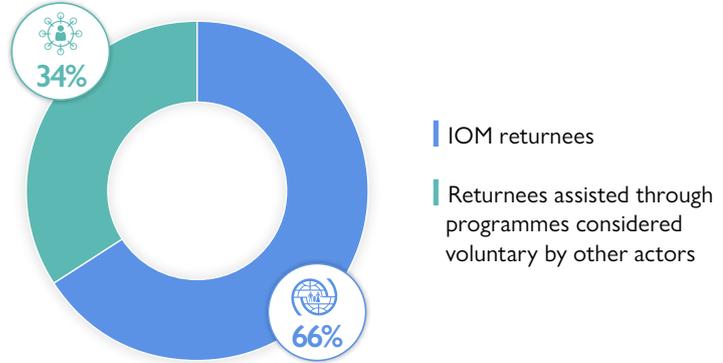
Source: IOM, 2019 Return and Reintegration Key Highlights, 2020.

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



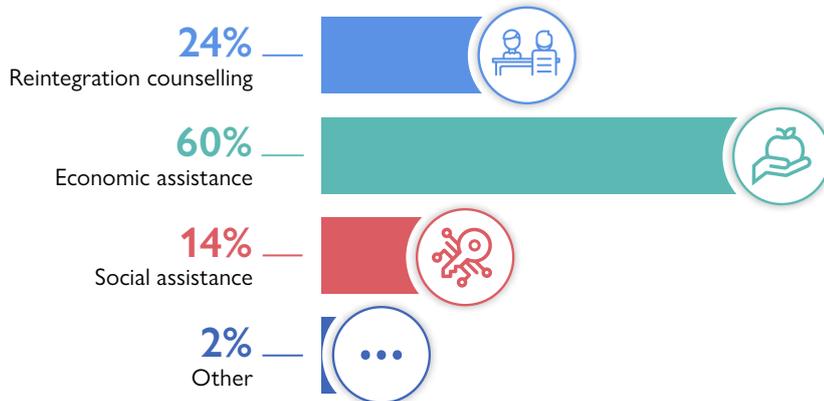
Types of beneficiaries



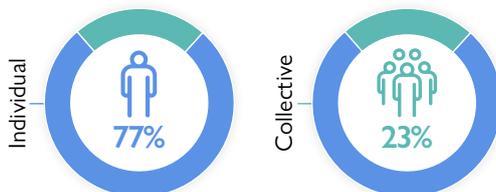
Reintegration assistance directly provided by IOM or through referral



Types of reintegration assistance



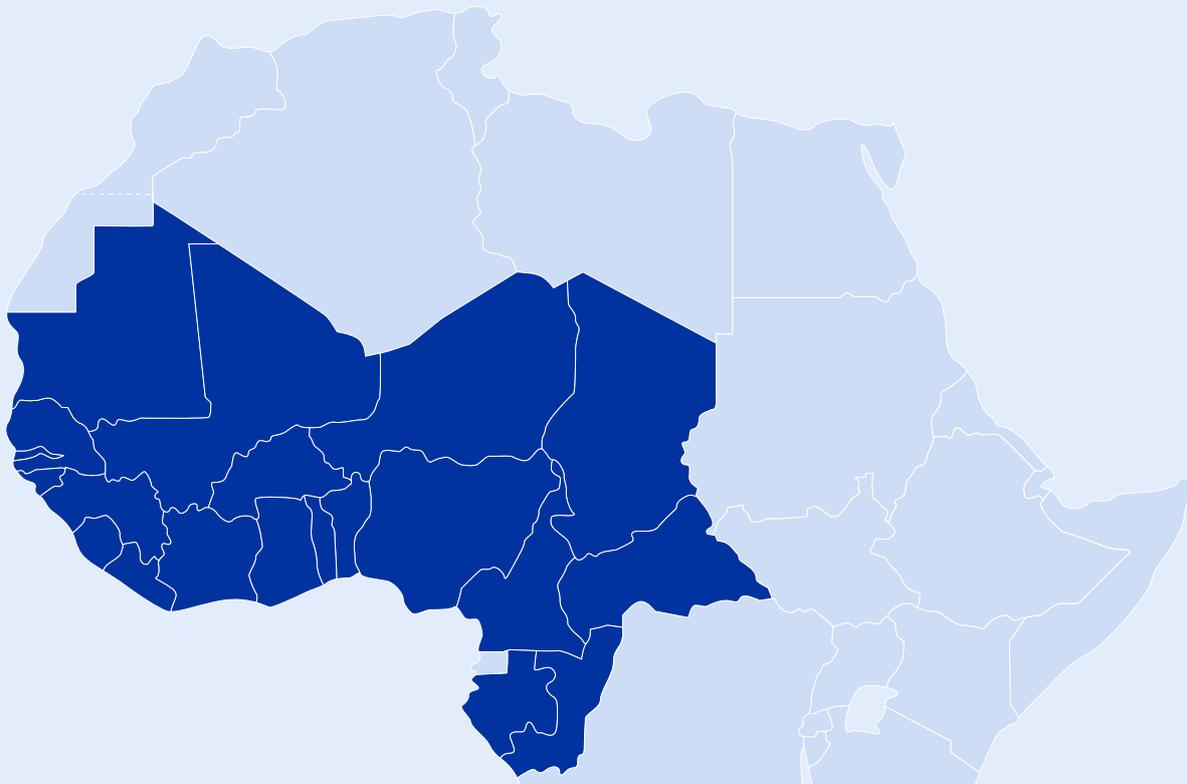
Levels of assistance



Top 5 countries providing reintegration assistance

- Mozambique
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Zimbabwe
- Angola
- South Africa

## WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA



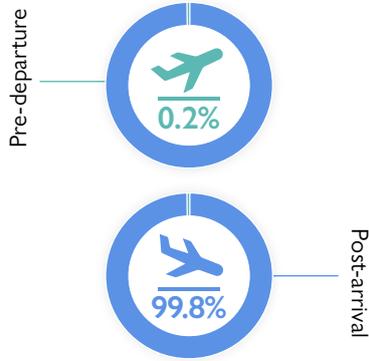
### Countries involved in reintegration assistance

- |                          |               |               |              |
|--------------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| Benin                    | Congo         | Guinea-Bissau | Senegal      |
| Burkina Faso             | Côte d'Ivoire | Liberia       | Sierra Leone |
| Cabo Verde               | Gabon         | Mali          | Togo         |
| Cameroon                 | Gambia        | Mauritania    |              |
| Central African Republic | Ghana         | Niger         |              |
| Chad                     | Guinea        | Nigeria       |              |

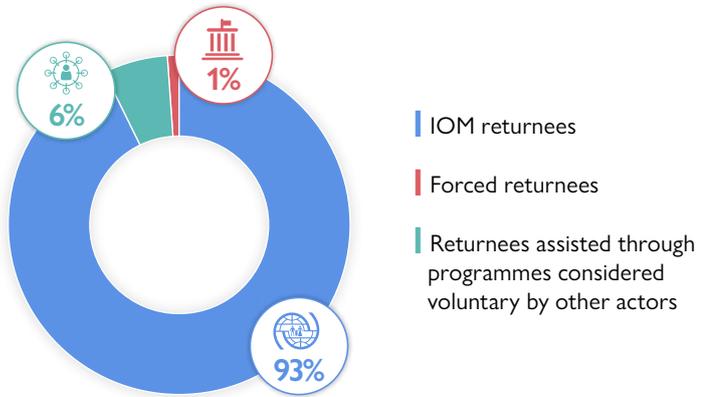
Source: IOM, 2019 Return and Reintegration Key Highlights, 2020.

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



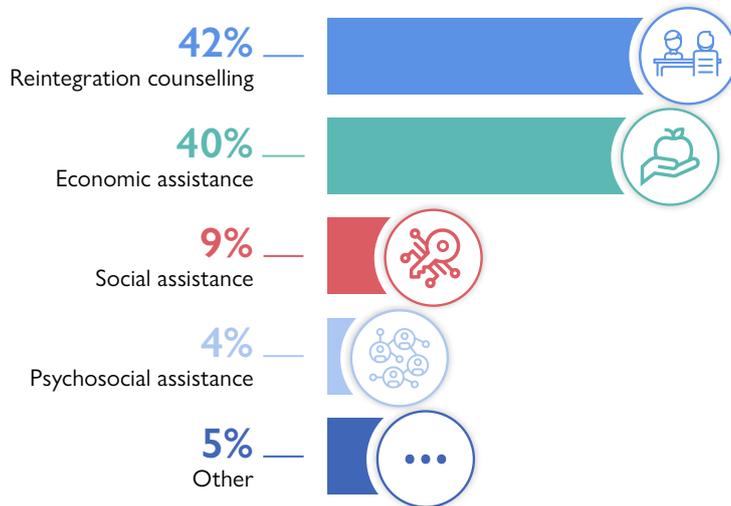
Types of beneficiaries



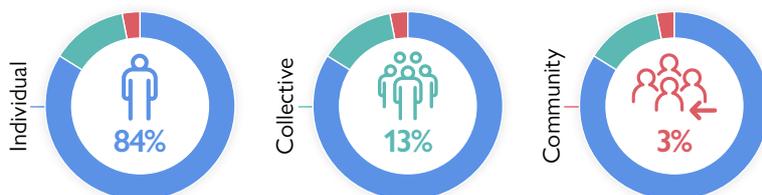
Reintegration assistance directly provided by IOM or through referral



Types of reintegration assistance



Levels of assistance



Top 5 countries providing reintegration assistance

- Guinea
- Senegal
- Nigeria
- Mali
- Côte d'Ivoire



# CHAPTER 5

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## GLOBAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL INITIATIVES



Hamza is a Somali returnee who runs a taxi service in Bossaso. He travelled to Libya in 2017 where he was taken hostage for ransom. After returning to Somalia through the help of the EU–IOM Joint Initiative, he re-enrolled in university and began a taxi service using a small business grant from IOM. As he continues his studies, he has a local driver to carry out his taxi service, generating income for them both.  
© IOM 2020/Muse MOHAMMED

## INTRODUCTION

Nurtured by the long-lasting experience of IOM in the field of return and reintegration, 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 of this chapter highlights some of the key emerging practices that have been employed by IOM offices and key measures adopted in the return and reintegration process, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Focused on two global projects, the second section presents the key results of the ORION study on reintegration outcomes through a comparative analysis<sup>3</sup> and the EU–IOM Knowledge Management Hub (KMH) key highlights in 2020.

## RETURN AND REINTEGRATION IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19

### Introduction

Global mobility restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic have posed significant challenges for IOM operations. Migrants availing of IOM return and reintegration services have faced a myriad of challenges which have been exacerbated by COVID-19 and the consequent containment measures, such as lockdowns and travel restrictions. While return and reintegration services have not been suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic, counselling, information provision, and direct return and reintegration support have been impacted. Delivering direct assistance became particularly challenging, as caseworkers were unable to meet beneficiaries in person. For the same reason, reintegration activities for returnees also slowed down.

