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Motivations, experiences and consequences of returns and readmissions policy: revealing and developing effective alternatives



## *Executive Summary*

# Development of the Return and Readmissions policy across Europe: Multilevel analysis

## Case Study: **Slovenia**

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This document provides a concise summary of the key findings from Slovenia. For detailed analysis, evidence, and comprehensive insights, please refer to the full report. The information in this summary should not be considered complete or fully representative of the entire study.

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# 1. National Report on Slovenia's R&R Policies

This report provides a comprehensive overview of Slovenia's return and readmission (R&R) policies within its migration framework, reflecting the interplay between national and EU-level regulations, historical and institutional contexts, and contemporary policy challenges. The national report on Slovenia's R&R policies provides an in-depth analysis of historical and contemporary migration management strategies. Slovenia's policies are guided by EU regulations, notably the Return Directive (2008/115/EC), which emphasizes fair, transparent return procedures with a preference for voluntary returns. While Slovenia officially endorses respect for human rights, systemic limitations and a lack of resources have led to challenges in policy implementation.

## 1.1 Historical and Policy Background

Slovenia transitioned from a part of socialist Yugoslavia to an independent state in 1991, with migration policies rooted in its Constitution and laws like the Foreigners Act. EU legislation, particularly Directive 2008/115/EC (Return Directive), has shaped national approaches to managing irregular migration.

## 1.2 Migration Strategy and Implementation

Slovenia prioritizes the return of irregular migrants as a cornerstone of its migration policy, emphasizing border control, international cooperation, and bilateral return agreements with EU neighbours. Since 2020, the police, in partnership with Frontex, have primarily managed R&R operations, emphasizing efficiency, but also raising concerns about sustainability and human rights.

## 1.3 Challenges in Voluntary and Forced Returns

Assisted voluntary return (AVR) programs are underdeveloped, with low implementation rates and insufficient reintegration support. Forced returns face logistical hurdles, especially with distant countries, due to limited resources and diplomatic networks. Critics argue Slovenia should focus on regularizing irregular migrants rather than maintaining costly and ineffective return systems.

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## 1.4 Human Rights and Monitoring

While Slovenia officially upholds human rights principles in its return processes, discrepancies in monitoring and policy coherence remain, particularly in cases of vulnerable groups like unaccompanied minors.

## 1.5 Discursive and Political Influences

Migration policies in Slovenia are heavily influenced by anti-migration rhetoric, populism, and political symbolism, often leading to restrictive and repressive approaches. Promises of a more humane migration policy by the left-liberal government remain largely unfulfilled.

## 1.6 Policy Effectiveness and Criticism

Effectiveness is measured narrowly by the number of returns, neglecting broader considerations like reintegration and rights protection. Non-governmental organizations advocate for increased focus on voluntary returns and regularization efforts for migrants already in Slovenia.

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