**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Panel Meeting on the return, readmission and reintegration organized within the framework of the Eastern Partnership Panel on Migration and Asylum took place in Tbilisi, Georgia and was co-organized by Hungary and European Commission (EC). The meeting gathered representatives of all Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries, EU Member States, international organizations, civil society and academia with the purpose of discussing all the relevant aspects of the return process: readmission, return and re-integration.

The first day started with welcome and opening remarks (EC, Georgia and Hungary). General Panel business was discussed during the first session beginning with the brief report from the previous Panel Meeting on Circular Migration held in Chisinau, following by sharing updates from the Panel. The session continued with tour de table on recent developments in participating states in the areas covered by the Panel at national and regional levels. Later on relevant initiatives implemented in the context of Prague Process (PP) were presented by Poland and followed by the updates on UNHCR Quality Initiative in Eastern Europe and Northern Caucasus. Lithuania reported on preparations to the 2013 Ministerial Conference.

The second session provided introduction to the return, readmission and reintegration starting with Poland sharing the report form the PPTI 1st Workshop of PP1 on exchange of experience and best practices on return and readmission of foreigners. Migration Policy Center covered return, readmission and reintegration in the EaP region continuing with tour de table on up-to-date situation with return, readmission and reintegration.

The third session was dedicated entirely to return and began with overview of the Return Directive and EU MS perspective on the directive. The session continued with presentation of the Belgian experience in facilitating return through information actions followed by the illustration of the human rights dimension of the return, readmission and reintegration process.

Fourth session covered readmission issues by reporting on implementation of the readmission agreements from the perspective of both receiving and returning states and continued with presentation on identification of undocumented migrants for the purpose of readmission. Later on Armenia added on readmission of irregular migrants and after discussion Georgia summarized the first day of the Panel meeting.

The second day of the Panel meeting started with the fifth session focusing closely on reintegration. Georgia informed on the short-term measures to ensure effective reintegration, while Armenia shared practices of return and reintegration of own citizens. The session went further with report on the facilitation of assisted voluntary return and reintegration in Moldova and followed by description of the civil society involvement in reintegration.

Sixth session of the meeting further developed reintegration topic by presentation of the lessons learned and experienced gathered from the projects addressing reintegration implemented by the IOM Georgia. Later on reintegration of vulnerable groups was addressed by Romania.
The second day of the EaP Panel meeting was summarized by Georgia and Hungary with final word by the EC.

20 March 2013 - Day 1

Welcome and Opening
Facilitator: Mr. Rob Rozenburg, European Commission

In his opening statement Mr. Rob Rozenburg welcomed all the participants at the EaP Panel on Migration and Asylum Meeting with a specific focus on readmission, return and reintegration.

Mr. David Darakhvelidze, Minister of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia, welcomed participants and expressed his pleasure for Georgia to be a hosting state of the Panel meeting, demonstrating its adherence to the EU integration process. He stressed Georgia-EU cooperation by mentioning existing agreements between the parties and Georgia’s participation in different EU initiatives like Prague Process and Budapest Process. The Minister thanked the organizers of the Panel meeting for the opportunity to share experience Georgia has in the sphere of readmission, return and reintegration briefly describing an example of the Targeted Initiative Georgia project.

Mr. Levan Izoria, Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs of Georgia, greeted participating states and organizers of the meeting marking this occasion to enhance cooperation between the EU and EaP countries in the sphere of return, readmission and reintegration. He indicated important steps taken by Georgia within the migration sphere including recently adopted migration strategy and beginning of implementation of its priorities; joint work of different agencies establishing mechanisms to fight migration challenges; and constructing new public custody center. Mr. Izoria highlighted importance of the Panel meeting and such cooperation.

Mr. Ketevan Gomelauri, Public Service Development Agency, noted that the Panel meeting is significant not only in terms of cooperation between EU MS and EaP countries, but also in terms of visa liberalization dialogue with Europe. He also stressed the importance of the migration strategy adopted by the Georgian Government last week. Mr. Ketevan showed his appreciation to the EC and co-hosting state for the organization of the meeting and wished everyone fruitful discussion.

Mr. Tamas Molnar, Head of Unit, Ministry of Interior of Hungary, welcomed everyone and marked the support Hungary always provided to the Söderköping Process in the past and to the Panel now in order to transform it to the government-led initiative. He underlined that incorporation of the Söderköping Process in to the framework of the EaP Panel on Migration and Asylum resulted in a successful regional consultative forum and expressed his hopes for a productive discussion.

