

# IOM COUNTRY OFFICE FOR BELGIUM AND LUXEMBOURG YEAR REPORT 2012



International Organization for Migration (IOM)  
Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations (OIM)  
Internationale Organisatie voor Migratie (IOM)

The opinions and analyses expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views and official policies of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) or its Member States.

Unless otherwise stated, whenever the masculine gender is used, both men and women are included.

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**Cover page picture:**

A group of Bhutanese girls returning from school. © IOM Kari Collins 2009 - MNP0064

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# FOREWORD

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Dear reader,

This very first edition of the IOM Brussels Country Office (CO) Year Report will give you a brief overview of activities undertaken in 2012 allowing a focus on specific areas of interest linked to the Belgian and Luxembourg migration context and more broadly to the European and global context.

The IOM Brussels CO is the IOM's principal interlocutor with the Governments of the Kingdom of Belgium and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and relevant ministries, diplomatic representations and UN agencies as well as more broadly with all stakeholders dealing with migrants and the migration issue.



In 2012, IOM Brussels CO has directly assisted an overall number of 12157 persons. Apart from Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration projects, direct assistance was equally provided supporting vulnerable cases, obtaining travel documents, logistically organising family reunifications as well as providing transit assistance for resettled refugees transiting through Brussels on their way to the US.

IOM Brussels CO also facilitated exchange visits of experts, administration representatives and NGOs. It provided several trainings to Belgian officials and partners. Regular participation in debates on migration and contribution to academic reflexion and research as well as the organisation of specific seminars and roundtables on migration topics such as counter-trafficking and the assistance to unaccompanied minors were part of 2012's main activities.

I wish you a pleasant reading,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P. Reyntjens', written over a horizontal line.

**Pascal Reyntjens,**  
*Chief of Mission (a.i.)*

# 1. THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION (IOM)

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. IOM is the leading international organization working with migrants and governments alike to address migration challenges, while also recognizing the enormous potential benefits of migration for countries of destination, for migrants themselves, and for their countries of origin.

Established in 1951, and currently counting 149 member states with another 12 states holding observer status, IOM's budget exceeded USD 1.3 billion in 2011, with funding for over 2,300 active programmes and more than 7,800 staff members serving in over 470 field locations in more than one hundred countries.

Building on expertise and experience, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to promote international cooperation on migration issues, assists in the search for practical solutions to migration problems and provides humanitarian assistance to migrants in need, including refugees and internally displaced people.

In addition to several policy activities, IOM works in four broad areas:

- migration and development
- facilitating migration

- regulating migration
- addressing forced migration

IOM's Constitution recognizes the link between migration and economic, social and cultural development, as well as the right of freedom of movement.

IOM activities that cut across these areas include the promotion of international migration law, policy debate and guidance, protection of migrants' rights, migration health and the gender dimension of migration.

*For more information on IOM and its work around the world, visit [www.iom.int](http://www.iom.int).*

## The IOM in Europe, Belgium & Luxembourg

In Europe, and more precisely in Belgium, the IOM is well represented. The organization has two offices in Brussels, namely the IOM Regional Office for the European Economic Area (EEA), the EU and NATO (RO Brussels) and the IOM Country Office for Belgium and Luxembourg (CO Brussels). These two offices work closely together but have each their own specific core tasks.

The RO Brussels acts as IOM's regional liaison and coordination office to the EU

and NATO, and provides policy, programme and resource management support to the IOM offices in the EEA plus Switzerland. RO Brussels also supports IOM offices worldwide on EU-related policy, programmes, legislation and cooperation. The RO Brussels maintains liaison and partnerships with Governments, development partners and civil society within the region and coordinates IOM's relations and liaison with the Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, the World Customs Organization and other multilateral bodies with headquarters in the region.

The CO Brussels develops and implements several programmes and projects on the Belgian and Luxembourg level, in the following fields: Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR), resettlement, migrant and vulnerable cases assistance, counter-trafficking, migration and development, liaison with governments and diplomatic representations, collaboration in research projects and organization of trainings, amongst others. The CO Brussels cooperates closely with the State Secretary for Asylum and Migration, Fedasil, the Belgian Immigration Office, the Belgian Development Cooperation, the European Commission, the Luxembourgish Ministry of Family and Integration as major donors and/or key partners.

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# 2. THE MIGRATION CONTEXT

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## 2.1. Migration in Europe

Europe is one of the most important regions in terms of migratory flows – with Germany, Spain, the United Kingdom and France hosting the highest numbers of the estimated 31.9 million non-European Union (EU) nationals residing in Europe. Despite the economic crisis, net migration remains positive in the major migrant destination countries.

Economic disparities among EU Member States and between Europe and its neighbors to the south have helped shape Europe as an immigration zone, while new EU Member States are still confronted with high mobility and emigration rates. Growing demand for migrant workers to fill gaps in local labour markets is also widely acknowledged as a main pull factor.

The events in North Africa and the Middle East continue to raise issues in new migration trends in Europe and reconfirm the necessity to adequately address the needs of local groups facing social exclusion and persistent socio-economic fragility which will be more likely to become mobile.

IOM's migration initiatives in the region aim to support all European

Member States in developing adequate migration management responses and support measures promoting regular migration and integration of third-country nationals, voluntary return and reintegration schemes, as well as activities to prevent and address irregular migration.

In parallel, IOM works to stimulate debate on emerging issues such as the complex relationships between climate change, environmental degradation and migration, the migration–development nexus and the key role played by Diasporas in Europe.

While irregular migration continues to be a major issue of concern in Europe and the complex nature of mixed flows of economic and other migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers will continue to present additional challenges; labour migration is increasingly at the center of European debates on migration management.

