

REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA | PROFILE 2023

MIGRATION

GOVERNANCE

INDICATORS



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MIGRATION
GOVERNANCE
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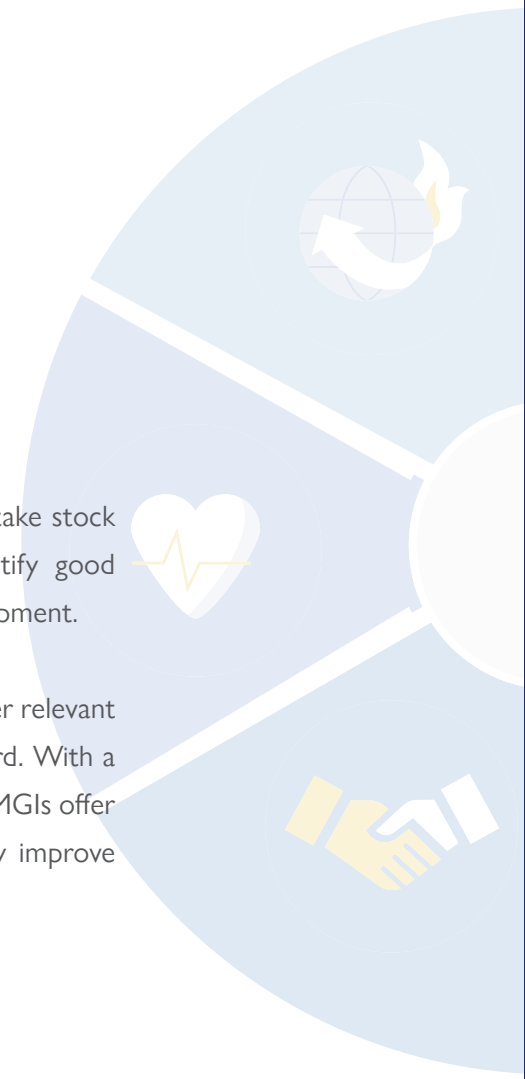
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OBJECTIVES

The MGIs aim to help governments, upon request, take stock of their migration policies and strategies to identify good practices and areas with potential for further development.

The MGIs open dialogues with governments and other relevant stakeholders to identify priorities on the way forward. With a focus on government ownership of the process, the MGIs offer support at the national and local levels to gradually improve migration management systems.



ACRONYMS

| | |
|-------|---|
| ARLIS | Armenian Legal Information System |
| CIS | Commonwealth of Independent States |
| CSOs | civil society organizations |
| EAEU | Eurasian Economic Union |
| ERRIN | European Return and Reintegration Network |
| IOM | International Organization for Migration |
| NSS | National Security Service |
| MCS | Migration and Citizenship Service |
| MGIs | Migration Governance Indicators |
| MIA | Ministry of Internal Affairs |
| MiGOF | Migration Governance Framework |
| MoU | memorandum of understanding |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |

INTRODUCTION

“ Migration has been part of the human experience throughout history, and we recognize that it is a source of prosperity, innovation and sustainable development in our globalized world, and that these positive impacts can be optimized by improving migration governance.¹

The need to maximize the opportunities and to face the challenges that mobility brings has been recognized with the inclusion of migration in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and with the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. The incorporation of target 10.7 into the 2030 Agenda created the need to define “planned and well-managed migration policies”. This is why, in 2015, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) developed the Migration Governance² Framework (MiGOF). This Framework³ offers a concise view of an ideal approach that allows a State to determine what it might need to govern migration well and in a way that suits its circumstances. That same year, IOM in collaboration with Economist Impact developed the Migration Governance Indicators (MGIs), a standard set of almost 100 indicators that help States assess the comprehensiveness of their migration governance structures.

The indicators constitute a starting point to engage governments in a consultative process that allows them to identify areas that are well developed and others that would benefit from further development, and most importantly priorities that are in line with the specific challenges and opportunities that a given country is facing.

The MGIs are characterized by three main fundamental attributes:

1. The MGI process is a **voluntary** exercise: The MGIs are conducted in countries that have requested to be part of the process.
2. The MGIs are **sensitive to national specificities**: The MGIs recognize the different challenges and opportunities of each context, and therefore, do not propose a one-size-fits-all solution, but rather aim to spark a discussion on what well-governed migration can mean.
3. The MGIs constitute a **process**: The MGI process is not a static tool to collect data on countries' migration frameworks. It is rather the first step of a dynamic exercise that can enable governments to identify areas of their migration policy in need of further development, or that could benefit from capacity-building.

The MGIs recognize that all countries have different realities, challenges and opportunities in relation to migration. Therefore, the MGIs do not rank countries on the design or implementation of their migration policies.

Finally, the MGIs do not measure migration policy outcomes or institutional effectiveness. Instead, they take stock of the migration-related policies in place and operate as a benchmarking framework that provides insights on policy measures that countries can consider as they further progress towards good migration governance.

This country profile presents a summary of the well-developed areas of the migration governance structures of the Republic of Armenia (hereinafter referred to as Armenia), as well as the areas with potential for further development, as assessed by the MGIs.⁴

¹ United Nations, *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration* (A/RES/73/195 of 11 January 2019), paragraph 8.

² “Migration governance” refers to the system of institutions, legal frameworks, mechanisms, and practices aimed at regulating migration and protecting migrants. It is used almost synonymously with the term “migration management”, although the latter is also sometimes used to refer to the narrow act of regulating cross-border movement at the State level.

³ IOM Council, *Migration Governance Framework*, 106th Session, C/106/40 (4 November 2015), page 1, footnote 1.

⁴ The MGI initiative is a policy-benchmarking programme led by IOM and implemented with the support of Economist Impact. Funding is provided by IOM Member States.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

MiGOF

IOM's MiGOF sets out the essential elements to support planned and well-managed migration. It seeks to present, in a consolidated, coherent and comprehensive way, a set of three principles and three objectives which, if respected and fulfilled, would ensure that migration is humane and orderly, and benefits migrants and society.

At the basis of

PRINCIPLES

1. **Adhere** to international standards and fulfil migrants' rights.
2. **Formulate** policy using evidence and a whole-of-government approach.
3. **Engage** with partners to address migration and related issues.

OBJECTIVES

1. **Advance** the socioeconomic well-being of migrants and society.
2. **Effectively address** the mobility dimensions of crises.
3. **Ensure** that migration takes place in a safe, orderly and dignified manner.




MGIs

WHAT THEY ARE

-  A set of indicators that offers insights on policy levers that countries can use to strengthen their migration governance structures
-  A tool that identifies good practices and areas that could be further developed
-  A consultative process that advances dialogues on migration governance by clarifying what "well-governed migration" might look like in the context of SDG target 10.7 and the Global Compact for Migration implementation*

Which support the measurement of

WHAT THEY ARE NOT

-  Not a ranking of countries
-  Not an assessment of policy impacts
-  Not prescriptive



Note: "The Global Compact is framed in a way consistent with target 10.7 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in which Member States committed to cooperate internationally to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration."

The MGIs consist of almost 100 indicators grouped under the six different dimensions of migration governance that draw upon the MiGOF categories:



MIGRANTS'
RIGHTS
PAGE 19

Indicators in this domain look at the extent to which migrants have access to certain social services such as health, education and social security. They look at family reunification, access to work, and access to residency and citizenship. The international conventions signed and ratified are also included.



WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT
APPROACH
PAGE 23

Indicators in this area assess countries' institutional, legal and regulatory frameworks related to migration policies. This area also looks at the existence of national migration strategies that are in line with development objectives and overseas development efforts, as well as institutional transparency and coherence in relation to migration management.



PARTNERSHIPS
PAGE 26

This category focuses on countries' efforts to cooperate on migration-related issues with other States and relevant non-governmental actors, including civil society organizations and the private sector.



WELL-BEING
OF MIGRANTS
PAGE 28

Indicators in this area assess countries' policies on the recognition of migrants' educational and professional qualifications, provisions regulating student migration and the existence of bilateral labour agreements between countries. Aspects of diaspora engagement in the country of origin and migrant remittances are also under this domain.



MOBILITY DIMENSION
OF CRISES
PAGE 30

This category looks at the type and level of preparedness of countries when they are faced with mobility dimensions of crises. The questions look at the processes in place for nationals and non-nationals in relation to disasters and climate change, including if humanitarian assistance is equally available to migrants as it is to citizens.