Mr. Rob Rozenburg, Deputy Head of Unit, European Commission, acknowledged Georgia for hosting the 4th Panel meeting, marking the second time it is taking place in Tbilisi. He described the Panel as a unique platform for comprehensive dialogue which serves a purpose of strengthening migration and asylum spheres in EaP states and focuses on approximation of standards in these areas to the European principles. Mr. Rozenburg recognised the strong cooperation of all six EaP participants with EU in the context of this panel, as well as the bilateral cooperation with EaP countries in the context of visa dialogues, mobility partnerships and readmission / visa facilitation agreements. He gave a brief introduction into the agenda of the two-day meeting and thanked all representatives for participation.

Session I. General Panel Business
Facilitator: Mr. Rob Rozenburg, European Commission

Mr. Rob Rozenburg, Deputy Head of Unit, European Commission, outlined the previous Panel meeting with a specific focus on circular migration which took place in Chisinau and was organized jointly by Moldova and Poland. He pointed out that a great part of the discussion devoted to the development of a definition of circular migration in the participating countries and special attention
was paid to migrant skills recognition. Mr. Rozenburg reminded that detailed report of the meeting was earlier distributed among all the participants.

Ms. Olesa Cotoman, Main Specialist of Policies and Legislation Division, Ministry of Interior of Moldova, added on the Panel meeting held in Chisinau, by highlighting its importance for Moldova not only because the country hosted it, but also due to circular migration being one of the key challenges for Moldova. The meeting allowed to see how circular migration is addressed in the EU MS and to find possible schemes and solutions for the EaP countries. Ms. Cotoman evaluated the discussion as very productive and indicated that a summary of the meeting is available upon request.

Ms. Agnieszka Kondek, Main Expert, Ministry of Interior of Poland, assessed the Panel meeting dedicated to circular migration as one of the significant, constructive and practically useful meetings, allowing to learn more about the phenomenon of circular migration and to share the experience Poland has in implementation of migration schemes with neighboring countries.

Mr. Rob Rozenburg, Deputy Head of Unit, European Commission, followed with general Panel business by introducing new focal points dealing with Panel issues: Mr. Erik Reho, expert from the SMB and Ms. Borbala Szigeti Policy Officer from the EC. He gave update on the Panel working programme notifying on the forthcoming expert workshop on trafficking in human beings to take place in Warsaw in the end of May 2013 and to be prepared jointly by Poland and Armenia. Following Panel meeting focused on refugees and IDPs will be organized by Czech Republic and Azerbaijan in Prague in September-October 2013. The Expert workshop on statelessness is scheduled closer towards the end of the year and will take place in Budapest under joint cooperation of Hungary and Moldova.

Mr. Erik Reho, Expert, Swedish Migration Board, introduced himself as a replacement of former colleague Mr. Lars-Erik Fjellström, working from now on within the Panel support function. He explained the responsibilities of the SMB, in this regard meaning assistance with preparation and planning of the Panel activities, developing agendas and questionnaires, collection of the answers and its compilation. Mr. Reho reassured deep commitment of the SMB to the Panel activities as a continuation of the earlier Söderköping Process.

Ms. Olga Kulebyakina, Project Specialist, IOM Ukraine, added on the support function of the IOM within framework of the Panel which includes managing content of the Panel web portal www.eapmigrationpanel.org, contributing to the reports and supporting studies. She encouraged participants to use the website and its Intranet function as an information sharing tool and announced the new issue of the Panel news digest covering January-March 2013 to be circulated in April 2013.

Ms. Borbala Szigeti, Policy Officer, European Commission, reminded about funds available for conduction of several studies within the framework of the Panel and the studies should be thematically related to the Panel activities.

Tour de table on recent developments in participating states the areas covered by the Panel at national and regional levels

Armenia informed on signing visa facilitation agreement with the EU and on new regulation which allows visa free travel for EU citizens to Armenia since 1 January 2013. The Action Plan for 2012-2016 ensuring realization of the Concept Paper for the Policy of State Regulation of Migration in the Republic of Armenia is being implemented.

Belgium reported on the adoption of the list of safe countries of origin is part of the national asylum policy; as a result, asylum applications from these countries will be processed at first instance. The criteria for establishing different categories of persons receiving entry bans were recently developed. Wide prevention and information campaigns on the limited possibilities of being granted asylum are implemented in the country.

Czech Republic notified on the establishment of the return center, a platform coordinating all activities related to return on national level under joint cooperation of the Ministry of Interior and IOM and financial support of the European Return Fund.
Azerbaijan mentioned current active involvement of the Government in the finalization of the readmission agreement with the EU and Norway and also that it enters into negotiations on visa facilitation agreement with the EU. The National Migration Code is developed and submitted for adoption by the National Assembly of Azerbaijan. Education and training activities are planned both on a local and international level. Several visits have been conducted to the Netherlands and Germany to identify their own citizens.

