

The migrant's **choice** to return to his or her country of origin as part of the migration process, is an integral part of the “**Assisted Voluntary Return – AVR**” ethos. The support and assistance, from the preparation for the journey to the process of social and workplace reintegration in the country of origin, are a practical consequence.

The premise of **NIRVA** is as follows: a project co-financed by the European Commission by means of the **European Return Fund** and the **Italian Ministry of the Interior**, and is promoted by **AICCRE, CIR** and **OIM**.

The intervention is geared towards **strengthening and organising within a single network** all the public and private organisations concerned with promoting this option. The project also proposes to involve representatives of the countries of origin of the migrants concerned, by consolidating a central national network. Once the latter is adequately structured and tuned, it will be in a position to interact and promote a wider awareness and resource distribution at a territorial level. It will also provide information to those migrants potentially interested and who qualify, in order to facilitate access in full respect of their legal rights and human dignity.

The project is aimed, on the one hand, at those public and private bodies which are directly or potentially involved at a national level in the realisation of AVR (*interim recipients*). On the other hand, it is aimed at those migrants who are eligible for the AVR option (*final recipients*).

Interim Recipients:

Local authorities (Prefectures, Police Headquarters, Local Institutions, managers of refugee centres), Embassies and Consulates, NGOs who look after refugee centres or projects concerned with immigrant integration or victims of human trafficking, bodies representing work (employment organisations, unions, local and socio-sanitary institutions), training, welfare, media and citizenship.

Final Recipients:

Immigrants eligible for the AVR option because they belong to specific groups termed as vulnerable:

- Acknowledged **refugees** who renounce their status.
- **Asylum seekers** who renounce their status.
- Asylum seekers whose application has been turned down within 15/30 days
- Asylum seekers who appeal against denial.
- Individuals in possession of a residence permit for **protective subsidy** or **humanitarian reasons**, who renounce their status.
- **Victims of human trafficking** who renounce their status.
- Foreign nationals who have been **denied a renewal or conversion of their residence permit** within the 15 days stipulated by the Law.
- Foreign nationals in possession of a **residence permit pending employment**, and who are unable to renew it.
- All foreign nationals in possession of a **"temporary" residence permit**, which they cannot renew (for example, in the case of medical treatment).
- Foreign nationals who live in Italy in **extremely vulnerable and distressing conditions** (individuals with disabilities, single mothers with children, the elderly, individuals with serious physical and/or mental health problems, the homeless).

The proposed **COURSE OF ACTIONS** are as follows:

- Outline, construction, implementation and formalising of a **national interinstitutional network**, aimed at raising AVR awareness, as well as setting up an online database.

- Activating an **information campaign** containing strategies, courses of action, multilingual information resources, broadcast through a purposely designed network (multilingual brochures, guidelines for operators, website).

Training and information actions:

- **Training scheme** for members of the network; **meetings with Embassies and Consulates; organising 21 information sessions in every region within the context of TCI** (Territorial Council for Immigration) of principal regional cities, and other information activities aimed at citizenship and at members of relevant public and private bodies - as well as at immigrants - promoted in tandem with members of the network.
- Setting up - alongside work providers and unions - specific **guidelines for the media** for the purposes of information and study.
- **Communicating and disseminating the results** through: press conferences, press releases, newsletters and a website.

The formation of a central group of over 55 public and private members of the outlined network has been operational since July 2009. These members are active in the field of immigration and represent the project's target of all the regional territories.

These bodies have adhered to the **NIRVA network**, and pledged to use territorial "**ANTENNAE**" to promote territorial information and awareness of AVR, as anticipated by the project, and to be a focus point for all the bodies and organisations who have subsequently joined as members (an updated list of NIRVA members is available on the project website www.retenirva.it)

Programmes in support of voluntary return and reintegration into countries of origin, funded mainly by the Government, have been implemented in Italy since 1991.

At present, the European Return Fund supports structured interventions in Italy, as well as throughout Europe.

In 2008, in tandem with the NIRVA project, interventions for the outline and awareness of the foreign communities involved (RACINE project), as well as the implementation of AVR (PARTIR project) were funded.

The NIRVA network - promoted by the project of the same name - allows participating bodies and organisations to interact with a national network equipped to supply material and information support aimed at guiding the migrants who apply for assistance, and to offer them access to ministerial funds, as well as helping with safe return to their countries.

The ultimate goal of the project, and of the promoted network, is actually to **increase migrants' access to the AVR option**. To that end, a connection has been created with the project called "**PARTIR**" - also co-financed by the fund - which will implement individual return projects. The latter will come under the OIM umbrella, and will deal directly with all applications for the return within the context of information actions and awareness raising, as promoted by the NIRVA network.

Lead partner



AICCRE - Italian Association for the Council of European Municipalities and Regions
www.aiccre.it

Partner



CIR - Italian Refugees Council
www.cir-onlus.org



OIM - International Organization for Migration
www.italy.iom.int

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www.retenirva.it

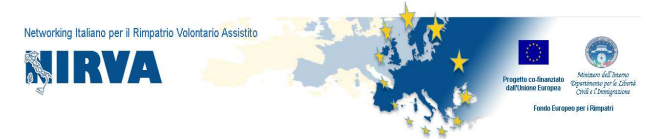


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NIRVA

Italian Networking for the Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR)

