Background note

Eastern Partnership Panel on Migration and Asylum
Meeting in Tbilisi 20-21 March 2013
- with a special focus on Return, Readmission and Reintegration

The Panel on Migration and Asylum was created in 2011 within the context of the Eastern Partnerships’ Platform for Democracy, good governance and stability. The establishment of the Panel incorporated the work carried out within the former Söderköringsprocess and will build on the achievements and experiences developed within that framework. The Panel will work towards strengthening the Migration and Asylum systems of Eastern partners and advance the dialogue on migration and asylum issues between the EU and Eastern Partners, as well as amongst the Eastern Partners, in line with the EU Global Approach to Migration and Mobility.

BACKGROUND
Readmission of a country’s own nationals residing or staying illegally at the territory of another state is a principle of international law by which all countries have to abide. Effective and sustainable return, readmission and reintegration are integral parts of efficient migration management. It was already discussed within the framework of the former Söderköringsprocess. The last time was at a thematic seminar in connection to the National Coordinator’s meeting in March 2011 in Riga, Latvia. The seminar focused on voluntary return and reintegration with the experiences of among others Ukraine, Moldova, Poland and Sweden.

PURPOSE
The dialogue to increase mobility between the EU and its Eastern Partners is on-going, including through the negotiation of visa facilitation agreements in parallel with readmission agreements. Given the importance of return, readmission and reintegration for migration management, these issues are also raised within other regional dialogues. The meeting will incorporate and build on the results from the Thematic Workshop of the Prague Process Targeted Initiative Pilot Project 1 in Warsaw 11-12 March 2013, which will have a special focus on different aspects of readmission agreements. The meeting should enhance and specify this dialogue, focusing on concrete cooperation modalities between Eastern Partner states and
EU member states in the area of return, readmission and reintegration.

OBJECTIVE
After providing a general update on recent developments within the scope of the Panel, the meeting will focus entirely on return, readmission and reintegration. It will provide a broad overview of the different systems in the Eastern Partner States and of the return system within the EU and in EU Member States. Different examples of initiatives in both Eastern Partner States and EU Member States on how to enhance the efficiency and sustainability of return, readmission and reintegration, as well as how to safeguard the rights of returnees, will be presented. Representatives from civil society will be present at the meeting to share their views and provide their inputs. The presentations can contribute to advancing discussions and sharing of experiences of capacity building in the different areas. The meeting will also present possibilities for networking and establishing contacts for further discussions between officials working with return, readmission and reintegration.

TOPICS
- General update on issues within the scope of the Panel and the participating states
- Aspects of effective and sustainable return
- Overview of the EU return and readmission framework
- Aspects of effective and sustainable readmission
- Aspects of effective and sustainable reintegration

TARGET GROUPS
The main target group is senior officials and/or experts and contacts point in the participating states.

MEETING FOLLOW-UP
Participating states can in cooperation with other states take initiatives to follow up certain questions that have been raised either by studies within the structure of the Panel and/or consider to continue discussions in future Panel meetings and/or expert workshops.