Estonia informed on the new draft provisions in national legislation aimed at attracting high-skilled migrant workers to be submitted to the parliament for adoption next year. Germany indicated no recent developments in the spheres of migration and asylum which concern interests of the Panel.

Belarus briefed on development of the Draft Concept on Single Migration Area with Russia and on further establishment of single migration card for Russia and Belarus. Visa-free regime is in the process of being established between Belarus and Turkey. Belarus actively participates in the Prague Process.

Hungary announced forthcoming Expert workshop on statelessness co-hosted by Moldova to take place in Budapest this December. Following the establishment of Common European Asylum System, Hungary is working on the implementation of the directives. Special focus is put on detention.. The elaboration of a national migration strategy has started.

Georgia spoke about the National Migration Strategy recently adopted by the Government indicating that it will be followed by the approval of a National Action Plan soon. A consultative role of the international organizations and civil society in the law-making process was positively assessed. There are six projects carried out in 2013 within the spheres of the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM) such as readmission and reintegration, and migration and development...

Lithuania highlighted EaP Ministerial Conference to take place in Vilnius this year and express particular hope towards the planned EU-Azerbaijan Mobility Partnership-

Poland marked transformations in the border guard system towards prioritizing not only border management issues, but also becoming a migration management agency. Ministry of Labor works on changes in current legislation concerning employment of migrant workers imposing more obligations on employers with the possibility of fines in case of violations. Economic migration to Poland has decreased in 2012, especially Ukrainian citizens.

Moldova described recent modifications in the Law on Foreigners introduced in November 2012 including new article on trafficking in human beings. The Law on Labour Migration was also changed and now incorporates more provisions on medical issues. New visa regulations were developed based on the EU standards. New law on police activity entered into force. In February-March 2013 assessment of the 2nd stage of the Action Plan on Visa Liberalization took place.

Romania informed on the establishment of the General Inspectorate for Immigration as a result of the reorganization of the Romanian Office for Immigration. The agency serves as migration, asylum, and aliens’ integration authority and works on relevant legislation in these fields. The number of asylum applications increased compared to 2011 and extended social rights have been granted to 100 000 foreigners. Romania takes active part in inter-institutional cooperation with other countries including involvement in twinning project with Armenia and Azerbaijan and Targeted Initiative Georgia project.

Sweden declared no recent developments in the sphere of migration and asylum.

Netherlands reported on the recent transition of function in the sphere of migration from the Ministry of Interior to the Ministry of Justice which is now responsible for aliens’ policies. Latest developments in the improvement of the asylum procedure allow to make fifty percent of decisions within a very short period of several days.

Ukraine mentioned establishment of the State Migration Service in 2011 as an authority responsible for regular and irregular migration. Following creation of the State Migration Service the State Migration Concept was developed. The Law on Legal Status of Aliens and the Law on Refugees were updated in 2011.

“Europe without Barriers” - Ukraine emphasized main challenges of implementation of the EU-Ukraine Visa Liberalization Action Plan indicating that many laws were developed and adopted lately
in Ukraine. However, civil society finds some of these developments to be violating human rights and data protection and also not being coherent with EU best practices.

**Danish Refugee Council** marked significant improvements in Georgia which help the international community to cooperate and provide assistance.

**ICMPD** remarked its current cooperation with all six EaP participating states within variety of projects and initiatives in the field of migration.

**IOM Georgia** mentioned its work in the sphere of migration in terms of different projects, as well as its participation in legislative developments contributing to and commenting law drafts.

**Migration Policy Center** informed on the CARIM-East project covering all EaP countries conducting research activities.

**Mr. Rob Rozenburg**, Deputy Head of Unit, European Commission, noted progress in visa dialogues with Moldova going through the second phase of the Action Plan on Visa Liberalization; Georgia having presented the Action Plan; and Ukraine going through the first phase of the Action Plan. He also marked Armenia having finalized the negotiations on the visa facilitation and readmission agreements, and Azerbaijan being at the fourth round of the negotiations and close to its conclusion. Mr. Rozenburg expressed his hopes for beginning of these negotiations with Belarus too.

**Ms. Agnieszka Kondek**, Main Expert, Ministry of Interior of Poland, presented relevant initiatives implemented in the context of Prague Process (PP) by reporting on meetings organized within PP. The PP work plan for 2013 and the new PP communication strategy were agreed during the High-level meeting in Prague in February 2013. The Kick-off of the Objective II meeting was held in Florence was focused on the migration policies and future development of the migration profiles. The Second Joint Workshop on Pilot Projects II and III was held in Prague and covered the issues of circular migration and legal migration. Training of trainers in Pilot Project IV dedicated to the European Asylum Curriculum took place in Warsaw. More updates are available through the PP newsletter.

