



ASSISTED RETURN AND  
REINTEGRATION IN THIRD  
COUNTRIES: PROGRAMMES,  
STRATEGIES AND INCENTIVES



**Assisted Return and Reintegration  
in Third Countries:  
Programmes, Strategies and Incentives**

**European Migration Network  
2009**



PORTUGAL  
NATIONAL CONTACT POINT  
FOR THE EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK



CO-FINANCED BY THE  
EUROPEAN COMMISSION

# PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

## CONTENTS

Executive Summary .....	4
1. Introduction .....	6
1.1. Purpose .....	6
1.2. Methodology .....	7
1.3. National context .....	7
2. Definitions, categories of returnees and available data .....	11
2.1. Definitions of Assisted Return .....	11
2.2. Categories of returning migrants .....	12
2.3. Data on Assisted Return (2004-2008) .....	14
2.3.1. Origin and nationality of returnees .....	14
2.3.2. Legal statuses of returnees .....	16
2.3.3. Demographic characteristics of returnees .....	18
2.3.4. Countries of return and return to unknown destinations .....	20
3. The political AND legal framework .....	21
3.1. The political and legal framework in Portugal .....	21
3.1.1. Political framework and debates regarding Assisted Return and Coercive Return .....	21
3.1.2. Legal framework .....	23
3.2. The influence of European policy, legislation and funding .....	23
4. Overview of assisted return measures .....	26
4.1. Motives for ( <i>and perceptions of</i> ) Assisted Return .....	27
4.2. Obstacles to Assisted Return .....	32
4.3. Organisation of Assisted Return measures .....	32
4.3.1. Assistance and counselling services before departure .....	34
4.4. Information campaigns regarding Assisted Return .....	36
5. Re-integration and sustainability of return .....	38
5.1. Post-return counselling and assistance .....	38
5.2. Evaluating the sustainability of returns .....	38
5.3. Measures that condition re-entry into the host country .....	39
6. Conclusions .....	40
7. Bibliography .....	44
8. Annex .....	45

## Executive Summary

This study examines the strategies and programmes that have been adopted in Portugal in the area of assisted return and has been prepared within the scope of the European Migration Network (EMN).

Assisted return is understood to be the process of voluntary return by a third country national to his or her country of origin, nationality or habitual residence, after a period of time in a Member State of the European Union, with structured support provided by the said State or by another entity, namely an international organisation.

In Portugal, since 1997, the [International Organization for Migration \(IOM\), Mission in Portugal](#)<sup>1</sup> has been the entity responsible for implementing the programmes for assisted return in Portugal, within the cooperation framework established by the Portuguese State. The IOM Mission in Portugal acts in close articulation with the [Aliens and Borders Service \(SEF\)](#)<sup>2</sup> and the [Ministry for the Internal Administration \(MAI\)](#)<sup>3</sup>, which supervises and evaluates the implementation of these programmes.

The main sources used to prepare this study were the annual reports about the implementation and evaluation of the programmes and projects to support voluntary return. These reports make it possible to monitor the results of the measures underway pertaining to assisted return, especially with regard to the management of the cases (number of cases entered and concluded) and the profile of candidates and returnees. It can be noted, however, that the statistical data contemplates a variety of categories that are not always comparable, which somewhat hampers a linear and evolutionary interpretation of the results that have been achieved over the years with regard to assisted return.

---

<sup>1</sup> Accessed on 15 September 2009 at the following website:  
<http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/pid/1386>

<sup>2</sup> Accessed on 20 October 2009 at the following website:  
<http://www.sef.pt/portal/V10/EN/asp/page.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> Accessed on 15 September 2009 at the following website:  
<http://www.mai.gov.pt/>

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

As per the guidelines defined for this study,<sup>4</sup> the introductory chapter will present the objectives of the study, the methodology adopted and a brief description of the programmes and projects that have framed the measures for assisted return in Portugal.

The second chapter provides the definitions for assisted return that are used in Portugal, the categories of returnees, as well as some statistical data about the returnees who received support for their return between 2004 and 2008.

The third chapter presents the legal and political framework pertaining to assisted return. The sources consulted while preparing this chapter include the first series of the Official Journal of the Portuguese Parliament (*Diário da Assembleia da República*) – especially with regard to surveys of the political debates about return – national legislation – to understand the legal framework pertaining to return in Portugal – and European legislation – keeping in mind the impact that European policies, directives and funding have on the national juridical framework.

The fourth and fifth chapters are, respectively, dedicated to the procedures inherent to implementing support for assisted return in Portugal – motivations, obstacles and the organisation of programmes – and measures to support reintegration and the sustainability of assisted return. Complementing the bibliographic research that served as the basis for this study, these sections also include information compiled by means of interviews with IOM personnel.

Finally, the conclusion presents a summary of the study, namely, the legal framework for assisted return in Portugal and a profile of the returnees, along with best practices in the context of the implementation of the said measures.

---

<sup>4</sup> European Migration Network (2009), *Specifications for EMN Study. Programmes and strategies in the EU Member States fostering assisted return and reintegration in third countries*. Final version: 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009. MIGRAPOL. EMN. Doc. 164.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Purpose

The objective of this report is to analyse the Portuguese situation in the field of programmes and strategies for Assisted Return<sup>5</sup>. Prepared within the scope of the European Migration Network (EMN), this study aims to compile reliable and comparable information with regard to the Member States of the European Union, presented in a concise European report about this subject. The EMN will thus contribute towards defining and developing policies in the area of assisted return while simultaneously providing an in-depth and consistent overview of European best practices in this area.

In brief, assisted return consists of support provided to third country nationals who voluntarily decide to leave a Member State of the European Union. In this context, assisted return is always based on the presupposition that the beneficiaries wish to return to their countries of origin.

In conformance with the specifications for this study, the coercive return of third country nationals, namely, removal in compliance with an administrative decision of expulsion, has not been included in this report.

Notwithstanding the conceptual distinctions used in this field (see 2.1 Definitions of Assisted Return), there is a coherent overall perspective, aimed at providing incentives and encouragement to promote return, overcoming barriers and stimulating methods and experiments to promote its sustainability.

---

<sup>5</sup> This report has opted to use capitals for the concepts that figure in the European Glossary for Immigration and Asylum, prepared by the EMN. Point 2.1 discusses the definition of this and other relevant concepts.

### **1.2. Methodology**

The primary methodology used in this study was that of an analysis of documentation. The sources have been identified in footnotes over the course of the text as well as in the bibliography presented at the end of this report. As institutional sources the IOM and the SEF are the main interlocutors in the area examined by this study and hence consulting with these entities proved to be decisive. The team at the EMN's National Contact Point (NCP) also used the documentation available at the High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue, IP (ACIDI), the MAI and the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), amongst others. The NCP team also conducted semi-structured interviews with personnel involved in the diverse aspects of the processes being studied herein.

This report was prepared by the EMN National Contact Point, which is ensured by the SEF and coordinated by João Ataíde, along with Maria José Torres and Alexandra Bento. Edite Rosário, Carmen Ponte, Inês Possante and Tiago Santos, researchers at Númena – Centre for Research in Social and Human Sciences, participated in the preparation of this report.

### **1.3. National context**

To better understand the organisation of assisted return in Portugal, in the manner required for this report, this study has opted to present the initial context, providing a brief description of the programmes and projects that are associated with this area.

The Portuguese State has been promoting assisted return in Portugal in close partnership with the IOM Mission in Portugal. The general principles pertaining to this area are currently enshrined in Law No. 23/2007, of 4 July (Foreigners' Law, article 139).

Activities pertaining to assisted voluntary return began in Portugal, in a consistent manner, in 1997. At that time, a protocol agreement signed between the Portuguese State – namely the

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

[Ministry for Foreign Affairs](#) (MNE),<sup>6</sup> the [Ministry for the Internal Administration](#) (MAI)<sup>7</sup>, the [High Commission for Immigration and Ethnic Minorities](#) (ACIME)<sup>8</sup> – and the [IOM, Mission in Portugal](#),<sup>9</sup> made it possible to implement the Pilot Programme for Voluntary Return. A new protocol agreement was signed in 2001, which defined an annual duration for the Programme for Voluntary Return (PVR), automatically renewable for identical and successive periods,<sup>10</sup> which is presently in effect.

The PVR is aimed at third country nationals who, having entered Portugal with the intention of settling here, find themselves in a vulnerable situation and wish to voluntarily abandon the country, without having the necessary financial resources to be able to return.

Third country nationals in both a regular as well as an irregular situation are eligible to apply to the PVR. The programme provides logistical and financial support for the returnees, enabling them to voluntarily return to their country of origin or to go to a third host country where they are guaranteed admission and helps them with their initial expenses in the destination country. This support consists of providing an air ticket, “pocket money” and a reintegration subsidy. From the initial phase of the PVR in 1997 to 2007, the technical and operational procedures of the return process (from submitting the application to embarking for the destination) benefited from monitoring by the IOM. Currently, the PVR also includes a service for assistance after return, which will be described shortly, in point 5.