In response to the complex challenge of organizing voluntary returns during the pandemic, and to support country offices in addressing these challenges effectively, the COVID-19 Return Task Force was established at IOM Headquarters to ensure a coherent approach and leverage expertise available under the various IOM thematic units.



Adil is one of IOM's 50 community mobilizers in the Niger who are raising awareness about COVID-19 and its prevention measures. © IOM 2020/Daniel Kisito KOUAWO

<sup>3</sup> This project was financed by the United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office as part the Safety, Support and Solutions in the Central Mediterranean Route Programme.

Amid the travel restrictions, lockdowns and various other containment measures, IOM quickly adapted, both in work modalities and in delivering services and assistance to migrants. Voluntary return and reintegration programmes were reorganized to further integrate public health interventions and measures. While the principles of AVRR have remained unchanged during the COVID-19 outbreak, new procedures were introduced in the processes to make returns possible and ensure protection of and assistance to migrants. These measures not only allowed IOM and its partners to continue to work and respond to the pandemic but have also led to the development and implementation of

various ways of delivering assistance and tools that can be further improved to enhance protection and assistance activities even in a post-pandemic phase. These include virtual counselling, establishing hotlines, developing/using mobile applications, providing cash-based initiatives, fundraising to support the return of stranded migrants and providing emergency assistance to those in vulnerable situations.

The next section highlights some of the key promising practices that have been employed by IOM offices and key measures adopted in the return and reintegration process in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In May 2020, the **United Nations Network on Migration (UNNM)** called on States to suspend forced returns during the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to protect the health of migrants and communities, and uphold the human rights of all migrants, regardless of status. The UNNM also advocated the release of migrants from detention, including detention for the purposes of deportation, into appropriate non-custodial facilities and other alternatives to detention or at a minimum decongestion of detention facilities, prioritizing vulnerable groups including children, families and the disabled and their respective needs.

## Emerging practices and innovative solutions

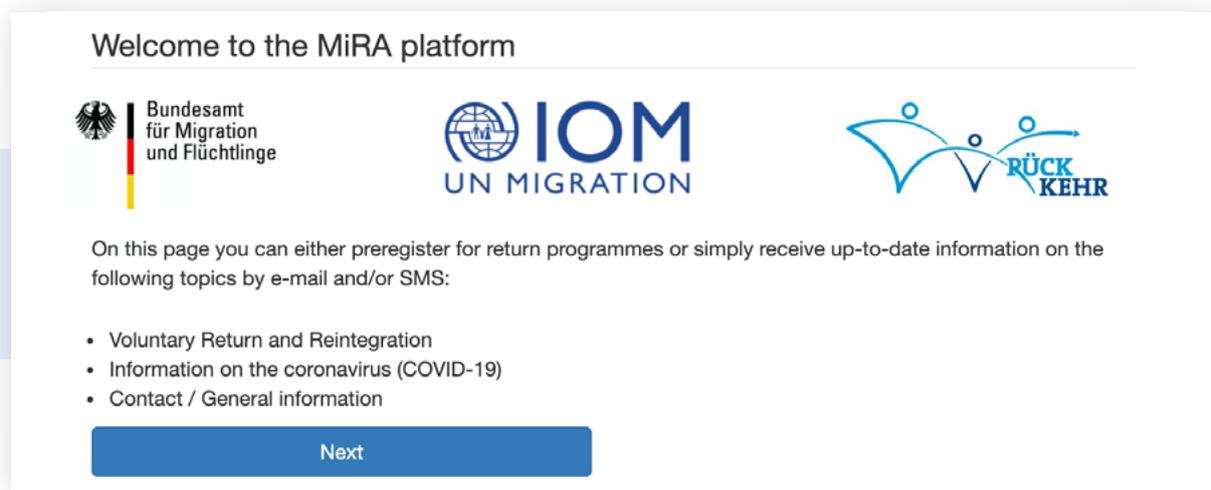
### *Technological innovation for migrants' enrolment in IOM return and reintegration programmes*

Civil society, host governments and countries of origin (through their embassies and consulates) received requests to return during COVID-19 from migrants who found themselves stranded. In order to process these requests remotely, IOM offices developed new or adapted already existing mobile or web applications to pre-register migrants, providing information and virtual counselling. These tools had a double advantage: firstly, they allowed migrants to

express their interest to return to their countries of origin once travel restrictions ease; and secondly, they made it possible to timely identify vulnerabilities of stranded migrants and address their most immediate needs, in some cases providing life-saving support.

## Emerging practices

IOM in Germany and the Western Balkans developed the **Migrant Registration Application (MiRA)** through which migrants are able to anonymously request information on return and reintegration programmes for a specific country or can additionally leave their contact information to be referred to a local return counselling centre and be registered for voluntary return. In many countries, most counselling sessions, including psychosocial support, were carried out in a remote setting via phones and/or mobile applications. Furthermore, information materials on COVID-19, hygiene measures and main countries of return are collected and shared via different social media platforms and IOM websites.



Source: IOM MiRA platform, 2020.

The IOM Migrant Assistance Portal (IMAP), an online remote case management platform, which was first implemented under EU–IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration programme and funded by the European Union Trust Fund for Africa, was piloted in **Algeria and Lebanon**. The IMAP allows for self-registration of migrants as well as referral from IOM to partners (national authorities and civil society organizations), and also referral from partners to IOM.

## Virtual counselling

Migrant return and reintegration counselling, including psychosocial counselling, which is typically done in person, has also evolved to a virtual modality during the pandemic. Some offices and their partner organizations provided **virtual counselling** over the phone, and some offices developed or adapted hotlines to be able to cater to these needs. In some countries, psychosocial support to returnees and medical screenings were also organized through videocalls (telemedicine).

