

Webinar

“Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on voluntary and forced return procedures and policy responses”

European Migration Network (EMN) –
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

20 January 2021, 15.00 – 16.15 (CET)

I. Context and aims

The COVID-19 crisis and the measures taken by EU and OECD countries to stop its spread are impacting migration directly and indirectly. One of the areas of migration that has been severely affected by COVID-19 measures has been **return**.

Health and safety conditions in pre-return detention centres have had to be adapted to ensure the protection of detainees during the pandemic, and migrants who have no legal basis to remain have only been able to return to their country of origin if travel is permitted and flights are available.

The EMN and OECD have been collaborating with the European Commission in order to provide information on how the pandemic is affecting migration in the EU and beyond useful to governments and policy makers. The result of the collaboration is a series of five Informs on measures taken at national and EU level in response to COVID-19 and their impacts on migration to address the negative consequences of the pandemic. Other topics include:

- ★ [Residence permits and migrant unemployment](#) (July 2020);
- ★ Impact on [international students](#) (September 2020);
- ★ Impact on [labour migration in essential sectors](#) (October 2020); and
- ★ Impact on [remittances](#) (December 2020).¹

II. Overview of the event

This webinar will serve to launch the fifth EMN-OECD Inform on the impact of COVID-19 in the migration area which reports **voluntary and forced return procedures and policy responses in EU and OECD Member States** between March and September 2020.

This Inform *inter alia* examines the impact of COVID-19 on implementation of returns since the onset of the COVID-19 crisis and on the issuing of return decisions. Moreover, it explores contingency measures related to managing migration pre-removal detention and alternatives to detention to prevent absconding, provision of return counselling and other predeparture services. Finally, the Inform will also look into changes to the voluntary return

¹ For more information on EMN events: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/content/emn-events_en

packages and reintegration programmes and the provision of services for migrants subject to a return decision.

A detailed agenda can be found below.

Agenda	
15.00 – 15.05	<p>Opening remarks</p> <p>Zane Rozenberga, EMN Luxembourg and EMN Communication and Dissemination Working Group co-chair</p>
15.05 – 15.20	<p>EMN OECD Inform “Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on voluntary and forced return procedures and policy responses”: presentation of key findings</p> <p>Knut Holm, Return Coordinator and EMN REG Co-chair, EMN Norway</p>
15.20 – 15.25	<p>Q&A session</p>
15.25 – 15.55	<p>Panel discussion: safe and dignified returns in times of COVID-19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jonathan Chaloff, Senior Migration Specialist, OECD • Christelle Caporali-Petit, EMN France • Non-EU OECD Country Representative (tbc) • IOM (tbc) <p>Moderator: Mikko Hakkarainen, DG HOME, European Commission</p>
15.55 – 16.10	<p>Q&A session</p>
16.10 – 16.15	<p>Closing remarks</p> <p>Magnus Ovilius, Head of Agencies and Networks Coordination Sector and Chair of the EMN, DG HOME, European Commission</p>

Moderator: **Zane Rozenberga**