

1. Please provide examples of migrants' contributions to various sectors of society and any relevant statistical or disaggregated data based on age, gender, disability, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation and gender identity, migration status, or other categories.

The available statistical data does not shed light on the contribution of migrants to specific sectors of society in Armenia, and therefore a rough idea can be obtained only from indirectly indicative statistics. Reflecting on the contribution to the country's economy as a whole, the following trends can be highlighted:

As of the beginning of 2023, the number of businesses with Russian founders in Armenia increased from 3,831 to 6,060, or more than one and a half times, according to the State Revenue Committee. The number of registered individual entrepreneurs increased from 775 to 7,771. The largest number of new companies and IEs opened in the IT sector (3,909 in total). 609 new companies and sole proprietorships opened in the industry classified as "professional, scientific and technical activities"¹.

According to the publications of the Central Bank of the Republic of Armenia (RA) in 2022, as compared to 2021, the volume of remittances made by individuals to the RA increased by about 30 percent, equalling 2.03 billion dollars, which is the highest figure since 2014. At the same time, due to the 12.6 percent growth of Armenia's GDP in 2022, remittances made 9.4 percent of GDP in 2022, while it was 11.2 percent of GDP in 2021.

The study of the structure of remittances made by the individuals shows that the increase in the total volume of transfers in 2022 was recorded mainly due to the personal transfers and the increase in net salary of migrant workers)².

Although the effects of migration processes on Armenia's economy in 2022 have not been studied and documented yet, policymakers and experts agree that the significant improvement of Armenia's macroeconomic indicators in 2022 was greatly facilitated by the unprecedented influx of migrants (in particular, relocators from Russia), the effects of which are noticeable in almost all sectors of the economy.

2. What positive measures are taken by States at the local, national, regional and international levels that facilitate, maximise and optimise migrants, their families and communities' contributions in origin, transit and receiving societies? Please provide details, which may include, but are not limited to, development and/or implementation of legislative, policymaking, and institutional frameworks; regularization mechanisms and integration programs; social integration and social cohesion efforts;

¹ [Насколько в Армении за год стало больше бизнеса у россиян и в каких отраслях - 18.04.2023, Sputnik Армения \(armeniasputnik.am\)](https://sputnik.am/news/1000000000)

² Armenian Migration Profile (2022) [Microsoft Word - Migration_Profile_2022 \(reintegrationfacility.eu\)](https://reintegrationfacility.eu) p. 27-28

material and/or financial support; recruitment opportunities, education and/or training; access to health, social welfare, justice and reparation.

On the basis of the Migration Service of the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructures Armenia, and the Passport and Visa Department of the Police, the Migration and Citizenship Service (MCS) was established within the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA). The statute of MCS was adopted in January 2024. The objectives of the MCS are state regulation of migration processes; operation of citizenship and passport system, organizing and implementing the process of determining status of a stateless person, recognition of refugee status and provision of asylum, implementation of readmission process, voluntary return and deportation of foreigners.

On 1 January 2022, Armenia introduced the ‘Work Permit Electronic System’, which utilises advanced software to allow employers to submit online requests to grant temporary residence status to foreigners on the basis of employment and simplified the access of migrants to work. In 2022, 10 909 and in 2023, 16,622 applications were received through the Work Permit Electronic System³.

In 2022, 16,658 foreigners received a permit of stay in Armenia, which is four times higher than the same indicator of 2021. Moreover, whereas the number of people receiving permanent permits increased by 2.5 times as compared to 2021, the number of foreigners with temporary permits quintupled⁴.

The most common countries of origin among successful applicants thus far are Iran, India, Indonesia, South Korea, and the Philippines.

Armenia, in partnership with the ICMPD, implemented the EU-funded project ‘Increasing Migrants’ Potential to Act for Development of Armenia (EU4IMPACT) which seeks to empower labour migrants, returnees and their family members by mobilising and investing remittances in local development and job creation in Armenia. Project applicants have invested an amount equal to the requested grant. As of 1 January 2024, the project received around 600 applications from all regions of Armenia. 222 applicants attended the online business training courses and presented their business projects to professional jury members, who selected 104 business projects for non-financial assistance.

Article 61 of the Constitution of Armenia (Right to Judicial Protection and the Right to Apply to International Bodies for the Protection of Human Rights) states that everyone shall have the right to effective judicial protection of his or her rights and freedoms. Everyone shall, in accordance with the international treaties of the Republic of Armenia, have the right to apply to international bodies

³ See ARMENIA EMN COUNTRY FACTSHEET 2022

⁴ Summarized Migration Profile of the Republic of Armenia (2022) [Microsoft Word - Migration Profile 2022 \(reintegrationfacility.eu\)](https://reintegrationfacility.eu)

for the protection of human rights and freedoms with regard to the protection of his or her rights and freedoms. Article 63 (Right to Fair Trial) states that everyone shall have the right to a fair and public hearing of his or her case, within a reasonable time period, by an independent and impartial court. The judicial proceedings or a part thereof may, in the cases and under the procedure prescribed by law, be held behind closed doors upon a court decision, for the purpose of protecting the private life of the participants of proceedings, the interests of minors or interests of justice, as well as state security, public order or morals. The use of evidence obtained in violation of basic rights or that undermining the right to fair trial shall be prohibited⁵.

