Lessons Learnt and Recommendations on the FReM Training for Forced Return Monitors
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Disclaimer: The Lessons Learnt Report was drafted within the framework of the EU funded “Forced Return Monitoring (FReM)” project.

The Report compiles lessons learnt and recommendations from FReM project/associated project Partner States’ representatives and the FReM trained forced return monitors as well as Frontex, assessing the effectiveness of the FReM training as a comprehensive educational tool. Furthermore, the Report compiles lessons learnt as identified by the FReM trained monitors who participated in forced return operations. The feedback focussed specifically on the reporting tool as well as documenting the additions necessary for the finalisation of the training material.

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Mr Martijn Pluim
Director, ICMPD
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The Lessons Learnt and Recommendations Report was elaborated within the framework of the “Forced Return Monitoring (FReM)” project. The main objective of the FReM project was to further strengthen the quality of the European return system in line with human rights standards and best practices, thus supporting the implementation of Article 8(6) of the Return Directive. In line with the project structure, a Framework for a European Pool of Forced Return Monitors (clarifying terms of reference, working modalities, participation, mandate, etc.) was designed and agreed upon between the project/associated project Partners. The Framework offers a concept for collaboration among EU Member States (EU MS), as well as those associated States,\(^1\) bound by the Return Directive\(^2\) in implementing its Art 8(6). The Framework served as a basis for the elaboration of the Guidelines and Monitoring Tools for Forced Return Monitoring, which aim to promote professional monitoring based on the principle that forcefully returned persons should be treated in a manner compliant with international human rights standards, EU and national legal obligations, in particular the proportionality of the use of force. The Guidelines outlines the principles and rules that a forced return monitor is committed to comply with while monitoring forced return operations. The Guidelines takes into account existing guidelines, namely, the Frontex Code of Conduct for Joint Return

\(^1\) Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein

Operations, the CPT standards and the Council of Europe Twenty Guidelines on Forced Return, as well as good practices currently implemented by EU MS and associated States. After the elaboration of the Framework and the Guidelines, the FReM project/associated project Partners, identified forced return monitors selected on the basis of set criteria. The selected group was trained in line with the elaborated draft FReM Training Manual. As part of the training programme, the trained monitors participated in forced return operations as trainee monitors and had to submit monitoring reports which the project team provided feedback to.

Following the training and the participation in forced return operations as trainee monitors, the FReM trained monitors and FReM project/associated project Partners, as well as Frontex, gathered on 7 May 2015 in Luxembourg for a Lessons Learnt (LL) Meeting. The objective of the Meeting was to discuss and compile lessons learnt and recommendations from the monitors who had participated in forced return operations as well as project/associated project Partner representatives who organised the missions. The reason was to enable the assessment of the effectiveness of the FReM training as a comprehensive educational tool. The specific objectives of the LL Meeting were to discuss and identify lessons learnt from both the training provided to the forced return monitors and the participation of the trainee monitors in forced return operations; linking the

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theoretical and practical work that has been undertaken, based on observations of the different parties involved.

This Report presents the lessons learnt as well as relevant recommendations that emerged from the discussion at the LL Meeting. Section one of this Report is divided into two sub-sections: (1.1) an overview of the training for forced return monitors, and (1.2) the pilot monitoring operations. Section two focuses on the lessons learnt and recommendations related to the training for European forced return monitors. The lessons learnt and respective recommendations relating to the successful organisation and implementation of (joint) forced return operations with FReM trained monitors are highlighted in section three, whilst section four focuses on lessons learnt in relation to reporting based on the reports submitted by the forced return monitors.

The experiences shared and the recommendations drawn served the purpose to finalise the products, procedures and processes elaborated in relation to a) the training of independent European monitors for forced returns (e.g. the Training Manual), b) the inclusion of European monitors in (joint) forced return operations, and c) the reporting by the monitors. The lessons learnt and corresponding recommendations will furthermore be used to inform European stakeholders of good practices of European forced return monitoring.

1.1 Training Sessions for Forced Return Monitors

One of the objectives of the FReM project was to train a group of European monitors who may be called upon to observe national and/or joint forced return operations, in line with the obligation for EU MS
and associated States under Article 8(6) of the Return Directive. The training sessions for forced return monitors were thus conducted to train those monitors who had been nominated by the FReM project/associated project Partner States and who had undergone a selection procedure to be part of the Pilot Pool of Forced Return Monitors. The training aimed to promote professional monitoring based on the principle that forcefully returned persons should be treated in compliance with human rights standards and EU and national legal obligations. More specifically, the objective of the training was to provide the trainee monitors with a comprehensive overview of the role, mandate and responsibilities of forced return monitors.

