

Booklet for municipal officials on reception and reintegration of repatriated persons

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Introduction

The purpose of this booklet is to provide municipal officials with an understanding of their roles and responsibilities with regard to the implementation of government policies and strategies aimed at reintegrating repatriated persons into society. It aims to give an overview of the institutional mechanisms necessary for the reintegration process and to guide municipal officials in their day-to-day work in assisting repatriated persons with reintegration in their places of origin.

The tasks and responsibilities required for the effective reintegration of repatriated persons are distributed between the central level (six ministries) and the local level (municipalities). The implementation of existing policies for the reintegration of repatriated persons requires that all actors at central and municipal level assume full responsibility for their obligations in the areas of civil registration, health, education, employment, social welfare, housing and property-related issues. This requires adequate knowledge of the “Revised Strategy for the Reintegration of Repatriated Persons” (May 2010)¹ and corresponding Action Plan, as well as adequate human and financial capacities for their implementation.

This booklet is intended for municipal officials working in both the executive and legislative branches of the municipality to assist them with information and guidance in meeting the reintegration challenges ahead.

The booklet is structured as follows:

Section One: Describes the main problems and challenges faced by repatriated persons upon return to Kosovo, including in the areas of civil registration, health, education, employment and social welfare, housing and property related issues;

Section Two: Outlines the policy and implementation framework for the reintegration of repatriated persons. The focus is on institutional mechanisms responsible for addressing the needs of repatriated persons from their arrival in Kosovo until their full reintegration in the municipality of origin;

Section Three: Provides an overview of the reintegration process, starting from the request for readmission, through the provision of initial reception assistance to the reintegration in the municipality of origin;

¹ “Kosovo Revised Strategy for Reintegration of Repatriated Persons”, approved by the government on 26 May 2010.

Section Four: Describes the roles and responsibilities of central level institutions in the reintegration process as outlined in the existing policy framework;

Section Five: Highlights the roles and responsibilities of the municipalities in the reintegration process as outlined in the existing policy framework.

Challenges with regard to reintegration of repatriated persons

According to the “Revised Strategy for the Reintegration of Repatriated Persons” (Revised Strategy), involuntary repatriation involves persons originating from Kosovo who were denied refugee or other legal status in a country and by an official order or court decision are repatriated to Kosovo.

Limited readmission competencies were transferred by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to the Kosovo institutions in January 2008, after which Kosovo institutions gradually took over further readmission and repatriation activities. On 1 November 2008, the Kosovo government started communicating directly with host countries on readmission requests and other repatriation related issues and has since entered into negotiations and/or concluded negotiations on readmission agreements with several of them. On 12 July 2010, the Kosovo government promulgated a law on readmission.²

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) statistics, between January and October 2010, 2,421 persons were forcibly repatriated to Kosovo from different, mainly Western European host countries, including 495 members of non-majority communities³. The year 2009 saw the involuntary return of 2,962 individuals, in comparison to 2,550 in 2008, 3,219 in 2007, 3,569 in 2006 and 3,554 in 2005.⁴

While the vast majority of international assistance in the field of return is aimed at supporting voluntary returns from the region and Western Europe, repatriated persons (forced returnees) often remain without any assistance from either Kosovo institutions or international governmental and non-governmental organizations upon their return. Their sustainable return and reintegration continues to pose major challenges for the Kosovo government and, in particular, municipalities throughout Kosovo. Upon arrival in Kosovo, individuals and families often face serious reintegration obstacles, including in the key areas of civil registration, health, education, employment, social welfare, housing and property-related issues.

These obstacles identified through ongoing monitoring and interviews with municipal officials, civil society representatives, international organizations and repatriated persons, include: lack of targeted assistance in relevant

² Law No. DL-030-2010 on Readmission, 12 July 2010.

³ In this document, non-majority communities are all those communities who constitute a numerical minority at the municipal level in Kosovo.

⁴ UNHCR Office of the Chief of Mission Statistical Overview – update as at end of October 2010.

areas of reintegration; lack of information on access to services and the support available; limited access to housing and property; and, difficulties in accessing public services, in particular for members of non-majority communities and other vulnerable groups.

It is the responsibility of the Kosovo government to ensure the sustainable reintegration of repatriated persons by facilitating their access to civil registration procedures and civil documents, as well as to basic public services, taking into account the specific needs of individuals and families upon their return. These responsibilities are described in the Revised Strategy and Action Plan.