In the sphere of social inclusion and integration, specific reference should be made to the mobility of minorities, particularly to protect Roma victims of human trafficking and to support the inclusion and integration of Roma in EU Member States and candidate countries.

## 2.2. Migration in Belgium<sup>1</sup>

Belgium is a federal state comprising the federal and regional levels (Communities and Regions). In the field of migration and asylum there are many levels and actors each having an autonomous role.

The State Secretary of Migration, Asylum and Social Integration is politically responsible for entry, stay and removal of foreigners, as well as for the reception of asylum seekers. The public administrations involved include: the Federal Public Service Home Affairs (incl. the Immigration Department), responsible for entry, stay and removal of foreigners; the Federal Public Planning Services Social Integration responsible for integration and reception of asylum seekers; the Federal Public Service of Justice, responsible for Belgian citizenship; and the Federal Public Service Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue and the Regions responsible for labour policy.

The implementation of labour policy is the responsibility of the regional governments, and integration the

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<sup>1</sup> The Organization of Asylum and Migration Policies, Fact Sheet Belgium, European Migration Network.

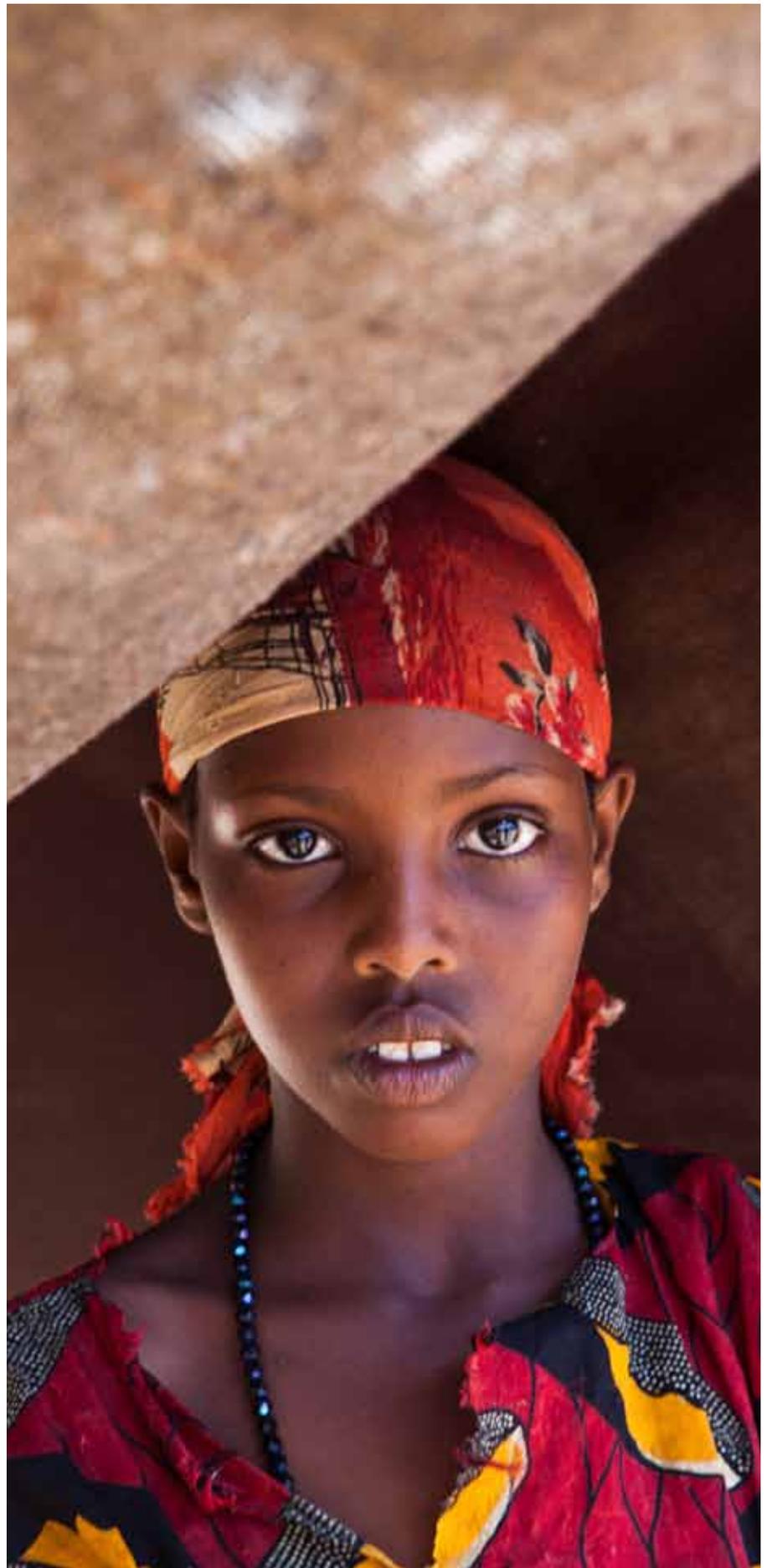
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responsibility of the Communities in the Brussels Capital-Region, the Walloon Region in Wallonia and the Flemish Authorities in Flanders.

As a reaction to pressure on migration channels such as family reunification and asylum and due to the influence of European legislation, a more global approach on migration and asylum has been undertaken. Also, more pro-active measures towards migration have been applied and more focus was put on the fight against fraud and misuse of procedures.

There have been continuous efforts to increase effectiveness and legitimacy of legal provisions in the field of migration and asylum as well as to develop a more pro-active approach to migration.

The latest developments have also been driven by the need to transpose EU directives, the need to manage a shortage in reception places for asylum seekers as well as a need to counter pseudo-illegal migration. Profound changes were made in the existing rules on family reunification, and concerning the stay for medical reasons.