In several cases, virtual counselling facilitated a direct contact between prospective returnees and IOM staff in their countries of origin. This allowed migrants to receive direct information from counsellors in their

own languages, thus establishing a stronger relation and a more solid climate of trust between (potential) returnees and IOM reintegration staff in countries of origin. One good practice consisted of working closely with consular officials in touch with potential returnees, in order to facilitate more fluid communication between migrants and return counsellors and ensure prompt referral for return support. The main advantages of virtual counselling have been its flexibility, the low access threshold, and the possibility to conduct counselling in remote areas and anonymously.

## Emerging practices

**IOM in Greece** set up 30 **phone helplines** that operate in 14 different languages so that migrants who were interested or already registered for AVRR could receive accurate and updated information about the return and reintegration procedures while enhancing their understanding of the COVID-19 pandemic and related measures. In addition to the helplines, migrants can reach out through applications that allow for phone calls and messaging for free.

**IOM Bangladesh** set up a hotline to provide support and counselling to migrants. The hotline is promoted and accessed through the [Probashihelpline website](http://www.probashihelpline.com). It was launched in March 2020 as a direct response to the challenges faced by migrants due to the pandemic in host countries.



Source: [www.probashihelpline.com](http://www.probashihelpline.com). 2020.

In **Germany**, the IOM virtual counselling project allowed migrants living in the country to contact IOM return counsellors in 16 countries of origin using different virtual communication platforms and receive culturally sensitive AVRR counselling. Already introduced in 2019 before the emergence of COVID-19, the application proved to counteract three COVID-19 specific difficulties: firstly, migrants were able to learn about movement restrictions, quarantine measures and health-related issues from a trusted source in their native languages; secondly, while the majority of German AVRR referral agencies limited their in-person counselling, virtual counselling remained fully operational; thirdly, in providing migrants with the opportunity to speak to a counsellor in their countries of origin, virtual counselling offered a safe space, increasing psychosocial resilience. IOM Germany engaged with other country offices to pass on their experience, such as in the Gambia, Greece and the Western Balkans.



Source: IOM flyer on virtual counselling, 2020.



Source: IOM, *Virtual Counselling: This Is How It Works*, 2020.

### Remote consent

Providing counselling and assistance to migrants virtually led to the inability to obtain signed consent as per the traditional method from beneficiaries. To be able to continue providing assistance, audio recording

of **consent on the phone and/or scanned signature** of beneficiary on documents sent to IOM by email were identified as alternative options.

### Information on measures related to COVID-19

IOM offices worldwide have been reaching out to migrant communities through social media and websites and providing up-to-date information on government-imposed measures related to COVID-19, such as movement restrictions, prevention of transmission and hygiene measures.

IOM offices in host countries communicated on a regular basis with offices in countries of origin on

COVID-19 prevention and/or quarantine measures imposed by governments in order to inform migrants and seek their consent prior to return. In addition, some IOM offices developed a **form on the health protocols** to be followed during the return, which is directly related to the COVID-19 outbreak and includes information on the health protocols people will be subject to upon return, including quarantine.

### Emerging practices

Across the **West and Central Africa** region, ongoing awareness-raising activities were revised to include information sessions and sensitization on COVID-19 prevention measures.



click to watch  
the video 



Information sessions on COVID-19 prevention measures are held. Among the migrants stranded in the Niger, there are many vulnerable cases. © IOM 2020/Daniel Kisito KOUAWO

In **Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal and Thailand**, IOM reached migrants in relevant languages through targeted websites with up-to-date information about COVID-19, including information regarding access to health services and the impacts of the pandemic on migration and migrant status.



Community awareness-raising in local languages about COVID-19 in Rakhine State, Myanmar.  
© IOM 2020

In **Algeria**, IOM organized the Facebook campaign “COVID-19: What do I need to know?”, aimed to raise awareness among migrants of COVID-19 prevention measures and containment measures adopted in Algeria. Messages on COVID-19 prevention measures were also included in the pre-departure training provided to migrants hosted at the transit centres.

### *Fostering dialogue between host countries and countries of origin*

In the context of the pandemic, IOM offices worldwide facilitated **dialogue between host countries and countries of origin** for the establishment of and/or

adherence to public health requirements and protocols for the safe and dignified return as well as sustainable reintegration of migrants.

### **Emerging practices**

IOM successfully negotiated with the Government of the Niger and the governments of origin countries of migrants the opening of **humanitarian corridors** to allow for the voluntary return of close to 2,500 migrants to **Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Guinea, Mali and Nigeria**. Humanitarian corridors were a much needed alternative for thousands of stranded migrants who would have otherwise remained in their countries of transit or destination with limited access to basic services.

**IOM Nicaragua**, in coordination with the Embassy of the Government of Guatemala, through the AVR programme, assisted the return of Guatemalan migrants stranded in Nicaragua due to the COVID-19 pandemic. IOM provided ground transportation, in addition to humanitarian assistance kits that included food, information and necessary supplies to comply with security protocols, prevention measures, and protection against COVID-19.

Country offices in **Central Asia** assisted thousands of migrants who were stranded to return to their countries of origin. Since the start of the COVID-19 crisis, IOM and its many partners have supported more than 3,000 people – mainly Tajik nationals – to return to their countries of origin. Migrants, among them women, children, migrant workers and students, were stranded at the Zhibek Zholy border point at the Kazakhstan border with Uzbekistan in the hope of continuing their journey home to **Tajikistan**. The movements were coordinated by the Government of Tajikistan with the cooperation of the Government of Kazakhstan and the Government of Uzbekistan and facilitated by the IOM offices in the three countries.



