



Ad-Hoc Query on return policy to Afghanistan

Requested by BE EMN NCP on 1 June 2011

Compilation produced on 10th of August 2011

Responses from Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom plus Norway (20 in Total)

Disclaimer: The following responses have been provided primarily for the purpose of information exchange among EMN NCPs in the framework of the EMN. The contributing EMN NCPs have provided, to the best of their knowledge, information that is up-to-date, objective and reliable. Note, however, that the information provided does not necessarily represent the official policy of an EMN NCPs' Member State.





1. Background Information

Due to an incident and the general security situation in Afghanistan Belgium does not carry out any forced removals to Afghanistan since March 2010. Because of the continuing increase of Afghan asylum applications in Belgium, which is probably also due to the fact that no forced removals are carried anymore, our removal policy towards Afghanistan will probably be revised.






In this respect we would like to know more about the current removal policy of other European countries towards Afghanistan. Please note that we are as such not interested in Dublin-cases.

Disclaimer: The following responses have been provided primarily for the purpose of information exchange among EMN NCPs in the framework of the EMN. The contributing EMN NCPs have provided, to the best of their knowledge, information that is up-to-date, objective and reliable. Note, however, that the information provided does not necessarily represent the official policy of an EMN NCPs' Member State.





2. Responses

		Wider Dissemination?	Does your country carry out forced removals towards Afghanistan? If yes, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How many people have been removed in 2010 and 2011 (so excluding Dublin-cases and AVR)? - Do you make any difference between the different categories of people (for instance, former prisoners, overstayers, rejected asylum applicants,...) - From which region are they originating (Kabul; other regions;...)? - How are they removed: accompanied by security personnel or not? Up to Kabul or up to a transit airport? Did your country organize secured flights towards Afghanistan or participated in joint flights? - Which flightpath is usually used? - Do you have any agreements with Afghanistan (MoU; readmission agreements; collaboration with UNHCR, IOM, etc)?
	Austria	No	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that their response is not disseminated further
	Belgium	Yes	Since March 2010 Belgium did not carry out any forced removal towards Afghanistan. So the number of forced removals towards Afghanistan were: 2010: 1 2011: 0 Belgium has no agreements with Afghanistan.
	Bulgaria	No	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that their response is not disseminated further
	Estonia	Yes	Estonia has not returned people to Afghanistan in 2011. In 2010, 2 persons were returned. Estonia does not categorize persons to be returned. Assessments of possibility of return are made on case by case basis. In 2010 the returnees were from Kabul and Jalalabad. Both returns were made with escorts up to Kabul. No connecting flights were needed. Transit was made through Frankfurt Germany. Estonia has no agreements with Afghanistan.





Disclaimer: The following responses have been provided primarily for the purpose of information exchange among EMN NCPs in the framework of the EMN. The contributing EMN NCPs have provided, to the best of their knowledge, information that is up-to-date, objective and reliable. Note, however, that the information provided does not necessarily represent the official policy of an EMN NCPs' Member State.

	Finland	No	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that their response is not disseminated further
	France	No	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that their response is not disseminated further
	Hungary	No	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that their response is not disseminated further
	Italy	Yes	In 2010 a total amount of 1094 Afghans has been removed. Among them, 1029 have been re-admitted in Afghanistan whereas the rest has been denied entry at the border or has been ordered to leave the national territory but there are no proves of re-admission to the country of origin.
	Latvia	Yes	<p>Does your country carry out forced removals towards Afghanistan? If yes,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How many people have been removed in 2010 and 2011 (so excluding Dublin-cases and AVR)? 2009 - 10 persons, 2010 – 2 persons, 2011 – 1 person. - Do you make any difference between the different categories of people (for instance, former prisoners, overstayers, rejected asylum applicants,...) <p>There is no difference in removals of the different categories of people. Currently the possibility to leave the territory of the Republic of Latvia voluntarily is given for the overstayers and rejected asylum applicants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From which region are they originating (Kabul; other regions;...)? <p>The removed Afghans were from northern regions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How are they removed: accompanied by security personnel or not? Up to Kabul or up to a transit airport? <p>The State Border Guard of the Republic of Latvia accompanies returnees either up to Kabul airport or up to a transit airport. In case if person is accompanied up to a transit airport the escort is present at the transit airport until the departure of returnee to Kabul. In 2009 the State Border Guard organized removals via Moscow, when accompanied the returnees up to Moscow transit airport. In 2010 and 2011 the returnees were accompanied up to Kabul airport. In 2009 the State Border Guard was asking for the best practice of EU MS on routes of commercial flights for removals to Afghanistan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Did your country organize secured flights towards Afghanistan or participated in joint flights? <p>The Republic of Latvia did not organize secured flights to Afghanistan and hasn't participated in organized joint flights.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which flightpath is usually used? <p>State Border Guard of the Republic of Latvia usually uses the commercial flights for removal of citizens of Afghanistan such as: Riga – Frankfurt – Kabul or Riga – Moscow- Kabul.</p>


Disclaimer: The following responses have been provided primarily for the purpose of information exchange among EMN NCPs in the framework of the EMN. The contributing EMN NCPs have provided, to the best of their knowledge, information that is up-to-date, objective and reliable. Note, however, that the information provided does not necessarily represent the official policy of an EMN NCPs' Member State.

