

Assisted voluntary return and reintegration refers to the support provided to migrants who cannot or do not wish to stay in a host or transit country and decide to return to their country of origin. They may be eligible to receive **administrative, logistical, and financial assistance**, including **reintegration assistance**.

What is return counselling?

Return Counselling

In Germany, there are **over 700 counselling centres** run by governmental actors and non-governmental organizations. During a return counselling session, counsellors inform migrants about the support available for voluntary return and reintegration. They also share useful insights into conditions in their countries of origin, including the education system, labor market, and healthcare.

If a person decides to return voluntarily, the counsellor helps them submit the application to receive support as well as organize the departure.



Virtual Counselling

Virtual Counselling enables migrants in Germany to speak directly with IOM counsellors in their country of origin already before their voluntary return. The counselling takes place in the respective national language via online communication tools and provides practical information to support reintegration as well as up-to-date insights into the current situation in the country of origin.



Additional information

Please visit the information portal www.ReturningfromGermany.de/en for additional information on assisted voluntary return and reintegration.

The portal is available in twelve languages and offers an overview of return and reintegration programmes, including key insights about the countries of origin.

What is the return process?

1 Before return

The migrant attends a return counselling session and makes an informed decision.

➤ If the person interested in return decides to leave, the submitting authority files the application for return and, if applicable, reintegration assistance.

➤ The application is reviewed for eligibility and decided upon.

➤ The return journey is planned and organized together with the migrant.

2 Return

The counselling centre provides with information on the departure procedure, assists in obtaining travel documents, and issues the grant approval notice and, if applicable, the travel allowance.

➤ Upon arrival at the airport, tickets are issued at the check-in counter, when the travel documents are presented.

3 After return

Reintegration assistance is available for a range of countries of origin and varies depending on the destination country, nationality, residence status, and the individual needs of the returning person.

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What are the return programmes?

Support for voluntary return is made possible through programmes funded by the federal government, the federal states, and the European Union (EU).

The provision of support services depends on various **eligibility criteria** (e.g., financial situation, nationality, or country of origin). If eligibility is confirmed, **the assistance may include the following:**

- **The travel costs.**
- **The travel costs to the airport or other point of departure.**
- **Specific medical assistance**, if needed.
- **A small sum of money** to help bridge the period after arrival and facilitate a new start.

The following **persons may be eligible to receive support:**

- Persons who have **expressed an intention to seek asylum** but have not yet submitted a formal application.
- Persons **in the asylum procedure.**
- Persons whose application for **asylum has been rejected and/or who are obligated to leave the country.**
- Persons **who are entitled to asylum or have a tolerated stay permit (Duldung).**
- Persons who have entered the country **under family reunification programme** with an eligible individual but **do not themselves belong to the eligible group.**
- Persons **who are affected by human trafficking and/or forced prostitution.**

Additional eligibility criteria

- The desired **departure is meant to be permanent.**
- The person has **not previously received financial support.**
- The person has **no funds available to pay for the departure.**



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What is reintegration assistance?

Tailored support is provided to individuals returning to their country of origin to help them **re-establish themselves in their home communities** easier. It is designed to ensure that returnees can do so in a **safe and sustainable way**. The goal is to foster **self-sufficiency and social inclusion**, enabling returnees to **rebuild their lives in the destination country**.

Reintegration assistance may include:

- **Financial support.**
- **In-kind assistance, eg. for housing.**
- Reintegration assistance, such as **vocational and entrepreneurial training.**
- **Job search and job placement** assistance.

Reintegration assistance is dependent on various factors, e.g. **migrant's nationality** and the **destination country**.

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