Guatemalan migrants stranded in Nicaragua prepare for their return home. © IOM 2020



IOM provides support to a group of stranded Tajik migrants at the Zhibek-Zholy border crossing between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. © IOM 2020

## Health screening and basic assistance

In addition to already existing health assessments, IOM offices, in cooperation with partner organisations, included pre-departure medical screenings to detect possible symptoms associated with COVID-19, including covering the costs of PCR testing in case of

need. IOM offices also provided basic humanitarian assistance with the provision of, among others, food, accommodation, health and hygiene kits, including personal protective equipment (PPE).

## Emerging practices

**IOM in the Niger** developed standard operating procedure for both return movements to the Niger and AVRR from the Niger in coordination with the National COVID-19 Committee and the Ministry of Health. IOM in the Niger adapts its operations according to the procedures and COVID-19 prevention measures of countries of origin and works in constant coordination with IOM offices in countries of origin.

Among others, **IOM offices in Belize, El Salvador and Mexico**, in cooperation with partner organizations, provided pre-departure medical screenings to confirm people were fit to travel and provided them with information on quarantine requirements upon arrival.

**IOM Egypt** provided immediate assistance to eligible vulnerable migrants in the form of socioeconomic assistance, housing and medical assistance while waiting to be assisted to return to their countries of origin.

## Escorts

Due to mobility restrictions during the pandemic, the protocols have changed in some countries. Prior to return, migrants were provided with PPE, food and any required medication. If migrants were escorted

by IOM staff, it was ensured that the escort could return after movement and he/she has signed a COVID-19 consent form.



A migrant waits for the flight to return home at the Belgrade airport. © IOM 2020

### Use of charter flights

Since the pandemic, IOM has increased the use of charter flights for its return operations. This has allowed IOM to assist more people and has facilitated negotiations with governments to open the borders

on an exceptional basis when commercial flights are not possible. These charter flights are closely coordinated with the governments of both host countries and countries of origin.



IOM staff at the airport facilitate the return of Iraqi migrants. © IOM 2020



Seventy-five Malagasy women arrive in Madagascar from Saudi Arabia via a flight chartered by IOM. © IOM 2020/Daniel SILVA

### Reintegration assistance

The COVID-19 outbreak caused additional uncertainty and anxiety among returnees, potentially exacerbating their existing psychosocial vulnerabilities. Similar to pre-departure return counselling, reintegration counselling in most countries of origin was increasingly

provided virtually to migrants. IOM also provided individualized virtual follow-ups on business plans and training as well as cultural orientation and peer networking, while the existing communication platforms were used as platforms for online job training.

### Emerging practices

The Joint Complementary Mechanism for Sustainable Reintegration in **Brazil** (SURE) aims to contribute to a more informed and sustainable reintegration process in Brazil by strengthening the connection between pre-departure and post-arrival counselling and establishing the referral and coordination mechanism. The mechanism is based on returning migrants' needs identified in host countries (**Belgium, Ireland and Portugal**) during the pre-departure counselling phase, as well as the referrals made to local actors with relevant support programmes in Brazil. As part of the SURE project, IOM also assisted returnees who lost their jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic and returned to Brazil. Hear their stories: *Returning to Brazil: The Stories of Vitor, Diego and Gercivaldo*.



click to watch  
the video

In **West and Central Africa**, the EU–IOM Joint Initiative put in place **remote psychosocial support** and regular follow-ups for vulnerable returnees and other migrants stranded in transit centres to facilitate their reintegration in the pandemic context. In the **Horn of Africa**, the seven migration response centres (MRCs) in **Djibouti; Ethiopia; and Somaliland and Puntland, Somalia** continued to fill a critical gap by providing direct life-saving assistance, including **medical assistance and psychosocial support**, to vulnerable migrants. In **Bosasso, Puntland, Somalia**, the MRC staff expanded outreach activities to informal settlements populated by migrants. A hotline enabled migrants to request information and to make appointments for medical assistance or AVRR.

In the **Sudan**, IOM provided psychosocial support via **tele-counselling to returnees** and migrants whose situation had been worsened by the pandemic.

In **Morocco**, migrants were provided virtual and in-person individual or collective orientation and counselling sessions on reintegration challenges and opportunities in their countries of origin and available opportunities in Morocco. Additionally, IOM Morocco, along with its implementing partner ASTICUDE and its consortium, delivered 13 pre-departure orientation training sessions in life and soft skills as well as entrepreneurship and commercialization.

**IOM Guatemala** developed a mobile app for the referral of returnees to reintegration services (OportuGuate). The app provides educational, employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for returnees.



OportuGuate is a system and application for the referral of returnees to reintegration services. © IOM 2020

**IOM Nigeria** launched several projects that provided complimentary reintegration support to returnees affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of these projects, the most vulnerable returnees were included in the National Social Register, and thus were eligible for government COVID-19-related relief schemes and support packages (including food assistance, cash transfers, loans, etc.), which the Federal Government of Nigeria, together with the Central Bank of Nigeria, established during the pandemic.

To enhance the availability of basic medical supplies in the **Gambia**, COVID-19-related activities were mainstreamed into the existing reintegration programmes. As part of their reintegration assistance, 20 migrant returnees produced more than 2,000 protective suits and shoe coverings, approved by The Gambia Standards Bureau. These were donated to the Ministry of Health for the use of front-line immigration and border officials. Beyond contributing to the Gambia's COVID-19 response, this cash-for-work initiative further facilitated their reintegration, as the pandemic's widespread impact on the economy risked undermining gains returnees have made in settling in.