			<p>- Do you have any agreements with Afghanistan (MoU; readmission agreements; collaboration with UNHCR, IOM, etc)?</p> <p>The Republic of Latvia does not have any agreements with Afghanistan.</p>
	Lithuania	Yes	<p>There were no cases recently when a question of removal of a citizen of Afghanistan had to be solved. So we do not have data to answer to your questions.</p> <p>No Afghanistan national was forcibly removed from Lithuania to Afghanistan in 2010-2011.</p> <p>LR does not have any agreements with Afghanistan.</p>
	Luxembourg	Yes	<p>No. Luxembourg has not carry out forced removals towards Afghanistan.</p> <p>In 2010, 4 Afghan's citizens had benefit of a voluntary re-entry with the assistance of the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Luxembourg has no agreements with Afghanistan.</p>
	Malta	Yes	<p>Does your country carry out forced removals towards Afghanistan? MT does not have any experience with Afghani migrants.</p>
	Netherlands	Yes	<p>Does your country carry out forced removals towards Afghanistan?</p> <p>Yes, the Netherlands carry out forced removals to Afghanistan.</p> <p>If yes, How many people have been removed in 2010 and 2011 (so excluding Dublin-cases and AVR)?</p> <p>2010: forced returns to Afghanistan: around 15</p> <p>2011 (until 16 June 2011): around 25 forced returns to Afghanistan.</p> <p>- Do you make any difference between the different categories of people (for instance, former prisoners, overstayers, rejected asylum applicants,...)</p> <p>The Netherlands do not make a difference in categories of people.</p> <p>According to Dutch policy the Dutch government in first instance encourages illegal Afghans to return to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan voluntarily. The I.O.M. can provide financial assistance through a special project called HRPT (Reintegration Measures Project Readmission). For those not opting for voluntary return, forced return is the only alternative.</p> <p>- From which region are they originating (Kabul; other regions;...)?</p> <p>The Netherlands do not make any distinction between the returnees with regards to their place of origin.</p> <p>Dutch policy is to return to safe countries and cities. In almost all cases this means the final destination will be the capital, and in some cases a major city, in their country of origin. For Afghanistan this means that the Dutch Repatriation & Departure Service returns Afghans to Kabul airport. From this point the deportee is free to choose his destination. If the</p>



Disclaimer: The following responses have been provided primarily for the purpose of information exchange among EMN NCPs in the framework of the EMN. The contributing EMN NCPs have provided, to the best of their knowledge, information that is up-to-date, objective and reliable. Note, however, that the information provided does not necessarily represent the official policy of an EMN NCPs' Member State.

			<p>deportee chooses to go to an unsafe area then this will be his own decision and responsibility. The Netherlands do therefore not differentiate with regards to the region of their origin .</p> <p>- How are they removed: accompanied by security personnel or not? Up to Kabul or up to a transit airport? Did your country organize secured flights towards Afghanistan or participated in joint flights? Return to Afghanistan is always to Kabul (see also the answer on the question above). The returnees will be accompanied by The Royal Military Constabulary. The Netherlands do not organize secured flights to Afghanistan and the Netherlands do not participate in joint flights.</p> <p>- Which flightpath is usually used? Mostly the flightpath is: Schiphol Amsterdam airport - Delhi Indira Ghandi international airport- Kabul airport. An alternative flightpath is Schiphol Amsterdam airport- Dubai-Kabul airport.</p> <p>- Do you have any agreements with Afghanistan (MoU; readmission agreements; collaboration with UNHCR, IOM, etc)? The Netherlands has a tripartite agreement between Afghanistan, the UNHCR and the Netherlands.</p>
	Portugal	Yes	<p>In Portugal the number of forced removals towards Afghanistan were: 2010: 0; 2011: N/A.</p> <p>Portugal has no agreements with Afghanistan.</p>
	Romania	No	<p>This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that their response is not disseminated further</p>
	Slovak Republic	Yes	<p>Excluding Dublin-cases and assisted voluntary returns, the number of forced removals to Afghanistan was 61 in 2010; in 2011 it was so far 5. The persons were not removed directly to Afghanistan; however, after unlawful crossing of the Slovak-Ukrainian border they were removed to Ukraine on the basis of readmission agreement. The Slovak Republic does not make any difference between the different categories of the persons and does not collect information from which region they originate.</p> <p>At present there are no agreements between Slovak Republic and Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.</p>
	Slovenia	Yes	<p>Slovenia has no agreement with Afghanistan. We do not carry out forced removals to this country.</p>