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# 3. ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION

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Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) is an indispensable part of a comprehensive approach to migration management aiming at orderly and humane return and reintegration of migrants who are unable or unwilling to remain in host countries and wish to return voluntarily to their countries of origin.

The successful implementation of AVRR programmes requires the cooperation and participation of a broad range of actors, including the migrants, civil society and the governments in both host countries and countries of origin. The partnerships created by IOM and a diverse range of national and international stakeholders are essential to the effective implementation of AVRRs – from the pre-return to the reintegration stages.

For migrants who need to return home but lack the means to do so, IOM's AVRR programmes are often the only solution to their immediate plight. Beneficiaries of IOM's assistance include: individuals whose application for asylum was rejected or withdrawn; stranded migrants; victims of trafficking, and other vulnerable groups, including unaccompanied migrant children, or those with health-related needs.

As a core activity of IOM, AVRR activities provide vital assistance to thousands of migrants returning home every year. Building on experience and a worldwide network of offices and partners, IOM's AVRR programmes promote international dialogue and cooperation on migration management issues among host countries and countries of origin.

The provision of reintegration assistance to migrants in their countries of origin is an essential element to ensure sustainability of returns. IOM and partners in countries of origin provide migrants with socio-economic support to promote their self-sufficiency and contributions to their local communities. The sustainability of returns may, however, ultimately only be ensured in tandem with socio-economic development.

In particular, IOM emphasizes that voluntariness remains a precondition for all its AVRR activities.

## 3.1. From Belgium

### 3.1.1. Programme Description

Since 1984, IOM has been implementing the REAB (Return and Emigration of Asylum Seekers ex-Belgium) programme, funded by the Kingdom of Belgium and managed

by Fedasil (the Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers in Belgium).

The REAB programme is a humanitarian programme that assists migrants in need who wish to voluntarily return to their countries of origin or to emigrate to other countries and **do not have the necessary means** to do so.

This programme is intended for three categories of migrants in Belgium:

- A.) Asylum-seekers who **withdrew** their asylum applications;
- B.) Asylum-seekers whose asylum applications have been **rejected**;
- C.) All foreign migrants (except recognised refugees, citizens of the EU or of a country in the Schengen area) **who may fall under the Belgian Government's financial support** and who request to return to their own countries.

Applicants can benefit from:

- return counselling;
- support to obtain travel documentation;
- a return plane ticket to their country of return;
- financial assistance for transport within Belgium to reach the Brussels National Airport, or for additional luggage allowance;

## IOM's Assistance over the years

- More than 1.2 million migrants assisted since 1979
- More than 400,000 migrants assisted over the last ten years
- Average number of migrants assisted per year: 25,000 to 30,000

- assistance throughout the return journey.

In view of maximizing the assistance provided to migrants, IOM Brussels and its team of AVRR counselors makes sure that the migrants' return occurs in a safe and dignified manner.

People who have already returned to their country of origin through the **REAB programme are not entitled to introduce a new application within 5 years following their return, unless they reimburse the costs of their first departure.**

In order to guarantee the sustainability of the returns, IOM and its network of Partners offer various services accessible at any time during the stay of the migrants in Belgium and tailored to their needs.

This REAB network is composed of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), local authorities (some cities and communes), governmental structures for reception of asylum seekers (Fedasil and Red Cross reception centres) as well as migrant associations and the Belgian Immigration Office.

### 3.1.2. Additional reintegration assistance

If eligible, applicants can also benefit from an additional pre-departure reinstallation grant and additional reintegration assistance in their home country. This accompanied and monitored in-kind reintegration assistance, in close collaboration with the IOM offices in countries of origin, increases the returnee's chances of reintegrating into his/her country of return, making the return more sustainable.

Reintegration support can cover different elements such as assistance in setting up

a microbusiness, funding for vocational training and education, temporary accommodation and medical expenses.

The reintegration support became a structural part of the REAB programme in 2006. Since then until the end of 2012, 4099 migrants have benefited from the IOM Brussels' reintegration support in 86 countries.

**In 2012 alone, reintegration support has been made available to 1354 migrants out of which 414 migrants received additional reintegration support through projects financed by the European Return Fund and co-funded by the Belgian government.**



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## 1) AVRR B-X Project

Additional support offered:

- Setting of a Microbusiness activity
- Wage Subsidy Support (for returnees to Kosovo, Iraq and Armenia)
- Tailored support to Vulnerable Cases

In addition, a Web Application – specifically designed for direct communication between IOM Offices, IOM Brussels, Fedasil and the REAB Partners – has been designed in 2012. It will be further developed in 2013. A test version is scheduled for early 2014.

## 2) MAGNET Project

“MAGNET” is a project implemented by IOM offices in Austria, Belgium, France, the Netherlands and Iraq, in partnership with local authorities, aiming at a joint approach on job placement promotion for Iraqis voluntarily returning to Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG).

Additional support offered:

- Pre-departure and post-arrival information on the Iraqi labour market, key economic sectors, training and job opportunities in

- view of encouraging a pro-active job placement of Iraqi returnees to KRG.
- Strengthening the links between IOM Iraq and the private sector in Iraq in order to facilitate the job referral of returnees and to increase the number of job offers available.
- Improving the current job placement system for Iraqi returnees by setting-up a more structured mechanism for the matching of supply and demand.
- Assisting returnees once in Iraq (KRG) with job referral services towards potential employers based on the identified needs of the private sector and the specific skills of the returnees.

From January to end of December 2012:

- 78 cases received pre-departure counseling by IOM
- 43 applications recorded in the “Job Seekers Database” (= 48% of the Magnet caseload.)
- 10 cases employed
- 2 cases monitored by IOM Brussels in Iraq in October 2012 and 4 cases monitored by IOM Iraq.