**IOM Zimbabwe** engaged with the Food and Agriculture Organization to develop an intervention addressing livelihood assistance for returning migrants and vulnerable receiving communities. This initiative aimed to avoid further socioeconomic pressures due to the COVID-19 pandemic and to create an immediate food source as well as medium- to long-term income-generating activities in order to reintegrate returnees into their communities.

### Cash-based initiatives

Although **cash-based initiatives (CBI)** were not completely new to the context of return and reintegration, many offices have increased their use during the pandemic as an alternative to in-kind reintegration assistance. CBI proved to be a safe option to provide rapid relief as they contributed to reducing transmission risks (no overcrowded distribution sites) and allowed for remote delivery. Additional

guidance was developed by IOM to reinforce CBI activities in the pandemic context as well as delivery mechanism, including multipurpose cash assistance to meet basic needs; top-up; and emergency cash (i.e. emergency cash grants or topping up existing cash or voucher transfers by increasing transfer values to accommodate growing needs; social protection systems and safety net cash assistance).

### Emerging practices

**IOM Algeria** launched a pilot one-time cash grant for vulnerable migrants along with its partners and the Government of Algeria, whereby beneficiaries can cash the amount in any post office using an SMS code.

In the **Sahel and Lake Chad region**, as part of the EU–IOM Joint Initiative, IOM piloted the provision of cash as part of reintegration assistance. Among the different types of CBI envisaged, some returnees were provided with monthly stipends, others with their reintegration assistance entirely in cash to buy their own equipment, while in some countries, top-ups were provided to returnees in vulnerable situations. Additional cash assistance was also provided to returnees with tailoring skills through cash-for-work initiatives, by involving them in the production of PPE for government frontliners or for migrants hosted in IOM transit centres.

### Monitoring

While in the past monitoring of the reintegration process consisted of home visits, since the COVID-19 pandemic, monitoring has been carried out mainly

by phone, through apps or different social networks, ensuring confidentiality and data protection.

### Emerging practices

Due to COVID-19 pandemic, **IOM Colombia** carried out monitoring of reintegration activities by phone. This practice provided a safe mechanism to check the progress of the reintegration activities and get the feedback from returnees, being at the same time a cost-effective practice.

### Capacity-building

IOM offices provided **virtual capacity-building support** for their partners to strengthen their knowledge and skills to assist migrants in the context of COVID-19. While interaction with the participants

was more direct when meeting face to face, conducting virtual training allowed to reach more participants while also being more cost effective.

## Emerging practices

In **Ethiopia**, IOM provided training in preparedness and basic response measures to its partner organizations offering shelter for migrant returnees. Over 550 staff were trained, including those on the front line of receiving and assisting thousands of migrants returning to Ethiopia as a result of the pandemic. IOM trained the centre staff on the spread of COVID-19, specific measures of protection, incubation period of the virus, signs and symptoms, running quarantine centres, the use of protective equipment, waste disposal and disinfecting quarantine centres.

## Awareness-raising activities

Many country offices incorporated measures to **combat xenophobia** (linked to the origin and

spreading of COVID-19) and discrimination against returnees due to COVID-19.

## Emerging practices

**IOM in Georgia** used online platforms, photos and storytelling to show the impact of COVID-19 on Georgian returnees and foreigners residing in Georgia. IOM started the “COVID-19 and Faces of Migration” initiative to counter xenophobia towards foreign nationals in Georgia and Georgian nationals, who returned home during the pandemic from various countries where the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases was high.

In **Guinea**, a group of returnees teamed up to raise awareness in their community about coronavirus pandemic, aimed at countering the stigma attached to COVID-19 patients and survivors.

In order to raise awareness of the mental health issues surrounding COVID-19, **IOM Sri Lanka** produced an animation video on mental health problems faced by migrant returnees. The video was posted on social media in local languages



click to watch  
the video

## Conclusion

While the COVID-19 pandemic has posed many challenges, it has also provided an opportunity for IOM to introduce new and innovative solutions into its return and reintegration programming. It has led to the development and implementation of different ways of delivering assistance and tools that will have a lasting impact on return and reintegration programmes in the post-pandemic world.

This includes the set-up of hotlines for the provision of information, the development or adaptation of mobile applications, virtual counselling and psychosocial support (as complementary tools to in-person support), increased use of CBIs, as well as the implementation of remote monitoring and the use of social media for communication and community outreach. The pandemic has brought to the forefront the importance of coordination between host countries and countries of origin, as well as the need to strengthen health-related measures in return and reintegration programming.



Mentoring returnees in Senegal. © IOM 2019

## ORION: KEY RESULTS OF A STUDY ON REINTEGRATION OUTCOMES THROUGH A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Through the ORION project, financed by the United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office as part of the Safety, Support and Solutions in the Central Mediterranean Route Programme, IOM piloted a mentoring approach between January 2019 and November 2020, in Guinea, Morocco and Senegal.

Twelve mentors in different communities in the three countries provided intensified follow-up and assistance to a total of 222 returnees. These mentors were members of the community who followed about 20 returnees each and helped them to implement their reintegration plans, taking into account the economic, social and psychosocial dimensions of reintegration.

To identify the beneficiaries to be part of the mentoring approach, IOM administered the Reintegration Sustainability Survey (RSS) as a baseline. Using 30 indicators, the RSS provides a standardized monitoring framework to measure the situation of migrants upon return. It was developed in 2017 as part of a study conducted by IOM and Samuel Hall. The results of the surveys generated a score from 0 to 1 for each of the three reintegration dimensions (economic, social and psychosocial) and a composite score. Those who had the lowest scores were asked if they wanted to be part of the pilot. The surveys were then readministered at regular intervals to monitor progress.