SAFE, ORDERLY AND
REGULAR MIGRATION
PAGE 32

This area looks at countries' approach to migration management in terms of border control and enforcement policies, admission criteria for migrants, preparedness and resilience in the case of significant and unexpected migration flows, as well as the fight against trafficking in persons.



SUMMARY

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Migrants' rights

All migrants have access to Government-funded health services on an equal basis as citizens, envisaged in the Law on Medical Aid and Service to the Population (1996, amended in 2022) (Article 2).

All foreign residents have equal access to employment as citizens. Temporary, permanent and special residents, citizens of countries that have international agreements with Armenia, and foreign citizens of Armenian nationality may work without an employment permit.

Migrants can obtain Armenian citizenship after legally residing in the country permanently for the last three years, provided that they have a command of the Armenian language and are acquainted with the Constitution. To apply for permanent residency, migrants need to have housing and means of subsistence and have lived in the country for at least three years.

Whole-of-government approach

In 2022, the National Assembly adopted the Law of Armenia on Amending the Law on Government Structure and Operation, which established the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA). MIA includes the Migration and Citizenship Service (MCS), the Police and the Rescue Service. The statute of MCS was adopted in March 2023. MIA is responsible for designing and coordinating the implementation of an overall migration policy and strategic plan in Armenia, while MCS is responsible for the regulation of migration processes and is actively participating in policymaking processes.

The Migration Service, under the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure of Armenia (currently MCS), developed the National Migration Governance Framework and its Action Plan in 2021 (adopted in May 2021, then amended in August 2021), which serves as the country's national migration strategy.

The Government does not yet have an interministerial coordination mechanism for migration issues, although there are plans to establish an interministerial committee for the development and implementation of migration policy.

Partnerships

Armenia has migration-related memorandums of understanding with Denmark (2003), Switzerland (2003), Germany (2006), the Benelux countries (Belgium, Luxembourg and the Kingdom of the Netherlands) (2009), Sweden (2009), Norway (2010), the Russian Federation (2010), Czechia (2011), France (2016) and the United Arab Emirates (2023). In addition, the agreement between Armenia and the European Union on the readmission of persons without authorization (2013) entered into force in 2014.

The Government of Armenia engages members of its diaspora and expatriate communities in agenda-setting and the implementation of development policy only in a semi-formal manner, particularly through the iGorts programme. This programme has incentives to encourage the diaspora population to return, invest and engage in the country's development agenda.

Well-being of migrants

Armenia has mechanisms in place to protect the rights of its nationals working abroad, through the Law on Citizenship (1995, amended in 2022) and the National Migration Governance Framework of Armenia (2021). The country also has measures to promote the financial inclusion of women and migrants, through the 2021–2025 Financial Education Plan (2021). In addition, the Government collects labour market data disaggregated by migration status and sex through the Statistical Committee. These data include information on the working-age population, work activities, employment and unemployment. They are further disaggregated by age group, sex, country of birth, citizenship, type of residency, marital status and educational attainment. However, there are no national assessments in place to monitor the labour market demand for immigrants or the effects of emigrants on the domestic labour market. Unfortunately, the annual Labour Force Survey does not cover such data.

Mobility dimension of crises

Communications systems exist for the public to receive information on the evolving nature of crises and how to access assistance via the website of MIA. Additionally, one of the objectives of the National Migration Governance Framework and its Action Plan (2021) is increasing capabilities to respond to migration crises, including natural and human-made disasters.

The Law on Seismic Protection (2002, amended in 2020) provides a framework for managing earthquakes in the country and mentions foreign citizens and stateless people as individuals to whom the provisions apply. However, neither the Statute of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (2023), the Statute of the Rescue Service (2005, amended in 2023) nor the Law on Population Protection during Emergencies (1998, amended in 2023) refers to migrants. Similarly, the National Action Plan for Climate Change Adaptation and its Implementation Plan for the years 2021–2025 (2021) does not include human mobility considerations.

Safe, orderly and regular migration

The Government of Armenia adopted in 2019 the National Human Rights Protection Strategy and its 2020–2022 Action Plan (2019, amended in 2021). Then in 2023, it adopted the Seventh National Plan for Combating Human Trafficking and Exploitation in the years 2023–2025. Both include legislative reforms and actions for raising awareness, collecting data, maintaining databases and improving conditions at educational institutions.

There are measures to combat labour exploitation that apply to all workers but do not specifically target migrants, through the Labour Code (2004, amended in 2023) and the Criminal Code (2021, amended in 2023). The establishment of a national system for tracing and identifying missing migrants is another area with potential for development.



CONTEXT

Armenia has a long migration history, traditionally being a country with a high rate of emigration. Estimates of migration flows from Armenia based on nationally representative survey data collected in 2013 and 2015 show an average departure rate of 30,000 per year between 2007 and 2012, and 35,000 per year between 2013 and 2015.⁵ However, even without migration, Armenia faces a population decline owing to a fertility rate of 1.6 (Campbell et al., 2018). Between 2000 and 2016, the population of the country decreased by 228,300 to 2,998,300 persons (stock).⁶ In recent years, however, more people have been arriving than departing. Arrivals consist of Armenians returning to the country, including those holding dual citizenship, along with labour immigrants. Data from the World Bank show that personal remittances received in Armenia accounted for 18.9 per cent of the country's GDP in 2022.⁷

⁵ This is from the 2017–2021 Strategy for Migration Policy of the Republic of Armenia, Annex to Protocol Decree No. 12 of the Republic of Armenia Government Session of 23 March 2017.

⁶ See footnote 5.

⁷ Visit the [Migration Data Portal](#) for more information.



KEY

FINDINGS



1

ADHERE TO INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS AND FULFIL MIGRANTS' RIGHTS

1.1. International conventions ratified

Table 1. Signature and ratification of international conventions

| Convention name | Ratified (Year) |
|---|---------------------|
| International Labour Organization (ILO) Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97) | Yes (2006) |
| United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (also known as the Refugee Convention), 1951 | Yes (1993) |
| United Nations conventions on statelessness, 1954 and 1961 | Yes (1994) |
| ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143) | Yes (2006) |
| Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 1989 | Yes (1993) |
| International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW), 1990 | No (signed in 2013) |

1.2. Migration governance: examples of well-developed areas

All migrants, regardless of their migration status, have the right to access Government-funded health services provided by the Ministry of Health. The Constitution (2015, amended in 2020) states that everyone has the right to health care (Article 85); while the Law on Medical Aid and Service to the Population (1996) extends the right to receive medical care and service (in accordance with the legislation and international agreements of Armenia), free primary health care, and emergency aid, among others, to foreign citizens and people without citizenship (Article 13). Additionally, with the onset of the Ukraine crisis in 2022, the Ministry of Health published a leaflet establishing that citizens of member States of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU)⁸ and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)⁹ are entitled to free primary health care at an institution of their choice and upon registration, and that low-income migrants and their families are also entitled to free medical care and hospital services. Decision No. 318-N of the Government of Armenia on free medical aid and services guaranteed by the State (2004) defines the list of persons who belong to “socially disadvantaged groups of society” and have the right to receive free medical aid and services guaranteed by the State. Asylum-seekers and their family members are included in the list.

All migrants, regardless of their migration status, can access Government-funded education and vocational training. Under the Constitution, primary and secondary education at State institutions is free, and everyone has the right to free vocational and higher education on a competitive basis (Article 38). The Law on Education (1999, amended in 2023) states that the right to education is guaranteed “regardless of nationality, race, gender, language, creed, political or other views, social background, wealth or other conditions” (Article 6).

⁸ Member States of the EAEU are Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and the Russian Federation.

⁹ Member States of the CIS are Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

The decision on the admission of foreigners to vocational training institutions (2011) states that foreigners can choose the vocational training institution where they would like to be admitted, under the conditions it has defined (Article 4). Admission of foreigners to vocational institutions is carried out on a contractual basis (paid) or on the basis of international agreements on educational and scientific cooperation concluded between Armenia and foreign countries (Article 6). With regard to higher education, the decision on the admission of foreign citizens and family members of Armenian diplomats into higher educational institutions of the Republic of Armenia (2011, amended in 2012) states that foreign citizens have the right to university education (Article 4). The same decision states that foreigners can study in higher educational institutions (a) on a contractual basis (paid); (b) within the framework of the places provided to foreigners by the State, with full reimbursement of the tuition fees in the form of student allowances (free of charge) by inter-State and interdepartmental contracts or agreements; and (c) within the limits of the places provided by the Government of Armenia for the admission of Armenian diaspora members, with full reimbursement of tuition fees (free of charge) in the form of student allowances by the State (Article 14).