*For more information on MAGNET:*

[www.magnet-project.eu](http://www.magnet-project.eu)



## 3) Enhancing Reintegration possibilities for Moroccan UAMs and ex-UAMs identified in Belgium

Implemented in close cooperation with Fedasil and the Guardianship Service and the IOM Office in Rabat, the project aims at strengthening reintegration for Moroccan UAMs and former UAMs (up to 21 years old who were identified as UAMs on the territory prior to their 18th birthday and who remained in Belgium thereafter).

- Local partnerships are being created with relevant Moroccan institutional

- and non-governmental actors
- Reintegration opportunities are being identified and developed in the fields of education, training and employment for UAMs and former UAMs who choose to return.
- Alternative reception facilities are being identified in the main Moroccan cities.
- Individual city profiles are being developed to disseminate accurate information on the actual reintegration possibilities in the different regions in Morocco
- A family assessment mechanism has been developed in order to improve the quality of the best interest determination carried out by the legal guardians in Belgium.

### As of May 15th 2012 - New criteria for the reintegration support:

Asylum seekers, rejected asylum seekers and irregular migrants are still eligible; migrants originating from countries with visa exemption can no longer benefit from the grant; vulnerable cases, despite their administrative status or length of stay, can receive special support for expenses linked to their vulnerability.

### 3.1.3. Operational Issues in 2012

During the two partner meetings organised in 2012, IOM has provided information to the partners on several operational changes having a direct effect on their work in counselling and processing the applications of the migrants:

- Change of transportation means for the returns to the Balkan and Eastern Europe countries: as of 2013 all REAB partners will be able to introduce request for these countries to return by bus.
- The decision to stop the reintegration support for Kosovo/ UNSC 1244 as of January 2013.



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- A new social report was created for Brazilian nationals in order to better determine the assistance to the Brazilian nationals.

### 3.1.4. REAB Trends and Analysis

When looking at the general developments in the Belgian legislation and migration context in 2012, two main trends have had a significant impact on the AVRR policies and practices, namely:

- Quantitatively, more decisions were taken and the backlog was diminished. For the very first time, more people returned voluntarily to their homeland than through forced return.
- Qualitatively, the cooperation between the relevant authorities was reinforced

and more coherent messages were sent out. Various new initiatives with regards to the voluntary return and reintegration process were developed.

In 2012, 6160 persons applied for assisted voluntary return out of which 4694 effectively departed. This results in **76 % effective returns in 2012**. For those who departed, 1354 migrants (29%) received additional reintegration assistance from IOM.

The main countries of return were Brazil (683 returnees), the Russian Federation (554 returnees), Ukraine (403 returnees), Iraq (359 returnees) and Kosovo UNSC 1244 (315 returnees).

The main countries of return for those benefitting from additional reintegration

assistance through IOM were the Russian Federation (364 returnees), Iraq (245 returnees), Kosovo UNSC 1244 (157 returnees), Armenia (124 returnees), and Kazakhstan (56 returnees).

For more detailed trends, refer to pages 12-13.

## 3.2. From the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

### 3.2.1 Programme Description

The “Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration from the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg” (AVRRL) programme aims at facilitating the sustainable return of rejected asylum seekers, asylum seekers and irregular migrants living in the



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Grand Duchy of Luxembourg as well as facilitating the sustainable reintegration into their respective countries of origin (CoO). It provides support in the decision making process and in the concrete preparation for voluntary return (pre-departure counselling and information), return travel, arrival assistance and post-arrival assistance.

Reintegration assistance is provided through support with housing/rent, training/education, material assistance, professional equipment and set up of an income-generating activity taking into account the resources and local

circumstances in the CoO. Other specific and tailored assistance packages geared to the needs of vulnerable groups, including unaccompanied minors and persons in need of medical assistance, are also offered.

A total budget of 471.731 EUR was allocated to the programme by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Luxembourg (Immigration Service) and the European Return Fund.

From the 1st of January to the 31st of December 2012, IOM assisted 97 persons to return to their CoO, out of which 59

returned to Kosovo (UNSC 1244) remaining the first country of destination (in comparison with the previous programmes of 2008-2011). Other popular countries are Iraq with 6 returnees, followed by Russia (4), Brazil (4) and Belarus (4).

Amongst the returnees, 54 cases (totaling 84 persons) were entitled to reintegration assistance in their CoO. In view of sustainability, extra assistance has been foreseen within the programme for the set up of an income-generating activity. 31 cases (covering 59 persons) have opted for a microbusiness activity. And 6 persons in need of medical



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assistance have benefited from an additional support in their CoO.

### 3.2.2. Project activities

In 2012, the programme focused on information activities aiming at disseminating and relaying accurate information on the purpose and functioning of the programme to potential beneficiaries:

- Public/individual information sessions towards people in contact with potential beneficiaries (i.e. social workers from the Red Cross, Caritas, ASTI, CLAE, Ministry of Family, lawyers);
- Public information sessions towards potential beneficiaries at their residences;
- Each Wednesday, the IOM focal point was on duty at the IOM office in Luxembourg. Potential candidates could come individually and receive the complete information on the content of the programme.
- IOM Brussels distributed an information leaflet (that exists in 10

languages) on the assisted voluntary return and reintegration from the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg to the potential beneficiaries.

- An informative poster has been distributed to the IOM partner's offices and posted in the different residences harboring potential candidates.

#### 1) Return assistance

- Whenever necessary, IOM helped beneficiaries to get travel documents by contacting different embassies enquiring on the formalities needed to be fulfilled and arrange appointments mostly with the representations of the following countries: Kosovo (UNSC 1244), China, Senegal, Iraq, Brazil, Bielo Russia, Russia, Algeria, Iran.
- The different IOM missions were also informed on the beneficiaries' travel date by IOM Brussels. Returnees were received at the airport in their CoO, when requested, and assisted by IOM with the necessary formalities. The beneficiaries were also assisted with

transportation to the final destination by IOM colleagues in their CoO.