Armenia is currently drafting the Law “On Ensuring Equality”. The latter envisages the establishment of an Equality Council adjacent to the Human Rights Defender. The purpose of the Council shall be to assist the Human Rights Defender in ensuring the equality of persons and protection from all forms of discrimination. The Council shall operate on the principles of equality, impartiality, publicity, transparency, accessibility and representativeness. Furthermore, a law “On National Minorities” is currently being drafted. The latter stipulates that a Chamber of National Minorities shall be established in order to contribute to the realization of the rights of national minorities, to discuss the situation and issues related to the realization of their rights, to prepare proposals for solving problems and to express a position. The Chamber is composed of representatives of national minorities, two members from each national minority.

The Government of Armenia has adopted the 2023-2025 Action Plan arising from the National Strategy for the Protection of Human Rights. The Action Plan envisages the obligation to have the two abovementioned drafts to be submitted to the National Assembly of Armenia for adoption by the end of the second semester of 2024⁶.

According to the Concept of the State Management of Migration of the Republic of Armenia, in order to ensure the implementation of actions aimed at the regulation of integration and reintegration issues, management of migration flows, crisis management of mass inflow of forced migrants, implementation of activities aimed at promotion of repatriation, in January, 2025 it is envisaged to submit to the RA Prime Minister's staff the updated version of the draft Strategy of the RA Government "On Approving the 2025-2035 Strategy of Migration Policy of the Republic of Armenia for the Regulation of Integration and Reintegration Issues of and the Action Plan for 2025-2026 depriving from it.

⁵ Constitution of Armenia

<https://www.arlis.am/documentview.aspx?docid=143723>

⁶ Draft Laws “On Ensuring Equality” and “On National Minorities”

<https://www.e-draft.am/projects/1801>

3. What positive measures are implemented by civil society organisations and non-governmental stakeholders in maximising and optimising migrants' contributions? If so, please provide details.

Consolidation of a transnational network of NGOs specializing on labour migration between Russia, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan by Armenian Caritas.

“Refugee Protection and Economic Integration” project Implemented by Armenian Red Cross Society (ARCS)

“Realizing basic rights of refugees and asylum seekers in safe and favourable protection environments in Armenia” project implemented by Mission Armenia NGO.

UNHCR in cooperation with KASA Swiss Humanitarian Foundation, established Hotline for displaced people.

Increasing Migrants' Potential to Act for the Development of Armenia. ICMPD⁷

4. What obstacles are there in law and practice which hinder the realisation and/or recognition of migrants' contributions in communities of origin, transit and destination? Please provide details, which may include, but are not limited to, development and/or implementation of legislative, policy and institutional frameworks as well as public discourse.

In 2023, the Government of Armenia adopted the 7th National Action Plan for Combating Trafficking and Exploitation of Human Beings for 2023- 2025. These include legislative reforms, 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, last amended in 2023) and the Criminal Code (2021, last amended in 2023). The establishment of a national system for tracing and identifying missing migrants is another area with potential for development.

Decision No. 318-N of the Government of the Republic of Armenia "On free medical aid and services guaranteed by the state" defines the list of persons who belong to “socially disadvantaged groups of society” and who 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.

⁷ ICMPD, “EU for Increasing Migrants Potential to Act for Development of Armenia” <https://www.icmpd.org/our-work/projects/eu-for-increasing-migrants-potential-to-act-for-development-of-armenia-eu4impact>

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)⁸.

5. How effective are existing mechanisms used by migrants and their families in overcoming hindering factors that they are subjected to?

On November 10, 2022, a program was approved by the 1711-N decision of the Government of Armenia, which provides compensation for renting apartments to people recognized as refugees in Armenia. The compensation is provided for a period of 6 months in the amount of AMD 60,000⁹. During 2023, 76 persons (36 families) received subsidies for renting apartments within the framework of the above-mentioned programme.

6. How can we raise awareness, rethink and change the way migration is spoken about, especially when harmful narratives on migration are inserted into the public discourse and politicised?

Armenia invested in preventing irregular migration by informing potential migrants of the risks through information, awareness-raising and dissuasion campaigns in countries of origin, or by addressing diaspora groups in countries of destination.

The Migration Service of Armenia worked with international partners and civil society organisations on information campaigns and media activities. A series of meetings and training courses were launched to help local journalists to present accurate and reliable migration-related content to the public, with the aim of increasing awareness of the risks of irregular migration to the EU among Armenian nationals¹⁰.

The Criminal Code of Armenia, adopted in 2021, envisages criminal offences aimed to protect persons from hatred-related behaviours i.e. direct and public calls for aggression (Article 151), publicly calling for violence, publicly justifying or advocating violence, and distributing materials or objects to that effect (Article 330). It should also be noted that Article 71 of the Code views the commitment of any crime motivated by hatred, intolerance or enmity based on racial, national, ethnic or social origin, religion, political or other views or other circumstances of a personal or social nature as an aggravating circumstance, resulting in a more severe punishment for the offender¹¹.

⁸ Migration Governance Indicators: Republic of Armenia

⁹ Armenian Migration Profile (2022) https://reintegrationfacility.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/English-EMP_2022.pdf

¹⁰ EMN Annual Report (2022) https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-07/00_eu_arm2022_report.pdf p. 67

¹¹ Criminal Code of Armenia

<https://www.arlis.am/documentview.aspx?docid=189521>

7. What practical recommendations would you propose in order to effectively address these ongoing challenges and protect migrants' human rights in origin, transit and host communities?

We would recommend to organise the awareness raising campaigns in order to inform migrants on their rights, on the risks and consequences in case of irregular migration, as well as enhance their capacities, etc. Another recommendation is to improve the cooperation between relevant stakeholders of origin, transit and host countries, including the sharing of good practices, knowledge and experience on the targeted topics that would enhance the capacities of all parties.