The target group for the training were entities with the mandate of conducting forced return monitoring and representatives from the FReM project/associated project Partner States, namely: Austria, Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal and Switzerland. Overall, 21 forced return monitors were trained in two training sessions at the ICMPD Headquarters in Vienna Austria. One training session was held in November 2014, the other in December 2014, each with a duration of four days.6

The training sessions were conducted with an overall multi-disciplinary approach using different methodologies, including presentations, discussions, exercises, and case studies as well as practical demonstrations. Consequently, the training sessions involved trainers and experts from EU Agencies, specifically, Frontex

6 AT: 8 monitors, BG: 3 monitors, EL: 4 monitors, HU: 1 monitor, LU: 2 monitors, MT: 3 monitors. The monitors from PO and CH were unable to attend the training. In addition, one representative of each FReM project/associated project Partner was invited to attend the training. All Partner States attended except for Switzerland as their monitors were unable to attend.
and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), representatives from the Austrian Ministry of Interior, the COBRA Special Operations Unit, the Schwechat Police Department, an experienced forced return monitor, and an independent human rights consultant contracted as moderator for the training and who was also one of the authors of the Training Manual.

The training sessions covered four modules and provided participants with information and a better understanding of key issues related to forced return procedures and forced return monitoring. Specifically, the modules covered the following:

- **Module 1: Introduction to Forced Return Monitoring**

  - Introduction to the procedures for a forced return operation, the Return Directive, the role of Frontex and the practicalities of a joint return operation (JRO), including an exercise on the different components of a forced return operation and the systematic approach to monitoring a forced return operation;
  
  - Understanding the role and the knowledge, skills and attitudes required of a forced return monitor;
  
  - Introduction and detailed discussion of the main monitoring tasks and the ethical principles involved: neutrality, professionalism, confidentiality and the importance of reporting;

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7 It is important to mention that the Training Manual which was produced as one of the final outcomes of the FReM project in September 2015, has considered and incorporated the feedback of the Lessons Learnt Meeting. Therefore, the final Training Manual does not fully correspond with the structure and substance as described in this Report.
Understanding the monitoring tasks and the obligation to factually report in detail during the four phases of a return operation, specifically, pre-return, pre-departure, in-flight and arrival.

Module 2: Human Rights Involved in Forced Return

Understanding the theoretical background, relevant definitions and the meaning of the key human rights involved in forced return operations;

Discussions and exercises on the treatment of returnees by the authorities throughout a forced return operation, the basis for the use of coercive measures and the use of a reporting template on the use of force (including a case study for analysis and application of the knowledge);

Understanding the possible impact on the monitor when monitoring forced return operations and related coping mechanisms.

Module 3: The Role of Escorts

Introduction of the main role of the escort leader and the escorts during a forced return operation;

Demonstration, simulation and discussion of the use of authorised restraints and different levels of force and/or coercive measures that might be used during a forced return operation. The actual official use depends on the national legal framework and thus may vary from country to country. The Austrian COBRA Special Operations Unit delivered the session at their training centre.
Module 4: Reporting and Communication
Responsibilities

- Introduction and clarification of a reporting template for forced return monitors, including the related responsibilities, subjectivity and objectivity, language, stating the necessary facts when reporting an incident, when reporting and communicating, etc.;

- Familiarisation with the core principles of accuracy, confidentiality, impartiality and non-discrimination in reporting and communication;

- Preparation of a monitoring report based on two different real-life scenarios (following demonstrations and simulations, i.e. role plays by the COBRA Special Operations Unit) and feedback on the reports by experts and experienced monitors.

The Lessons Learnt Meeting was instrumental to determine through a combination of discussions in plenary and working groups, whether the training conducted, did indeed prepare the monitors for their tasks and provide all necessary information, knowledge and experiences to enable them to conduct the actual monitoring of forced return operations. The discussions served the purpose to identify lessons learnt from the monitoring operations (good practices and challenges), especially with regard to the reporting tool as well as to document additions and improvements for the finalisation of the training material.
1.2 Pilot Monitoring of Forced Return Operations

After the training, the trained forced return monitors were given the opportunity to participate in actual forced return operations as trainee monitors, which was a pre-requisite to receive a training certificate. The participation of the trained monitors in an actual forced return operation served the purpose to test the knowledge they had obtained during the FReM training.

