

# JRC SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND DATABASES REPORT

## Dashboard on return

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## **Abstract**

This dashboard on return follows on a recommendation identified in the JRC Report *How to measure the effectiveness of return?*. It is meant to be an operational tool for return practitioners and policy makers. It helps visualise the two indicators which makes the return rate – i.e. orders to leave and returns to third country – in a more comprehensive way, by nationality and by Member States.

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# 1 Introduction

This dashboard has been prepared as a follow-up to the JRC Report *How to measure the effectiveness of return?*<sup>1</sup> The report tackled the problem of how to measure the effectiveness of the return of persons who do not have the right to stay in the country and have received an order to leave (OTL) from the EU. In particular, it explored the limitations of the indicator that is commonly used to measure return effectiveness, i.e. the return rate.<sup>2</sup> This is as the share of third-country nationals (TCNs) returning to third countries (TCs), over the total number of migrants who are ordered to leave the Member State (MS), in a given year. It can be defined for a single nationality in a specific Member State (MS), for the MS (regardless of the nationality of the person ordered to leave), or for a specific nationality (regardless of the identity of the MS issuing OTL).

Two groups of limitations were identified. The first group refers to the extent to which the indicators currently available (i.e. number of people who leave the country after receiving an order to leave, and number of orders to leave issued) are fit for the purpose of measuring return effectiveness. In particular, it was highlighted that the orders to leave are not always enforceable, due for instance to appeals or because the persons absconded or because their return would be contrary to the principle of *non-refoulement*.

The second group of limitations refers to the formula used to calculate the return effectiveness. In particular, the formula does not take into account important characteristics of the population to return that vary by country – for instance, the nationality. In addition, it does not include some factors that are difficult to measure, such as the legal systems of the MS.

To improve the measurement of the return effectiveness, the report recommended the following actions:

- Mapping and analysing in depth practices related to return and asylum at the national level to clarify to what extent the indicators reflect the population they are supposed to measure.
- Mapping and analysing in depth practices related to return and asylum at the national level to support an improved data collection mechanism, so to identify additional statistical indicators to collect.
- Mapping and in-depth analysing each MS's legal system and bilateral agreements and practices in place to frame correctly comparability issues across MSs and nationalities.
- With the existing indicators, producing comprehensive monitoring tools that could provide more background information to the overall return rate. In particular, the tools would include alternative definitions of the return rate. These would 1) minimise the dominant effect of most represented nationalities and reduce bias in comparing to an EU average behaviour; 2) factor in various elements having a positive/negative role in determining the effectiveness as well as minimise bias in benchmarking.

The dashboard on return is one of the tools mentioned in last recommendation and has been developed by the JRC in cooperation with DG HOME.

The dashboard can be found at the following link: <https://migration-demography-tools.jrc.ec.europa.eu/>, under 'thematic dashboards'.

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<sup>1</sup> Belmonte, M., Sermi, F., Tarchi, D., *How to measure the effectiveness of return? Problem definition and alternative definitions of the return and readmission rates*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2021, ISBN 978-92-76-27075-1, doi:10.2760/200580, JRC122948.

<sup>2</sup> Several policy documents make reference to it. See for example the European Commission (2019), Progress report on the Implementation of the European Agenda on Migration (COM(2019) 481 final; or European Commission (2018), Proposal on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals (recast).

## 2 The dashboard

This dashboard provides a visual display of the latest available data (from Eurostat) on the return of irregular migrants in the EU and in Schengen Associated Countries to a third country. The return of an irregular migrant starts from the moment they receive an order to leave (OTL) from the authorities. Readmission is the term used to describe their return to a third country, and it is more often used when taking the perspective of the third country.

By providing data on both the number of persons who have received an order to leave, as well as the number of persons who have actually left, this dashboard helps assess return and readmission effectiveness. The dashboard can be configured to display country-specific information as well as the nationality of persons to return.

In particular, the Member States' and Associated Schengen countries' perspective offers the perspective of the country (EU Member States and Schengen Associated countries) issuing the OTL. Specific countries can be selected so to explore how many persons in that country are ordered to leave, where they are from, and how effective their return is.

The third countries' perspective offers the perspective of a specific nationality receiving orders to leave. The user can select the third country of interest and explore how many of its nationals have to return, from which EU Member States and Schengen Associated countries, as well as how effective their return is. It should be noted that the data do not indicate to which third country persons return. Therefore, data on return effectiveness of a specific nationality are used as a proxy of a third country's readmission effectiveness only under the assumption that the persons return to their country of nationality. Third country, citizenship or nationality are therefore used interchangeably.