Policy and implementation framework for the reception and reintegration of repatriated persons

In early 2010, the Kosovo government initiated an assessment of existing mechanisms for the reintegration of repatriated persons. Key recommendations identified during this assessment included amending the Strategy for Reintegration of Repatriated Persons which was endorsed by the government in October 2007; establishing a fund for the reintegration of repatriated persons; strengthening capacities of central and local level institutions to address the reintegration process more effectively; improving inter-institutional co-operation at both central and local levels; and improving communication with the sending countries, in particular direct exchange of information on potential persons to be repatriated.

In May 2010, the Kosovo government endorsed the Revised Strategy which sets out the policies and measures to be taken to ensure sustainable solutions for repatriated persons in the key areas of civil registration, health, education, employment, social welfare, housing and property-related issues, and provides for an institutional framework for managing the reception and reintegration of repatriated person. It defines the roles and responsibilities of central and local institutions in each stage of the reintegration process and outlines procedures and co-ordination mechanisms to address the needs and promote the rights of repatriated persons. Special attention is paid to the needs of vulnerable sections of society and non-majority communities. These include victims of trafficking, single-parent households, children without caregivers and children with special needs, elderly persons without caregivers and persons with disabilities.

Following its adoption in May 2010, the government initiated the drafting process of the Action Plan for the implementation of the Revised Strategy for Reintegration of Repatriated Persons. It foresees specific activities by relevant central and local institutions in relation to the implementation of the legal framework on migration, repatriation and reintegration; institutional and human capacity-building; communication and co-ordination; provision of services in the areas identified by the Revised Strategy; establishment of a reintegration fund; and monitoring the implementation of the Revised Strategy.

A key priority is to mobilize and earmark sufficient funds to ensure the effective implementation of the Revised Strategy and Action Plan. During the budget planning processes at central and local level, all municipalities

and respective ministries are required to include a reintegration component for the implementation of their respective obligations with regard to the Revised Strategy. In addition, a reintegration fund to support the implementation of the Revised Strategy has been set up by the government and a first financial tranche has been allocated. Since none of the municipalities or ministries adequately budgeted the costs for the implementation of the Revised Strategy, this fund could supplement the budget of these actors and provide financial means for the implementation of specific reintegration initiatives.