Disclaimer: The following responses have been provided primarily for the purpose of information exchange among EMN NCPs in the framework of the EMN. The contributing EMN NCPs have provided, to the best of their knowledge, information that is up-to-date, objective and reliable. Note, however, that the information provided does not necessarily represent the official policy of an EMN NCPs' Member State.

	Sweden	Yes	<p>Yes, we do carry out forced removals to Afghanistan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We have returned forcefully 26 individuals during 2010 and 15 individuals this year by the end of May (Dublin-cases and AVR-cases are excluded in the figures). - We do not make any difference between different categories of people on return cases. We always do, of course, assessment and risk analysis in each individual asylum case before the removal decision is made. We therefore, do not make any general differentiation on different groups on the cases. Once the final removal decision has been taken it will be carried out if there is no barrier for the enforcement of the removal decision. We do not exempt any group from forced return if they are not in need of international protection. - Our statistics does not show from which part of the country they come from but they can be from different parts of the country. - They are usually not accompanied by security personnel in case they have valid passport (if it is assessed that there is no security problem). Otherwise they will be accompanied by security personnel all the way to Kabul. We have not yet taken part in joint flights. - The routes are different but we organize the flights mostly via Dubai and then to Kabul. - No, we don't have any agreement. The tripartite MoU between Afghanistan, Sweden and UNHCR expired 30 April 2009. The Swedish Migration Board (SMB) had an agreement with IOM on voluntary return cases. Afghans who wish to return to Afghanistan voluntarily were able to get assistance and counselling before, during and after their return. Pre-departure information and counselling was offered by UNHCR ROBNC, office in Stockholm. The SMB financed this service from March 2008 until December 2010). <p>Apart from the UNHCR counselling service, returnees can also get pre-departure assistance from IOM Helsinki within the SMB financed project of an Afghan telephone helpline. The duration of the helpline project is 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2010.</p> <p>The helpline project is closely linked to the Reception and Reintegration of Afghan Nationals in Afghanistan – a project financed by SMB and implemented by IOM in Kabul. Within the project IOM offers reception assistance including temporary accommodation and onward transport to final destination. Furthermore, returnees are offered post-arrival information and counselling as well as reintegration assistance and monitoring such as educational/vocational training or support in establishing small businesses. All practical arrangements related to travels from Sweden to Afghanistan are</p>
---	--------	-----	---

Disclaimer: The following responses have been provided primarily for the purpose of information exchange among EMN NCPs in the framework of the EMN. The contributing EMN NCPs have provided, to the best of their knowledge, information that is up-to-date, objective and reliable. Note, however, that the information provided does not necessarily represent the official policy of an EMN NCPs' Member State.

			conducted by IOM.
	United Kingdom	No	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that their response is not disseminated further
	Norway	Yes	<p>Norway carries out forced returns to Afghanistan. They are executed by the National Police Immigration Service, following a decision made by Norwegian Directorate of Immigration and/or Norwegian Immigration Appeals Board. No returns are executed without the prior approval of the Norwegian Immigration Appeals Board.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In 2010 57 persons were returned to Afghanistan. As of 31.05.11 33 persons have been returned to Afghanistan this year. - With very few exceptions, the persons returned to Afghanistan are rejected asylum seekers. At present Norwegian authorities only return single adult males. Families, minors or single adult females are not returned. - Norwegian authorities return persons from all regions of Afghanistan, although in effect all returns to Afghanistan go to Kabul. The returns are carried out in accordance with the decisions of the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration and/or the Norwegian Immigration Appeals Board. The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration and/or Norwegian Immigration Appeals Board consider the internal flight alternative when making their decision to return a person to Afghanistan. - The persons are returned by regular scheduled flights, operated by regular airlines. Norwegian authorities have not participated on any joint operations flights. The National Police Immigration Service decides in each case the need for escorting the persons to Afghanistan. This decision will depend on the person's medical status, behaviour, (possible) criminal record or other factors. The escort is carried out by police officers. - Norway mainly uses the travel routes Oslo – Amsterdam – Dubai – Kabul or Oslo – Frankfurt – Kabul. <p>Norway has a well functioning tripartite readmission agreement with Afghanistan and UNHCR. There is also an AVR programme in place for Afghanistan, as well as a reintegration support programme.</p>