---

<sup>6</sup> Accessed on 15 September 2009 at the following website:

<http://www.mne.gov.pt/mne/pt/>

<sup>7</sup> Accessed on 15 September 2009 at the following website:

<http://www.mai.gov.pt/>

<sup>8</sup> In 2007 the restructuring of the Public Administration resulted in the creation of the ACIDI, Public Institute, by merging the then ACIME with the structure for Technical Support for Coordinating the Choices Programme and the Mission Structure for Dialogue with Religions and the Intercultural Secretariat: Decree-Law No. 167/2007, of 3 May. Accessed on 15 September 2009, at the following website:

[http://www.acidi.gov.pt/docs/ACIDI/Lei\\_organica\\_ACIDI.pdf](http://www.acidi.gov.pt/docs/ACIDI/Lei_organica_ACIDI.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Accessed on 15 September 2009 at the following website:

<http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/pid/1386>

<sup>10</sup> International Organization for Migration Mission in Portugal (2005) *Relatório de Execução e Avaliação do Programa de Retorno Voluntário (PRV) 2004, Protocolo de Cooperação entre o Governo de Portugal e a Organização Internacional para as Migrações (OIM) de 20 de Dezembro de 2001*. Lisbon: IOM.

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

Some changes were implemented in the PVR during the second half of 2008, in the context of the project entitled “SuRRIA – Sustainable Return – Network for Information and Counselling”. This project, developed by the SEF in partnership with the IOM, was implemented between December 2006 and May 2008. Co-financed by the European Union, this project introduced significant changes at the level of the programme for voluntary return in Portugal.<sup>11</sup> One of the main changes consisted of a decentralisation of the preparatory activities for the return, by creating a decentralised network for information and counselling for assisted return, comprising, namely, the regional branches of the SEF, Local/ National Immigrant Support Centres (CLAII/CNAI), immigrant associations, social support organisations and other local institutions.<sup>12</sup> Another important change had to do with the eligibility of candidates for voluntary return. While implementing the SuRRIA Project, the PVR only focused on immigrants in an irregular situation, who had been notified beforehand by the SEF to abandon the country. Finally, it is important to highlight the reinforcement of the component of reintegrating candidates after they return, with a view to affording returnees the possibility of a more sustainable and favourable return.

In this context, it is also important to note the study entitled “*Assessment of Brazilian Migration Patterns and Assisted Voluntary Return Programme from selected EU Member States to Brazil*”, prepared between September 2007 and February 2009, co-financed by the European Union (Return Fund – 2006) and managed by the Regional Mission of the IOM in Brussels. This was an integrated project for research and support for voluntary return aimed at the Brazilian community resident in Belgium, Ireland and Portugal, in view of the growing demand for voluntary return on the part of Brazilian citizens in these three countries. In Portugal, the tasks were carried out by the IOM Mission.

---

<sup>11</sup> International Organization for Migration Mission in Portugal (2009) *Relatório Anual de Execução e Avaliação do Programa de Retorno Voluntário, 2008*. Lisbon: IOM.

<sup>12</sup> The network of assistance points for voluntary return comprises diverse entities at a regional level, namely: the IOM Mission in Lisbon, the National Immigrant Support Centre (CNAI) in Lisbon; the Jesuit Refugee Service in Lisbon; the SEF Regional Branch in Setúbal; SEF Regional Branch in Santarém; SEF Regional Branch in Évora; Delegation of the Red Cross in Braga (CLAI), National Immigrant Support Centre (CNAI) in Porto; SEF Regional Branch in Bragança; SEF Regional Branch in Viana do Castelo; the AMigrante Association, in Leiria (CLAI); SEF Regional Branch in Aveiro; SEF Regional Branch in Castelo Branco; Capela Association in Portimão; SEF Regional Branch in Faro; João Paulo II Residential Centre in Coimbra; Caritas, in Beja (CLAI); the Local Government of the Azores; SEF Regional Branch in Madeira.

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

Finally, a new project was adopted in 2009 – Programme to Support Voluntary Return and Reintegration – based on a partnership between the Aliens and Borders Service (SEF) and the IOM. This is an initiative aimed at ensuring an informed and sustained return and the efficiency and diversification of the assistance services available for the PVR, reinforcing and enhancing the flexibility of the services supporting reintegration in the country of origin. In collaboration with the IOM mission in Buenos Aires, this project also aims to monitor the reintegration of approximately 30 Brazilians, with a view to evaluating the impact of assistance for reintegration, so as to be able to respond to the needs of the target-group and more effectively promote a sustainable return for the beneficiaries of the programme.

In short, ever since the PVR was created in Portugal, in 1997, the Portuguese State, in cooperation with the IOM, has supported the assisted return of third country nationals as a relevant element in terms of managing national migration policies. Over the course of this period, the concrete methods for providing support have undergone diverse changes, namely in terms of the different target-groups of the programmes and the forms of assistance.

## 2. DEFINITIONS, CATEGORIES OF RETURNEES AND AVAILABLE DATA

### 2.1. Definitions of Assisted Return

The European Glossary for Immigration and Asylum, prepared by the EMN, has defined a consolidated and harmonised concept of assisted return.<sup>13</sup> In this context, assisted return corresponds to the process of a third country national voluntarily returning to his or her country of origin, nationality or habitual residence, after a period of time in a Member State of the European Union, with structured support, provided by this State or by another entity, namely an international organisation. Hence, this is the concept of “assisted return” that was used as the conceptual basis for this report.

In the national context, under the heading “*support for voluntary return*”, the Foreigners’ Law (article 139 of [Law No. 23/2007, of 4 July](#)) stipulates that the State can support the voluntary return of foreign citizens to their countries of origin who meet the required conditions, within the scope of programmes for cooperation with international organisations, namely with the IOM.

The Portuguese asylum law (art. 81 of [Law No. 27/2008, of 30 June](#)) likewise stipulates the possibility of providing assistance to the beneficiaries of asylum or subsidiary protection, namely by means of programmes for voluntary return.

A central element of the notion of assisted return is the desire of potential beneficiaries to return to their countries of origin. In this context, cases of the coercive return of third country nationals falls outside the purview of assisted return. With regard to this requirement, it must be noted that the degree of self-determination in terms of the desire to return voluntarily varies according to the concrete situation of the candidates. There is no doubt that factors such as a situation of irregularity or being notified by the authorities to abandon the country also influence the desire to avail of the said programmes.

---

<sup>13</sup> The terms of the European Glossary for Immigration and Asylum, related to return, are based on a factual and legal conceptual framework whose main sources are the IOM Migration Glossary and Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and the Council, of 16 December 2008 (Return Directive).

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

Residually, and without prejudice to availing of these said programmes, the State can also support the necessary expenses for abandoning the country of dependent members of the family unit of an individual being expelled, in case the expellee cannot meet the necessary expenses as well as in the case of foreign citizens in need, in case they are unable to obtain the support of the diplomatic representatives of their countries (art. 231, point 2 of Law No. 23/3007).

In brief, Assisted Return (called Voluntary Return in national legislation) consists of stimulating and providing structured assistance (material, logistical, financial or other kinds of assistance) on the part of the State in favour of a third country national who decides to return to his or her country of origin, of their own free will. In Portugal, assisted return is implemented by means of programmes for assistance, promoted by the State in collaboration with the IOM, aimed at third country nationals who wish to avail of these programmes, if they meet certain factual and legal requirements. Residually, and on a case by case basis, the State can support the necessary expenses for abandoning the country for the family members of an individual who is being expelled or for foreign nationals who do not have the necessary means of subsistence.

### **2.2. Categories of returning migrants**

The categories for third country nationals who are eligible for the programmes for assisted return have been defined in the cooperation protocol signed between the Government of Portugal and the IOM in 2001. This instrument identified three main categories for intended returnees (preamble and Annex I of the protocol agreement):

- Foreign citizens in an irregular situation or who are in the process of appealing against the rejection of their applications for regularisation;
- Asylum seekers in one of the following situations:
  - Who, while their application is pending, wish to return voluntarily to their country of origin or to go to another country that is willing to receive them;
  - Who wish to return to their country of origin after their application has been refused;

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

- Beneficiaries of the status of refugee or temporary protection who wish to return to their country of origin.
- Third country nationals resident in Portugal. The programme can be extended to foreign citizens who have the status of resident, without prejudice to the dispositions of relevant international commitments or agreements.

In abstract terms, the main categories of the beneficiaries of the PVR are thus third country nationals in an irregular situation, asylum seekers, refugees or beneficiaries of temporary protection and individuals who have the status of resident.

With regard to individuals in an irregular situation, this category of returnees has to be considered within the legal framework for removal from the national territory. Thus, apart from foreigners in an irregular situation who have not been detected by the authorities, individuals who have been notified to voluntarily abandon the country owing to an irregular stay can also benefit from the programme (article 138 of the Foreigners' Law);

Residually, foreign nationals who have been served with an administrative order for expulsion, owing to an irregular entry and/or stay could also be included within the scope of this programme, in case a deadline has been established by which they must abandon the national territory (articles 160, point 2, and 161 of the Foreigners' Law).

The eligibility of these categories has undergone some changes, in given phases of implementing the PVR, so as to favour foreign nationals in an irregular situation.

Finally, in the case of minors, they must be accompanied by whoever exercises parental authority or tutelage over them or have the express authorisation of these individuals to return to their country of origin to join them, while their parents or guardians must commit to receiving them when they disembark.