#### 2) Monitoring and evaluation

- The IOM CoO Offices reported to IOM Brussels on the progress of reintegration activities and the implementation of the reintegration plan for each applicant with two narrative reports;
- A monitoring mission has been conducted in the Kurdistan Regional Government region of Iraq by staff from IOM Brussels and Luxembourg with the assistance of IOM Erbil. An official from the Belgian Government (Federal Agency for Asylum Seekers - Fedasil) and a reintegration counsellor from the REAB Partner Network (Red Cross Flanders) also took part. The mission allowed gathering information on the general migration context in Iraq and on the activities of the IOM Office. It also gave the team an opportunity to better understand the importance of the reintegration system and its impact on the returnees and their communities.

# TRENDS AND ANALYSIS 2012

## 1. From Belgium

### REAB - Voluntary Return: Top 10 countries of destination

Destination Country	Departed	%
BRAZIL	683	15 %
RUSSIAN FEDERATION	554	12 %
UKRAINE	403	9 %
IRAQ	359	8 %
KOSOVO, UNSC 1244	315	7 %
ARMENIA	228	5 %
ALBANIA	207	4 %
SERBIA	207	4 %
MONGOLIA	190	4 %
KAZAKHSTAN	125	3 %
TOTAL	3271	70 %
GRAND TOTAL departures 2012	4694	

### REAB - Reintegration Support: Top 10 countries of destination

Destination Country	Departed	%
RUSSIAN FEDERATION	365	27 %
IRAQ	245	18 %
KOSOVO, UNSC 1244	157	12 %
ARMENIA	124	9 %
KAZAKHSTAN	56	4 %
GEORGIA	39	3 %
AFGHANISTAN	39	3 %
BANGLADESH	35	3 %
NEPAL	26	2 %
PAKISTAN	25	2 %
TOTAL	1110	82 %
GRAND TOTAL departures 2012	1354	

## Assisted Voluntary Returns per REAB Category

In 2012, we witnessed a considerable increase in the number of asylum seekers (still in procedure and/or rejected asylum seekers) benefiting from the REAB assistance. These categories combined accounted for 62% of all returnees; this corresponds to an increase of 12% compared to last year. 46% of all candidates were rejected asylum seekers, and the remaining 16% were asylum seekers still in procedure.

Voluntary returns per REAB category	2012	%
Asylum stopped	743	16 %
Rejected Asylum seekers	2139	45 %
Non Asylum seekers	1812	39 %
GRAND TOTAL	4694	100 %

## Referrals to the REAB per Type of Partner

Most of the candidates for voluntary return (3526, of whom 2606 departed) were referred to IOM by NGOs, followed by the Federal Reception centres (1675, of whom 1322 departed). 81 migrants, of whom 62 departed, opened their files directly at the IOM Office.

Referrals per Type of Partner	Departed	Registered
Non Governmental Organizations	2606	3526
Fedasil Reception Centres	1322	1675
Immigration Office	108	119
Red Cross Centres	440	573
Cities	156	186
International Organization for Migration	62	81
GRAND TOTAL	4694	6160

\* Croix-Rouge de Belgique: 273 departed; Rode Kruis - Vlaanderen: 140 departed.

## 2. From the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

### Top 5 countries of destination

Destination Country	Departed
KOSOVO, UNSC 1244	59
Iraq	6
Russia	4
Brazil	4
Belarus	4
TOTAL	77
GRAND TOTAL departures 2012	97

# 4. MOVEMENTS

## 4.1. Travel Arrangements and Agreements

The IOM Brussels Movements Department is responsible for making the travel arrangements for the voluntary return programmes, family reunification, resettlement and MIDA programmes and provides customized

travel arrangements according to the needs of these programmes.

The Resettlement and Movement Management Department (RMM) in Geneva therefore establishes agreements with airlines in order to obtain competitive fares.

In 2012, new global agreements have been established with South African Airways and Alitalia. Unfortunately one of IOM's partners, Malev Hungarian Airlines, went bankrupt.

IOM is in constant negotiation and search of possible new partners. It has now global agreements with:

Air Algérie	Air Canada	Air France
Alitalia	American Airlines	Austrian Airlines
Avianca	British Airways	Brussels Airlines
Cathay Pacific	Delta Air Lines	Emirates
Egyptair	Ethiopian Airlines	Etihad Airways
Gulf Air	Icelandair	Iberia
Japan Airlines	Jet Airways	Kenya Airways
KLM Royal Dutch Airlines	Lufthansa	Malaysia Airlines
NextJet	Qantas Airways	Qatar Airways
Royal Jordanian	Scandinavian Airlines	South African Airways
Swiss International Air Lines	TACA International Airlines	Turkish Airlines
Ukraine International Airlines	United Airlines	

For more information: <http://avrr.belgium.iom.int/en/other-projects/movements.html>

## 4.2. Family Reunification

IOM Brussels assists with the operational assistance of family reunifications. Once a family receives the approval for family reunification from the Belgian Immigration Office, the family can then introduce a request for operational assistance to IOM Brussels via one of its partners.

In 2012, 118 people or 46 families have been assisted to travel to Belgium from their country of origin.

Top 5 Countries of Origin	Total
Guinea	12
Cameroon	6
Uganda	4
Burundi	3
Rwanda	3

Most people are arriving from Africa but there is also a significant caseload from the Middle East, i.e. Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq.

For more information: <http://avrr.belgium.iom.int/en/other-projects/family-reunification.html>.