Migrants in Armenia have the same access as citizens to some forms of social protection. According to the Constitution, everyone has the right to social protection for maternity, family, sickness, disability, occupational injury, loss of a breadwinner, old age and unemployment (Article 83). The Law on Social Assistance (2014, amended in 2022) establishes that “foreign citizens holding the status of resident, stateless persons, as well as persons with refugee status” in Armenia have the right to social assistance (Article 18). This includes counselling, rehabilitation, in-kind aid, housing, care, legal assistance, pensions, allowances, monetary payments, employment services and medical aid (Article 8). However, the right to pensions is applicable to migrants only during the period of their residency in the country, as per the Law on State Pensions (2010, amended in 2022). In addition, a foreigner who does not have refugee status in Armenia has the right to a pension if they do not receive any from the State of which they are a citizen (Article 7).

Armenia has agreements with other countries on the portability of social security entitlements and earned benefits, including old-age pensions. The country is a party to the CIS agreement on cooperation in the field of labour migration and social protection of migrant workers (1994), which covers contracts, taxation and pensions.¹⁰ Armenia is also a party to the agreement on pension provision for workers of the member States of the Eurasian Economic Union (2019),¹¹ which allows the portability of pension rights among member States. According to the agreement, a citizen of one member State, employed in another member State, must participate in the host country’s social security retirement system.

Armenia allows family reunification for migrants under all residency categories. The Law of Armenia on Foreigners (2006, amended in 2023) establishes three categories of residency: temporary, permanent and special. Under Article 15 of the Law, family members¹² of foreigners with temporary residence status have the right to obtain temporary residence status as well for a period of one year at a time. Under Article 16, family members of permanent residents may apply for permanent residence, which is issued for five years. Family reunification is also possible for migrants holding special residence status, which is granted to ethnic Armenians holding foreign citizenship, and it is valid for 10 years, with the possibility of renewal, as per Article 18 of the Law.

¹⁰ A total of 12 countries are party to this agreement: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

¹¹ Member States of the EAEU are Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and the Russian Federation.

¹² A “family member” is defined as one’s spouse, parent, child, sibling, grandparent or grandchild.

All foreign residents have the same access to employment as citizens, including private-sector employment. Under the Constitution, everyone has the right to free choice of employment, as well as employment protection, ensuring the prohibition of forced labour (Article 57). Article 15 of the Labour Code of Armenia (2004, amended in 2023) establishes that the right to work is recognized equally for all citizens of Armenia, foreign nationals and stateless people. Employers may sign work/service contracts with foreign nationals using either a temporary residence permit¹³ or the public services identification number,¹⁴ as per the Law of Armenia on Foreigners (Article 22, paragraph 2). However, special categories, such as temporary, permanent and special residents,¹⁵ asylum-seekers, citizens of countries that have international agreements with Armenia, and foreign citizens of Armenian nationality,¹⁶ among others,¹⁷ may work without an employment permit for the duration of their residence permit (Article 23). All other migrants, except those from EAEU member States (Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and the Russian Federation), need a work permit. As per the government decision on the unified electronic platform (2021), migrants may change employment under the same work permit. Both the Labour Code and the Law of Armenia on Foreigners (Article 22) guarantee equal access to employment irrespective of gender, race, nationality, language, citizenship and other conditions not related to the work performed.

Migrants can obtain Armenian citizenship after legally residing permanently in the country for the last three years, provided that they have a command of the Armenian language and are acquainted with the Constitution, as per Article 13 of the Law of Armenia on Citizenship (1995, amended in 2022).¹⁸

Armenia has measures in place to combat hate crimes, violence, xenophobia and discrimination against migrants. The Constitution prohibits discrimination based on gender, race, skin colour, ethnicity or social background, genetic characteristics, language, religion, political or other views, belonging to a national minority, wealth, disability, age, and other individual or social characteristics (Article 29). The National Migration Governance Framework and its Action Plan (2021) includes as one of its nine aims the protection of the rights and interests of migrants. Goal 4 in Section 7 of the Framework indicates that the Government aims to prevent all forms of violation of migrant rights in the country. Another aim is to bolster the provision of various support services, including humanitarian, health, social, information and psychological support, to victims of crises. Additionally, according to the Framework, the protection of migrant rights is a priority of the Office of the Human Rights Defender, achieved through the protection and promotion of their rights, including via providing free legal aid, receiving complaints and applications, providing training to relevant State officials (border guards), and awareness-raising activities.

1.3. Areas with potential for further development

Temporary residents are entitled to apply for permanent residency (granted for a period of five years at a time) if they have housing and means of subsistence and have lived in the country for at least three years, as per the Law of Armenia on Foreigners (Article 16).

¹³ This is for temporary residents.

¹⁴ This is for permanent and special residents or citizens of countries with which Armenia has bilateral agreements and for foreign citizens of Armenian nationality.

¹⁵ Special residency status is granted for a 10-year period by the Prime Minister of Armenia to foreign citizens of Armenian ancestry and individuals who have provided significant services to the Armenian State and nation and/or are engaged in economic and cultural activities in the country.

¹⁶ In this case, Armenian nationality refers to ethnical, cultural or religious ties to Armenia as opposed to holding Armenian citizenship.

¹⁷ These are foreign diplomats and their family members; cultural figures and athletes who arrived for a short period of time; the founders, directors or authorized representatives of commercial organizations, with the participation of foreign capital; employees of foreign commercial organizations; specialists arriving for the purpose of installing and repairing machines, equipment or machine tools (for a period of up to 6 months); foreign journalists; visiting lecturers; students who arrived as part of exchanges during vacations; and highly qualified workers. The list of specialists is defined by the Government of Armenia's decision on work permits (2016).

¹⁸ The first two requirements are waived for foreigners who have been in a legally registered marriage with a citizen of Armenia for the last two years and have been legally resident in Armenia for at least 365 days during those two years, foreigners whose parent(s) were born in Armenia or had Armenian citizenship, individuals who have renounced their Armenian citizenship after 1 January 1995, and refugees and stateless people. All three requirements are waived for foreign citizens of Armenian nationality (ethnic Armenians), as well as individuals who have provided exceptional service to the country in the fields of economy, science, education, culture, health care or sports.

Armenian citizens living outside the country cannot vote in national elections. However, the Electoral Code (2016, amended in 2022) states that Armenians who are on diplomatic service (and their family members) and military personnel on long-term service or studying in foreign countries have the right to vote in national elections through electronic means if they live abroad (Article 62). In 2021, 500 out of 650 eligible voters participated in the elections of the National Assembly of Armenia through electronic means.¹⁹

Armenia offers civil registration services to migrants, including registration of birth, paternity, adoption, marriage, divorce, name change and death, but as with citizens, proof of identity is required in order to access these services, as per the Law on Civil Registration Services (2021, amended in 2022).

¹⁹ See the Early Elections to the National Assembly of Armenia's [2021 protocol for voting in electronic form](#) to know more.



2

FORMULATE POLICY USING EVIDENCE AND WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT APPROACH

2.1. Migration governance: examples of well-developed areas

The Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) is responsible for designing and coordinating the implementation of an overall migration policy and strategic plan in Armenia. As per the Law on Government Structure and Operation (2018, amended in 2022), the Ministry develops and implements government policies in the field of migration governance. On the basis of the Migration Service²⁰ of the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure of Armenia, along with the Passport and Visa Department of the Police, the Migration and Citizenship Service (MCS) was established within MIA. The statute of MCS was adopted in March 2023. The objectives of MCS are State regulation of migration processes; organizing and implementing the activities of the asylum system; integration of persons granted asylum and refugees in Armenia into society, as well as long-term immigrants; improvement of the readmission process; reintegration of returned citizens of Armenia; and organization and implementation of the passport system of the country.