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

### 2.3. Data on Assisted Return (2004-2008)

In the context of this statistical approach it must be noted that whenever the sources allow it, a distinction will be made between applicants to the programme and effective returnees, i.e. between candidates and embarked returnees. On the other hand, amongst the universe of embarked returnees, it is necessary to make a distinction between those who were the primary applicants in the process (primary candidates) and those who were part of cases headed by another person (by means of family rules). As will become evident, many of the statistics in question are only available for the primary candidates.

An analysis of the data between 2004 and 2008 reveals that there has been a rise in the number of individuals applying for assisted return, with the exception of 2006. Thus, 2006 was the year in which the lowest figures were recorded, both in terms of the number of applicants (252) as well as in terms of effective returnees (163). In the *2006 Report Regarding the Implementation and Evaluation of the Programme for Voluntary Return*<sup>14</sup> this decline was explained as being due to budgetary factors and was not due to a reduction in demand on the part of beneficiaries of the PVR.

*Table 1 – Applicants and returnees of assisted return (2004-2008)*

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Embarked candidates	226	321	163	278	347
Individuals enrolled	389	455	252	320	634

Source: IOM data file.

#### 2.3.1. Origin and nationality of returnees

In terms of an analysis of the origin and nationality of the returnees, in order to facilitate comparisons, these variables have been limited to information regarding embarked returnees.

---

<sup>14</sup> International Organization for Migration Mission in Portugal (2006) *Relatório de Execução e Avaliação do Programa de Retorno Voluntário (PRV)*. Lisbon: IOM.

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

Thus, it can be noted that, throughout the period in question, by far the most numerous component of returnees comprised individuals holding **Brazilian nationality**. In fact, this position has even been reinforced substantially and in 2008 they represented 4/5ths of the total returnees.

Correspondingly, over the course of these years, it can be seen that the representation of other nationalities has reduced both in absolute as well as in relative terms. Thus, the second most represented nationality is that of citizens of **Angola**, although there has been a consistent and relative decline in their presence in this context in recent years. The same phenomenon can be witnessed with regard to nationals of the **Ukraine**, who constitute the third most represented national group. In 2008, Russia and Cape Verde represented 3% of returnees, an identical percentage as that of the Ukraine. It can also be noted that Romania had a relatively important position at the level of the main nationalities of embarked returnees in 2004 and 2005, a phenomenon that disappeared when Romania joined the European Union.

It is also interesting to note that the main nationalities of returnees coincided with the nationalities of the largest foreign communities resident in Portugal: Brazil, Ukraine, Cape Verde and Angola. Moreover, even at the level of residents, the Brazilian community has also recorded a growth that has far surpassed that of other nationalities.

*Table 2 – Embarked returnees by nationality (2004-2008)*

	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
Brazil	75	33%	117	36%	74	45%	194	70%	279	80%
Angola	37	16%	53	17%	23	14%	29	10%	25	7%
Ukraine	34	15%	41	13%	21	13%	12	4%	12	3%
Romania	25	11%	40	12%	2	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Russia	12	5%	19	6%	10	6%	5	2%	9	3%
Cape Verde	10	4%	11	3%	14	9%	10	4%	9	3%
Others	33	15%	40	12%	19	12%	28	10%	13	4%

Source: IOM data file.

### 2.3.2. Legal statuses of returnees

As has been mentioned, the legal situation of the beneficiaries who are eligible to avail of the PVR has undergone changes over the course of time, so as to favour foreign nationals in an irregular situation. With regard to this question, in the period under study, it is important to note the implementation, in 2007, of the SuRRIA project, specifically aimed at migrants in an illegal situation, who had been notified to voluntarily abandon the country (article 138 of the Foreigners' Law) and who decided to do so voluntarily.

Another relevant aspect for the analysis of the data contained in the annual reports of the IOM regarding the PVR derives from a change in the unit of analysis.<sup>15</sup> In fact, in **2004** the statistics published in the IOM report referred to the universe of **candidates returned**; while from **2005** onwards the reports referred to **cases begun**. We were able to repair the statistical series with unpublished data on actual returnees which was kindly supplied by IOM in a data file, but the data for 2005 are not featured in that file and, as a consequence, the percentages featured on the table below for 2005 refer to a different unit of analysis: cases begun, while the absolute frequencies for the same year were estimated by multiplying each of those percentage by the total number of returnees in that year (321). Finally, the very categories used to classify the cases seem to have varied over the course of the years in the series being studied, without it immediately being clear which categories can be compared and whether if in 2004 and 2005 absence of information mean zero frequency or that the category was not in used.

---

<sup>15</sup> From 2005 onwards.

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

*Table 3 – Legal statuses of returnees (2004-2008)*

	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
Without a visa	78	44%	146	46%	42	39%	128	68%	160	70%
Lapsed visa	70	39%	90	28%	33	30%	37	20%	44	19%
Undocumented	19	11%	52	16%	24	22%	6	3%	8	4%
Lapsed residence permit	-	-	-	-	0	0%	4	2%	7	3%
Lapsed stay permit	-	-	-	-	0	0%	12	6%	4	2%
Valid residence permit	10	6%	19	6%	6	6%	1	1%	3	1%
With a visa	-	-	-	-	2	2%	1	1%	2	1%
Unknown	-	-	1	0%	-	-	0	0%	0	0%
Pass	-	-	-	-	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Dual nationality	-	-	1	0%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Valid stay permit	2	1%	11	4%	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source: IOM data file, IOM 2005 report and authors' estimations from the latter.

Thus, it is impossible to determine whether the large drop in the “undocumented” category that was recorded between 2006 and 2007 reflects a substantial reality or is instead the result of a methodological effect. Apart from this, the available data reveals that over the course of the entire statistical series the majority of the individuals in question did not hold a visa. This trend has been reinforced in recent years and, in 2008, more than two thirds of the processes begun pertained to individuals without a visa. However, this phenomenon can be explained by the fact that many of the applicants to the PVR were citizens of Brazil, who do not require a visa to enter the country for stays of up to 90 days.<sup>16</sup>

Another noteworthy aspect is the virtual non-existence of applications by asylum seekers, refugees or beneficiaries of temporary protection to the PVR in Portugal. This fact is,

---

<sup>16</sup> Parliamentary Resolution No. 83/ 2000, which approved for ratification the Treaty for Friendship, Cooperation and Consultations between the Republic of Portugal and the Federal Republic of Brazil, signed in Porto Seguro on 22 April 2000. According to Art. 7 of the said Treaty, holders of valid ordinary passports issued by Portugal or by Brazil, who wish to enter the territory of the other contracting party for purposes of culture, business, journalism or tourism for a period of up to 90 days, are exempted from the requirement of a visa. Accessed on 4 October 2009, at the following website: <http://dre.pt/pdf1sdip/2000/12/287A00/71727187.pdf>

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

however, understandable when one considers the limited numbers of such individuals in the context of migration in Portugal.

### 2.3.3. Demographic characteristics of returnees

In terms of **gender**, about two-thirds of returnees are **male**, a proportion that has remained quite stable over the course of time. As before, the statistical unit in observed in 2005 differs from the observed in the other years.

*Table 4 – Primary candidates of processes begun according to gender (2004-2008)*

	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
Female	70	31%	170	37%	29	30%	69	33%	79	34%
Male	156	69%	285	63%	80	70%	120	67%	149	66%

Source: IOM data file and 2004 and 2005 reports.

Any analysis of the **evolution of age-groups** of returnees is hindered by changes in the categorisation of the age-groups and even the choices regarding what should be measured. Considering the complexities involved in pursuing an in-depth diachronic analysis of the age profile of PVR beneficiaries, this report has presented an illustration of these changes and, whenever possible, some elements pertaining to the evolution of the age structure evidenced over the course of the years.

In 2004, the basis for observation was that of embarked foreign nationals. With individuals under 20 years comprising the youngest category, the statistics pertaining to this year reveal that returnees were concentrated in **economically active ages**, especially in the group between the ages of 20 and 29 years.

The data available for 2005 and 2006 is based on observations of enrolled candidates, which, in itself, hinders the comparability of the statistics. Another obstacle has to do with the categorisation of the youngest age group: individuals under 18 years of age. As for the other age groups, although they fluctuate, they have remained relatively stable over the course of time, without there being any discernable tendency to reconfigure the age profile of returnees.

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

In 2007, new changes were introduced in terms of the categories, whereby individuals between the ages of 18 and 60 years were classified into three groups, as opposed to the four groups used in previous years.

In terms of **qualifications**, the percentages for 2004 in the table below regard actual returnees – the only available unit of analysis – and the absolute frequencies were estimated by multiplying each of those percentage by the absolute number of processes open in 2004 (298). Having said this, there has been a decline in the number of illiterate individuals and, above all, of individuals with technical qualifications, in favour of a growth in the categories that include individuals with basic and secondary education. There could be a possible connection with the changes in the composition of the nationalities (see Table 1).

*Table 5 – Primary candidates of the processes begun according to qualifications (2004-2008)*

	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
Illiterate	18	6%	21	6%	5	5%	8	4%	3	1%
Basic education	89	30%	96	28%	33	31%	65	34%	87	38%
Secondary education	89	30%	120	35%	37	44%	77	41%	99	43%
Technical education	63	21%	48	14%	17	11%	12	6%	7	3%
University education	30	10%	51	15%	15	7%	26	14%	23	10%
Unknown	9	3%	7	2%	2	2%	1	1%	9	4%

Source: IOM data file, 2005 report and authors' estimations from the 2004 report.

