

MONEY CARDS FOR RETURNEES

Category
Innovation

Timeline
12 months (tbc)

Countries of implementation
Global

Project lead
ERRIN Programme Management Unit

ERRIN has been actively working on developing a pilot project on money cards to ensure that returnees are fully supported and have the necessary means to thrive in the most challenging contexts.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

European countries have traditionally provided *in kind* assistance to returnees via a service partner in the respective country of return. However, this system has some limitations that have become particularly visible during the coronavirus pandemic. COVID-19 has sparked additional uncertainty amongst migrants about what future awaits them back in the home countries struck by the pandemic, negatively affecting pre-return counselling. In some countries, *in kind* services had to be temporarily suspended because of external factors and restrictions related to the coronavirus. Moreover, working solely with *in kind* services often creates higher administrative burden for Member States and service partners, longer process flows that potentially delays service delivery, and lesser flexibility when addressing the returnees' immediate needs. Support *in kind* also focuses on the mid- and long-term solutions, but does not always take into consideration the basic needs of a returning person, such as access to food and water. Providing returnees with cash creates time and space to work on a realistic and more long-term oriented reintegration plan, ensuring that the immediate needs are met. Through developing **a reliable system of money cards**, ERRIN aims to **empower its beneficiaries, make them less dependent on external actors and provide them with more ownership of their reintegration journey**.

Prepaid money cards will be delivered to the returnees in Europe prior to their departure to the country of return. Cards will only be activated once the person has arrived in their home country, and can only be used by the returnee in this respective country. The amounts will be defined by the Member States themselves according to their national policy, and will be paid by the respective Member State where the person returned from. The payment of these amounts to the service provider will be channelled via ERRIN to the respective service provider.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

A round of **consultations, market analysis and procurement** of a service provider for the delivery of the money cards.

Delivery of money cards to 1000 beneficiaries. The number can be expanded in case of increased interest or need.

Implementation, monitoring and steering of the pilot-system; evaluation of the lessons learned and **recommendations** for further project design.

ABOUT ERRIN

The European Return and Reintegration Network (ERRIN) is a joint initiative of 15 EU Member States and Schengen countries, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency and the European Commission. The International Centre for Migration Policy Development supports the programme as an implementing partner. ERRIN enhances European cooperation to improve both the return process, and the quality of support offered to migrants.



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