A comparative analysis was conducted in collaboration with Samuel Hall and the University of Sussex, in order to strengthen evidence-based programming by analysing reintegration outcomes across different contexts and conditions using standardized indicators and qualitative data collected in the countries where the mentoring approach was being piloted (Guinea, Morocco and Senegal), combined with data from the RSS collected in 14 additional countries.

The comparative analysis aimed to answer these questions:

**1. Reintegration outcomes:** To what extent have returnees assisted by IOM achieved a sustainable reintegration? Where are the gaps and needs?

**2. Outcomes of the mentoring approach:** Does mentoring make a difference for reintegration?

**3. Effective reintegration activities:** What are existing good practices and effective reintegration activities that can be learned from each of the three fieldwork countries?

The key results from the study are as follows:

### 1. Reintegration outcomes

**The migration cycle affects what happens post return.** Often, difficult experiences occur during the migration journey (including, in some cases, situations of detention or being stranded). In these cases, psychosocial support cannot be considered an “optional extra”. It is therefore a crucial component to a healthy and sustainable reintegration process.

### All three reintegration dimensions are essential.

The foundational reintegration dimension is economic, while social and psychosocial support is needed to consolidate and sustain reintegration gains. Analysis of trend lines show the mean rate of improvement for each of the countries observed and highlight where additional support is needed.

**Certain variables have more impact on reintegration.** Regression analysis shows that the most impactful variables are (a) country of residence, (b) training, (c) microbusiness and (d) financial services.

**Networks are the missing link between social and economic programming.** The role of networks varies country by country: they are not rated as providing strong support to returnees in Guinea, while they play a stronger role in Ethiopia, partly due to well-established national and local mechanisms.

## 2. Outcomes of the mentoring approach

**An “ORION effect”: the mentoring approach has positive outcomes.** A regression analysis highlights the relatively small but statistically significant impact of ORION’s mentoring approach on reintegration, with ORION beneficiaries being better off in all dimensions, while non-ORION beneficiaries stayed at the same level.

**The mentor is a positive and supportive influence... but at risk.** Mentors have created a strong and trustful relationship with returnees and have successfully increased their confidence over time. However, four challenges threaten this relationship: (a) keeping track of returnees, (b) engaging with returnees’ families, (c) project duration and (d) mentor’s inability to provide material support.

**Mentoring’s positive impact on reintegration can be enhanced.** The ORION country contexts are among the toughest across the RSS dataset for reintegration indicators, and ORION shows a positive impact. To turn this impact into a major one, the study recommends integrating ORION’s mentoring approach in all reintegration programming.

## 3. Effective reintegration activities

**Including local, social and political structures is important.** Government involvement in reintegration programmes varies the most at the local level. Overall, effective reintegration initiatives connect the returnees with their ecosystem – other returnees, their families and local actors.

**The focus should be on reintegration outcomes.** IOM’s definition of sustainable reintegration requires returnees to achieve economic self-sufficiency, social stability and psychosocial well-being, and to make any migration decision a choice rather than a necessity. To meet this goal, the mentoring

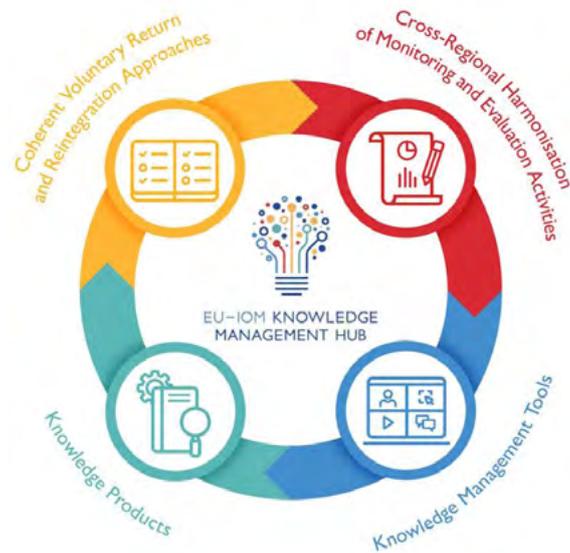
approach should be strengthened through linkages with other programming, and by giving more means to mentors to enable them to support returnees across all dimensions.

These results provide insights on how future reintegration interventions can be designed and implemented so they can be more impactful for migrants, communities of origin and countries of origin. Some of the practical applications are as follows:

- **The mentoring approach can be used systematically**, especially as a way to address the psychosocial dimension of reintegration, and the role of the mentors can be expanded into a more holistic case management approach.
- Programmes should seek to be **more adaptive and flexible** according to the context of return and the returnees’ specific situation, laddering support instead of linear, sequential programming.
- Further **synergies at local and national levels** can be found with greater engagement of local actors to connect the three reintegration dimensions.
- Investing in research and pilot initiatives for a **stronger use of technology** in support of reintegration programming and information-sharing can help build more systematic approaches to information and communication.
- It is crucial to continue **advocating better conditions for migrants**, and specifically the provision of protection for those on fragmented and dangerous journeys. A possible extension of the mentoring approach can be to **include mentors in host and transit countries**, in recognition of the fact that reintegration does not start upon return but can be planned ahead of time and prior to departure.

The full report provides further details. It is available in [English](#) and [French](#).

## KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT HUB KEY HIGHLIGHTS



The KMH activities revolve around four mutually reinforcing components as presented in this infographic.  
Source: EU–IOM Knowledge Management Hub, 2020.

The EU–IOM Knowledge Management Hub (KMH) was established in September 2017 in the framework of the Pilot Action on Voluntary Return and Sustainable, Community-Based Reintegration funded by the European Union to strengthen learning across return and reintegration programmes, and support the harmonization of approaches, processes and tools under the EU–IOM Actions<sup>3</sup> and beyond.