The changes in the **categorisation** make it difficult to compare the data for 2005 with that of subsequent years. Thus, in relative terms, in 2005, 34% of returnees worked in the sector of commerce and services, 28% in construction and 15% in domestic services. With regard to subsequent years, the relative percentage of individuals employed in the service sector in terms of the total number of returnees varies, without any clear trends, between 28% and 40%. In their turn, the relative percentage of returnees who worked in the construction sector varies from between 20% and 39%, revealing a tendency to decline. This trend is, in fact, shared by the other categories, with the exception of the category of unemployed individuals, which grew consistently between 2006 and 2008, rising to 32% of the total in 2008.

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

*Table 6 – Primary candidates of processes begun according to occupation (2006-2008)*

	2006		2007		2008	
Unemployed	10	9%	45	24%	74	32%
Service sector	31	28%	75	40%	71	31%
Construction	42	39%	38	20%	56	25%
Rural worker	4	4%	4	2%	4	2%
Without a profession	3	3%	4	2%	4	2%
Industry	8	7%	7	4%	2	1%
Student	3	3%	4	2%	2	1%
DK/DA	8	7%	12	6%	15	7%

Source: IOM data file.

### **2.3.4. Countries of return and return to unknown destinations**

Despite the fact that this item is part of the questionnaire used by the IOM for PVR beneficiaries, there is no statistical information in the sources consulted while preparing this present report about the country to which beneficiaries have returned, from which one can deduce an absence of subsequent statistical processing. However, both the text of the IOM reports as well as the information obtained by means of interviews indicate that the country of destination coincided with the country of origin. Moreover, since the IOM is the entity that purchases the tickets for travel, there can be no cases of returns having taken place to an unknown destination.

### **3. THE POLITICAL AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **3.1. The political and legal framework in Portugal**

##### **3.1.1. Political framework and debates regarding Assisted Return and Coercive Return**

For some years now voluntary return has played a key role in the context of the European Union's policy for return, where it is considered to be an essential component for a balanced and sustained approach with regard to return. In this context, Portugal has been implementing legislative solutions to encourage the voluntary return of immigrants, with a view to providing a more dignified, humane and sustainable form of removing third country nationals.

Aware that a lack of economic resources prevents many foreign nationals from voluntarily opting to abandon the national territory, the Portuguese State has supported assisted return to countries of origin, by means of specific programmes to this end, in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration.

The recent political debate regarding Voluntary Return in Portugal has centred on the Parliament, in the context of discussions about the approval of the Return Directive, in 2008. The first debate in which this subject was discussed was promoted by a Member of Parliament (MP) from the Socialist Party, which is currently the ruling party in Portugal. The MP in question criticised the approval of the Return Directive by the European Parliament, considering it to be:

“...a setback for the objectives of the Europe/Africa Summit that the Portuguese Presidency of the EU held in Lisbon, in December 2007, and is likewise a defeat for human rights organisations. Effectively, it represents a defeat for the churches, lay organisations and immigrant associations; it represents a defeat for those who believed that, since it risked endangering fundamental rights, as it does in fact endanger, the Directive would be rejected by the majority of Eurodeputies”.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> Parliamentary Debates: X Legislature, 3rd Session, 22 | I Series - Number: 102 | 4 July 2008. Accessed on 18 October 2009, at the following website:  
<http://debates.parlamento.pt/page.aspx?cid=r3.dar>

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

The said MP referred to some characteristics of the said Directive which she considered to be negative, including the limitation “of the possibilities for Voluntary Return”. However, she highlighted that, “in Portugal, the existing legislation in this regard is far better and more respectful of the rights of immigrants than the Return Directive”.

In this context, a communiqué by the Ministry for the Internal Administration stated that the “Directive does not invalidate the solutions that Portugal has adopted in the foreigners’ law. The national legislation will continue to be applied” —, which is, in fact, a right consecrated in the Directive, namely in its article 4. The Portuguese norms already contemplate a regime for voluntary return and removal that enshrines a broader range of human rights.<sup>18</sup>

In another parliamentary session, in the context of a query by an MP from the Left Block about the Government’s position with regard to the Return Directive, the Minister for the Internal Administration likewise alluded to the fact that human rights are already protected in the national legislation:

“This directive gives priority to voluntary return rather than coercive return, a fact that has also been established in our national legislation, however, the directive implies progress with regard to various European States, because these States do not contemplate voluntary return as a priority. In much the same manner, this directive establishes judicial support, which is also enshrined in our legislation, but which is not contemplated by various States. In short, we cannot mistake the sense of the directive. The directive establishes minimum levels of respect for human rights that represent effect progress for some European States, not in our case, but we will continue to remain at a stage of greater respect for human rights, at which we already were.”<sup>19</sup>

Over the course of the discussion that preceded the approval of the Return Directive, the position of the Portuguese Government was to maintain the more favourable norms for

---

<sup>18</sup> Parliamentary Debates: X Legislature, 3rd Session, 22 | I Series - Number: 102 | 4 July 2008. Accessed on 18 October 2009, at the following website: <http://debates.parlamento.pt/page.aspx?cid=r3.dar>

<sup>19</sup> Parliamentary Debates: X Legislature, 4<sup>th</sup> Session, 27 | I Series - Number: 008 | 3 October 2008. Accessed on 18 October 2009, at the following website: <http://debates.parlamento.pt/page.aspx?cid=r3.dar>.

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

immigrants that are currently in effect in the national legislation, especially with regard to voluntary return. Thus, the transposition of the Return Directive is not expected to result in substantial changes at the level of policies and the legal framework for immigration and asylum in Portugal.

### **3.1.2. Legal framework**

As has already been mentioned, the laws that regulate immigration and asylum in Portugal – [Law No. 23/2007, of 4 July](#), and [Law No. 27/2008, of 30 June](#), respectively – establish the general guiding principles for assisted return, allowing for the possibility of support being provided to returnees (immigrants and applicants or beneficiaries of statuses of protection) by means of programmes for voluntary return.

In this regard, the Foreigners' Law stipulates that foreign nationals benefiting from the programme who hold a residence permit must surrender it at the moment of embarkation, at the border post. Beneficiaries who have received support for voluntary return cannot return to the national territory for the next three years after leaving Portugal, except if the financial support provided is reimbursed along with accumulated interest at the applicable legal rate. However, this situation does not preclude the possibility of issuing an exceptional short term visa for humanitarian reasons. The aforesaid requirements are not applicable in cases involving a foreign national who has benefited from temporary protection.

Implementing this legislative framework, the Cooperation Protocol to Implement the Programme for Voluntary Return signed between the Portuguese State and the IOM on 20 December 2001 regulates the specific aspects of the Programme, namely the conditions for the eligibility of candidates.

### **3.2. The influence of European policy, legislation and funding**

In terms of the influence of EU policies on the national legal and political context, with regard to the European Pact on Immigration and Asylum, the aspect that gave rise to the most public discussion in Portugal was eliminated during the negotiations and was not part of the

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

version that was eventually approved. This was the question of the immigration contract. In effect, this contract was defended, including at the Parliament, by the CDP-PP, the party most to the right with a parliamentary presence. Comparatively, in general terms, the discussions about the aspects that were part of the approved version of the Pact were not very heated, although opinions were manifested against the Pact.

With regard to the transposition of EU legislation, Directive No. 2001/40/EC of the Council, of 28 May 2001,<sup>20</sup> pertaining to the mutual recognition of decisions of removal of third country nationals, has been transposed to the national legislation, having been consolidated by means of articles 169 to 172, of Law No. 23/2007, of 4 July, complemented by article 83 onwards of Regulative Decree No. 84/2007, of 5 November.

Similarly, Directive No. 2003/110/EC of the Council, of 25 November 2003,<sup>21</sup> pertaining to support in case of transit for the effects of removal by air transport, was transposed to the national legislation by means of articles 173 to 180, inclusive, of Law No. 23/2007, of 4 July, complemented by article 89 of Regulative Decree No. 84/2007, of 5 November. In terms of the operational application of this legal regime, although this is not exactly a violation of the dispositions of Directive No. 2003/110/EC, it sometimes happens that transit between Member States is hindered by the requirement of an escort, in cases in which the individuals being removed do not constitute a risk for the safety of people and properties, and do not need to change airports in the country of transit.

In compliance with Decision No. 2004/191/EC of the Council, of 23 February 2004,<sup>22</sup> which defines the criteria and suitable practical modalities for compensating for the financial imbalances that could result from Directive No. 2001/40/EC, in terms of appointing national

---

<sup>20</sup> Accessed on 26 October 2009, at the following website:  
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2001:149:0034:0036:EN:PDF>

<sup>21</sup> Accessed on 25 October 2009, at the following website:  
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:321:0026:0031:EN:PDF>

<sup>22</sup> Accessed on 25 October 2009, at the following website:  
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:060:0055:0057:PT:PDF>

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

contact points, article 85 of Regulative Decree No. 84/2007, of 5 November<sup>23</sup> (which regulates Law No. 23/2007, of 4 July) establishes that the SEF will be the national contact point for this effect.

