

Mongolia

EU engagement to date

The EU-Mongolia Framework Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation, which entered into force on 1 November 2017, deals with cooperation on migration, including the obligation to readmit one's own nationals (Article 31). To date, no further engagement on readmission cooperation has taken place, as no specific issues have been raised by Member States and the country was not prioritised for EU level engagement due to a relatively low number of return decisions issued annually to its nationals.

Cooperation on readmission

In 2019, 1 205 Mongolian nationals staying illegally in the Member States were issued return decisions and 640 effectively returned to Mongolia resulting in a **return rate** of 53%. Member States submitted 155 readmission requests to Mongolian authorities, which issued 31 travel documents resulting in an **issuance rate** of 20%.

A total of 11 Member States reported having approached the authorities of Mongolia for readmission matters related to its nationals in 2019.

One Member State relied explicitly on the EU-Mongolia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), and two have a **bilateral agreement** which was often to always respected.

More than half of the Member States engaging, where three quarters of all Mongolian nationals ordered to leave are to be found, assessed the overall cooperation with Mongolia in the **identification procedure** as good or very good, while four considered it as poor or very poor, with the remaining one assessing it as average.

Seven Member States consider an established routine with diplomatic missions as effectively implemented, and four Member States as not effectively implemented, e.g. due to long delays, or lack of effective cooperation on non-voluntary returns.

For most Member States, valid or expired passport, or its photocopy and other identity documents, are used as evidence. Information extracted from VIS is accepted for three Member States, but not for one, and biometrics are accepted for half of the eight who tried.

For five Member States, standing for close to 40% of all return decisions, consular interviews are often to always performed upon their request, while it is rarely or never the case for another four, representing slightly more than half of all return decisions. Of the seven Member States who experienced interviews, five (standing for 70% of return decisions) consider that outcomes are (very) satisfactory or acceptable.

Identification missions are never or almost never organised (no such need was flagged by Member States either).

According to five Member States, standing for nearly three quarters of return decisions issued to Mongolian citizens, the **issuance of travel documents** often to always takes place in a timely manner, except in cases of families whose child/ren born in a Member State first have

to be voluntarily registered by the parents at the Mongolian embassy in order to get travel documents. In four Member States, accounting for 20% of return decisions issued, travel documents are rarely or never issued in time.

Return operations by **charter flights** were accepted from three Member States. Other Member States have not attempted it.

In principle, no restrictions are imposed on **scheduled flights**. However, two Member States indicated that visas for escorts were necessary.

Overall, six Member States, standing for 40% of all return decisions, assess the **overall cooperation on return and readmission** positively or as improved. One rates it as stable, one as challenging and two, standing for slightly more than 40% of all return decisions consider that it has deteriorated.

With a total of 1 205 Mongolian nationals ordered to leave in 2019, Mongolia ranks 40th amongst visa-bound third countries whose nationals have been issued return decisions in the Member States. Overall, a third of Member States interact with Mongolia on readmission, with the rest having few or no cases. No jointly agreed procedures are in place at EU level, but two Member States have bilateral agreements and most of those who engage have an established readmission routine. Those practices deliver uneven results, with identification processes conducted successfully for half of the Member States accounting for three quarters of return decisions issued, and the opposite for the rest. Issuance of travel documents is generally timely for Member States representing nearly three quarters of the return decisions issued, with, however, difficulties for certain categories of returnees for the Member States representing 40% of the return decisions issued. For the remaining Member States issuance of travel documents is not timely. The better cooperation practices would need to be extended to all Member States, including regarding the range of evidence accepted (VIS, biometrics). For a more effective and predictable cooperation, identification processes could be expedited by performing interviews as requested by all Member States and by availing itself of alternative means of identification (missions, phone or videoconference), and be followed through swiftly with issuing travel documents for all irregularly staying nationals. This, potentially facilitated by targeted capacity building support, should result in a better rate of issuance of travel documents and a higher return rate.