Therefore, the FReM project team, the FReM project/associated project Partners as well as Frontex, co-operated to identify international JROs, national return operations and Dublin operations, during which the trained monitors had the opportunity to participate as trainee monitors enabling them to gain valuable experience. Even though Dublin returns do not fall within the Return Directive, this type of return operation was used for training purposes so that all monitors received the chance to participate in a forced return operation. The project team tried specifically to allocate monitors to forced return operations organised by a state other than that from which they came, in addition to Joint Return Operations (JROs). The basis of this strategy was to ensure that forced return monitors would monitor the procedures of another project/associated project Partner, to gain experience with return procedures other than those of their own country, i.e. to test the concept of a European Monitor.

From 29 November 2014 to 26 August 2015, in total, 14 forced return operations, two of which were Dublin operations (see more details under section three) were conducted with the participation of FReM trained forced return monitors.
The following lessons learnt and respective recommendations are drawn from the insights gathered during plenary session as well as those emerging from four working groups during the Lessons Learnt Meeting in Luxembourg, 7 May 2015. The results of the feedback forms completed by the participants after the two training sessions were also taken into account. However, the lessons learnt meeting particularly looked for insights into the relevance of the training, after the knowledge had been put into practice by the forced return monitors while participating in forced (joint) return operations.

2.1 General Observations

Overall, the monitors concluded in their assessment that the training provided a good framework with relevant and useful information in sufficient time and prepared the monitors well for their tasks. The training was said to having been well prepared and organised.

The training was further considered to have provided sufficient information about the different phases of a forced return operation covered by monitoring, and to have facilitated the understanding of the different roles of the participants in the process (e.g. escorts, escort leader etc.). Furthermore, it helped to mentally prepare the future monitors for their tasks. Case studies used as part of the training were judged as suitable, helpful and supportive to develop a deeper understanding of the different roles.

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8 The four phases identified are: 1. the pre-return phase, 2. the pre-departure phase, 3. the in-flight phase and 4. the arrival phase.
scenarios of forced return operations and how these can and might develop.

Some participants expressed that they could have benefited from more detail during the training in relation to the different tasks, possible circumstances that can arise and related responsibilities of monitors. Another request that was voiced related to the wish for increased interaction with experienced forced return monitors from different EU Member States as part of the training. Some monitors also expressed interest in visiting detention centres in different countries in order to see differences in the national return procedures.

2.1.1. Recommendations Training – General Observations

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintain small groups for the training;</td>
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<td>Discuss possibilities, importance and feasibility to include a visit to detention centres in different countries for monitors;</td>
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<td>Revise the Training Manual so that it is as specific as possible in the information that is provided;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review the possibility to include more time for discussions in the training, e.g. with experienced monitors (review the possibility to include a Q&amp;A session with experienced monitors from different EU MS).</td>
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2.2 Use of Coercive Measures and the Role of Escorts

In addition to the theoretical introduction, the training included a hands-on, practical training session by the Austrian COBRA Special Operations Unit that introduced the participants to coercive measures and restraints, which could be used during a forced return operation. This session and practical experience was particularly highlighted and emphasised by all participants as very helpful and highly beneficial.

The practical session allowed the monitors on the one hand to increase their awareness, and on the other hand made it possible for them to experience what coercive measures actually are, how they look (and actually feel like) and what they are used for (e.g. as a protection and preventive measure). Furthermore, hands-on experience with these measures ensured that the FReM trained monitors would be able to distinguish between and better judge the “adequacy” of different restraining and coercive measures. Thus, even if the training session is to be held in different MS on a rotational basis, or with input from various MS by a possible future Secretariat of the European Pool of Forced Return Monitors, this session is judged as crucial.

It is also important that escorts are aware of the role, mandate and responsibilities of the monitors. The participants shared positive experiences, where interaction of monitors and escorts as part of the training of escorts contributed to increased awareness and understanding of the police, and of escorts, on the role of the monitors and vice versa. The interaction took different forms. In Greece, the police invited the Office of the Ombudsman (mandated with forced
return monitoring) to provide lectures on forced return monitoring in training sessions for police officers participating in forced return operations. In Luxembourg, the police school as of April 2015 invited forced return monitors to provide information on monitoring of forced return to new police recruits. Despite the fact that the *Frontex Code of Conduct for Joint Return Operations coordinated by Frontex* - valid for all participants in a joint return operation - introduces the concept of monitors, awareness of the different roles and tasks is not necessarily guaranteed. In line with the feedback from both the training and the Lessons Learnt Meeting, it is judged that a future participation of European forced return monitors in Frontex escort training sessions would benefit both the monitors and the escorts.