As for Decision No. 2004/573/EC, of the Council, of 29 April 2004,<sup>24</sup> pertaining to the organisation of common flights for removals from the territory of two or more Member States, of third country nationals that are subject to individual decisions for removal, to date Portugal has never participated or promoted this kind of removal flights.

With regard to Decision No. 575/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 23 May 2007,<sup>25</sup> which created the European Return Fund for the period between 2008 and 2013 within the scope of the general programme for “Solidarity and managing migratory fluxes”, Order No. 98/2008, of 31 January<sup>26</sup> defined the juridical regime for public funding of national actions developed in the context of the said fund, for the period between 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2013. In this regard, it must be mentioned that the aforesaid SuRRIA programme, dedicated to assisted return, promoted by the SEF in partnership with the IOM was implemented with funding from the Return Fund – Preparatory Actions 2005. In this context, during the course of the project the programme for assisted return was aimed at third country nationals who had been notified by the Portuguese authorities to voluntarily abandon the national territory.

Thus, it can be said that the Return Fund was a key factor for implementing such an ambitious programme as the SuRRIA project, which made it possible to implement a lasting reinforcement of the structure of the national PVR.

---

<sup>23</sup> Accessed on 25 October 2009, at the following website:  
<http://dre.pt/pdf1sdip/2007/11/21200/0800808031.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> Accessed on 25 October 2009, at the following website:  
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:261:0028:0035:PT:PDF>

<sup>25</sup> Accessed on 25 October 2009, at the following website:  
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:144:0045:0065:PT:PDF>

<sup>26</sup> Accessed on 25 October 2009, at the following website:  
<http://dre.pt/pdf1s/2008/01/02200/0086300863.pdf>

#### 4. OVERVIEW OF ASSISTED RETURN MEASURES

The Portuguese State is responsible for implementing activities for assisted return in Portugal, and counts, in this regard, on the collaboration of the IOM. In terms of the development of the general principles pertaining to assisted return, stipulated in the Foreigners' Law, the regulatory framework of this programme is derived from the Cooperation Protocol to Implement the Programme for Voluntary Return, signed between the Portuguese State and the IOM on 20 December 2001.

In brief, the target audience of the Portuguese PVR are third country nationals, irrespective of their legal situation in the national territory. The programme envisages providing support in three phases: **pre-return, transport and post-return**. The pre-return phase encompasses all the activities of disseminating information and counselling and support for candidates. The transport phase consists of assistance up to the moment of embarkation and the return passage. The post-return phase includes reception and transport in the destination country and the attribution of an initial subsidy and support for reintegration projects, whenever justified.

Nevertheless, diverse national and EU circumstances resulted in adjustments to the initial Portuguese programme for voluntary return, namely at the level of the target audience and the procedures to implement the programme. Examples of this include the implementation of projects with a limited duration, such as: Cabinet Resolution No. 21/99, of 25 February,<sup>27</sup> which defines the conditions for voluntary return by citizens of Guinea-Bissau who, in the aftermath of the events of 7 June 1998, were temporarily hosted in Portugal (financed by the Portuguese Government); the SuRRIA Project (2007-2008), which oriented the voluntary return programme for immigrants in an irregular situation who had been notified beforehand by the SEF to abandon the national territory (co-financed by the EU Return Fund – Preparatory Actions 2005); and the project entitled *Assessment of Brazilian Migration Patterns and Assisted Voluntary Return Programme from selected EU Member States to Brazil*, which

---

<sup>27</sup> Resolution that defines the conditions for voluntary return for citizens of Guinea-Bissau who, in the aftermath of the events of 7 June 1998, were temporarily hosted in Portugal. Accessed on 6 October 2009, at the following website: <http://pt.legislacao.org/primeira-serie/resolucao-do-conselho-de-ministros-n-o-90-99-cidadaos-guineenses-programa-portugal-142160>

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

evaluated the living conditions of the Brazilian community and the reasons for return and supported the voluntary return of Brazilian citizens in an irregular situation (co-financed by the European Commission, Return Fund 2006).

The recent and aforementioned project “Programme to Support Voluntary Return and Reintegration”, aimed at providing support for assistance and reintegration in the country of origin, is an initiative aimed at reinforcing the pre-return and post-return phases, including monitoring and evaluation.

It is however important to emphasise that the study of the measures for assisted return in this chapter is based on the basic programme in effect in Portugal – namely the PVR – introducing, whenever necessary, a description of the measures that differ from it.

### **4.1. Motives for (*and perceptions of*) Assisted Return**

The main objectives of the PVR are to promote an effective, dignified and humane policy and make it possible for foreign nationals to voluntarily return and reintegrate in the countries of origin or in third countries that are willing to host them. This Programme is aimed at third country nationals, who, having entered the national territory with a view to settling here, have not managed to achieve the main objective that induced them to emigrate and, consequently, wish to abandon the country but do not have the necessary resources to do so.

The programme is applicable to foreign nationals in diverse situations, such as: foreign nationals who are in an irregular documental situation in Portugal; asylum seekers whose applications are pending or have been refused; refugees or beneficiaries of temporary protection who wish to return to their country of origin and other foreign nationals resident in Portugal<sup>28</sup>.

---

<sup>28</sup> Without prejudice to international agreements or commitments in this area to which Portugal is a party.

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

The Programme is likewise applicable to foreign minors, as long as they meet the particular conditions required for such cases.<sup>29</sup>

It is also important to emphasise that the PVR is not aimed at nationals of the Member States of the European Union.

In order to be able to benefit from the PVR, candidates must meet certain eligibility conditions, namely: a desire to return voluntarily to their country of origin or to a third host State and to expressly renounce their stay in the national territory, as envisaged by prevailing national legislation; not possessing sufficient resources of their own; to provide, directly or through third parties, the necessary documentation to the IOM to facilitate their voluntary return; not have committed in Portugal infractions liable to criminal procedures; to not have received financial assistance in the past from the Programme or used a comparable facility in Portugal or in another country and, finally, to not provide false declarations.

Since citizens of the European Union cannot benefit from the PVR, holders of dual nationality are also excluded from the programme, in case one of the nationalities is that of an EU Member State. However, this exclusion rule is not applicable to minors with dual nationality who travel with their parents, who are third country nationals. In the same way, the programme also excludes support for third country nationals who intend to travel to another EU Member State. The passages promoted within the scope of the programme are exclusively aimed at returning to the country of origin or to another third country in which the applicant can prove having resided and where he or she can be admitted legally.

The components of support envisaged for the beneficiaries of the PVR are as follows: pre-departure counselling, air transport, pocket money and possibly a reintegration subsidy. As the entity that implements the PVR, the IOM provides the air passage, following the most

---

<sup>29</sup> Minors can only benefit from the Programme for Voluntary Return if they are accompanied by whoever exercises parental authority or guardianship over them or, alternatively, after presenting an express authorisation by whoever exercises parental authority or guardianship over them, so as to be able to return to their country of origin to join them, the said person or persons committing to be present when they disembark [Annex I of the Protocol for Cooperation, Operational Regulations for the Programme]. International Organization for Migration Mission in Portugal (2005) *Relatório de Execução e Avaliação do Programa de Retorno Voluntário (PRV) 2004, Protocolo de Cooperação entre o Governo de Portugal e a Organização Internacional para as Migrações (OIM) de 20 de Dezembro de 2001*. Lisbon: IOM.

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

direct and economical route for the return, as well as assistance during the embarkation process. Returnees receive a sum of €50 (fifty euros), aimed, primarily, at paying for transport and other expenses that might be incurred upon arrival at the destination country. The reintegration subsidy is attributed, after evaluation on a case by case basis, to candidates in a more vulnerable situation and/or who present a plan to begin a small business in their country of origin. This amount has been gradually increased over the course of the programme's implementation, according to living costs.<sup>30</sup> In 2001, when the Cooperation Protocol establishing the PVR was signed, the amount of the reintegration subsidy was established at €200 (two hundred euros).<sup>31</sup> In 2002, the sum was updated to €250 (two hundred and fifty euros).<sup>32</sup> In 2006, the programme included specific sums to attribute a reintegration subsidy of €400 (four hundred euros) per adult and €150 (one hundred and fifty euros) per child, however, the financial assistance cannot exceed €1100 (one thousand one hundred euros).<sup>33</sup> In 2009, this was still the reference sum for attributing a reintegration subsidy per candidate. In any case, the number of reintegration subsidies attributed depends on the annual budget available for the Programme for Voluntary Return.

The annual reports regarding the implementation and assessments of the programme<sup>34</sup> make it possible to prepare a comparative analysis of the evolution of demand for support and the assistance provided, since 1997, the year in which the PVR was first implemented.

The most recent report available, pertaining to the year 2008, indicates a 98% increase in the number of people enrolled in the PVR as compared to 2007 (634 individuals enrolled in

---

<sup>30</sup> The number of reintegration subsidies attributed depends on the annual budget available for the Programme for Voluntary Return (PVR).

<sup>31</sup> International Organization for Migration Mission in Portugal (2007) *Relatório de Execução e Avaliação do Programa de Retorno Voluntário (PRV) 2006, Protocolo de Cooperação entre o Governo de Portugal e a Organização Internacional para as Migrações (OIM) de 20 de Dezembro de 2001*. Lisbon: IOM, p. 6.