**Ms. Inna Borisevich**, QIEE National Project Coordinator for Georgia, gave an update on the UNHCR’s Quality Initiative in Eastern Europe and Northern Caucasus announcing that the project has already officially started. The project focuses on promoting protection of refugees and asylum seekers, as well as on improving the quality of decision making in the context of refugee status determination in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. Russia will participate as an observer in key regional events. Poland, Romania, Germany, Sweden and the UK will provide expertise and share best European practices in the field of quality assurance capacity building, and COI. Currently specialists from all participating countries are already selected. The project kick-off meeting is scheduled for April 2013.

**Mr. Maksim Afanasjev**, Chief Specialist, Ministry of Interior of Lithuania, provided update on the EaP Ministerial Conference to be organized by Lithuania during its presidency in the Council of the European Union in the second half of 2013. Currently Lithuania is developing agenda of the event. Hence, all EU and EaP participating states are welcome to voice their expectations. A joint declaration will be the main outcome of the meeting.

### Session II. Introduction into return, readmission and reintegration

**Facilitator: Mr. Rob Rozenburg, European Commission**

**Ms. Agnieszka Kondek**, Main Expert, Ministry of Interior of Poland, reported on the PPTI 1st Workshop of PP1 on exchange of experience and best practices on return and readmission of foreigners. The aims of the workshop were to analyze the texts of readmission agreements, look closely into the process of negotiations on readmission agreements and study cooperation on readmission and return with state and non-state agents. Challenges in implementation of existing agreements include problematic identification, notification procedures and deadlines, lack of consular representatives, lack of due exchange of information and communication between partner states, lack of reintegration programs for ensuring sustainability of return. Possible solutions incorporate improvement of management capacities of various migration-related databases, better coordination of negotiations on the EU level, development of regional initiatives aiming at organization of joint returns, strengthening mutual trust, cooperation and partnership between
collaborating countries. Please, see presentation “Report from the PPTI 1st Thematic Workshop of PP1 on exchange of experience and bets practices on return and readmission of foreigners”

Ms. Zuzanna Brunarska, Migration Policy Institute, EUI, presented an overview of the return, readmission and reintegration in the EaP countries pointing out the lack of reliable data for proper comparative analysis of return in EaP states due to diverging rules such as different terms, time limits, detention and entry bans. The lack of implementation protocol is also causing difficulties besides the fact that voluntary return often lacks relevant data. Most EaP countries lack readmission agreements with major countries of origin whose migrants come or transit through their territories; moreover, Azerbaijan and Belarus have not signed any readmission agreements at all. The fear in some countries of mass return of third-country nationals seems to be unfounded, given the Ukrainian experience. Existing return and reintegration initiatives in EaP countries are mostly funded from external sources. Return policy should become a separate branch of migration policy among migrant sending states. There is a need to initiate a proper information campaign for returning migrants and support them in finding employment and business start-up. Please, see presentation “Return, readmission and reintegration in the Eastern Partnership countries: An overview”

Tour de Table regarding up to date situation with return, readmission and reintegration. 

Ukraine informed on the recent changes in the legislation with regard to the return. The notion of assisted voluntary return was introduced into the national legal framework. The State Migration Service of Ukraine together with the IOM was working on AVR mechanism and its practical implementation. Thus, the State Migration Service was making decision and IOM was taking care of the actual return within the framework of the EU funded project. Now state funding is envisaged for the AVR activities in 2013.

Netherlands shared experience gained within various AVR projects. It is difficult to change minds of migrants in order to return and stay in their home countries. Nevertheless, many migrants use the opportunity to receive reintegration assistance. Numbers of migrants who actually benefited from the offered reintegration assistance differ from country to country. Very low percentages of returnees are using reintegration assistance in Ukraine, whereas significant increase in accepted reintegration grants is marked in Armenia.

Sweden stated that voluntary return is prioritized in the country since it is more humane and more cost effective. Out of total 16,000 migrants returning from Sweden, 13,000 were returned through the AVR procedure. Sweden does not always gets involved in bilateral readmission agreements in order not to increase bureaucratic procedures when the return functions well without it. There is a possibility to apply for “Reestabishment support” for the AVR returnees from specific countries. The SMB together with NGOs implement a variety of reintegration projects.

Romania specified that General Inspectorate on Immigration is the only authority in the country dealing with forced return issues. Voluntary return is on place and implemented together with the IOM in terms of existing AVR supporting projects. 600 foreigners were returned to their countries of origin forcedly, out of total 3,500 foreigners identified as staying illegally in Romania.