The process of reintegration of repatriated persons

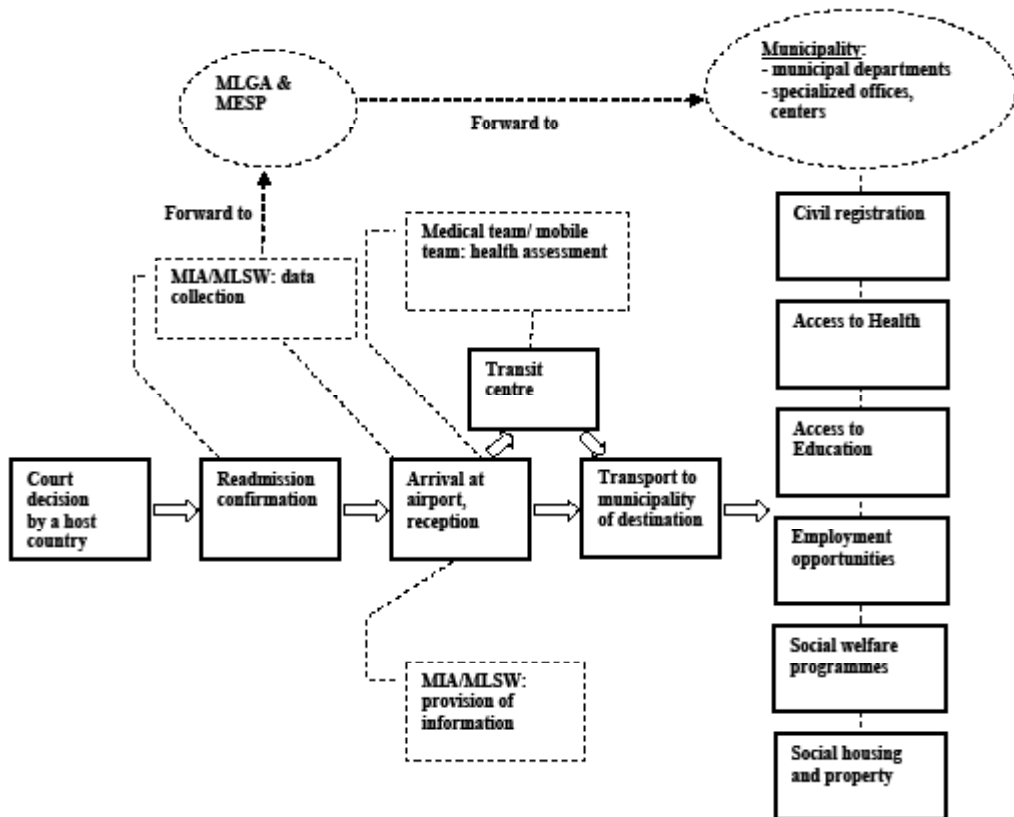


Illustration 1: Graphic description of the repatriation and reintegration process⁵

⁵ Abbreviations: Ministry of Local Government Administration (MLGA), Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW), department for citizenship, asylum and migration (DCAM) of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) and Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning (MESP).

The process of readmission/repatriation starts with an official order or court decision by a host country, denying a person or a family legal status in a country. Following the decision, the sending country contacts the Kosovo institutions to verify the origin or nationality of the person. After receiving the readmission confirmation by the Kosovo institutions, the person can be returned. Upon his/her arrival at the airport, Kosovo institutions are obliged to receive the person, assess the person's health condition, supplement the already existing information on the needs of the person and provide him/her with information about rights and opportunities in regards to his/her reintegration. If a person is not able to reach his/her final destination in Kosovo on the day of arrival, Kosovo institutions are obliged to provide temporary accommodation for a period of up to seven days. Furthermore, they will make transport arrangements to the municipalities of destination, where needed. Upon arrival at the municipality of origin, municipal institutions, relevant departments and specialized offices or centres are responsible to provide the person with the required reintegration assistance, which ranges from civil registration to housing and access to public services, including in the areas of health, education, employment and social welfare.

Roles and responsibilities of the central government for the reintegration of repatriated persons

The provision of effective reintegration assistance for repatriated persons requires various central government institutions to closely co-ordinate their activities in the key areas of legal reintegration, health, education, employment, social welfare and housing. Key ministries in charge of the reintegration process include: the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), the Ministry of Local Government Administration (MLGA), the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW), the Ministry of Health (MH), the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) and the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning (MESP). Each of the ministries has a specific mandate and responsibilities to ensure basic conditions for sustainable return and reintegration.

To oversee and monitor the effective implementation of existing reintegration policies and to co-ordinate the work of ministries and co-operation between central and local level, an **inter-ministerial co-ordination board** was established in April 2010. It consists of representatives of the aforementioned ministries, the Ministry of Finance and Economy (MFE) and representatives from international organizations in an advisory capacity. Amongst its responsibilities, the inter-ministerial co-ordination board must prepare and oversee the implementation of the Action Plan; design, propose and manage the budget for the implementation of the Revised Strategy and Action Plan; set out areas of responsibility for all relevant central and municipal institutions; establish effective mechanisms for the dissemination of information between ministries and municipalities; co-ordinate the implementation of the Strategy with relevant municipal assemblies; and co-ordinate the activities of donors and other organizations active in the field of reintegration. It regularly meets and informs the government on the progress achieved and any remaining challenges.

Ministry of Internal Affairs

Mandate

The MIA is mandated to develop, implement and monitor policies and legislation in the field of security and internal affairs. In the context of reintegration of repatriated persons, the MIA holds an important co-ordination role between central and local institutions. It is responsible to ensure the implementation and monitoring of the Revised Strategy and Action Plan, in co-operation with other ministries represented in the inter-ministerial co-ordination board as well as with municipalities. Within the MIA, the department of citizenship, asylum and migration and the agency of civil registration are of particular importance. The **department of citizenship, asylum and migration's** main responsibilities include the readmission of Kosovo residents from abroad in accordance with international human rights standards and treaties. It is further responsible to develop policy and planning documents and legal acts on readmission, and to collect statistics in the field of readmission, migration and asylum. In this context, it should administer a database with information on repatriated persons. The adequate sharing of this information is crucial for the work of other ministries and the municipalities in the reintegration process. The agency of civil registration within the MIA is mandated to develop, monitor and implement government policies for registration and civil status. It co-operates with foreign governmental institutions on issues related to registration, civil status and civil documentation. It further plans, organizes and monitors the work of municipal civil registration centres and municipal civil status offices.