The sources used in these dashboards are from Eurostat (accessed in October 2022), in particular:

- Third country nationals ordered to leave - annual data (rounded) [[migr\\_eiord](#)]
- Third country nationals returned following an order to leave - annual data (rounded) [[migr\\_eirtn](#)]

A glossary completes the introductory page.

### 3 Short description

The dashboard contains filters that the users can use to visualise specific information. One filter at the top-left of the page is for selecting the Member State and Associated Schengen country, or the third country of interest. This commands the entire page. Filters at the bottom of each chart allow the users to change the parameter for the chart, e.g. the year. The dashboard is also complemented by tooltips: by hovering on the charts or the titles the users can get more detailed explanations on the visualisations.

#### 3.1 Member States' and Associated Schengen countries' perspective

The section on the **Member States' and Schengen Associated countries' perspective** allows the users to select a specific country of interest, using the filter in the top left corner.

*Figure 1 – Member States' and Schengen Associated countries' perspective – general filter.*



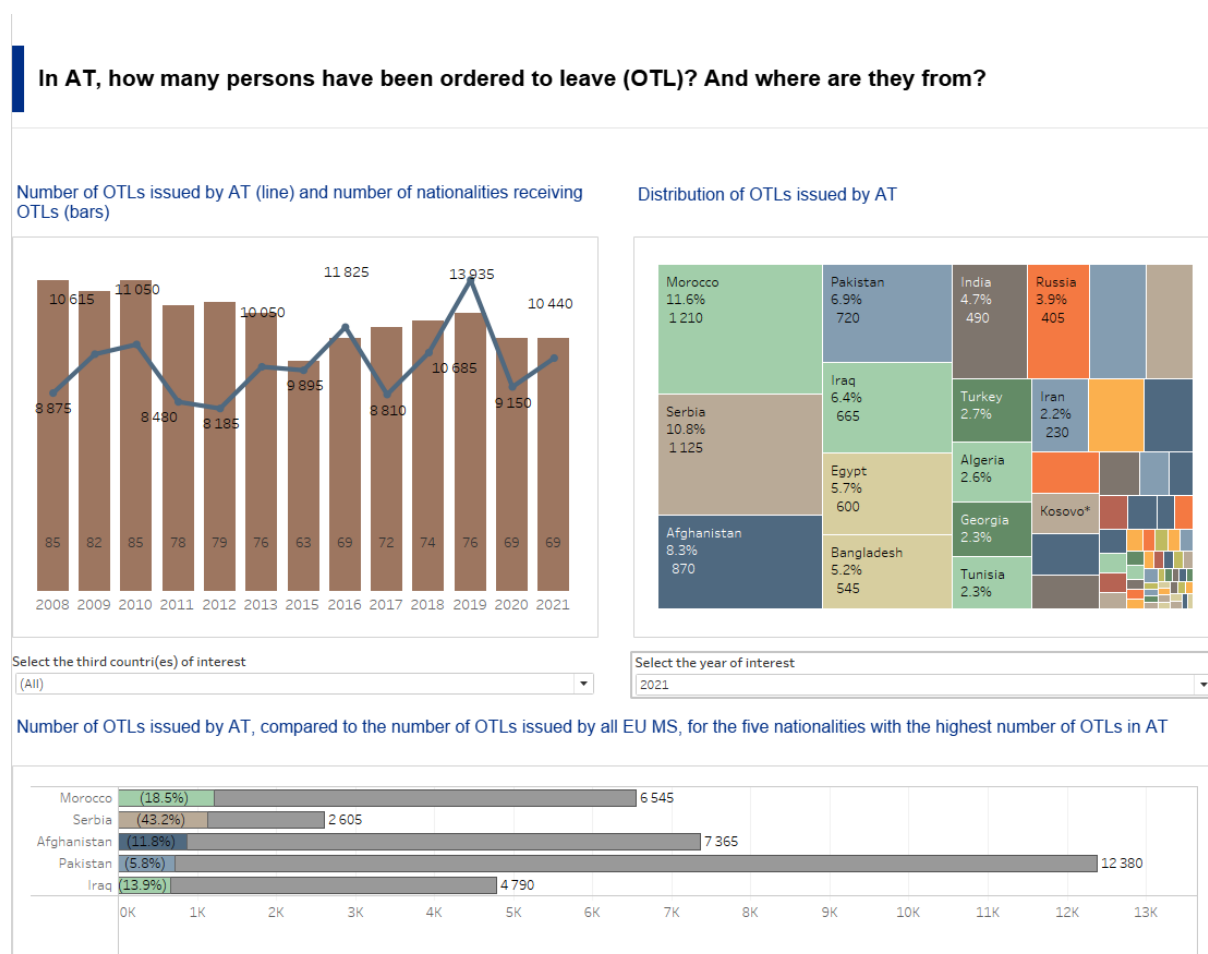
It is divided into two parts. The upper part provides information on how many persons have been ordered to leave in the selected country and where they were from (first bar and line chart in Figure 2). The users can explore the number of OTLs issued over time (in total or to people from selected citizenships), and the number of nationalities who are present among those ordered to leave. This is important to get a sense of how varied the population to return in a country is.