Moldova notified on the developments in the national legal framework on return stating that most of the terms were recently defined in the Law on Status of Foreigners. The Bureau on Migration and Asylum is managing the sphere of readmission agreements. In 2012 Moldova has signed readmission agreements with Bosnia, Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro. Readmission agreements with Ukraine and Albania are expected to be signed soon.

Poland named countries problematic in the return procedure (Congo, Pakistan, and Nigeria). Measures are taken in order to improve cooperation with mission of Congo in Poland. Pakistan has not been very cooperative in cases of forced return. Therefore Poland intends to sign implementing protocol with Pakistan and specify alternative methods of identification. A coordination meeting with Nigerian embassy is to be organized.

Lithuania marked its satisfaction with cooperation with the EaP states in the field of return, readmission and reintegration.

Georgia introduced State Commission on Migration activities in the sphere of migration management. Cooperation with Danish Refugee Council in return and reintegration is very
productive. Targeted Initiative for Georgia project proved to be very successful in implementing reintegration programs.

**Hungary** shared experience of the two-year implementation of the EU Return Directive and marked recently signed implementing protocols with Georgia and Bosnia. Hungary is involved in trilateral cooperation with neighboring states (Serbia, Austria). There are 31 readmission agreements signed as of today but EU readmission agreements are favored.

**Belarus** highlighted absence of signed readmission agreements with other countries, though active steps are made in order to conclude readmission agreements and implementing protocols with Ukraine, Russia, Turkey and Kazakhstan. Currently there is no effective reintegration mechanism for own nationals returning from abroad. Belarus has little experience in readmission, return and reintegration and will appreciate best practices of other countries in this field.

**Germany** briefed on the state approach to return. Many stakeholders are involved into the process of return, readmission and reintegration due to Germany’s federal structure. Voluntary return is coordinated by the Ministry of Interior. Germany in trying to implement integral approach by providing comprehensive counseling throughout return process and one-package reintegration assistance after return.

**Estonia** informed on implementation of the Return Directive. Bilateral agreements have been signed with Montenegro, Ukraine and Kosovo. Signing of the implementing protocols to the readmission agreements is very important for the process of readmission.

**Azerbaijan** marked that the geographical placement makes the situation in Azerbaijan very specific. Currently there are no readmission agreements, though negotiations with the EU are taking place. There are no specific reintegration programs in the country, however national employment scheme for returnees exists. The program of reintegration for the children of victims of trafficking in human beings was developed and to be adopted soon.

**Czech Republic** briefed on the Aliens Act describing return practices. As a result of cooperation with the IOM the return center for migrants was established. Forced return prevails in Czech Republic although voluntary return is implemented as well. Migrants need to be convinced to participate in reintegration programs.

**Belgium** informed on the entry ban introduced into national legislation in July 2012. There is a reintegration program lead by the Netherlands for voluntary and forced returnees of eight different nationalities.

**Armenia** mentioned the readmission agreement with the EU and five reintegration programs currently implemented in the country.

**Mr. Rob Rozenburg**, Deputy Head of Unit, European Commission, underlined the thirteen readmission agreements EU has with other states (including Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia) and three more to be ratified (including Armenia and – hopefully soon - Azerbaijan). The newest EU readmission agreements could be treated as model texts as they cover all aspects of the process. Implementation protocols are important, but not obligatory to reach smooth operation, as proven by Georgian electronic system of readmission case management.

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**Session III. Return**

Facilitator: Ms. Timea Lehoczki, Hungary

**Mr. Tamas Molnar**, Head of Unit, Ministry of Interior of Hungary, presented overview of the Return Directive from the perspective of the EU MS. The Return Directive constitutes part of a comprehensive approach to migration providing common standards for an effective return policy with speedy and efficient return procedures in full respect of human rights of the returnees. MS may decide to exclude third-country nationals subject to refusal of entry, apprehended or intercepted in connection with irregular crossing. MS shall issue a return decision to any third-country national staying illegally on their territory. MS shall provide for an appropriate period of voluntary departure ranging between 7 to 30 days. Throughout the whole procedure when implementing Return Directive MS shall take due account of procedural safeguards such as the best interest of the child, family life, state of health and respect the principle of non-refoulement. Return decisions shall be accompanied
by an entry ban if no period for voluntary return has been granted or if the obligation to return has not been complied with. The Return Directive harmonizes and improves return standards in full compliance of the ECHR. However, improvements are needed in the areas of legal status for non-removable persons and in removals by land. *Please, see presentation “The Return Directive – An Overview”*

**Mr. David Kuiper**, Policy Advisor Litigation, Immigration and Naturalization Service, Ministry of Security and Justice of the Netherlands, followed with a Dutch approach to the Return Directive. Major changes concerning implementation of the Return Directive include always written return decision; an entry ban, pre structuring relevant individual circumstances; integration of the Dutch concept of “undesired persons” in the entry ban system; maximizing the duration of detention; written prolongation of decision. Major legal challenges after implementation incorporate relation to other directives/council regulations/Schengen Border Code; defining the impact of the Soprole doctrine on decisions relating to 2008/115; obligatory entry ban; position of holder of residence permits in other MS; prolongation decisions; objective criteria for the risk of absconding. *Please, see presentation “Implementing the Return Directive – The Dutch Approach”*

**Ms. Katy Verzelen**, Immigration Officer, Belgian Immigration Office, described ways of facilitating return through information actions based on the examples of various projects implemented in Belgium and aimed at different target groups. AVR related projects actively use intensified coaching towards voluntary return, free phone number for counseling and accessible helpdesks, operating hotline which offers free bus journeys or flights to the country of origin. Special unit SEFOR (Sensibilisation, Follow-up and Return) created within the Immigration office promotes voluntary return through brochures, posters, DVDs, website and other information materials in more than 20 languages. Main theme of information actions is to persuade irregular migrants to assume their responsibility for organizing their return. Focus of all initiatives lying on the voluntary return, however, if return is not happening on a voluntary basis forced return will inevitably follow. *Please, see presentation “Facilitating Return through Information Actions”*

**Mr. Christoph Bierwirth**, Deputy Representative, UNHCR Georgia, elaborated on human rights dimension of the return, readmission and reintegration process. All human rights-based approaches offer legal protection tools and are implemented in all UNHCR activities. Human rights enabling return stating that no one should be deprived to enter his own home country; taking into account definition of the home country does not necessarily mean the state of citizenship, but the state of strong attachment. Human rights could limit return in compliance with Article 33 of the Geneva Convention. Human rights in return and reintegration imply safe means, safe routs, access to proper documentation, access to social services, freedom of movement.

**Session IV. Readmission**

Facilitator: Mr. George Jashi, Georgia

**Ms. Nata Chkadua**, Chief Specialist of International Relations Unit, Ministry of Interior of Georgia reported on ensuring effective readmission from the perspective of the receiving state based on the results of implementation of readmission agreements. Georgia has signed readmission agreements with Ukraine, Switzerland, EU and Norway. Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Refugees and Accommodation are engaged into the readmission process at different stages. Reply to the request shall be made within 2 working days in case of the accelerated procedure and within 12 calendar days in all other cases. The number of EU MS sending readmission request reached 20. Implementing protocols are signed with Bulgaria, Estonia and Hungary, while negotiations are taking place with Austria, Czech Republic, Poland and Germany. 1795 readmission requests were received between 2011-2012 of which 132 were answered negatively. *Please, see presentation “Results of Implementation of the Readmission Agreements in Georgia”*

**Mr. George Grigalashvili**, Deputy Head of Consular Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, presented readmission case management electronic system developed within the framework of the project titled “Support to the Authorities of Georgia for the implementation of the
Readmission Agreement with the EU" funded by the EU and implemented by the IOM. The readmission agreement with EU is in palce since 1 March 2011. It is expected for the system to incorporate single space, electronic database, governance and coordination, increase operationality, security, communication, unified procedure and complete statistics. Software Developed software covers submission of the readmission application, revision, planning of the interview, communication between users by internal integrated communicator, reply to the application, request of travel document, information on transfer modalities and statistics. Database includes management control system, not allowing users from different modules to access or modify current module. Please, see presentation “Readmission Case Management Electronic System”

Mr. András Czakó, Legal Expert, Office of Immigration and Nationality, Aliens Policing Directorate of Hungary, followed with ensuring effective readmission from the perspective of the returning state based on the experience of Hungary. National Police Headquarter (NPH) and Office of Immigration and Nationality (OIN) are engaged in readmission. Removal in terms of readmission procedure is prepared and carried out by the NPH and monitored by public prosecutors. In case of forced return the OIN collects information, obtains travel documents and visas, arranges flight tickets, accommodation and necessary transit permits. There are two types of forced return in practice: 1) unaccompanied removal to the external borders of Hungary and 2) escorted removal to the country of origin or to any state liable for readmission. Improvements are possible in the sphere of cooperation with the country of origin, cooperation with the returnee in identification, support from third countries in case of transit requests, refusals to board the aircraft and corruption. Please, see presentation “Readmission from the Perspective of the Returning State - Hungary”

Mr. Szymon Grygiel, Senior Specialist, Aliens Department of Polish Border Guard HQ, focused in his presentation on identification of undocumented migrants for the purpose of readmission. Identification is a necessary condition for successful removal of an irregular migrant to the country of origin. Identification is possible through traditional methods based on cooperation with diplomatic posts and contacts with the appropriate authorities in the countries of origin. Means of evidence include expired passports of all types, personal IDs, citizenship confirmation certificates, other official documents pointing to a citizenship of a person, databases and fingerprints. Consular interviews are necessary when provided proofs are not sufficient to confirm foreigner’s identity. Readmission agreements play important role as they set time limits for the response, set an obligation to issue travel document in case of identity confirmation, define means of evidence. Please, see presentation “Identification of Undocumented Migrants for the Purpose of Readmission”

Mr. Edgar Khachatryan, First Class Specialist, Ministry of territorial Administration of Armenia, briefed on Armenia’s experience on readmission of irregular migrants. Since 2003 Armenia was actively involved into the process of signing readmission agreements with 13 EU MS and 1 CIS country. Currently there are eleven readmission agreements signed, while five agreements are going through the negotiations stage. The State Migration Service of Armenia is the main state body responsible for implementation of readmission agreements. The Police processes readmission applications and provides answer within 15 days. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs provides return certificates while the National Security Service gives opinions regarding special cases.

Mr. Rob Rozenburg, Deputy Head of Unit, European Commission, evaluated Georgian electronic system of readmission case management as an effective tool that should be considered by other EaP states.

Mr. George Jashi, Executive Secretary, State Commission on Migration Issues, Public Service Development Agency, summarized the first day of the Panel meeting highlighting prevailing legislative changes in all participating states.

21 March 2013 - Day 2

Session V. Reintegration
Facilitator: Mr. Tamas Molnar, Hungary
Ms. Bela Hejna, Policy officer, Director for the Targeted Initiative for Georgia (TIG), presented short-term measures to ensure effective reintegration. The reintegration component of the TIG incorporates direct counseling, employment mediation, vocational trainings and business start-up, provision of medical assistance and accommodation. First contact with beneficiary is established at the Tbilisi airport. Development of an individual reintegration plan and further reorientation to contracted service providers according to individual needs are primary steps. Two Job Counseling and Placement Centers were established in Tbilisi and Kutaisi. Reintegration network on the EU level includes authorities involved in implementation of readmission, deportation and voluntary return; on the national level it includes municipal authorities, social services providers, international organizations and NGOs. Please, see presentation “Support Reintegration of Georgian Returning Migrants and the Implementation of EU-Georgia Readmission Agreement”

Ms. Nino Meskhi, Chief Specialist, Migration Unit, Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia, briefed the participants on the reintegration activities by describing work of the Thematic working group on reintegration established within the State Migration Committee in 2011. Since then, five coordination meeting were held by the working group, gathering representatives of the state authorities, international organizations and civil society in order to discuss reintegration activities in the country.

Mr. Edgar Khachatryan, First Class Specialist, State Migration Service, Ministry of territorial Administration of Armenia, delivered presentation on return and reintegration of Armenian citizens. Returnees to Armenia mainly are students, labor migrants, migrants moved to obtain permanent residence status, rejected asylum seekers, irregular migrants and retired persons. According to the Concept on the Policy for State Regulation of Migration, Armenian government has to support reintegration in 2012-2016. Migrants Support Center was established under the State Migration Service in 2006 and three Migration Resource Centers were established within the State Employment Service Agency in 2010. Armenia successfully implements a variety of reintegration projects funded by external donors. Areas requiring further improvement include temporary basis of the projects, differences in nature and methodology of the projects, variations in volumes of the offered assistance and a non-unified approach. Please, see presentation “Return and Reintegration of the Citizens of the Republic of Armenia”

Ms. Olesa Cotoman, Main Specialist of Policies and Legislation Division, Ministry of Interior of Moldova, illustrated facilitation of assisted voluntary return and reintegration based on the result of project titles “Support to Implementation of EU Readmission Agreements with the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation and Ukraine: Facilitation of Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (SIREADA)”. The project aimed at promoting sustainable reintegration of voluntary returnees and serving the economic and political interests of countries of origin, transit and destination, thus, facilitating social and professional reintegration and enhancing reception capacities of Moldova. 50 returnees were successfully assisted by the IOM through the established referral mechanism with National Employment Agency. Please, see presentation “Support to Implementation of EU Readmission Agreements with the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation and Ukraine: Facilitation of Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (SIREADA)”

Mr. Guy Edmunds, Policy Advisor, Danish Refugee Council (DRC) South Caucasus, reported on civil society involvement in reintegration based on Georgian context. Main DRC reintegration activities include direct service provision to individual returnees (legal aid, information, income generation/business grants); awareness raising of general public; research, policy and advocacy; capacity building of civil society institutions; and capacity support to government institutions. The multi-faceted nature if reintegration provides great scope for cross-sector partnership (civil society, government and business sectors). Increasing awareness in Georgia of how the INGO sector can benefit returning migrant and government institutions and domestic civil society and the private sector. Please, see presentation “Civil Society’s Involvement in Reintegration”

Mr. Zviad Devdariani, Director of the Civil Development Agency (CiDA), added on the role of civil society in reintegration activities by presenting implementation of the project called “Georgia – Personalized Assistance for Migrants (G-PAM)”. The project is focused on Georgia as a country of origin and on Turkey and Greece as countries of destination. An overall objective of the project is to
help Georgia better manage all aspects of migratory flows in all dimensions by protecting human rights of Georgians intended to migrate, promoting well-managed legal migration of Georgians who migrate, and optimizing positive effects of migration on Georgian development. Please, see presentation “Georgia – Personalized Assistance for Migrants (G-PAM)”

Session V. Reintegration
Facilitator: Ms. Ketevan Gomelauri, Georgia

Ms. Ilyana Derilova, Chief of Mission, IOM Mission to Georgia, covered lessons learned and experiences gathered from the implemented projects which address reintegration. Effectiveness and sustainability of return depends on the availability of reintegration assistance. Reintegration component should be an integral part of all types of return, both forced and voluntary. Return systems should have proper return policy and uniform framework. Voluntary return option should be preferred and it is important for a migrant to make an informed choice about return and reintegration. Motives and needs of the returnee, as well as the context of country of origin should be taken into account while developing reintegration programmes. Programmes proved to be more effective when it is in kind assistance rather than cash. Linking reintegration assistance to business, employment and agriculture allow migrant to be come integral part of the labor market. Reintegration programmes should not be less than 6 months in order to respond properly to individual needs of the returnee and make reintegration process sustainable.

Mr. Octavian Predescu, Head of European Affairs and International Cooperation Department, General Inspectorate of Immigration, Ministry of Interior of Romania, reported on reintegration of vulnerable groups based on the experience of implementation of two projects by the IOM Romania. There are no provisions on reintegration of vulnerable groups in Romanian legislation in the field of migration and asylum. As the EU MS Romania can submit proposals and receive money from the European Return Fund for projects related to the reintegration of vulnerable groups. A wide range of activities is offered to the beneficiaries in the countries of origin under reintegration assistance, ranging from granting of limited amount for taking up residence again and all the way socio-economic assistance provided directly. Reintegration process is divided into four main phases: pre-departure assessment, post-arrival assessment, implementation of reintegration plan, evaluation and monitoring. Reintegration is impossible without close cooperation and collaboration between migrant, counselors and other staff involved.

Closure of the Panel meeting
Facilitator: Mr. Rob Rozenburg, European Commission

Mr. Rob Rozenburg, Deputy Head of Unit, European Commission, thanked all the presenters and reminded about the schedule of the forthcoming meetings within the Panel’s framework. Thus, following Panel meeting on integration and IDPs will take place in Prague in September 2013 and will be organized jointly by Azerbaijan and Czech Republic. The expert workshop on trafficking in human beings will happen in Warsaw in May 2013 and to be organized by Poland and Armenia. The expert workshop on statelessness is planned for the end of the year and will be hosted in Budapest by Hungary and Moldova. Mr. Rozenburg suggested the meetings to be organized in a more interactive way allowing more time for discussions and open debate. The Work program of the Panel for the next year should be developed during the meeting in Prague paying more attention to the issue of labor migration and encouraging participation of Ukraine in hosting the Panel activities. He also reminded about available funding for a conduction of studies, thus topics have to be identified and overlaps with other existing initiatives should be avoided. The participants are welcome to share their suggestions on the subject with the Panel support function at the SMB.

Ms. Ketevan Gomelauri, Deputy Head of the Public Service Development Agency, expressed gratitude to Hungary for co-organization of this meeting. She marked importance of the Panel meeting which provided an opportunity to discuss challenging issues and share best practices of EU MS and EaP
countries in the field or return, readmission and reintegration. Ms. Gomelauri also thanked the EU for funding variety of projects concerning AVR and reintegration.

**Mr. Tamas Molnar**, Head of Unit, Ministry of Interior of Hungary, showed appreciation to Georgia, EC, SMB and IOM for organization of the meeting. He noted substantial presentations and productive discussions were able to cover all relevant aspects of the return, readmission and reintegration. The format of the meeting gathering to gather EU MS, EaP countries, civil society and academia was highly evaluated.

**Mr. Rob Rozenburg**, Deputy Head of Unit, European Commission, thanked everyone for participation and contribution to the Panel meeting on return, readmission and reintegration. He highlighted that all presentations will be available and the report on the meeting will be circulated among the national focal points.