### 4.3. Transit Assistance

In 2012, IOM Brussels assisted **7325 passengers** during their transit in Brussels.

This assistance was facilitated by an agreement between IOM Brussels and the Belgian Immigration Office to provide Transit Visa Waivers.

The people transiting Brussels airport are mainly people resettling to a third country. Most of them are coming from Nepal - Bhutan and are resettling to the United States in the framework of the USRAP Programme (United States Refugee Admissions Programme).

During the next coming 5 years, IOM Brussels will assist Congolese refugees resettling to the United States as well.



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# 5. MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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## 5.1. Migration and Development

The Migration and Development concept developed by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) seeks to respond to the « brain drain » phenomenon in African countries through the creation and strengthening of sustainable links between Diasporas and their countries of origin.

It was first made concrete in Belgium through the MIDA Great Lakes Programme launched in 2001 contributing to the development of local institutions working for the national development of their country in the sectors of health, education and rural development.

Through the MEDMA Programme, a pilot project aiming to encourage the mobilisation of Moroccan Diaspora legally settled in Belgium, the involvement of IOM has been extended to the sector of active investing encouraging the creation of employment opportunities in Morocco.

## 5.2. MIDA Great Lakes

The MIDA Great Lakes programme aims to strengthen the capacities of public and private institutions in Burundi,

the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda by mobilizing the Diasporas of the Great Lakes region legally settled in Europe.

It further aims at encouraging the mobility of skills and resources of the diaspora in response to local development needs. The professionals of the diaspora participating in the MIDA Great Lakes Programme are originally from the Great Lakes region, and hold a qualification and professional experience corresponding to the needs of the beneficiary institutions. This support from the diaspora is fundamental to reinforce the capacities of the local staff where the expertise is not available.

Concrete examples of sharing expertise and practical experiences can be found in the health sector, and more in particular in neonatology where professionals of the diaspora collaborated with the staff of the Hôpital of Muramvya (Burundi) to allow them to better fulfill their mission towards the local population.

The MIDA Great Lakes Programme is implemented by IOM in close collaboration with the Ministry of Public Service, Labor and Social Security (MFPTSS) in Burundi, the Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security (MTEPS) in DRC, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and

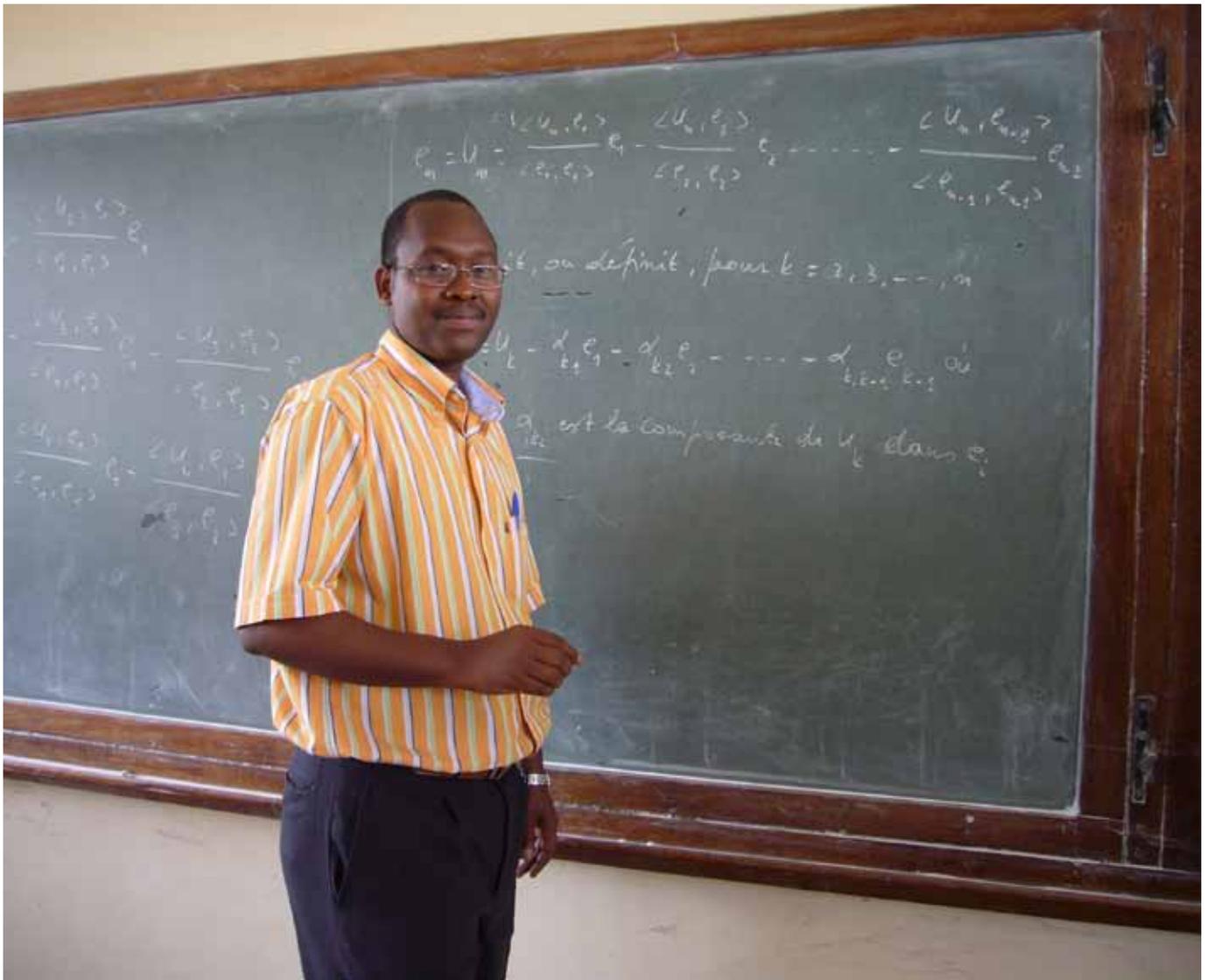
Cooperation (MINAFFET) in Rwanda. The programme is financed by the Belgian Cooperation.