<sup>32</sup> Protocol Agreement for Cooperation signed between the Government of Portugal and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on 20 December 2001. Components of Support contained in Annex I of the Cooperation Protocol, Operational Regulations for the Programme.

<sup>33</sup> International Organization for Migration Mission in Portugal (2007) *Relatório de Execução e Avaliação do Programa de Retorno Voluntário (PRV) 2006, Protocolo de Cooperação entre o Governo de Portugal e a Organização Internacional para as Migrações (OIM) de 20 de Dezembro de 2001*. Lisbon: IOM, p. 6.

<sup>34</sup> Prepared by the IOM.

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

2008, as compared to 320 in 2007) and a 25% increase in the number of embarked individuals (347 individuals in 2008, as compared to 278 in 2007).<sup>35</sup> The IOM believes that the main reasons for the gradual increase in demand for support within the scope of voluntary return programmes are, “The fact that the most recent immigrants find it impossible to regularise their migratory situation, as well as a decrease in economic growth rates and the consequent rise in unemployment”,<sup>36</sup> a trend that has been witnessed in recent years and became more accentuated in 2008. Corroborating the 2008 annual report, IOM personnel who were interviewed while compiling information for this present study indicated vulnerable situations derived from unemployment, especially prolonged unemployment, as the main reasons that induced immigrants to resort to the PVR.

Although the migratory situation in terms of legal documents for foreign nationals is not a criterion for the PVR, those who are in an irregular situation tend to be a priority for return, namely because they find it more difficult to access the labour market<sup>37</sup> and it is hence more difficult to find autonomous means of subsistence.

It is thus possible to conclude that the primary reasons for applications to the PVR were the economic unsustainability of immigrants who were frustrated in their projects for staying in Portugal and, in this context, sought to return to their countries of origin. Moreover, one of the immediate purposes of the PVR is to remedy a lack of economic resources to abandon the country.

More specifically within the scope of the SuRRIA Project (2007-2008), the eligibility criteria of the returnees were limited to third country nationals in an irregular situation who had been notified to abandon the country, under the terms of the applicable national legislation.

---

<sup>35</sup> The percentages and absolute numbers presented herein are a result of the sum total of applications and embarkation in the context of programmes to support voluntary return underway in 2008, namely the PVR, the SuRRIA project and the *Assessment of Brazilian Migration Patterns and Assisted Voluntary Return Programme from selected EU Member States to Brazil Project*.

<sup>36</sup> International Organization for Migration Mission in Portugal (2009) *Relatório Anual de Execução e Avaliação do Programa de Retorno Voluntário, 2008*. Lisbon: IOM, p. 6.

<sup>37</sup> According to national legislation (Law No. 23/2007, of 4 July, the so-called “Foreigners’ Law”), recruiting illegal labour (Art. 185) and exercising unauthorised professional activities are punishable, both on the part of the employee and the employer (Art. 198). Accessed on 22 September 2009, at the following website: <http://www.sef.pt/documentos/56/Nova%20Lei%20de%20EstrangeirosEN.pdf>

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

Furthermore, this regime preceded the similar legal framework stipulated in the Return Directive. The SuRRIA project, developed by the SEF, in partnership with the IOM, co-funded by the EU Return Fund – Preparatory Actions 2005, sought to “reinforce support for the voluntary return of immigrants in an irregular situation in Portugal, as an alternative solution to coercive expulsion from the national territory, namely, by means of creating a decentralised network for information and support for individuals interested in returning to their countries of origin”.<sup>38</sup> This project emphasised the humanitarian aspect as opposed to coercive removal and likewise provided for intangible and financial assistance for immigrants who resorted to the programme, namely, by means of a network for information and counselling based on diversified assistance services and on support for reintegration in the country of origin. The financial support was identical to the support offered within the scope of the PVR.

According to the implementation and assessment report produced at the conclusion of the SuRRIA project,<sup>39</sup> the reasons which induced candidates to resort to voluntary return have to do with the precariousness of their situation, in most cases owing to difficulties in finding employment. According to information provided by the SEF branches that comprised the project’s network, immigrants who sought support for their return had already decided to return before contacting the counselling unit. The notification to abandon the country voluntarily seems to have been more a consequence rather than a cause for such decisions, which, to a certain extent, explains why the number of applications for support for returning are far lower than the number of notifications issued by the said counselling units. Voluntary return was not, at the time, the first option for immigrants in a regular situation. The counsellors confirmed that applying for this support was a last resort for illegal immigrants to resolve their situation.<sup>40</sup>

---

<sup>38</sup> Aliens and Borders Service (SEF) (May 2008) Press Release – Best practices in the area of the voluntary return of immigrants. Accessed on 6 October 2009, at the following website:  
[http://www.sef.pt/portal/v10/PT/asp/noticias/Noticias\\_Detalhe.aspx?id\\_linha=5037](http://www.sef.pt/portal/v10/PT/asp/noticias/Noticias_Detalhe.aspx?id_linha=5037)

<sup>39</sup> International Organization for Migration Mission in Portugal (2008) *The SuRRIA Network – A Decentralized and Sustainable Counselling and Information Mechanism*. Lisbon: IOM.

<sup>40</sup> International Organization for Migration Mission in Portugal (2008) *The SuRRIA Network – A Decentralized and Sustainable Counselling and Information Mechanism*. Lisbon: IOM, p. 34.

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

One cannot overlook the coming into effect of the new Foreigners' Law (August 2007) and its regulations (November 2007). The new law created expectations in terms of the possibilities for regularisation, based on the exceptional regimes stipulated in this legal framework, which undoubtedly played a role in the decision to remain in Portugal rather than return.

### **4.2. Obstacles to Assisted Return**

With regard to logistical barriers, both in terms of national entities, as well as in terms of the destination states of the returnees, there are no obstacles to the implementation of the programme worthy of note, according to the information provided by the IOM.

As a general rule, permanent contact is maintained with the diplomatic missions of third countries in Portugal, especially with those with whom the IOM works most frequently with regard to return. Thus, more complex cases (e.g. undocumented citizens) tend to be resolved in a streamlined manner by means of this institutional articulation. Similarly, PVR candidates do not habitually face logistical difficulties within the national territory. However, it is difficult to ensure that this is also the case with regard to their arrival in the destination country, since – with the exception of returnees who receive support for reintegration – they are not subject to continuous monitoring. Nevertheless, it must be mentioned that the IOM has not received feedback indicating such difficulties.

### **4.3. Organisation of Assisted Return measures**

Until 2007, the year when the SuRRIA project was begun, the return activities contemplated by the PVR consisted, above all, of a centralised process of services, information and travel assistance for immigrants who resorted to the programme. Thus, immigrants who sought support for returning had to go to the IOM office in Lisbon, the entity responsible for implementing the PVR in Portugal, as has been mentioned. This office was also responsible for monitoring the cases.

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

The innovation of the SuRRIA project consisted of establishing a decentralised network for services and counselling throughout the country, with a view to providing closer points for assistance to immigrants. This network of assistance points for voluntary return was constituted, above all, by the local branches of the SEF, by the ACIDI's National Immigrant Support Centres (CNAIs) and Local Immigrant Support Centres (CLAIs) and by immigrant associations and associations for social intervention, scattered throughout the national territory.<sup>41</sup> Counsellors for voluntary return were identified at each assistance point, who were provided with specific training in the area of the PVR. The accumulated experience of these assistance points in matters pertaining to immigration, as well as their knowledge of local realities, facilitated the training sessions and the flow of information between them and the immigrants. An information campaign was simultaneously promoted regarding the assistance network and the national PVR.

Moreover, since the network was based on pre-existing entities, with autonomous budgetary allocations, it was possible to ensure the sustainability of the services for the Programme for Voluntary Return even after the conclusion of the SuRRIA project.

Thus, in collaboration with the network's partners, it was possible to ensure the maintenance of these technical and operational procedures, incorporating them into the national PVR, including, apart from the return activities, pre-departure assistance and counselling services and assistance services after the return. In this way, the programme's procedures emphasised and reinforced the component of the reintegration of beneficiaries in the country to which they returned.

In general terms, the main objectives of the PVR currently are to promote an informed and sustained return and ensure efficient and diversified services to assist individuals who apply for assisted return.

---

<sup>41</sup> Various entities throughout Portugal are part of the network of assistance points for voluntary return, namely: the IOM Mission in Lisbon, the National Immigrant Support Centres (CNAIs) in Lisbon and Porto; the Jesuit Refugee Service, in Lisbon, Regional Branches of the SEF in Setúbal, Santarém, Évora, Bragança, Viana do Castelo, Aveiro, Castelo Branco, Faro and Madeira; Local Immigrant Support Centres (CLAIs) in Beja, Braga, Leiria, Lisbon, João Paulo II Residential Centre and the Local Government of the Azores.

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

### **4.3.1. Assistance and counselling services before departure**

Applications for support by means of the PVR can be presented directly to the IOM or to the entities that are part of the decentralised network for information and counselling, scattered throughout Portugal. These services are sought out on the individual initiative of the candidates or they are sent there by institutions that are familiar with the PVR (as a result of prior dissemination of information by the assistance network) and interact and/or have privileged contacts with the immigrant population (e.g. hospitals, social security, parish councils).