Since the entry into force of the statute of MCS, the Passport and Visa Department²¹ has operated within MCS. The Law on Making Amendments and Supplements to the Law on Bodies of the State Management System (2022) states that officials from the Passport and Visa Department who have passed their training, in accordance with the decision of the Prime Minister on the procedure of Migration and Citizenship Service officers' retraining for appointment,²² are appointed to the civil service positions of MCS and considered civil servants (Article 3, paragraph 10).

The National Migration Governance Framework and its Action Plan (2021) has 10 sections, including an overview of migration flows to and from the country, governance principles and priorities, target groups of the national migration policy, challenges and proposed actions, strategic objectives and directions of the migration policy, and expected results. The document establishes three principles of migration governance – a whole-of-government approach, cooperation and evidence-based policymaking – and designates foreigners, individuals who are repatriated, internally displaced people, asylum-seekers, refugees, forced migrants and emigrants as its target groups. The Framework has nine objectives, including the protection of the rights and interests of migrants, combating irregular and illegal migration, border control and improved governance of entry and exit, integration and reintegration, and development of migration crisis response capabilities.

The National Migration Governance Framework contains gender-sensitive provisions. Section 3 states that the migration policy in Armenia is aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG target 8.8, which aims to “[p]rotect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment”. The Framework also includes an objective regarding the development of the cultural and gender-responsive capabilities of border guards.

The National Migration Governance Framework also addresses migrant integration as one of its nine objectives, including through improved access to education, health care and social assistance; enhanced protection of migrant rights; cultural integration; employment support and economic inclusion; and the creation of an overall environment characterized by hospitality (Goal 5 in Section 7, Article 22).

²⁰ The Migration Service was the governing body responsible for migration prior to the establishment of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in 2022.

²¹ This was previously called the Police Passports and Visas Department.

²² See the Deputy Prime Minister of Armenia's decision on the procedure of Migration and Citizenship Service officers' retraining for appointment (2023).

In addition, between 2018 and 2022, Armenia was engaged in the European Return and Reintegration Network (ERRIN), an intergovernmental cooperation project implemented by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development and operating within MCS. ERRIN is a consortium of 16 countries,²³ contributing to the return and reintegration of migrants who cannot or do not want to stay in Europe. As a result of the ERRIN project, the Return and Reintegration Facility in Armenia was built to foster government-to-government cooperation on post-arrival assistance, strengthen Armenia's migration management capacities, and support the social and economic reintegration of Armenian nationals who return voluntarily or involuntarily from European Union and ERRIN member States.²⁴

Armenia has national legislation in place regulating immigration – the Law of Armenia on Foreigners (2006, amended in 2023) and the Law on Refugees and Asylum (2008, amended in 2021). The Law of Armenia on Foreigners includes information on entry into the country, visa types, exit from the country, transit through the country, residence status, employment of foreigners in the country, deportation and detention. The Law on Refugees and Asylum includes details on the rights and duties of asylum-seekers and refugees, the authorities of State bodies and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees representation in Armenia, and the procedures for granting asylum and temporary protection.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs, under the Office of the Prime Minister, is responsible for coordinating efforts to engage with Armenia's diaspora population.²⁵ In accordance with its statute, found in the decision of the Prime Minister on approving the statute of the High Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs of the Prime Minister's Office of Armenia (2019, amended in 2020), the Office is responsible for supporting the repatriation of returning migrants and Armenian diaspora members, and facilitating their reintegration. The Office engages with the diaspora population through a number of programmes, including the Diaspora Youth Ambassador,²⁶ Step Towards Home,²⁷ iGorts,²⁸ Neruzh,²⁹ Diaspora Connected³⁰ and GovTech Launchpad.³¹

There are clear and transparent rules and regulations pertaining to migration on the website of MCS, which are available to the public and easy to consult and understand. The website includes information on asylum, refugee integration, return and reintegration, temporary residence for work purposes, legal migration and irregular migration; the migration profile of Armenia; migration statistics; and useful information for immigrants. Legislation pertaining to migration is accessible via the country's official legal database, the Armenian Legal Information System (ARLIS),³² while visa information is available on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Migration data are collected and published on an annual basis in Armenia. The Statistical Committee (Armstat) publishes an annual report on migration, which is based on the Households' Integrated Living Conditions Survey. The latest report (for the year 2021) was published in 2023 and is available in Armenian and English (IOM and Armstat, 2023). It covers data on migration flows, migrant stock, and monetary and commodity flows (remittances). Since 2002, Armstat has produced annual statistical yearbooks, which include information on migration flows, with data on the number of arrivals and departures, the reasons for migration, and the countries of origin and destination, as well as data on the migrant stock, their age

²³ These are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

²⁴ Visit the web page of [ERRIN-Armenia](#) to know more.

²⁵ Prior to the establishment of the Office of the High Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs, Armenia had a Ministry of Diaspora, which was set up in September 2008 and operated until June 2018.

²⁶ The Diaspora Youth Ambassador is a one-year programme that aims to enable the youth in the Armenian diaspora to expand their views on Armenia's political, social and economic issues; support youth involvement in community life; and increase the efficiency of their activities.

²⁷ Step Towards Home is a two-week programme that aims to preserve and develop the Armenian national identity of the youth in the diaspora.

²⁸ iGorts invites professionals in the Armenian diaspora to serve in the public sector as well as in the Government.

²⁹ Neruzh is a start-up programme aimed at encouraging technology and business talent from the diaspora to return to Armenia.

³⁰ Diaspora Connected seeks to connect the diaspora with the Office of the High Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs through online video conferences, with a view to maintaining connections, identifying and addressing problems, and deepening cooperation.

³¹ The GovTech Launchpad project seeks to engage technological solutions related to repatriation and bridging the gap between Armenia and its diaspora population.

³² The ARLIS portal publishes all adopted legal acts in Armenia, making them available to the public, and includes information on legislation being adopted and/or amended.

and sex composition, educational level, employment, access to health care and remittances, among other data. Additionally, data on asylum granted, existing and recently issued residence permits, readmission, and border crossing have been published yearly since 2012 on the website of MCS.

MCS compiles and harmonizes migration data collected by different government agencies, as per Chapter 8 of the Law of Armenia on Foreigners. The Service ensures the availability of migration data to other government authorities, including the National Security Service of Armenia, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

2.2. Areas with potential for further development

There is no interministerial coordination mechanism for migration issues at the national level, and efforts to enhance the vertical coherence of migration-related policies could be further developed. However, there are plans to establish a Migration Council headed by MIA as an interministerial committee for the development and implementation of migration policy in 2024. Section 4 of the National Migration Governance Framework of Armenia states that the Government aims at a whole-of-government approach to migration governance in the country. However, according to the national voluntary review report of Armenia on the status of the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration at the national level (2020), coordination on migration-related issues remains a challenge in terms of policy development and implementation.

The establishment of mechanisms to formally engage the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs – the agency responsible for promoting gender equality and diversity – in agenda-setting and the implementation of migration-related policies is an area for further development.

The National Migration Governance Framework and its Action Plan mentions internally displaced people as one of its eight target groups, but the Action Plan does not set out concrete actions addressing migration due to environmental degradation. Meanwhile, as mentioned in the Framework, the Government of Armenia, emphasizing its readiness to respond to migration crises, has initiated the development of the Action Plan for the Management of Migration Flows Caused by a Disaster or Military Operation. In 2019, the draft for the Action Plan was proposed by the Ministry of Emergency Situations (currently the Rescue Service); however, it has not been adopted at the time of publication.



3

ENGAGE WITH PARTNERS TO ADDRESS MIGRATION AND RELATED ISSUES

3.1. Migration governance: examples of well-developed areas

Armenia is part of several regional processes and forums. It is part of the Budapest Process, established in 1993 as an “information-sharing tool between European countries in a pre-EU enlargement setting ... [and a] forum for improving migration management”.³³ Armenia is also a member of the Prague Process, established in 2009 as a regional consultative process on migration, covering 47 European States³⁴ and aiming to “strengthen co-operation in migration management, [and specifically] to explore and develop agreed principles and elements for close migration partnerships between [the participating] countries”. Furthermore, Armenia is a member of the Eastern Partnership Panel on Migration, Mobility and Integrated Border Management, established in 2001 to advance the dialogue on migration and asylum policies between the Eastern Partners³⁵ and the European Union, facilitate the exchange of best practices, and strengthen the asylum and migration systems of Eastern Partners.

The Government of Armenia participated in the Budapest Process Sixth Ministerial Conference in 2019, in which 38 countries adopted the Istanbul Commitments on the Silk Routes Partnership for Migration and its Call for Action, which includes six priority areas of cooperation. In particular, countries have agreed to improve the conditions for regular migration and mobility; promote labour market assessments and mobility agreements; develop programmes for circular and temporary migration; enhance student mobility; facilitate well-managed mobility for genuine travellers, including students, researchers and businesspeople; and improve the transparency of rules and procedures.

Armenia has migration-related memorandums of understanding and agreements with other countries. For instance, the agreement between the Police of Armenia and the Federal Migration Service of the Russian Federation on cooperation against illegal migration (2011) contains provisions on the identification of individuals who are “illegally” residing in the territory of Armenia and the Russian Federation, exchange of information and analytical materials, training and professional development of officials engaged in the fight against “illegal migration”, and joint scientific research. The agreement with Bulgaria on the regulation of labour migration (2018) applies to short-term (up to three years of residency) and seasonal (up to nine months of stay) workers, and it includes provisions on recruitment and selection, work conditions and social rights, and the return of migrant workers.

Armenia has also signed agreements on the return and readmission of migrants with Denmark (2003), Switzerland (2003), Germany (2006), the Benelux countries (Belgium, Luxembourg and the Kingdom of the Netherlands) (2009), Sweden (2009), Norway (2010), the Russian Federation (2010), Czechia (2011), France (2016) and the United Arab Emirates (2023). Additionally, the Government has an agreement with the Government of France on migration partnership (2016).

Moreover, the agreement between Armenia and the European Union on the facilitation of the issuance of visas (2012) and the agreement between Armenia and the European Union on the readmission of persons without authorization (2013) entered into force in 2014. The Armenia–European Union Joint Visa Facilitation Committee and the Armenia–European Union Joint Readmission Committee were established to monitor the implementation of these agreements respectively.

³³ As of May 2023, the [Budapest Process](#) has 51 member States and 7 observer States.

³⁴ Visit the website of the [Prague Process](#) to know more.

³⁵ The Eastern Partnership aims to strengthen and deepen the political and economic relations between the European Union and its member States and partner countries. The members are Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

Armenia currently participates in bilateral negotiations and discussions related to migration with several countries. For example, the joint Armenian–Russian working group, established in 2010, meets annually to exchange information and discuss common issues related to migration, including the protection of the rights of migrant workers. As of 2023, negotiations are also taking place with India on migration, mobility and readmission.

The Government formally engages civil society organizations (CSOs) in agenda-setting and the implementation of migration-related policies through the Return and Reintegration Quarterly Forum. CSOs were also involved in drafting the National Migration Governance Framework and its Action Plan (2021). The Return and Reintegration Quarterly Forum has members from nine organizations, including IOM, and local CSOs, such as the International Centre for Migration Policy Development, the French Office for Immigration and Integration, Armenian Caritas, People in Need, and the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development, along with several State agencies. From 2018 to 2023, 16 meetings of the Forum have been convened, providing a platform for various actors to discuss the operational challenges they encounter in the field, exchange experience, disseminate information and statistics, and deepen the cooperation between organizations providing reintegration support to Armenian citizens returning to the country. In 2022, a stakeholder meeting was organized by the Migration Service of Armenia and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees representation in Armenia to discuss the establishment of an inter-agency working group of experts representing State agencies, non-governmental organizations and international stakeholders – to ensure an inclusive consultative process in developing legislative amendments to benefit those seeking international protection in Armenia. An inter-agency working group for the development of draft legislation on refugees and asylum-seekers has been established in the framework of a project run by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees/IOM, and it has met four times as of 2023.

Armenia is part of the Eurasian Economic Union Treaty (2014),³⁶ a regional agreement promoting labour mobility. The Treaty grants access to employment of nationals within the bloc, regardless of individual State regulations on work permits, quotas or other limitations aimed at protecting their labour markets, and qualifications are reciprocally accepted. In addition, Armenia is a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), established in 1991, through which member States cooperate in labour and social affairs.

3.2. Areas with potential for further development

The Government engages members of the diaspora and expatriate communities in agenda-setting and the implementation of development policies only in a semi-formal way through the iGorts programme.³⁷ Launched by the Office of the High Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs in 2020, iGorts invites professionals in the Armenian diaspora to serve in the country's public-sector offices. Additionally, the Global Armenian Summit, organized by the Office of the High Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs and held in October 2022 in Armenia, included the discussion of topics such as national security, protecting Armenia's interests globally, repatriation, economic engagement, preservation of the Armenian identity, diaspora representation within Armenia's governing structures and self-organization within the diaspora.

The Government does not closely engage with the private sector in agenda-setting and the implementation of migration-related programmes. Nonetheless, the private sector is involved in various discussions on migration issues as well as the drafting process of the National Migration Governance Framework and its Action Plan.

³⁶ The Eurasian Economic Union is an economic union between Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and the Russian Federation. The Union creates a common market for member States by coordinating economic policies among them.

³⁷ Visit the web page of iGorts for more information.



4

ADVANCE THE SOCIOECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF MIGRANTS AND SOCIETY

4.1. Migration governance: examples of well-developed areas

Armenia has mechanisms in place to protect the rights of its nationals working abroad. Under the Law on Citizenship (1995, amended in 2022), citizens abroad enjoy the protection and patronage of Armenia through its diplomatic representations (Article 7). The National Migration Governance Framework of Armenia (2021) mentions the importance of protecting the rights of Armenian nationals working abroad (Section 7, Article 22) and lists concrete mechanisms for this, such as access to social assistance in the host country; provision of health care, including continued delivery of prescription medicines; and the portability of pension rights.

There are policies in place to promote the financial inclusion of migrants and their families. The national Financial Education Strategy (2014) aims to improve financial literacy by promoting financial education and training in schools, universities and workplaces. In July 2021, the Government adopted the Financial Education Plan and its implementation schedule for the years 2021–2025 as a milestone for achieving the goals set out in the Strategy. The Strategy's main objectives include the facilitation of effective management of personal and family budgets; contribution to savings, long-term financial planning and effective debt management; raising awareness of individual rights while using financial services; discouragement of financial fraud; and the promotion of literacy in understanding key financial and macroeconomic indicators in order to guide individual decision-making in managing personal and/or household finances. The 2021–2025 Financial Education Plan identifies women and migrants and their families as target groups for financial-inclusion policies. Specific policies for migrants include the development of financial education programmes targeted to their needs, cooperation with non-governmental organizations that are engaged in migrant integration, the development and promotion of financial literacy content on platforms that are widely known and used by migrants, and the provision of financial literacy courses to citizens who intend to emigrate for work purposes.

Data on the labour market are regularly collected, disaggregated by migration status and sex. The Statistical Committee of Armenia (Armstat) publishes an annual report on the labour market, which includes data on the working-age population, work activities, employment and unemployment, disaggregated by age group, sex, country of birth, citizenship, type of residency, marital status and educational attainment.

4.2. Areas with potential for further development

Armenia does not yet have assessments in place to monitor the labour market demand for immigrants in the country. Similarly, there is a periodic national assessment for monitoring the labour market supply, but it does not assess the effects of emigrants on the domestic labour market. Armstat's annual reports on the labour market³⁸ include a dedicated section on labour supply. The reports draw on three sources: administrative registries maintained by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the State Revenue Committee, household surveys conducted by Armstat itself, and reports published by various establishments. Section 2 of the reports provide an assessment of the labour market supply, disaggregated by characteristics such as age, country of birth, country of citizenship, type of residency, marital status, educational attainment and sex.

³⁸ As of December 2023, Armstat last published its annual report in 2021.

The establishment of a programme for managing labour migration based on the labour market demand is an area with potential for further development. The Law of Armenia on Foreigners (2006, amended in 2023) lacks provisions on adjusting visa awards based on the labour market demand or offering different types of visas to attract specific labour skills. The government decision on entry visas (2007, amended in 2022) states that the examination of a visa application involves checking whether the applicant is on the list of *personae non gratae* of Armenia and confirming the veracity of the submitted data and credibility of the purpose of the visit. However, no reference is made to the labour market demand or specific labour skills.

The establishment of specific provisions to promote gender equality in the labour force for migrants is an area for further development. The Constitution (2015, amended in 2020) establishes the equality of rights of men and women (Article 30) and lists the promotion of equality of men and women as one of the 16 priorities of the State in economic, social and cultural fields (Article 86). The Law of Armenia on Ensuring Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (2013, amended in 2020) prohibits unequal pay for equal work, wage increase/decrease and deterioration of working conditions due to gender (Article 6). The 2019–2023 Gender Policy Implementation Strategy and its Action Plan (2019) establishes five priorities for the implementation of the Law on Ensuring Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, which are as follows: equal participation of men and women in government decision-making, wider scope of economic opportunities for women, equal access to and opportunities for professional development in the fields of education and science, equal opportunities in the field of health care, and prevention of gender discrimination. However, it does not refer to migrants.

The development of measures to promote the ethical recruitment of migrant workers is considered an area with potential for improvement. The Constitution states that everyone has the right to free choice of employment, as well as employment protection, and prohibits forced labour, but it makes no specific reference to ethical recruitment (Article 57). The Law of Armenia on Foreigners states that cases of unlawful employment of migrants, including cases of employment without a work permit, as well as suspected trafficking and exploitation, are reported to the Police of Armenia. However, it does not require that the recruitment process for migrant workers – including advertising, information dissemination, selection, transport, placement in employment and return to the country of origin – respects, protects and fulfills internationally recognized human rights and labour standards. Nonetheless, strengthening the surveillance of the recruitment of workers – involving both inward and outward migration – by organizations, individuals and groups of individuals is one of the objectives of the National Migration Governance Framework of Armenia.



5

EFFECTIVELY ADDRESS THE MOBILITY DIMENSIONS OF CRISES

5.1. Migration governance: examples of well-developed areas

There are measures in place to provide assistance to the population before, during and after crises in Armenia. The Law on Seismic Protection (2002, amended in 2020) establishes a framework for managing earthquakes in the country. It explicitly includes foreign citizens and stateless people as individuals to whom the provisions apply. The Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) is responsible for disaster risk management in Armenia – including civil protection during emergencies, evacuation and sheltering of people affected by emergencies, prevention of emergencies and recovery from their consequence, and management of information related to emergencies and disasters. The functions of the Ministry of Emergency Situations (operational until June 2023) are implemented by the Rescue Service operating under MIA. According to the decision on approving the statute of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Armenia (2023), the Police, the Rescue Service, and the Migration and Citizenship Service (MCS) operate under MIA (Article 36).

MCS regularly collects and publishes data on disaster displacement. Data on refugees, people in refugee-like situations, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons and stateless persons are collected by the Government and published in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees annual Global Trends report (last published for the year 2022).

Armenia has measures in place to assist nationals living abroad in times of crisis. Citizens of Armenia travelling abroad or residing in foreign countries are invited to submit their personal data to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with a view to protecting their rights and interests and assisting them during emergencies, as per the Law on Consular Service of Armenia (1996, amended in 2021). Consular services provided by embassies and consulates include the issuance of passports, return certificates and entry visas; civil registration; verification of certificates; and provision of attestations.

There are communications systems in place to receive information on the evolving nature of crises and how to access assistance. Communication is the first of several population protection measures during an emergency, as outlined in Article 5 of the Law on Population Protection during Emergencies (1998, amended in 2023). The Rescue Service is responsible for the provision of information to the population regarding an emergency, which is available via the website of MIA.³⁹ The Law on Seismic Protection provides for an early warning system as one of the components of the seismic protection system.

The Government has provisions to make exceptions to the immigration procedures for migrants whose country of origin is experiencing a crisis. Under the Law of Armenia on Foreigners (2006, amended in 2023), foreigners who transit through Armenia may stay in its territory not more than 72 hours, but migrants whose country of origin is experiencing a crisis are exempt from this requirement (Article 13). Additionally, as per the Law on Refugees and Asylum (2008, amended in 2021), Armenia grants temporary protection to foreign citizens and stateless people who flee their countries of origin because of mass violence, foreign invasion, internal strife, mass violation of human rights or other events threatening public order (Articles 3 and 6).

³⁹ This function was previously under the competence of the Ministry of Emergency Situations (operational until June 2023), the website of which included a page providing information on disasters (such as location, people involved, casualties, if any, and rescue works). The Ministry of Emergency Situations also published a newspaper in both print and web form, and the population can still ask for assistance through its 911 hotline and social media channels.

5.2. Areas with potential for further development

Armenia's emergency management framework has limited measures in place to specifically assist migrants before, during and after crises. The decision on approving the statute of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Armenia and the decision on approving the statute of the Rescue Service (2005, amended in 2023) do not refer to migrants. The Law on Population Protection during Emergencies includes measures for the prevention of emergencies (including the monitoring and surveillance of radiation and chemical and biological contamination levels, and raising public awareness) as well as the provision of assistance during and after crises (including shelter, evacuation, communication, sanitary works and involvement of volunteers in recovery activities). However, the Law does not refer to migrants specifically.

The Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy and its Implementation Plan (2017) included specific provisions on displacement, as well as measures for disaster mitigation, preparation, response and recovery. However, this Strategy is no longer in force. The New Strategy on Disaster Risk Management for 2023–2030 and its derived Action Plan for 2023–2026 are pending for adoption, but the Strategy does not refer to displaced persons. In addition, the 2021–2026 Programme of the Government of Armenia (2021) does not have measures regarding displacement (e.g. provisions for refugees or internally displaced persons). Therefore, the inclusion of measures regarding displacement in national development strategies is considered an area with potential for further development.

Armenia does not include human mobility considerations in its environmental and climate change policies, such as the National Action Plan for Climate Change Adaptation and its Implementation Plan for the years 2021–2025 (2021) and the nationally defined contribution of Armenia to the Paris Agreement, adopted for the years 2021–2030 (2021). Nonetheless, IOM is supporting the Government of Armenia's National Adaptation Plan by integrating human mobility into climate change decision-making at different levels of governance, as well as helping the Government in having an improved understanding of the migration, environment and climate change nexus in the context of climate action.

The development of a contingency plan to manage large-scale population movements in times of crisis is an area for improvement. The Population Protection Plan for Major Earthquakes (2011, amended in 2013) covers internal large-scale population movements, but it has not yet been adopted. The Plan includes a governance scheme, emergency announcement and communication schemes, an intelligence plan, rescue and recovery measures, and estimates of provision of medical aid, shelter, food, clothing and other necessary items to displaced people.



6

ENSURE THAT MIGRATION TAKES PLACE IN A SAFE, ORDERLY AND REGULAR MANNER

6.1. Migration governance: examples of well-developed areas

The National Security Service (NSS), which operates under the Office of the Prime Minister, is tasked with integrated border control and security. Its remit includes intelligence, counter-intelligence, State border control and the fight against criminal activity, as per Section II, Article 14, of the decision on approving the statute of the National Security Service of Armenia and its structure (2018, amended in 2023). The NSS Border Guard Troops are responsible for State border control. They are tasked with checking the documents of individuals, vehicles and cargo; arresting individuals who unlawfully cross the border; and confiscating unlawfully transported goods, as per the Law on Border Guard Troops (2001, amended in 2018).

As per the Law on Border Guard Troops, border staff are regularly trained in accordance with the Law on Education (1999, amended in 2023) and through other professional development opportunities (certified courses), both in Armenia and abroad. The website of the Border Guard Troops includes training materials, such as training manuals on trafficking developed by IOM (2007) and Frontex (2012), as well as a readmission training manual developed jointly by the Migration Service and IOM (2014).⁴⁰ A new curriculum aligned with European Union standards and national legislation was developed for the Border Guard Troops Training Centre in 2021, which includes gender-sensitive modules on applied psychology, communication skills and public relations, professional ethics, fundamental rights, document examination, air border control and transnational organized crime.

In 2022, the representatives of the Office of the Human Rights Defender, in cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Armenian Red Cross Society, carried out border monitoring visits to the Syunik and Shirak provinces of Armenia and to Zvartnots International Airport. In addition, they provided three training courses, attended by more than 60 employees and officers of the NSS Border Guard Troops. Within the framework of the training courses, reference was made to the asylum procedure in Armenia, international protection mechanisms and relevant legal regulations. The trainings have also been carried out in 2023.

There is a mixed online and paper system for applying for visas prior to arrival in Armenia. Most migrants may apply for a visa through the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, although nationals of 57 countries are required to apply for a visa only upon invitation and in person at diplomatic representations or consular posts of Armenia. Nationals of 44 countries are unilaterally exempted from the requirement of obtaining a visa, and 64 countries have a visa-free regime according to bilateral and multilateral agreements.

Armenia has measures in place focused on attracting nationals who have migrated from the country, including tax breaks for citizens who have lived abroad for more than 12 months and returned to Armenia for permanent residence.⁴¹ Members of the Armenian diaspora are also incentivized to return to Armenia through programmes like iGorts, launched by the Office of the High Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs in 2020, which invites professionals in the Armenian diaspora to serve in public-sector offices, including the Government of Armenia.

⁴⁰ Visit the [publications page of the Border Guard Troops website](#) to know more.

⁴¹ Under the Tax Code (2016), these citizens can import personal items valued at less than EUR 5,000 (excluding personal cars) without paying customs duties and/or other applicable taxes.

The National Human Rights Protection Strategy and its 2020–2022 Action Plan (2019, amended in 2021) aims to ensure the protection and promotion of human rights through legislative reforms and awareness-raising activities. Additionally, the National Plan for Combating Human Trafficking and Exploitation in the years 2023–2025 and its implementation schedule (2023), developed by the Inter-agency Working Group against Trafficking in Persons, refers to the need for strengthening the institutional mechanisms for combating human trafficking and exploitation, public awareness-raising campaigns on trafficking and exploitation, training of government officials and organizational leadership in trafficking and exploitation-related issues, and improvement of the role of mass media in preventing trafficking and exploitation.

Armenia has three institutional bodies with counter-trafficking responsibilities. First, the Anti-trafficking Interministerial Council, established in 2007, sets policies and provides overall coordination of activities to prevent and combat human trafficking in Armenia. It is chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister and is composed of the Ministry of Health; the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports; the Ministry of Justice; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Ministry of Defense; the Ministry of Finance; the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs; the Ministry of Economy; the Prosecutor General's Office; NSS; the Ministry of Internal Affairs; and the Office of the Human Rights Defender. The Council meets regularly to raise priority issues and provide guidance on policy and strategic issues. Reporting to the Council, the Inter-agency Working Group against Trafficking in Persons, which was established in 2002, adopts consultative decisions in three areas: legislation on human trafficking and exploitation, prevention of human trafficking and exploitation, and protection and support for victims of human trafficking and exploitation. Finally, the Victim Identification Commission, established in 2015, studies cases of presumed victims of trafficking and makes decisions based on the evidence and data collected, then refers trafficking victims to shelters.

In 2022, based on Article 11, Part 5, of the Law of Armenia on the Identification and Support of Persons Exposed to Human Trafficking and Exploitation (2014), the Government of Armenia approved Government Decree No. 1534-N on the indicators for identifying a person as a victim, or a victim of a special category, by the Commission for the Identification of Victims of Human Trafficking and Exploitation.

There are some policies and procedures to support migrants in vulnerable situations and provide them with adequate referral and protection services. The Unified Social Service, operating under the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, is a State body that organizes the provision of services for the social inclusion (integration/reintegration) of refugees, displaced persons, long-term migrants and forcibly returned Armenian citizens who received asylum in Armenia. The body hosts a social assistance portal online where individuals who are temporarily displaced can enter their information and indicate their needs.⁴² Moreover, in 2022, a programme envisaging the provision of subsidies for renting apartments to recognized refugees was approved by Government Decree No. 1711-N.

Additionally, the Migration and Citizenship Service implements the government programme of primary assistance for the reintegration of nationals returning to the Republic of Armenia (including involuntary returnees), as per Government Decree No. 336-L (2020). For instance, it offers referral of returnees to address their health-care problems, referral of vulnerable groups to receive assistance from relevant organizations, and temporary accommodation to involuntary returnees with a six-month housing subsidy.

⁴² Visit the website of the [Unified Social Service](#) to know more.

6.2. Areas with potential for further development

The Law of Armenia on Foreigners (2006, amended in 2023) states that migrants may be detained in special residences for up to 90 days when it is not possible for them to return to their country of origin. Detention is undertaken in cases of violating the law, including entry into the country without a passport or with an expired passport and entry without a valid visa (Article 37). Nonetheless, non-custodial alternatives to detention in general, as specified in Article 56 of the new Criminal Code (2021, amended in 2023), include fines, public works, revocation of the right to occupy certain offices or carry out certain types of activity, expulsion and restrictions of freedom.

The Government's measures to combat labour exploitation apply to all workers but do not specifically target migrants. The Labour Code of Armenia (2004, amended in 2023) prohibits all forms of forced labour and violence against workers but makes no specific reference to migrants or nationality in this regard. The 2003 Criminal Code (Article 132) – which defines “forced labour” as a form of exploitation – envisages sentence terms ranging from 5 to 14 years for human trafficking and exploitation.

The establishment of a national system for tracing and identifying missing migrants, in line with Objective 8 of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration to identify “those who have died or gone missing, and to facilitate communication with affected families”, is an area with potential for further development.



ANNEX

The MGI process



1 Launch of the MGI process

The first step of the process is to explain what the MGIs entail to key government officials, in order to ensure full understanding of the project and complete buy-in.



2 Data collection

The second step of the process is to start the collection and analysis of data, based on about 100 indicators grounded in the six dimensions of the MiGOF. A migration governance profile based on the analysis of the findings is then drafted and shared with the government counterparts.



3 Interministerial consultation

The third step of the process is to convene an interministerial consultation where all relevant ministries and other stakeholders discuss the good practices and main areas that could be developed further as identified in the draft migration governance profile, as well as priorities on the way forward. It is also an opportunity for them to comment and provide suggestions on the draft profile.



4 Publication of the report on the Global Migration Data Portal

After the migration governance profiles are finalized and vetted by government counterparts, they are published on the [Migration Data Portal](#) and the [IOM Publications Platform](#).

After the MGI assessment

IOM would like to thank the Government of Armenia for its engagement in this process. IOM hopes that the results of this assessment can feed into the Government's strengthening of its migration governance. After an MGI assessment, the following are recommended:



The MGI report can be used to inform policy work with the support of IOM (if desired).



A follow-up assessment can be conducted after three years to verify progress.



The findings can feed into capacity-building activities, which may connect to other IOM initiatives.



Governments can exchange best practices and innovative solutions with other governments that have conducted the MGI process.



KEY SOURCES*

** All hyperlinks were working at the time of writing this report.*

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2019 [Agreement on pension provision for workers of the member States of the Eurasian Economic Union.](#)

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- 2012 [Anti-trafficking Training Course. Instructor's Guide for Border Guards.](#)

Government of Armenia

- 1995 [Law on Citizenship \(amended in 2022\).](#)
1996a [Law on Consular Service \(amended in 2021\).](#)
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2002 [Law on Seismic Protection \(amended in 2020\).](#)
2003 [Criminal Code.](#)
2004a [Labour Code \(amended in 2023\).](#)
2004b [Decision No. 318-N on free medical aid and services guaranteed by the State.](#)
2004c [Law on Higher and Postgraduate Professional Education \(amended in 2021\).](#)
2004d [Decision on State-guaranteed free and privileged health care \(amended in 2023\).](#)
2005 [Decision on approving the statute of the Rescue Service \(amended in 2023\).](#)
2006 [Law on Foreigners \(amended in 2023\).](#)
2007 [Decision on entry visas \(amended in 2022\).](#)
2008 [Law on Refugees and Asylum \(amended in 2021\).](#)
2010 [Law on State Pensions \(amended in 2022\).](#)
2011a [Decision on the admission of foreign citizens and family members of Armenian diplomats into higher educational institutions of the Republic of Armenia.](#)
2011b [Decision on the admission of foreigners to vocational training institutions.](#)
2011c [Decision on approving the Population Protection Plan for Major Earthquakes \(amended in 2013\).](#)
2013a [Law on Employment \(amended in 2020\).](#)
2013b [Law on Ensuring Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Women and Men \(amended in 2020\).](#)
2014a [Decision on the Financial Education Strategy of the Republic of Armenia.](#)
2014b [Law on Social Assistance \(amended in 2022\).](#)
2014c [Law of Armenia on the Identification and Support of Persons Exposed to Human Trafficking and Exploitation.](#)
2015a [Decision of the Prime Minister on the creation of a working group for combating human trafficking \(amended in 2022\).](#)
2015b [Constitution of the Republic of Armenia \(amended in 2020\).](#)
2016a [Decision on work permits \(amended in 2021\).](#)
2016b [Electoral Code \(amended in 2022\).](#)
2016c [Tax Code \(amended in 2023\).](#)
2017 [Protocol decision on approving the National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy and its Implementation Plan.](#)
2018a [Decision of the Prime Minister on adopting the statute of the Ministry of Emergency Situations \(amended in 2022\).](#)