Since 2001, the programme has allowed the strengthening of local institutions in the Great Lakes region through the organization of more than 200 missions of qualified experts.

The fourth phase of the MIDA Great lakes programme (2008-2013) is based on the experience gained since 2001 and its capacity building activities for local institutions take place within the framework of multi-annual projects.

Monitoring missions are regularly organized ensuring that the beneficiary institutions reach the objectives of their project by April 2013. In February 2012, a mission was organized by IOM Brussels; two project assistants were in the field to draft a roadmap with each institution for the last year of their project. It provided the opportunity to update the actual needs of the institutions according to the local circumstances.

Besides the missions initially planned by the institutions, additional missions have been organized by IOM Brussels to ensure the sustainability of the given trainings during the period 2011-2012.



Remezo IPA 2007

In 2012, the IOM Brussels team contributed to the creation of a calendar and a promotional spot to increase the visibility and the understanding of the actions of the programme to the members of the diaspora. The video was screened for a communication event on the 25th of April where representatives of Embassies and members of Diasporas were invited; the spot is now available on the MIDA Great Lakes website [www.midagrandslacs.org](http://www.midagrandslacs.org).

### 5.3. MEDMA

The MEDMA 2 Programme is a pilot programme aiming to **encourage the mobilization of the Moroccan Diaspora**

**legally settled in Belgium (Marocains Résidant à l'étranger/MRE) for the development of their country of origin.**

Financed by the Belgian Cooperation, the programme is implemented since May 2012 by IOM Rabat and IOM Brussels.

This project is conducted in close collaboration with the Ministry in charge of Moroccans living abroad (MCCMRE) and the Foundation Hassan II (FHII).

The objective is to show how the Moroccan diaspora can play a positive role in economic and social development of the Northern and the Oriental regions of Morocco.

This project, based on a pluri-annual approach, contributes to the sustainable development of Morocco through the investment of the MRE in the beneficiary regions of Tanger-Tétouan, Taza Al Hoceima/Taounate and l'Oriental.

After a preliminary contact with the Moroccans residing in Belgium, a call for proposal will be launched in 2013.

The candidates will be invited to attend a training at the Solvay Business School to refine their business plan. The final selection of the projects will be made by IOM in May 2013 on the basis of the selection criteria approved by IOM and its Moroccan partners.

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# 6. RESETTLEMENT

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Developing and strengthening resettlement programmes throughout Europe requires exchange of knowledge and sharing of expertise between stakeholders at all stages of engaging in resettlement. In 2012, IOM continued its successful cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) on practical cooperation and promotion of European Resettlement in the framework of the

Linking in EU resettlement project – linking the resettlement phases and connecting (local) resettlement stakeholders.

One of the key activities of this project is the development of the **EU Resettlement Network, an inclusive network that supports the development of resettlement in Europe by connecting a variety of actors involved in refugee resettlement**. It provides a platform to exchange information and expertise on

resettlement priorities, processes and practices. It offers support, resources and solutions to actors seeking to start, expand or improve resettlement programmes.

The Network particularly focuses its current support on **new resettlement countries, including Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Germany and Spain**, to facilitate their efforts in establishing and consolidating annual quota resettlement programmes.



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The central tool for the network is the website - [www.resettlement.eu](http://www.resettlement.eu) - launched by the 3 partners in early March 2012 and currently being developed to include a resource library, a directory of resettlement policymakers and practitioners, online discussion groups, opportunities for online consultations and mutual learning via an online community of practice.

The information-sharing activities of the network - the website, the network newsletter and the bi-weekly news digest - inform members about developments and trends in global refugee situations and European resettlement policy and practice, in addition to highlighting opportunities to participate in the network and its activities.

On 14 and 15 May 2012, **the first EU Resettlement Skills Share Day took place in Brussels**. It marked a key moment in the development of the EU Resettlement Network. The Skills Share Day brought together some 200 policy makers and practitioners in refugee resettlement from 26 countries, including the EU Commissioner and the Director General for Home Affairs, representatives from European governments, international organizations, regions, cities, municipalities and NGOs, as well as representatives from



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Australia, Japan, Thailand and the US. Refugees resettled from across the world to the EU played an important role in the conference. This event provided a forum to share good practices and expertise. It also aimed to engage existing and new actors to contribute to the further development of the EU Resettlement Network.

The highlight of the Skills Share Day was the resettlement marketplace, an interactive event showcasing innovative resettlement practices from across the EU. A video of the event and the market place was made and is available at: <http://www.resettlement.eu/page/eu-resettlement-skills-share-day>.

Since the launch of the Network at the EU Skills Share Day in May, the Network has

continued to grow and develop, engaging new members and actors and expanding the functions and content of the Network website.

A number of EU Resettlement Network member organisations have joined together to launch **the Resettlement Saves Lives – 20,000 for 2020 campaign** at the European Skills Share day. Led by a coalition of NGOs and IOM, the campaign advocates an increase in the total number of resettlement places provided by European countries, to reach 20,000 resettlement places every year by 2020.

To join the network, please register yourself and/or your organisation via: [www.resettlement.eu](http://www.resettlement.eu).

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# 7. LIAISON WITH OTHER IOM OFFICES AND PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

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The IOM Brussels Country Office (CO) is working closely together with the Regional office, also located in Brussels, by contributing to the regional strategy and analysing and discussing migration issues and emerging trends.

The CO also works closely together with IOM offices in the countries of origin, particularly in the framework of the implementation of the AVRR programmes but also in light of information and awareness campaigns and migration and development programmes. In 2012, IOM Kosovo implemented two information and awareness raising campaigns “Promoting regular migration decisions among ethnic minorities through outreach and education” and “Promoting regular migration decisions among youth through outreach and education” in Kosovo and Macedonia. IOM Conakry also continued to implement an awareness raising campaign focusing on irregular migration from Guinea Conakry to Belgium.

Furthermore, IOM Brussels CO collaborates closely with other EU countries and counterparts. In 2012, IOM Brussels CO has provided support for the Voluntary Return Network (VREN) project, funded by the European Union (European Return Fund 2010).

The VREN project aims at facilitating exchanges, via a web-based platform, among stakeholders in the EU Member States as well as in Switzerland and Norway on voluntary return and reintegration of third country nationals to their countries or origin. This e-community includes, amongst others, specific libraries, fora of discussions and a calendar of key AVRR-related events.

In particular, IOM Brussels CO has collaborated in the e-compendium of AVRR policies and practices and has uploaded key documents in the Belgian country folder. The VREN library holds

323 documents, out of which 70 are in the Belgian folder. Out of 410 members registered in the web platform, 104 are Belgian users. 2 meetings of the Advisory Group have been organized in Brussels.

The second meeting was organized on 7 November jointly with the IOM AVRR Annual Consultation “Building on Synergies and Partnerships”. This event, co-organized by IOM Brussels Regional and Country Offices, gathered 64 participants representing various IOM offices and governmental counterparts in the EU, Norway and Switzerland.



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# 8. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

During the year 2012, IOM Brussels CO has managed a financial flow of about **EUR 6.900.000 generated for assisted voluntary return and reintegration projects**. These expenditures have been covered thanks to the financial support of the Belgian Government, in particular the Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers in Belgium (Fedasil) and the Immigration Office as well as the Government of Luxembourg.

It allowed IOM to assist in 2012, together with its social partners in Belgium and its

offices worldwide, the voluntary return of 4694 persons, out of which 1354 benefited from reintegration support.

Moreover, in close collaboration with UNHCR and ICMC, IOM Brussels CO has spent **EUR 187.841 on resettlement projects and activities**.

IOM Brussels CO has also been very active in the field of migration and development, through the **MIDA programme, which amounted to EUR 1.025.891 in 2012** and which allowed for

about 24 institutions located in Rwanda, Burundi and Congo DRC to benefit from the support of the Belgian Government (DGD) via IOM Brussels CO.

Thanks to efficient management tools and resources, IOM Brussels CO has been able to maintain a healthy financial situation over the year 2012.

An overview of projects financially managed by IOM Brussels CO in 2012 can be found below.

PROJECT	BUDGET
Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration from the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg	390.860,90 EUR
REAB 2012 - Assistance to Voluntary Return from Belgium	5.092.749,79 EUR
Reintegration assistance 2012	769.076,37 EUR
Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration B Extra	577.075,68 EUR
Pilot project for an enhanced reintegration approach as durable solution for Moroccan Unaccompanied Minors - and former Unaccompanied Minors - identified in Belgium	47.728,05 EUR
Reintegration support provided in the countries of return to removed migrants with special needs	7.154,00 EUR
Comprehensive AVRR support for families residing in adapted holding facilities	24.155,00 EUR
MIDA Great Lakes Project - Phase 4	1.025.891,00 EUR
Joint IOM, UNHCR & ICMC- Linking In EU Resettlement project	187.841,68 EUR

# THE IOM STRATEGY

Committed to the principle that orderly and humane management of international migration benefits migrants and society, IOM will continue to address the migratory phenomenon from an integral and holistic perspective. To achieve this goal, IOM articulated a twelve point strategy:

1. to provide secure, reliable, flexible and cost-effective services for persons who require international migration assistance;
2. to enhance the humane and orderly management of migration and the effective respect for the human rights of migrants in accordance with international law;
3. to offer expert advice, research, technical cooperation and operational assistance to States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders, in order to build national capacities and facilitate international, regional and bilateral cooperation on migration matters;
4. to contribute to the economic and social development of States through research, dialogue, design and implementation of migration-related programmes aimed at maximizing migration's benefits;
5. to support States, migrants and communities in addressing the challenges of irregular migration, including through research and analysis into root causes, sharing information and spreading best practices, as well as facilitating development-focused solutions;
6. to be a primary reference point for migration information, research, best practices, data collection, compatibility and sharing;
7. to promote, facilitate and support regional and global debate and dialogue on migration, including through the International Dialogue on Migration, so as to advance understanding of the opportunities and challenges it presents, the identification and development of effective policies for addressing those challenges and to identify comprehensive approaches and measures for advancing international cooperation;
8. to assist States to facilitate the integration of migrants in their new environment and to engage diasporas, including as development partners;
9. to participate in coordinated humanitarian responses in the context of inter-agency arrangements in this field and to provide migration services in other emergency or post-crisis situations as appropriate and as relates to the needs of individuals, thereby contributing to their protection\*;
10. to undertake programmes which facilitate the voluntary return and reintegration of refugees, displaced persons, migrants and other individuals in need of international migration services, in cooperation with other relevant international organizations as appropriate, and taking into account the needs and concerns of local communities;
11. to assist States in the development and delivery of programmes, studies and technical expertise on combating migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons, in particular women and children, in a manner consistent with international law;
12. to support the efforts of States in the area of labour migration, in particular short-term movements, and other types of circular migration.

\* Although IOM has no legal protection mandate, the fact remains that its activities contribute to protecting human rights, having the effect, or consequence, of protecting persons involved in migration.

## Thank you to our donors and partners



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