While the KMH has initially focused on setting the scene to ensure that proper systems and tools are in place, particularly in the field of monitoring and evaluation, it has also achieved substantial results in developing knowledge management tools and generating knowledge products.

In December 2020, one of the key features of the KMH – the Return and Reintegration Platform – celebrated its first anniversary. Developed as a global tool for sharing knowledge, research and good practices, the Platform is available in [English](#) and [French](#). It promotes exchanges among practitioners, policymakers and

other stakeholders in host, transit and origin countries. Since its launch in December 2019, the Platform has continued to grow and engage with practitioners globally. It has received more than 80,000 page views from over 180 countries. Its membership has expanded to more than 500 members across regions and close to 500 [public resources](#) on return and reintegration are made available. Furthermore, in 2020 the Platform hosted eight [public webinars](#) on a variety of reintegration-related topics, reaching in total close to 700 participants.

Building on a harmonized set of monitoring indicators and tools established by the KMH,<sup>4</sup> a more robust, cross-regional comparative analysis, particularly in the field of reintegration sustainability, has been made possible. This has allowed the KMH to launch, in October 2020, the [Sustainable Reintegration Knowledge Bites Series](#) that presents findings pertaining to sustainable reintegration outcomes emerging from analyses-based monitoring data collected in the framework of the EU–IOM Actions.

<sup>3</sup> In line with the European Union external policy and migration priorities, IOM and the European Union have jointly developed the following programmes focusing on migrant protection, dignified voluntary return and sustainable reintegration: EU–IOM Joint Initiative in Sahel and Lake Chad, North Africa and Horn of Africa; Pilot Action on Voluntary Return and Sustainable, Community-Based Reintegration; Improving Reintegration of Returnees in Afghanistan (RADA); and Sustainable Reintegration and Improved Migration Governance (Prottasha).

<sup>4</sup> See Nassim Majidi and Nazanine Nozarian, Measuring sustainable reintegration, *Migration Policy Practice*, 9(1):30 (January–March 2019). Available at <https://publications.iom.int/books/migration-policy-practice-vol-ix-number-1-january-2019-march-2019>.

In 2020, the KMH also published nine Good, Promising and Innovative Practices fact sheets on a diverse range of reintegration topics implemented in **Burkina Faso, Guinea, Iraq, Mali, Morocco, the Netherlands** and **Somalia**. These fact sheets focus on initiatives with a high replicability potential and, although analytically rigorous, they are presented in an easy-to-digest way to serve as a quick reference for other countries and regions.

With an aim to further reinforce data analysis and research on return and reintegration, the KMH launched in September and October 2020 three comprehensive research studies to look into reintegration outcomes through the prism of children, gender and forced return.<sup>5</sup> Findings emerging from research and from comparative data analysis can provide useful evidence and contributions to inform the development of future programming and policies on reintegration.

Other KMH achievements in 2020 included the development of harmonized indicators and data collection tools for tracking community-based reintegration initiatives and capacity-building activities. These new elements will be embedded into the IOM institutional monitoring and evaluation framework for voluntary return and reintegration programmes, for global roll-out.

The KMH, furthermore, initiated the development of an monitoring and evaluation training course for voluntary return and reintegration. The training will be rolled out in the first half of 2021 and initially benefit IOM staff and key stakeholders in countries and regions covered by the EU–IOM Actions.

Finally, in 2020 the KMH supported **capacity-building on reintegration** and in that context started a reintegration training programme. As part of this, training for the roster of facilitators was organized between September and October 2020. Twenty IOM facilitators, mainly representing the EU–IOM Actions,<sup>6</sup> were trained and have started cascading the training among different external and internal stakeholders working in the field of reintegration in their respective regions and countries. Additionally, the digitalization process of the *Reintegration Handbook* is ongoing, and the web and mobile apps are foreseen to be operational in 2021.

All in all, the KMH has already proven to be a valuable tool for experts, policymakers and practitioners working in the field of migrant protection, return and sustainable reintegration, therefore benefitting returning migrants and their communities. It has reinforced standards and processes, including through capacity-building efforts, harmonized monitoring and evaluation activities, and strengthened data analysis and research. It has served as a catalyst fostering exchanges between return and reintegration practitioners; facilitating the sharing of knowledge, expertise, good practices and lessons learned; and enhancing the understanding of different aspects of sustainable reintegration.

While these attempts to increase the evidence base in the field of return and reintegration and, in turn, strengthen the assistance to returning migrants and their communities are important first steps, more efforts are needed to ensure that programming and policymaking are based on sound research and learning. Based on the results achieved and experienced gained so far, it is clear that, if supported in a sustainable manner, the KMH can play a leading role in that regard.

<sup>6</sup> The KMH is coordinating on three studies: (a) sustainable reintegration of child returnees, in collaboration with Samuel Hall, and with Ethiopia, Georgia, Honduras, Iraq and Nigeria as target countries for field testing; (b) comparative reintegration outcomes in forced and voluntary returns; and (c) gender-sensitive sustainable reintegration, in cooperation with Maastricht University, and with Afghanistan, Bangladesh, El Salvador, the Gambia, Nigeria and Somalia as target countries for additional data collection.

<sup>7</sup> The distribution of facilitators is as follows: 5 from the Sahel and Lake Chad, 4 from the Horn of Africa, 4 from Northern Africa, 3 from Afghanistan and 2 from Bangladesh, with 2 additional facilitators from South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia to expand the scope beyond the EU–IOM Actions.



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