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| 2018b | Law on Government Structure and Operation (amended in 2022). |
| 2018c | Decision of the Prime Minister on approving the statute and structure of the National Security Service of the Republic of Armenia (amended in 2023). |
| 2019a | Decision on approving the National Human Rights Protection Strategy and its 2020–2022 Action Plan (amended in 2021). |
| 2019b | Decision on approving the 2019–2023 Gender Policy Implementation Strategy and its Action Plan. |
| 2019c | Decision of the Prime Minister on approving the statute of the High Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs of the Prime Minister’s Office of the Republic of Armenia (amended in 2020). |
| 2020a | National voluntary review: Republic of Armenia. |
| 2020b | Government Decree No. 336-L on the government programme of primary assistance for the reintegration of nationals returning to the Republic of Armenia (including involuntary returnees). |
| 2020c | Decision on approving the National Plan for Combating Human Trafficking and Exploitation in the years 2020–2022 and its implementation schedule (amended in 2021). |
| 2021a | Decision on approving the National Migration Governance Framework and its Action Plan. |
| 2021b | Decision on approving the Financial Education Plan of the Republic of Armenia and its implementation schedule for the years 2021–2025. |
| 2021c | Decision on approving the National Action Plan for Climate Change Adaptation and its Implementation Plan for the years 2021–2025. |
| 2021d | Decision on approving the nationally defined contribution for 2021–2030 of the Republic of Armenia to the Paris Agreement. |
| 2021e | Decision on invalidating protocol decisions of the Government of Armenia. |
| 2021f | Decision on the unified electronic platform for issuing work permits to foreigners. |
| 2021g | Law on Civil Registration Services (amended in 2022). |
| 2021h | Criminal Code (amended in 2023). |
| 2021i | 2021–2026 Programme of the Government of the Republic of Armenia. |
| 2022a | Law on Amending the Law on Government Structure and Operation. |
| 2022b | Government Decree No. 1711-N on the programme for ensuring housing to refugees in Armenia. |
| 2022c | Law on Making Amendments and Supplements to the Law on Bodies of the State Management System. |
| 2022d | Status of implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration at national level for the IMRF. |
| 2022e | Government Decree No. 1534-N on the indicators for identifying a person as a victim, or a victim of a special category, by the Commission for the Identification of Victims of Human Trafficking and Exploitation. |
| 2023a | Decision of the Prime Minister on approving the statute of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Armenia. |
| 2023b | Decision on approving the National Plan for Combating Human Trafficking and Exploitation in the years 2023–2025 and its implementation schedule. |
| 2023c | Decision of the Prime Minister on the procedure of Migration and Citizenship Service officers’ retraining for appointment. |
| 2023d | Decision on the draft law of the Republic of Armenia on the ratification of the protocol on amendments to the memorandum of understanding between the Government of the Republic of Armenia and the Government of the United Arab Emirates on the exemption of persons holding diplomatic passports from the requirement to obtain an entry visa. |
| n.d. | International bilateral agreements. |
| Government of Armenia and Government of Belarus | |
| 2001 | Agreement on the temporary employment and social protection of citizens working abroad. |
| Government of Armenia and the Benelux States (Belgium, Luxembourg and the Kingdom of the Netherlands) | |
| 2009 | Agreement on the return of persons residing illegally. |
| 2018 | Agreement on the readmission of persons illegally residing without authorization. |
| Government of Armenia and Government of Bulgaria | |
| 2012 | Agreement on cooperation in the fields of employment and social protection. |
| 2018 | Agreement on the regulation of labour migration. Not available online. |

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- Government of Armenia and Government of Czechia
2011 [Agreement on the readmission of persons without a permit.](#)
- Government of Armenia and Government of Denmark
2003 [Agreement on the readmission of persons without authorization.](#)
- Government of Armenia and Government of France
2016a [Protocol signed in Brussels on 19 April 2013, implementing the agreement signed between the Republic of Armenia and the European Union on the readmission of persons residing without authorization.](#)
2016b [Agreement on migration partnership.](#)
- Government of Armenia and Government of Germany
2006 [Agreement on readmission and transit of persons without authorization.](#)
- Government of Armenia and Government of Norway
2010 [Agreement on the readmission of persons staying without authorization.](#)
- Government of Armenia and Government of the Russian Federation
1994 [Agreement on the employment and social protection of citizens of the Republic of Armenia working in the territory of the Russian Federation and citizens of the Russian Federation working in the territory of the Republic of Armenia.](#)
2010 [Agreement on readmission.](#)
2011 [Agreement between the Police of the Republic of Armenia and the Federal Migration Service of the Russian Federation on cooperation against illegal migration.](#)
- Government of Armenia and Government of Sweden
2009 [Agreement on the readmission of persons without a permit.](#)
- Government of Armenia and Government of Switzerland
2003 [Agreement on the readmission of persons with unauthorized stay.](#)
- Government of Armenia and Government of Ukraine
1997 [Agreement on the temporary work activities and social protection of citizens of the Republic of Armenia and Ukraine working outside the borders of their countries.](#)
- Human Rights Defender of Armenia
2023 [Annual Report.](#)
- International Organization for Migration (IOM)
1993 [Budapest Process.](#)
1996 [Regional Conference to Address the Problems of Refugees, Displaced Persons, Other Forms of Involuntary Displacement and Returnees in the Countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and Relevant Neighbouring Countries \(CIS Conference\).](#)
2001 [Eastern Partnership Panel on Migration, Mobility and Integrated Border Management.](#)
2007 [The IOM Handbook on Direct Assistance for Victims of Trafficking.](#)
2009 [Prague Process.](#)
2014 [Processing Readmission Cases in Armenia. Guide and training materials for officials of the state bodies mandated to process readmission cases.](#)
2019 [Migration Data in the Context of the 2030 Agenda: Measuring Migration and Development in Armenia. Yerevan.](#)
- IOM and the Statistical Committee of Armenia (Armstat)
2021 [Migration Profile of the Republic of Armenia, 2019. Yerevan.](#)
2022 [Migration Profile of the Republic of Armenia in 2020. Yerevan.](#)
2023 [Migration Profile of the Republic of Armenia in 2021. Yerevan.](#)
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Migration and Citizenship Service (MCS)

- 2023 [Order on approving the statute of the Migration and Citizenship Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Armenia.](#)

Migration Service

- 2021a [Migration Governance and Framework Action Plan.](#)
2021b [Statute of Migration Service.](#)
n.d. [Statistics.](#)

Ministry of Emergency Situations

- 2019 [Government decision on approving the Action Plan for the Management of Migration Flows Caused by a Disaster or Military Operation.](#)

Ministry of Health

- n.d. [Information on medical aid and services provided to citizens of EAEU and CIS member States, as well as citizens of other countries \(including Ukrainians\).](#)

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

- 2023 [Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2022.](#) Copenhagen.
n.d. [Armenia: Summary statistics.](#)

Official Journal of the European Union

- 2012 [Agreement between the Republic of Armenia and the European Union on the facilitation of the issuance of visas.](#)
2013 [Agreement between the Republic of Armenia and the European Union on the readmission of persons without authorization.](#)

Statistical Committee of Armenia

- n.d.a [Publications by year – 2022.](#)
n.d.b [Households' Integrated Living Conditions Survey tools.](#)

United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

- 2000 [Resolution No. 1325, Landmark resolution on women, peace and security.](#)



www.migrationdataportal.org/mgi

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