Overall, the trained forced return monitors seemed to be well aware of existing differences with regard to coercive measures legally allowed and/or requested in the FReM project/associated project Partner States. However, based on the outcome of the working groups, it was concluded during the LL Meeting that in the future, the Training Manual should include an overview of the legally allowed and/or required coercive measures (and materials) in the different countries in a short format. Furthermore, it was suggested that a short information note on the corresponding return system, including return procedures and allowed coercive measures be distributed to the monitors before a monitoring operation in a specific EU MS or associated State.
### 2.2.1. Recommendations Training – Use of Coercive Measures and Role of Escorts

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<tr>
<td><strong>Institutionalise</strong> hands-on, practical experience in the training for forced return monitors in relation to coercive measures (e.g. provided by Special Forces).</td>
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<td><strong>Develop an (additional) explanatory video on different types of coercive measures</strong> to be used in training sessions.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ensure participation of the forced return monitors in Frontex’s escort training.</strong> This can be designed as an additional training session or module within the training.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Develop a guide and/or country factsheets on specific coercive measures used and/or prescribed/authorised by the different countries</strong> in relation to their legal framework. Use that as part of the training and/or provide it for reference to the monitors during the monitoring exercise (see also section three, recommendations JROs);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ensure an overview/information sheet/guide on the state of play of the national return procedures</strong> in the different EU MS and associated States. This should include specific information on, for example, how the return is organised, who is involved and responsible for the forced return, notification periods, as well as other specifics, i.e. whether health (or fit-to-travel) certificates are required or not.</td>
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2.3 Information to be Added and/or Reinforced

Although it was generally said that the training sessions provided sufficient information on the different phases (pre-return, pre-departure, in-flight and arrival\(^9\)) and created a thorough understanding of the different tasks as part of the phases, more information about the pre-departure phase was requested by some monitors.

A discussion emerged on whether sufficient information was provided on the different types of operations, e.g. by air and land. A number of participants were of the view that sufficient information was provided and that the operations by air or land (bus) did not differ in too many aspects. However, some monitors expressed the wish to be briefed more thoroughly on possible differences, including departure times at night, and the necessity to bring with them food and beverages etc.

Additional topics and/or information that were described as missing and perhaps useful to be added to the training and/or Training Manual can be found at the end of the following table of recommendations.

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9 These phases have been determined as part of the FReM project in order to further guide the forced return monitors and streamline the monitoring process. They are described in detail in the FReM Guidelines and Monitoring Tools for Forced Return Monitoring.
### 2.3.1. Recommendations Training – Information to be Added/Reinforced

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<tr>
<td>Revise information provided in the training and/or Training Manual on different means of transportation (e.g. aircraft, bus, train, etc.) with a focus on specific details and differences of air and land operations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revise and specify information provided in the training and/or Training Manual on the pre-departure phase and the specific responsibilities of the monitor during the in-flight phase.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasise information on possible “hardship” conditions so as to better prepare monitors, e.g. by including a testimony of a particular case (several landings, delays, staying awake for 36hrs etc.) of a forced return monitor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review the possibility to include more and different examples and case studies on jurisprudence.</td>
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Integrate more and specific information on:

- Children and vulnerable groups, their rights, protection measures, responsibilities etc.;
- The importance of the personal attitude of the forced return monitor, especially on international Joint Return Operations, in relation to an impartial and factual monitoring as is the main task of monitors, and the request for necessary information, e.g. from the escort leader;
- Relevant procedures and differences between JROs with stops and national forced return operations joining a JRO (specifics on seating and responsibility for returnees, including those that enter at different stops).
As part of the training, the newly trained monitors were to participate in (joint) forced return operations in order to complete the FReM training cycle.\(^{10}\)

In the timeframe from 29 November 2014 to 26 August 2015, the FReM project/associated project Partner States organised 14 forced return operations in total\(^ {11}\) and took on 19 FReM trained monitors. The Lessons Learnt Meeting provided the opportunity to discuss whether the inclusion of (European) monitors in (joint) forced return operations actually results in relevant differences in comparison to having national monitors, thus requiring adaptations for any party involved in the preparation and/or organisation of the (joint) forced return operation.