In addition, users can visualise the presence of each nationality as compared to the total number of nationalities to return in the selected country and year (second tree map Figure 2). This allows them to analyse whether a nationality is particularly overrepresented among the population to return, or rather various nationalities are equally present.

Moreover, users can see for the top five citizenships ordered to leave, the extent to which these citizenships are also found in the population to return in other Member States (third bar chart Figure 2). This tells if the return of a specific nationality is an 'issue' for one MS only, or whether it is a common issue across the EU.



Figure 2 – Member States' and Schengen Associated countries' perspective – upper part.

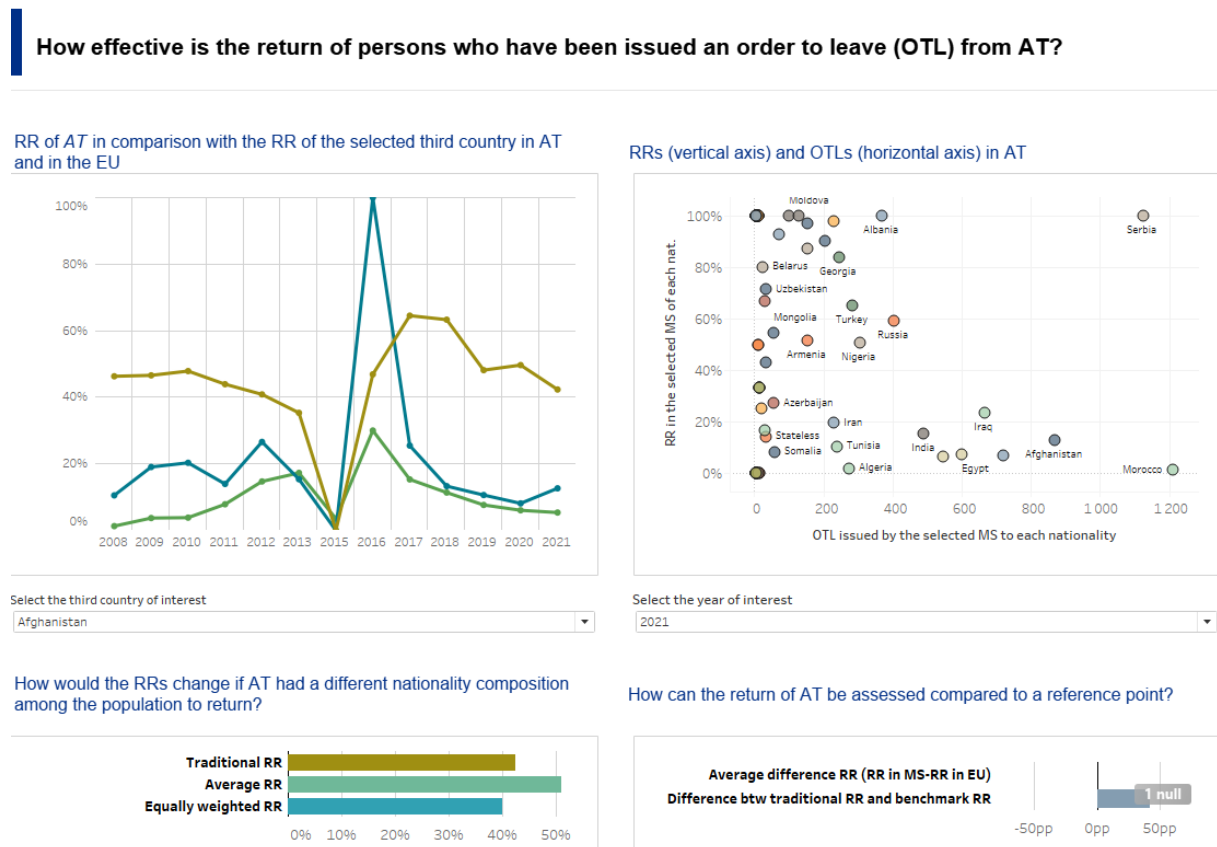


The bottom part provides information on the return effectiveness in the selected country. It allows the users to compare three return rates over time: the return rate of the MS (calculated on the total orders to leave), the return rate of a specific citizenship in the selected MS, and the return rate of the specific nationality (calculated on the total orders to leave received by EU MS) (first line chart in Figure 3). This provides more background information to be used when assessing the return rate of one country.