In any case, the counselling phase includes a personal interview with the candidate. The role of technical experts/counsellors in this phase is that of assisting the candidate in a structured manner, defining their situation in Portugal and the reasons for wanting to return. The candidate is informed of the programme's conditions, including the fact that the process depends on the personal will of the candidate and that the application can also be withdrawn if they so wish, as well as the legal restrictions that will temporarily condition any future admittance in the national territory (cf. point 5).

Once the request to apply to the programme has been formulated and communicated to the IOM, an interview is scheduled with the applicant, in which the candidate provides the information that is necessary to analyse their application, in the form of a questionnaire. The information collected pertains to the contact established with the assistance and counselling point (date of the first contact, who recommended the PVR to the candidate, etc.), personal data (name, age, profession in Portugal and in the country of origin, nationality, date of arrival in Portugal, country of return, migratory situation, amongst other aspects), composition of the family unit (number of individuals who are part of the application, data pertaining to the family members), migratory trajectory, professional situation, psycho-social history (difficulties faced in Portugal, reasons for abandoning the country, etc.), medical history, life in Portugal and questions about post-return plans/ reintegration (future prospects, plans and needs to be able to implement these plans, support networks in the immigrant's country of origin).

After the interview, the specific case is classified as normal, priority or urgent.

Once the information has been collected and the documentation has been analysed, the IOM informs the SEF, through the Central Directorate for Immigration, Control and Documental Expertise (DCICPD), that the candidate has been enrolled in the PVR. In its turn, the SEF

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

must verify whether there are any legal impediments that would prevent the candidate from abandoning the country by means of assisted return. If there are no impediments, the remaining phases of the process are centralised by the IOM, namely, reserving the transport, purchasing the ticket, eventual contacts with the respective consulate to issue documents and assistance at the airport until the moment of embarkation. During the process of assistance at the airport during departure the candidate receives €50 (fifty euros), in cash, to meet possible expenses pertaining to the journey/ transit in the destination country.

From the interview to embarkation, priority cases take an average of about twenty to thirty days. Other cases can take about sixty to ninety days.

It must be noted that during the interview candidates are asked a set of questions regarding the post-return phase, essentially with a view to assessing their needs and facilitating the process of reintegration. Whenever necessary, the technical staff of the IOM assist candidates to prepare an Individual Reintegration Plan and decide about the attribution of a reintegration subsidy up to a maximum amount of €1100.00 (one thousand one hundred euros) per candidate. During the counselling process candidates likewise receive information about the possibility of training while still in Portugal, so as to prepare them for planning and implementing small businesses when they return. They are also provided with other relevant information to help them during the process of reintegration and to consolidate their lives after returning to their country of origin. Such assistance includes identifying training and employment opportunities, developing a small business, scholastic support for their children and health care in vulnerable cases, amongst others. The information about the country of return is provided with the help of the Information Project regarding Return and Reintegration in Countries of Origin (IRRiCO), which compiles a vast body of information about the immigrants' countries of origin.<sup>42</sup>

---

<sup>42</sup> The IRRiCO Project is a project implemented by the IOM, co-financed by the European Union, whose objective is to make information pertaining to return available to immigrants who are considering returning to their countries of origin. The project provides information about the possibilities of reintegration in the following countries of origin: Afghanistan, Albania, Angola, Armenia, Brazil, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Georgia, Ghana, Iran, Iraq, Côte d'Ivoire, Kosovo, Moldavia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Russia, Serbia, Sudan and the Ukraine. The information is provided in the form of information sheets about the various countries containing data regarding education, healthcare, housing, employment possibilities, opportunities to create businesses, regulations, customs, transport, telecommunications, special facilities and services for vulnerable groups. It also provides a list of addresses of relevant organisations and services such as hospitals, schools, universities, ministries and non-governmental organisations. The European countries in which this project was implemented include Austria, Belgium, Greece, Holland, Ireland, Malta, the United Kingdom, Switzerland and Portugal. Accessed on 12 October 2009, at the following website: [http://irrico.belgium.iom.int/images/stories/documents/leaflets/IRRiCO\\_II\\_Leaflet\\_English.pdf](http://irrico.belgium.iom.int/images/stories/documents/leaflets/IRRiCO_II_Leaflet_English.pdf)

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

The data pertaining to cases being sent to the IOM by counselling points reveals that the counselling network scattered throughout Portugal is working effectively. According to the report assessing the PVR for the year 2008 many of the network's technical staff carried out interviews and counselling within the scope of the programme. The IOM carried out about 49% of the total number of interviews and the remaining 51% were promoted by the network's other technical partners. Given that the Lisbon region hosts the largest number of immigrants, this was where the highest percentage of applications were filed and it was naturally the counselling points in the area of the capital (IOM, CNAI Lisbon and JRS) that conducted the most interviews (about 75% of the total). It is also important to note the collaboration of entities that are not formal partners of the network, representing 2% of the total number of interviews conducted.<sup>43</sup>

#### **4.4. Information campaigns regarding Assisted Return**

The MAI is responsible for implementing the national PVR, supported by the Aliens and Borders Service (SEF). As has already been mentioned, as the entity responsible for the operational aspects of the PVR, the IOM is responsible for administering the resources in question and managing them efficiently to ensure that the programme is implemented effectively. The allocated budget also contemplates administrative and operational expenses (15%), transport for individuals and properties and reintegration subsidies (70%) and costs associated with campaigns to publicise the programme (15%).

The information and awareness campaigns about the PVR focus on the channels of communication that are aimed at the target audience, namely through the institutions that are part of the programme's network and other institutions that work directly or indirectly with the immigrant population, such as embassies, consulates, immigrant associations, hospitals and social security, without overlooking initiatives using the mass media.

---

<sup>43</sup> See Annex I: Distribution of interviews within the counselling network in 2008. IOM (2009) *Relatório Anual de Execução e Avaliação do Programa de Retorno Voluntário*, 2008. Lisbon: IOM, p. 14.

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

The public dissemination of information about the PVR also includes circulating a brochure specifically dedicated to the programme, through a wide range of institutions and sites, namely branches of the SEF, CNAIs, CLAI, immigrant associations, centres for social security, hospitals, parish councils and town halls, amongst others.

It can also be noted that the guide entitled *Immigration in Portugal, Useful Information*, published annually by the High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue (ACIDI), includes a chapter on Voluntary Return, which likewise publicises the PVR. This brochure is published in different languages (e.g. Portuguese, English and Russian) and is available online<sup>44</sup> and in various spaces frequented by immigrants.

The IOM is currently developing a study about “mapping channels by which immigrants in Portugal can access information”. As its name indicates, this study seeks to carry out a survey of the preferred channels used by the main immigrant communities present in Portugal to access information, with a view to disseminating information about the PVR in a more direct and focused manner.

---

<sup>44</sup> ACIDI, IP (2008) *Imigração em Portugal, Informação Útil 2008*. Presidency of the Council of Ministers. Accessed on 6 October 2009 at the following website:  
<http://www.acidi.gov.pt/docs/Publicacoes/brochport/GuiaImig2008.pdf>

## **5. RE-INTEGRATION AND SUSTAINABILITY OF RETURN**

### **5.1. Post-return counselling and assistance**

Assistance services after return are generally provided by the IOM missions based in the countries of origin of the immigrants benefiting from the PVR. The IOM in Lisbon works closely with IOM missions in these countries so as to accompany and monitor the reintegration process of candidates who have requested assistance for their reintegration.

In cases in which a reintegration subsidy has been attributed, the sum is handed over to the returnees directly by the IOM mission in the country of return. The reintegration subsidy is always handed over in two instalments, and the second instalment depends on the prior presentation of proof corroborating how the first instalment was spent.

In the case of Brazil, keeping in mind the fact that this nationality represents the largest component of immigrants resorting to assisted return and the fact that there is no IOM mission in this country, the returnees are monitored by means of a network comprising diverse organisations. This network, which supports local follow-up in cases of assisted return, is managed by the IOM mission in Buenos Aires, Argentina, the regional office responsible for Brazil.

### **5.2. Evaluating the sustainability of returns**

To date, the reports regarding the implementation of activities associated with voluntary return have been limited, above all, to examining the measures for pre-departure counselling, activities related to the journey and profiles of the programme's beneficiaries, without expounding upon the aspect of post-return monitoring and assistance for reintegration.

This is undoubtedly due to the fact that sustained reintegration is a relatively recent objective for the Portuguese PVR. In fact, this dimension of the PVR only began to be consistently implemented in 2007 (within the scope of the SuRRIA project). In this regard, the PVR implementation report for the year 2008 affirmed: "Another aspect to be improved is the

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

support provided for reintegration in the country of origin, a fundamental action in the context of a programme for an informed and sustainable voluntary return”.<sup>45</sup>

### 5.3. Measures that condition re-entry into the host country

According to the Foreigners’ Law (article 139 of [Law No. 23/2007, of 4 July](#)), immigrants benefiting from voluntary return programmes are banned from entering Portugal for three years after they abandon the country. Thus, an indication of non-admittance is entered into the SEF’s Integrated Information System.

However, during this period, they can be admitted into the national territory if they refund the monies received plus interest at the applicable legal rate. In such cases, after the sums attributed have been refunded, the respective indication is erased (article 33 of the Foreigners’ Law).