Bulgaria, Greece, Luxembourg, Malta and Portugal did not implement any (joint) forced return operation with trained FReM monitors in the given timeframe in their own countries, but sent their monitors to attend other FReM project/associated project Partner States’ (joint) forced return operations. The other states, Austria, Hungary, Switzerland as well as Frontex – as observer to the project and

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\(^{10}\) As previously mentioned under 1.2., the participation in and monitoring of a forced return operation as well as the submission of a respective monitoring report was agreed to constitute a prerequisite to obtaining a certificate.

\(^{11}\) 8 of the 14 pilot monitoring of forced return operations were JROs, and 6 were national forced return operations. The JROs were organised by different MS, including Austria, Hungary and Italy, to destinations such as Albania, Georgia, Kosovo (4), and Nigeria (2). The national forced return operations, two of which were Dublin operations, were organised by Austria, Germany, Luxembourg and Switzerland. Their destinations were Poland (2) via Slovakia (1), Hungary, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Kosovo (source: ICMPD FReM Monitoring data).
supporting third party in the implementation of the pilot monitoring missions - organised (joint) forced return operations and facilitated the participation of FReM trained monitors in their operations.

3.1 General Observations – Organisation of Forced Return Operations with FReM Trained Monitors

Every organising FReM project/associated project Partner State and Frontex agreed in their assessment that having a FReM trained monitor on board did not generally increase the organisational workload relating to the preparations of forced return operations, as in general, getting monitors on board requires additional organisation. The project/associated project Partner States therefore overall agreed that there was no pronounced difference in the preparations relating to the European monitor in comparison to a national monitor.

However, Switzerland had a significant additional workload to report. In their experience, informing all the involved authorities as well as the FReM trained monitor about the procedure of the forced return operation involved more efforts than with national monitors. The representative of Switzerland, however, also mentioned that this might be due to the Swiss cantonal system, as many different authorities are involved, which need to be duly informed. With a national monitor it is usually less work since the processes with the national monitoring body are well established. They receive the relevant information about planned forced return operations and then they decide on their own whether to join or not. With the FReM trained monitor, the role and background had to be explained to all authorities involved. However, when the national monitoring system
was established, Switzerland faced the same challenges. Therefore, it may just be the question of new procedures and processes, which with time will ease. Nonetheless, Switzerland rated it overall as a positive and interesting experience, allowing for valuable feedback on their own system.

In addition, the representatives from the organising FReM project/associated project Partner States highlighted the participation of the FReM trained monitors as a good opportunity to learn how to monitor in a training environment i.e. as trainee monitors. As the police/escorts could also present their own working procedures, a mutual understanding between the police/escorts and monitors was created. Furthermore, the representative from Frontex reported that the Frontex managers involved had highlighted the good level of training and knowledge of the FReM trained monitors.

Most monitors stated positively that they were provided with all necessary information beforehand, including a list of the returnees to be returned in the operation and that they were able to observe all relevant phases of the process. The relationship of the monitors with the escort leader as well as with the escorts was reported to be based on good communication and co-operation.

3.2 Challenges Encountered and Respective Recommendations

All participating States agreed with the assessment that the only major difference, and in instances difficulty, of having European forced return monitors on board of (joint) return operations is the language issue. For example, Switzerland reported that when they
took a FReM trained monitor on their operation, the briefings, as it was a national forced return operation, were all held in German, and as the specific monitor did not speak German, the monitor was not able to follow the conversation. However, on Joint Return Operations, the common language spoken, thus also in briefings, is usually English. This requires the monitors to have an adequate command of English to allow them to follow the briefing.

Another challenge encountered related to the number of monitors participating in a return operation. Generally, the number of returnees is considerably higher in a JRO than in a national forced return operation. In line with the FReM Guidelines, two monitors should participate in large JROs or large national forced return operations in order to be able to monitor the full procedures throughout the operation. Overall, JROs present a more dynamic and diverse situation, which also require more interaction between the forced return monitors and the escort leader/escorts.

The issue of ensuring sufficient places for FReM trained monitors (rather than for returnees) on the flights was a challenge. Austria, for example, reported a challenge in organising and securing the participation of more than two FReM trained monitors per operation – something to be considered in future preparations when sending trainee monitors on forced return operations.

A related difficulty encountered during the pilot monitoring missions was the question of seating for the forced return monitors. In several instances, it seemed to not have been clear where, at which position in the aircraft, for example, the monitors should be seated, especially after stops on JROs, with additional and/or new
returnees coming on board. In the working groups at the Lessons Learnt Meeting, it became clear that seating of the FReM trainee monitors was not always clarified beforehand.

