

Ghana

EU engagement to date

Efforts to engage Ghana in formalising cooperation on readmission practices at EU level have not resulted in a commitment by Ghanaian authorities so far. In July 2017 the Commission put forward draft Best Practices on identification and return, and in October 2018, aiming at a wider engagement, a draft roadmap based on the Valetta pillars. Ghana was reluctant to address readmission, at EU level, beyond general terms. From a practical perspective, a workshop for the consular authorities organised by Frontex back to back to a familiarisation visit to the Agency took place in February 2019. An ERRIN Gov-2-Gov project ‘Management Information Centre for Returnees (MICR)’ is ongoing. Article 13 of the ACP-EU Cotonou Agreement, to which Ghana is party, prescribes the commitment of the partner countries to cooperate with the EU in readmitting its own nationals.

Cooperation on readmission

In 2019, 2 675 Ghanaian nationals illegally staying in the Member States were issued return decisions and 555 effectively returned to Ghana resulting in a **return rate** of 21%. Member States submitted 444 readmission requests to Ghanaian authorities, who issued 275 travel documents resulting in an **issuance rate** of 62%.

A total of 15 Member States reported having approached the authorities of Ghana for readmission matters related to its nationals in 2019. Among those, two Member States report **bilateral agreements/arrangements** in place with Ghana, whose relevant provisions are often to very often respected.

Four Member States where approximately two-thirds of all Ghanaian nationals ordered to leave are to be found, assess the overall cooperation with Ghana in the **identification procedure** as average. Five Member States, accounting for 4% of the return decisions issued assess it as good to very good, and six others accounting for 28% of return decisions issued consider it poor to very poor. This is reflected in 10 Member States having a functioning established routine, which is often to always effectively implemented in eight of them.

For all responding Member States but two, consular interviews are very often to always performed upon their request as necessary. Outcomes are, on average, satisfactory to very satisfactory in the case of six Member States representing more than half of all Ghanaians ordered to leave, but unsatisfactory in the case of five representing around a quarter of Ghanaians ordered to leave. The remaining two consider interviews outcomes as acceptable.

In the case of ten Member States, interviews are very often to always requested by Ghanaian authorities in cases where sufficient evidences to establish nationality are already provided (e.g. valid or expired travel documents). At the same time, Ghanaian authorities are rarely to never available to organise short or long term identifications mission, according to four Member States who tried – and for the two that managed, the outcomes were poor.

According to more than half of the responding Member States, where more than two-thirds of all Ghanaian nationals ordered to leave are to be found, once the person has been positively

identified by Ghanaian authorities, the **issuance of travel documents** is often to always timely. This is rarely to never the case for five Member States, where a quarter of all Ghanaian nationals ordered to leave are to be found.

Returns by **charters flights** are accepted by Ghana. Certain restrictions may apply, for some Member States: the issuance of a landing permission, the frequency of flights, the number of returnees on board and/or a visa requirement for escorts. Visa requirement for escorts also apply in case of returns by **scheduled flights**, according to four Member States.

In general, two-thirds of responding Member States have assessed the **overall cooperation on return and readmission** as good, stable or improved since 2015.

With a total of 2 675 Ghanaian nationals ordered to leave in 2019, Ghana ranks 31st amongst visa-bound third countries whose nationals have been issued return decisions in the Member States. Overall half of the Member States interact with Ghana on readmission and two have bilateral agreements/arrangements. No jointly agreed procedures are in place at EU level, however a readmission routine is in place for two-thirds of the Member States who engaged. Those practices deliver mixed results, yet acceptable for Member States representing two thirds of return decisions issued - where identification processes are conducted successfully, including through interviews, and issuance of travel documents is timely – and poor for the remaining Member States. For a more effective, even and predictable readmission cooperation, the better cooperation practices could be extended to all Member States. Identification could be further expedited by issuing travel documents without interviews for documented cases and availing itself of alternative means of identification (missions, phone or videoconference). This should result in a better rate of issuance of travel documents and a higher return rate.