However, this regime can be derogated for humanitarian reasons and it is possible, if necessary, to issue a special visa on an exceptional basis.<sup>46</sup> On the other hand, foreign nationals who have benefited from a regime of temporary protection are exempted from the obligation to refund the sums spent by the State within the scope of the PVR.

In case the returnees hold a residence permit, they must surrender the respective document to the Portuguese authorities at the border post before embarking.

---

<sup>45</sup> IOM (2009) *Relatório Anual de Execução e Avaliação do Programa de Retorno Voluntário*, 2008. Lisbon: IOM, p. 25.

<sup>46</sup> Article No. 68 of Law No. 23/2007, of 4 July, allows for granting a special visa, for humanitarian reasons and for reasons of national interest, permitting entry and a temporary stay in the national territory for foreign nationals who do not meet the legal requirements necessary for the effect. Accessed on 14 October 2009, at the following website: <http://www.sef.pt/documentos/56/Nova%20Lei%20de%20EstrangeirosEN.pdf>

### 6. CONCLUSIONS

1. Having been begun systematically in 1997, Assisted Return is a relatively recent phenomenon in Portugal. In quantitative terms, the dimensions of Assisted Return are fairly limited, although it has evidenced a sustained growth.

Aimed at third country nationals, the Portuguese programmes for Assisted Return are directed at three types of candidates:

- Foreign nationals in an irregular situation;
- Foreign nationals in a regular situation;
- Asylum seekers or beneficiaries of the status of refugee or temporary protection who wish to return to their country of origin;

However, owing to diverse reasons, the candidates belong primarily to the category of third country nationals in an irregular situation in Portugal.

The data regarding assisted return reveals the absolutely negligible presence of candidates who were asylum seekers, refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection. This fact is undoubtedly linked to the limited numbers of cases of international protection in Portugal. It is also possible to note that although a specific line was created within the PVR for returnees from this category, it never achieved a significant expression owing to a lack of candidates.

On the other hand, one cannot overlook the fact that humanitarian, social, legal and political reasons combine to favour providing support to foreign nationals in an irregular situation, to the detriment of foreign nationals in a regular situation. In this context, the programmes co-funded by the EU in the context of the PVR are likewise aimed at this target audience. In addition, the SuRRRIA project, a landmark initiative in terms of the Portuguese PVR, financed by the Return Fund – Preparatory Actions –, was aimed at foreign nationals in an irregular situation who had been notified to abandon the national territory.

2. In terms of the political approach, the Portuguese PVR is based on the presupposition of implementing an effective, dignified and humane policy of voluntary return for foreign nationals to their countries of origin or to third host States, promoted by the Portuguese State

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

in cooperation with the IOM. Similarly, the PVR is viewed as an additional instrument for a coherent, balanced and integrated policy for the entry, stay and exit of foreign nationals, as is expressly recognised in the protocol agreement formalising this collaboration.

With regard to the legal framework, Portuguese legislation suitably reflects the relevant European directives, without prejudice to the national legal regime – namely with regard to the Return Directive – consecrating solutions that are generally more favourable than the minimum standards defined in the EU directive.

Under the heading of support for voluntary return, the Foreigners' Law ([Law No. 23/2007, of 4 July](#)) defines the general principles for assisted return in Portugal and the ways in which the State promotes and supports this form of return.

In order to implement Assisted Return, a protocol agreement was signed for cooperation between the Portuguese State and the IOM, the latter being the entity responsible for managing the Programme for Voluntary Return (PVR). The PVR also involves a wide range of diverse entities and organisations, which are part of a decentralised network offering counselling and information regarding the programme. While highlighting the role of the Aliens and Borders Service (SEF) in terms of implementing the PVR, it is also important to note the contribution of other entities that are part of the State's central administration (social security, hospitals and health centres), municipalities, immigrant associations, the social structures of the Catholic church, NGOs and foreign diplomatic and consular missions in Portugal.

All the actions in the context of this programme reflect a humanist perspective that seeks to encompass the specific features of each case. A series of services are available, such as counselling, information and financial, logistical and material support, contributing towards ensuring that the beneficiaries' return is successful and sustainable. Noteworthy features of the programme include the existence of an individual plan and a reintegration subsidy. Moreover, the returnees are also accompanied by the IOM missions in the destination country, or, in the absence of such a mission, by other similar structures.

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

The main qualitative developments in the context of the PVR in recent years include creating and dynamising a network of counselling points at a national level and reinforcing the services available to support the reintegration of returnees. More specifically, the decentralised counselling network represents a **best practice** in the area of assisted return, the result of consolidating a methodology adopted within the scope of the SuRRIA Project (which was co-financed by the EU and implemented between late 2006 and May 2008). As is evident in the report about the implementation of the PVR in 2008: “The management of the decentralised counselling network was an interesting challenge and (...) it proved to be an excellent mechanism to support Voluntary Return, both from the institutional point of view as well as in terms of enabling returnees to access information”.<sup>47</sup> The evolution of the PVR is currently tending to focus more on reinforcing the conditions for assistance in the post-return phase.

3. According to available information, the primary reason why candidates applying to the PVR wish to return to their country of origin has to do with a failure of personal projects for economic migration, particularly in the case of immigrants who are in an irregular situation in terms of their stay in the national territory.

In terms of gender, male returnees predominate, representing about two-thirds of returnees, a figure that has remained constant over the course of time. In terms of qualifications, there has been a decline in the number of illiterate returnees and, above all, individuals with technical qualifications, in contrast to the growth in the categories comprising individuals with basic and secondary education.

In the three year period between 2006 and 2008, the situation with regard to the professional situation of returnees was characterised by an effective increase in unemployed individuals, who represented 9%, 24% and 32% of returnees in these three years respectively. The most representative sector of activity was the service sector, accounting for between 28% and 40% of returnees. There has also been a tendency for the other categories to decline, particularly the construction sector, as a result of the significant increase in unemployed returnees.

---

<sup>47</sup> International Organization for Migration Mission in Portugal (2006) *Relatório de Execução e Avaliação do Programa de Retorno Voluntário (PRV)*. Lisbon: IOM, p. 25.

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

The main nationalities of (embarked) returnees of the PVR reflect the more relevant foreign communities that are resident in Portugal: Brazil, Ukraine, Cape Verde and Angola. The most numerous component of returnees throughout the period in question comprises Brazilian nationals, a position that has been reinforced over the course of time. In 2008, Brazilians totalled four-fifths of returnees. Consequently, the other nationalities have a correspondingly reduced presence, both in absolute as well as relative terms. Nationals from Angola and the Ukraine represent, respectively, the second and third most numerous national groups.

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

### 7. BIBLIOGRAPHY

European Migration Network (2009), *Specifications for EMN Study. Programmes and strategies in the EU Member States fostering assisted return and reintegration in third countries*. Final version: 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009. MIGRAPOL. EMN. Doc. 164.

International Organization for Migration (2004) *International Migration Law – Glossary on Migration*. Geneva: IOM.

International Organization for Migration Mission in Portugal (2005) *Relatório de Execução e Avaliação do Programa de Retorno Voluntário (PRV) 2004, Protocolo de Cooperação entre o Governo de Portugal e a Organização Internacional para as Migrações (OIM) de 20 de Dezembro de 2001*. Lisbon: IOM.

International Organization for Migration Mission in Portugal (2006) *Relatório de Execução e Avaliação do Programa de Retorno Voluntário (PRV)*. Lisbon: IOM.

International Organization for Migration Mission in Portugal (2007) *Relatório de Execução e Avaliação do Programa de Retorno Voluntário (PRV) 2006, Protocolo de Cooperação entre o Governo de Portugal e a Organização Internacional para as Migrações (OIM) de 20 de Dezembro de 2001*. Lisbon: IOM.

International Organization for Migration Mission in Portugal (2008) *The SuRRIA Network – A Decentralized and Sustainable Counselling and Information Mechanism*. Lisbon: IOM.

International Organization for Migration Mission in Portugal (2009) *Relatório Anual de Execução e Avaliação do Programa de Retorno Voluntário, 2008*. Lisbon: IOM.

International Organization for Migration Mission in the Netherlands (2006) *Coping with Return*. The Hague: IOM.

Protocol Agreement for Cooperation signed between the Government of Portugal and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on 20 December 2001. Components of Support contained in Annex I of the Cooperation Protocol, Operational Regulations for the Programme.

## PROGRAMMES FOR ASSISTED RETURN

### 8. ANNEX

*Table 1- Distribution of interviews within the counselling network in 2008<sup>48</sup>*

Counselling points	Number of interviews	% of interviews
CAJP II	5	1%
CLAI Braga	9	2%
CLAI Leiria	13	3%
CNAI Lisbon	103	24%
CNAI Porto	28	6%
DRC Azores	2	0%
JRS	9	2%
SEF Faro	7	2%
SEF Aveiro	2	0%
SEF Braganza	2	0%
SEF Castelo Branco	4	1%
SEF Évora	1	0%
SEF Madeira	6	1%
SEF Portimão	5	1%
SEF Santarém	4	1%
SEF Setúbal	12	3%
IOM	212	49%
Others	7	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: IOM (2009) *Relatório Anual de Execução e Avaliação do Programa de Retorno Voluntário*, 2008. Lisbon: IOM, p. 14.

<sup>48</sup> The number of interviews may not coincide with the number of individuals enrolled, since an interview can include a family unit consisting of more than one person.



EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK