



AD HOC QUERY ON 2022.2 FR AHQ on the possibility to implement a medical assisted voluntary return scheme to Armenia

Requested by EMN NCP France on 19 January 2022

Responses from Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden plus Switzerland (25 in Total)

<u>Disclaimer:</u>

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1. Background information

The OFII — the French Office for Immigration and Integration — is responsible for applications for voluntary return and reintegration.

Since 1 April 2021, an experimental medical Assisted Voluntary Return Facility to Georgia has been put in place.

It aims at the return and reintegration of Georgian nationals who are eligible for the Assisted Voluntary Return Programme and whose medical condition, as assessed by the doctors of the OFII and IOM, requires medical care during the journey and/or after the return to Georgia.

It applies in particular to rejected asylum seekars or rejected applicants for residence permit for treatment, or those who withdrew those procedures.

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Member State

This process is managed by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), financed by the OFII. Recipients of the medical return as such shall be entitled to cover their health costs up to a ceiling of EUR 1,500 and, if necessary, medical escort in France during the flight and arrival in Georgia, provided, of course, that the medical treatment is available in Georgia.

The beneficiary is also eligible for the re-employment or business creation programme implemented by the OFII in Georgia.

Members of his/her nuclear family (i.e. husband/wife and minor children) may travel with the beneficiary of the medical return, benefit from assisted voluntary return as well as social reintegration assistance through employment or business creation under the normal conditions of the national reintegration programme.

On 18 January 2022, 35 Georgians attended this scheme, including 22 recipients of medical return as such, and 13 accompanying family members. Before deploying this scheme, the OFII had conducted a prefiguration mission in Georgia to meet health authorities and visit hospitals to ensure that care was available and how it would be covered.

Today, the OFII is exploring the possibility of extending this scheme to Armenia.

To this end, it wished to be aware of similar arrangements implemented by other EU MS to Armenia and/or studies on the health system in that country, which would enrich the OFII's discussion on the possibility of deploying such a system to Armenia

2. Questions

- 1. Has your country implemented a medical return scheme to Armenia? YES / NO
- 2. If YES, what are the practical arrangements: Target audiences, arrangements to reach the eligible population, acceptance rate of applicants, eligible pathologies, selected operator (s), etc.?
- 3. Have you assessed these schemes? YES / NO
- 4. If YES, What are the main results and recommendations you can share? If available, can you please share the link of these evaluation reports (any language)?
- 5. Do you have any studies on the health system in Armenia (provision of care, treatment arrangements, etc.)? YES / NO
- 6. If YES Please detail their scope of analysis of these studies. If available please share the link of these studies (any language)?

We would very much appreciate your responses by 16 February 2022.

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3. Responses

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	Wider Dissemination ²	
EMN NCP Austria	Yes	1. No. However, there is a reintegration project in Armenia (IRMA Plus II) implemented by Caritas. Both vulnerable and non-vulnerable persons can participate in it. Returnees with medical needs may also fall under this group of vulnerable persons. Regardless of whether it is a returnee with medical needs, a reintegration support of EUR 3,000 is available in kind. Furthermore, there is no specific additional support for medical treatment, etc. Source: Ministry of the Interior 2. n/a Source: Ministry of the Interior 3. n/a

¹ If possible at time of making the request, the Requesting EMN NCP should add their response(s) to the query. Otherwise, this should be done at the time of making the compilation.

² A default "Yes" is given for your response to be circulated further (e.g. to other EMN NCPs and their national network members). A "No" should be added here if you do not wish your response to be disseminated beyond other EMN NCPs. In case of "No" and wider dissemination beyond other EMN NCPs, then for the Compilation for Wider Dissemination the response should be removed and the following statement should be added in the relevant response box: "This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that it is not disseminated further."

		Source: Ministry of the Interior 4. n/a Source: Ministry of the Interior 5. n/i Source: Ministry of the Interior 6. n/a Source: Ministry of the Interior
EMN NCP Belgium	Yes	1. Yes. Regarding assisted voluntary return, Fedasil has developed the AMAAR-project in cooperation with a doctor of medicine of Fedasil's medical unit, IOM and Caritas International Belgium. AMAAR stands for Adapted Medical Assistance After Arrival. It consists of three components: analysis of medical treatment available in the country of origin, maximal referral to already existing healthcare, and financing of medical costs (if necessary) for a period of six months (exceptionally 12 months). The aim is to minimize the obstacles to make a voluntary return feasible. The Amaar project aims at all returnees with complex medical problems and is not limited to Armenian returnees only. Fedasil has, in addition to the AMAAR-project, a pool of medical or social escorts that can accompany a voluntary returnee if needed. These medical or social escorts (nurses, doctors, social workers,) also make sure that the continuity of the medical treatment is guaranteed immediately upon arrival in the country of origin and / or in the first weeks or months after the return. They often work in the reception centre the returnee stayed in, and so they know the returnee (and his medical problems) well, which is an advantage.

Fedasil can also ask the help of IOM for organising an escort. Sometimes the escorts stay a day or two longer in the country of return in order to gather targeted information (for example by visiting a psychiatric hospital in order to collect relevant information to improve the voluntary return counselling toward this particular target group). For example, in 2017 Fedasil conducted 33 medical or social escorts. 2. All applications are analysed and approved on a case-by-case basis in dialogue with the local reintegration partner in the country of origin and the medical staff of Fedasil Headquarters. The target group are third country residents without legal residence permit residing on our territory. Our reintegration partners are IOM and Caritas in Armenia. We don't have a list of eligible pathologies because we assess every case individually in function of the needs. However, all cases need to have a complex medical component with a high cost of treatment in the countries of origin. The target group is reached by social workers, hospitals, medical staff or NGO's. Here are the statistics for medical AMAAR cases returning to Armenia; 2016: 2 AMAAR cases 2016: 2 AMAAR cases 2017: 1 AMAAR cases 2018: 8 listed but only 3 AMAAR cases 2019: 4 AMAAR cases 2020: 2 AMAAR cases 2021: 1 AMAAR cases 2021: 1 AMAAR cases 3. We organized a monitoring mission to Armenia with a focus on healthcare, but there is no structural assessment after arrival. 4. NA 5. In November 2019 an "AMAAR mission was organized to Armenia in cooperation with Fedasil, IOM and Caritas. Focus of this mission was to gain an insight in the local healtcare system. The result of this mission is practical information that can be used by our return counselors. An extensive monitoring/research was not conducted.

			6. NA
	EMN NCP Bulgaria	Yes	 The International Organization for Migration (IOM) – Bulgaria offers support for voluntary return and reintegration of all third-country nationals, including Armenia. IOM-Bulgaria's programmes do not target individual countries and in this sense IOM-Bulgaria has not implemented a voluntary return programme especially focused on Armenians. All IOM programmes for voluntary return and reintegration of third-country nationals provide an opportunity for medical support for third-country nationals with illnesses and medical problems both before departure (in order to create travel opportunities) and after return to the country of origin, as part of the reintegration support. The current programme for voluntary return and reintegration provides an opportunity for medical support to third-country nationals with illness and medical problems after returning to the country of origin in the amount of up to 1,500 euros. For the past 3 years, IOM-Bulgaria has supported the voluntary return of four Armenians, including one person with oncological disease, who was provided with medical support after returning to Armenia. 6.
Н	EMN NCP Croatia	Yes	1. No, HR has no specific program to Armenia, returnees to Armenia can be assisted by the national AVRR program implemented by IOM and benefit from assisted voluntary return accompanied by medical escort if medical state of returnee requires medical assistance during the journey. All returnees with medical needs are assisted with reintegration assistance and continuation of care in Country of Origin.

			2. n/a 3. n/a 4. n/a 5. n/a 6. n/a
¥	EMN REG Practitioners Cyprus	Yes	1. No 2. N/A 3. N/A 4. N/A 5. No 6. N/A
1	EMN NCP Czech Republic	Yes	1. NO 2. N/A 3. NO

			4. N/A 5. NO 6. N/A
	EMN NCP Estonia	Yes	 NO, Estonia does not have a medical return scheme to Armenia. Number of persons returned (including in a framework of an assisted voluntary return) to Armenia has remained low during recent years. N/A N/A N/A N/A N/A N/A
+	EMN REG Practitioners Finland	Yes	 No, FI has no specific program to Armenia, returnees to Armenia can be assisted by the national AVRR program implemented by IOM. 3. 4.

			5. 6.
=	EMN REG Practitioners France	Yes	1. NO 2. n/a 3. n/a 4. n/a 5. n/a 6. n/a
	EMN NCP Germany	Yes	1. YES / though not limited to specific target countries: Return can also be carried out in the event of illness or disability. In this case, the process of leaving the country may take longer. This depends on the illness and the medical reports required. Medical cases should always be entered on the application. An additional medical report has to be handed in. Pre-departure: - medical supplies and required medical aid for up to three months as in-kind assistance; has to be purchased/organized prior to departure (e.g. medicine) (only if required for immediate life support purposes or to avoid serious illness or if suspected that otherwise there is risk of deterioration of general condition of returnee - medical equipment (e.g. wheel chair, blood glucose- or blood pressure monitor, as in-kind assistance (max.

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up to 200 EUR) prior to departure - costs for physician's letters/medical certificates (up to 180 EUR), if not covered by German health care system Departure: This includes any additional costs required due to medical condition of the returnee - (medical) escort during the flight or family member as assistance - additional costs for transport and medical equipment (e.g. stretcher, business class, ambulance/transport to airport and/or from airport in target country to target destination, arrival assistance) Post arrival: Additional to this the REAG/GARP programme covers the cost for medical follow-up support in the target country. This in-kind support is limited up to 2,000 EUR / Person and for up to three months after arrival in the country of destination. Reintegration programme: StarthilfePlus / post arrival: Additional reintegration support available for specific target countries. For returnees to Armenia there currently is no additional medical support available. For returnees to Georgia additional medical support is available. Please find document attached for further information (please note this will get updated soon so BAMF reserves the right of error and technical modifications without further notice) 200213 shp reintegrationsunterstutzung englisch.pdf 2. Return counselors are advised to report persons with significant health limitations to the IOM at the time of application or promptly during the processing procedure. Indications for Individuals with significant health limitations (including, but not limited) may include: Hospitalization within the past 12 months Mental illness Previous (within the past 5 years) or ongoing treatment for cancer History of heart disease/surgery History of seizures or stroke

			 Dialysis Significant limitation of mobility Physical and/or mental disability requiring assistance in daily living End-stage of a pre-terminal/terminal illness Illnesses requiring in-flight injections (e.g. insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus) Illnesses that require special arrangements during the flight (e.g., med. escort, wheelchair service, transport in a recumbent position, oxygen, catheters, etc.). IOM Germany is obligated to inform all outbound travelers (both air and land) with health restrictions to the IOM internal medical service. In addition IOM must report to airlines any illnesses or physical conditions of passengers who may require may require special in-flight precautions. IOM verifies fitness to fly against the standard of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) guidelines. Transport Association IATA). For this purpose, IOM reports to the airlines any illnesses or physical complaints of passengers. The decision on airworthiness is made by the airline. 3. N.A. 4. N.A. 5. Not specifically a study, but findings of current situation in some target countries, such as Armenia called CFS - Country Fact Sheet (please find attached). This information is gathered by IOM and available for counselling purposes 6. N.A.
!!!!	EMN NCP Greece	Yes	1. No.In the context of the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) programme, beneficiaries with medical needs are offered medical assistance on a case by case basis before departure, during the journey and, depending on the case, upon return (in the form of reintegration assistance). IOM has not implemented any programme of medical Assisted Voluntary Return to Armenia.

			 2. 3. 4. 5. N/A 6.
II	EMN NCP Hungary	Yes	 No, in the recent years Hungary did not implement any returns. N/A No. N/A No. N/A N/A
=	EMN NCP Ireland	Yes	1. No. 2. N/A 3. N/A

			4. N/A 5. N/A 6. N/A
•	EMN NCP Italy	Yes	 No. No specific medical assisted voluntary return schemes to Armenia have been implemented. Since 2017, 17 persons have returned to Armenia through the Assisted Voluntary Return programmes implemented by Italy. Some of the AVR projects implemented in the years 2017-2018-2019 provided for a top up for medical reasons, even if they were not specific programmes for medical assisted voluntary returns. - - - - - - - -
II	EMN NCP Latvia	Yes	1. No. Latvia has not implemented a medical return scheme to Armenia. In general, the number of assisted voluntary returns to Armenia is very small, for example, in 2019 - 1, in 2020 - 2, in 2021 - 0 persons. So far, there has not been any medical assisted voluntary return to Armenia. 2. N/a

			3. N/a 4. N/a 5. N/a 6. N/a
	EMN NCP Lithuania	Yes	 No. There is no specific scheme for medical return to Armenia. Assisted voluntary return is usually carried out by IOM and in cases when medical escort is needed for the safe return of the beneficiary, such service would be provided in coordination with the country of origin and according to IOM policy and guidelines. N/a N/a N/a N/a N/a N/a
П	EMN NCP Luxembourg	Yes	1. No. Luxembourg has not implemented a medical return scheme to Armenia. The assisted voluntary return and reintegration programme Luxembourg (AVRR-L) is managed by the IOM Brussels. Luxembourg had conducted one voluntary medical return to Azerbaijan using IOM Brussels which counts with a special unit for conducting this type of return.

			 2. N/A. 3. N/A. 4. N/A. 5. No. 6. N/A.
	EMN NCP Malta	Yes	1. No 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.
П	EMN REG Practitioners Netherlands	Yes	 Yes, the NL can return Armenian citizens without legal stay and, if deemed necessary, arrange a medical transfer through the ERRIN programme in Yerevan Due to the COVID pandemic, there have been very few recent cases. The medical return process shall take place only after the NL Medical Advisory board has concluded that the relevant medical treatment is available in Armenia. Acces to necessary medical care is arranged via the afore mentioned ERRIN programme based in

			Yerevan. 3. No 4. n/a 5. No 6. n/a
•	EMN REG Practitioners Poland	Yes	 No. N/a No. n/a Yes. During last years COI Unit of the Polish Office for Foreigners prepared the following answers to queries conc. health system/availability of medical treatment in Armenia: Psychiatric treatment and psychotherapy in Armenia (March 2018); Access to dialysis, possibility of kidney transplantation in Armenia (Jan. 2019); Palliative care in Armenia (Sept. 2019); The Health Service of Armenia and COVID-19 (Aug. 2020). These answers to queries are written in Polish and are not publicly available, but we can share it with other EU+ countries if there is such an interest. However first of all we highly recommend you to contact EUAA MedCOI sector (MedCOI@euaa.europa.eu), as

			they have a lot of valuable information on Armenian health system, which might be of support to you.
	EMN NCP Slovakia	Yes	1. No. 2. NA 3. No. 4. NA 5. No. 6. NA
1	EMN NCP Slovenia	Yes	 No. Not applicable No. Not applicable. No. Not applicable. No.
8	EMN NCP	Yes	1. NO

Spain		 2. 3. NO 4. 5. NO 6.
 EMN NCP Sweden	Yes	 No, there is no specific medical return scheme for Armenia. The Swedish Migration Agency does however arrange for all returnees who need medical assistance during their return journey to be escorted to their country of return by medical staff. Responsibility for the care of such persons is handed over to the medical authorities in the country of return upon arrival. N/A N/A N/A No, there are no studies on the health system in Armenia to our knowledge. N/A
EMN REG Practitioners Switzerland	Yes	1. In general, Switzerland has a return assistance system, in which medical return assistance is a part of it. Armenia is one of the countries of which returnees can benefit from this return assistance system.

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 The target audiences are rejected asylum seekers, who return voluntarily to their home country. With the negative asylum decision, the persons concerned receive an invitation from the return counselling office. Our return assistance system is an arrangement of different aspects: Return counselling Individual return assistance Medical support: purchase of medicines and/or treatment following return, or of a medical escort during the return journey. 3. Yes, partially; within the framework of monitoring individual cases 4. According to point 3; we only have evaluation reports on individual cases 5. Due to the low number of asylum seekers from Armenia in the past years, no studies have been written by our office on this countries health system. The last paper regarding the Armenian health system, specifically mental health, was written in 2012 https://www.sem.admin.ch/dam/sem/de/data/internationales/herkunftslaender/europa-gus/arm/ARM-
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