

## Reintegration of Returnees: Experience of Armenia

Dear colleagues,

Under these thematic discussions the issue of sustainable reintegration of migrants is also mentioned among other issues and I will touch upon this matter in my talk.

Why is it important for Armenia to provide reintegration support for returnees? As a result of living several years in the foreign countries, after returning back to their homeland the returnees find themselves in completely new situation than before their departure. This is due to the drastic and serious changes taking place in all spheres of social-economic life in Armenia. Quite often the return process is also very stressful and it is not surprising that especially after returning back, irregular migrants are seeking to leave the country by all means. In this sense, provision of reintegration support can be also viewed as prevention of irregular emigration recycling.

That is why reintegration is also one of the priority directions of the RA Government migration policy. Both the issues on return and reintegration are included on the agenda of the international cooperation as well.

The issue on "*Improving the efficiency of assistance provided to citizens of the Republic of Armenia returning to the Republic of Armenia*" was recognized the 3<sup>rd</sup> Policy Priority in the *Strategy of Migration Policy for 2017-202*, approved by the RA Government on March 23, 2017.

Furthermore, **5 Actions and 14 Activities** identified in the *Action Plan for effective implementation of the migration strategy of the Republic of Armenia*, adopted by the RA Government on August 31, 2017.

### The following actions will be carried on:

- a. Building the capacities of government agencies dealing with issues of reintegration of returned citizens of the Republic of Armenia.
- b. Arrangement of a permanent forum, enhancement of co-operation between non-governmental organizations and government agencies dealing with re-integration of returnees;
- c. Development of a concept paper for re-integration and further approval by the Government;
- d. Increasing the awareness among those willing to return and the returned ones regarding programmes and mechanisms addressing the core challenges of returning migrants
- e. Ensure continuity of re-integration support programmes within the framework of bilateral and multilateral agreements.

A special internet system was elaborated to manage the portal - [www.tundarc.am](http://www.tundarc.am) (in Armenian translated “back to home”). The system was established for the citizens of the Republic of Armenia who wish to return Armenia from foreign countries. Information from the internet system can be obtained through three levels.

In the first level the information related to the return is posted in 15 spherical divisions of the system. According to the Government Decision for each of sphere a respective state authority has defined, who develops and installs information in popular way and in “question and answer” format.

In the second level each citizen can apply to respective state authority with a concrete issue through the system. The System Administrator (Employee of the State Migration Service of Armenia) after receiving the application sends it to the respective state authority where the application entered into the general document flow system, after all the application must be answered according to the RA legislation. At the same time the identification number is provided to the applicant who will be able to follow the process of discussion of his/her issue from abroad.

In the third level the citizen living in a foreign country can receive necessary information from the respective state authority via Skype conversation.

Currently systemization of the work of different institutions within the area of reintegration and also the cooperation of appropriate international and non-governmental organizations has been ensured. The Referral Centre for Reintegration (RCR) was established at the State Migration Service of Armenia and became operational since January 2014. The aim of RCR is to provide returnees with “a one-stop shop” for information about reintegration possibilities and referrals to the most appropriate services for assistance.

Thank you.