Moreover, for the selected MS and year, the users can compare the nationalities ordered to leave by number of OTLs issued and by return rate. High return rate may be associated with very low number of orders to leave (second scatterplot in Figure 3).

Finally, the users can compare for the selected MS and year the traditional return rate and the alternative definitions of the return rate, in particular the average, the equally weighted, the average difference and the difference (third and fourth bar charts in Figure 3). The alternative definitions of the return rate have two purposes. On the one hand, they give different weights to the return rate of each nationality in the MS to counter-balance the effect that the return rates of larger groups of nationalities have on the final number. On the other hand, they allow to compare the country to a reference point.

Figure 3 – Member States' and Schengen Associated countries' perspective – bottom part.



### 3.2 Third countries perspective

The section on the **third countries' perspective** allows the users to select a specific third country of interest, using the filter in the top left corner.

Figure 4 – Third countries' perspective – general filter.



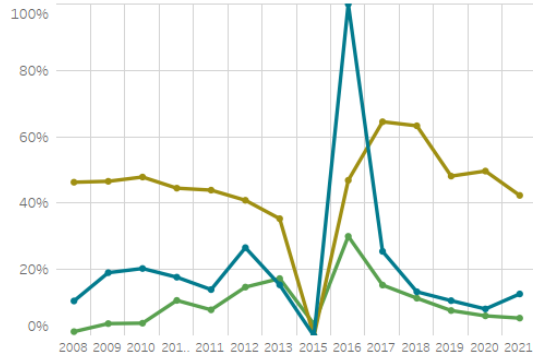
It is divided into two parts. The upper part provides information on how many citizens of the selected third country have been ordered to leave from which Member States or Schengen Associated countries (first line and bar chart in Figure 5). The users can explore the number of OTLs issued over time (in total or from selected countries), and the number of countries that issued them. This is important to get a sense of how dispersed the nationality is across the EU.

In addition, they can visualise the proportion of OTLs issued by EU and Schengen associated countries and appreciate whether the nationality to return is disproportionately present in one or few countries only (second three map in Figure 5).

Figure 5 – Third countries' perspective – upper part.

## How effective is the return of citizens from Afghanistan who have received an order to leave (OTL)?

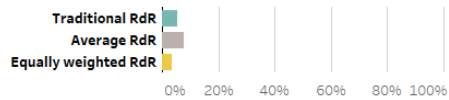
RR of citizens of *Afghanistan* from the EU and from the selected MS, in comparison with RR of the selected MS



Select the Member State of interest

AT

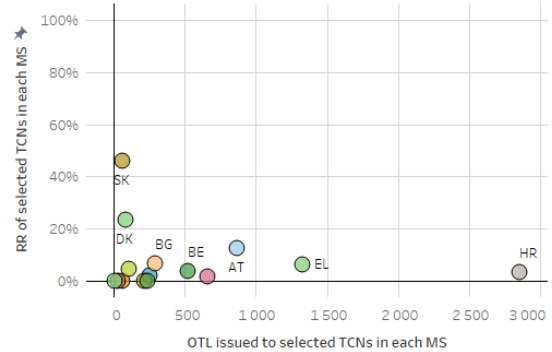
How would the RdRs change if citizens of *Afghanistan* receiving OTLs had a different distribution across MSs?



Select the year of interest

2021

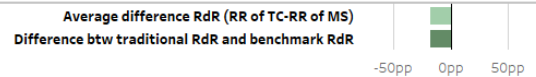
RRs (vertical axis) and OTLs (horizontal axis) of citizens of Afghanistan



Select the year of interest

2021

How can the return of citizens from Afghanistan be assessed compared to a reference point?



Select the year of interest

2021

## **4 Conclusions**

The dashboard has been prepared for an operational use. It is meant to support policy makers and practitioners working in the area of return and readmission by providing more disaggregated information on return effectiveness. It builds on the indicators commonly used to measure the return rate, i.e. orders to leave and people who returned to a third country after receiving an order to leave.

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