According to agreed procedures and as clarified in the Guidelines, the escort leader assigns seats to the monitors based on the security assessment made and communicates their positioning at the briefing. Should the monitor be of the opinion that another seat would make the monitoring tasks easier (e.g. better view from another seat, or not seated at the front, or the wish to be seated in close proximity to a case that needs special attention etc.), the monitor can ask the escort leader if it is possible to have another seat. However, the decision always remains at the discretion of the escort leader.

While discussing the experience of the return operations with FReM trained monitors, a point in relation to the training re-emerged: the importance that the forced return monitors are aware of the differences in relation to the use (and related laws and regulations) of coercive measures in the different countries, specifically for countries where the national legal framework in this regard differs. Since it was already a topic while discussing the lessons learnt of the training for FReM monitors, a related recommendation is already specified in section two.
### 3.2.1. Recommendations – Pilot Monitoring Missions of Forced Return Operations

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<td>Provide more specific information on the procedures and differences between JROs with stops and national return operations joining a JRO (including specifics on seating) as part of the training and in the Training Manual (relevant also for section 2).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monitors shall be in possession of a guide on coercive measures authorised and/or prescribed by the different countries.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ideally, monitors shall speak the language of the organising Member State (or English for JROs) and/or the language of the returnees;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language abilities of monitors shall also be reflected (and recorded somewhere) in the European Pool of Forced Return Monitors.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Observe the Framework and Guidelines and ensure the timely information of all monitors as well as their full participation in briefings during the return operation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduce a vest for European monitors for improved visibility and identification.</td>
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Monitoring missions were conducted as part of 14 forced return operations (see section 3 for details). In total, 19 monitors participated and submitted monitoring reports.

Upon completion of a pilot monitoring mission the trainee monitors were to submit a report based on the FReM reporting template. An experienced forced return monitor, also acting as an expert in the project, as well as the FReM project team, assessed all the reports submitted. Overall, the quality of the monitoring reports produced was high. In most cases, the reports, based on the FReM report template developed, were precise and detailed, especially when taking into consideration that for most it was the first time to report on an actual forced return operation.

In addition, since it was the first time the FReM trained monitors “officially” used the reporting template, the discussions allowed for important insight into the suitability of the template. The monitors had already used the reporting template on the simulations at the COBRA Special Operations Unit facilities, and, interestingly, these reports showed little difference between the way an experienced and a non-experienced monitor analysed the simulations.

4.1 Observations from the Pilot Monitoring Mission Reports

The assessment of the submitted reports facilitated the following main observations, which were also communicated and discussed as part of the Lessons Learnt Meeting:
The report is to reflect facts and details that were observed and need to be reported. It should follow a presentation of facts – what do I see, an assessment - what does that mean and recommendation(s) - what needs to change. It should not contain information about the monitor him/herself, except in situations where being the monitor posed a limitation or where the person was involved;

The report should be accurate about data and figures, e.g. how many returnees were present (disaggregated by male/female, adults/children);

For FReM purposes, one report in English is sufficient and is thus not required in the national language of the organising MS;

No boxes should be erased from the template and/or left blank. If nothing is to be reported, n.a. (for not applicable) is to be inserted;

The reports need to be cross-checked in terms of quality and completeness and, where necessary, be revised by the monitor;

A short and concise description of the debriefing, by stating which topics were addressed and highlighting their own contribution, if any;

When making recommendations, explanations as to why and what they are related to are required. National legislation and rules in place on the use of coercive measures are not subject for recommendations.
Feedback on the Reporting Template

Overall, the monitors agreed that the template provided is helpful for reporting. However, the need to simplify and modify the template was also expressed. The observation was made that the template as provided requires to be completed entirely with text by the monitor, and thus supports an undesired mix of facts, opinions and statements, as it is not based on checking given options in the context of multiple choice.

4.1.1. Recommendations - Reporting

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>■ Revise (add certain information columns at the beginning) and simplify the reporting template – discuss whether to change the reporting template to a fact-based sheet or checklist-type template;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Discuss the future use of a fact-based reporting sheet which can be linked to a database and used by the future secretariat and/or pool of monitors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Provide more and better information in the reporting template itself, including to whom the report is being addressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Develop a detailed guide to filling in the monitoring report, emphasising the presentation of facts – assessment - recommendation steps and the observations drawn as part of the Lessons Learnt meeting;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Add the revised reporting template and relevant observations to the revised Training Manual and relevant documents.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>