Responsibilities

Readmission: The MIA, particularly the department for citizenship, asylum and migration, is the focal point on all matters relevant to migration management and readmission procedures. This includes, *inter alia*, the management of readmission/repatriation from third countries; co-ordination of the procedures to confirm the origin of persons announced for readmission; and negotiation and implementation of readmission agreements. After receiving a readmission request by a requesting state, the department for citizenship, asylum and migration, in co-operation with the relevant departments within the MIA and offices in the municipalities, assesses whether a person originates from Kosovo. Following the confirmation, the MIA informs the requesting state about its decision and the readmission procedure is initiated.

Information and co-ordination: Prior to the arrival of repatriated persons in Kosovo, the MIA is responsible for informing relevant ministries about the

needs of the arriving persons through an early notification (at least three to four working days before their arrival at the airport). The MIA is responsible for providing these ministries and municipalities with information on the number of repatriated persons per municipality as well as basic data on the date and place of arrival and the special needs of persons concerned. Upon arrival of the repatriated persons at the airport, the department for citizenship, asylum and migration staff shall receive and confirm their return. In co-operation with the border police, the staff shall inform repatriated persons through information brochures in the official languages about their rights, available support mechanisms and civil registration procedures.

Civil registration: In the context of civil registration, the MIA should ensure that all repatriated persons without documentation can access civil registration procedures and receive civil documents. This is done in close co-operation with the municipal centres for civil registration and municipal civil status offices located in each municipality. The department of civil registration and civil status within the agency of civil registration plans, organizes and supervises the work of municipal centres for civil registration, closely co-operating and communicating with the municipal offices of civil status concerning the civil status registration. The MIA should further develop terms of reference for appeal boards at municipal level in order to facilitate the registration of persons without documentation.

Contact information

Ministry of Internal Affairs, department of citizenship, asylum and migration and department of registration and civil status/agency of civil registration, Telephone/Telefax: +381 (0) 38 200 19 066 or +381 (0) 38 200 19 067; Website: <http://www.mpb-ks.org/> (available in Albanian, Serbian and English)

Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare

Mandate

The MLSW is responsible for the development and implementation of labour and social welfare policies, the promotion and development of non-discriminatory labour relations and employment, as well as proposing appropriate measures to increase employment and meet social assistance needs. The MLSW directs and supervises labour and social welfare institutions in co-operation with the municipalities. In the context of reintegration of repatriated persons, the MLSW holds responsibilities in the area of data collection and distribution, provision of reception assistance including transportation and temporary shelter, and supporting the socio-economic reintegration of returning persons. According to the Revised Strategy, the MLSW is required to increase financial and human resources in order to establish a sustainable system of planning and provision of temporary accommodation and other services to repatriated persons in need.

Responsibilities

Information and co-ordination: Upon the arrival of repatriated persons at the airport, the MLSW is responsible to welcome and provide them with information on social welfare schemes and employment opportunities, in liaison with the MIA. During the reception and welcome, the MLSW staff shall collect information on the general situation, medical condition, municipality of origin and (special) assistance needs of repatriated persons. Complete and accurate information on the situation of repatriated individuals is fundamental for the successful reintegration in their municipality of destination. The collected information supplements the information already gathered by the MIA prior to the arrival of repatriated persons. Every week, the MLSW is responsible for informing the MLGA focal point on the number of repatriated families and their composition; their municipalities of origin; the type of special needs (including in the areas of health and education); and housing needs. In addition, the MLSW should develop written procedures for the collection, transfer and protection of personal data of repatriated persons.

Transport arrangements and temporary accommodation: The MLSW staff is responsible for verifying whether repatriated persons are in need of temporary shelter and/or transport to their municipality of origin. Arrangements should be made for those persons who have no other means of transport. The MLSW is responsible for providing repatriated persons

with temporary accommodation (up to seven days) for those who require shelter upon arrival. While in the temporary shelter, the MLSW has to notify the respective municipality of destination about the forthcoming arrival, in order for the municipality to find a more permanent housing solution. Currently, the MLSW has contracted a local non-governmental organization to manage transport and temporary accommodation for repatriated persons in need. In the context of outsourced services, the MLSW is required to increase the budget and create a multi-annual budget for the initial social services in order to ensure long-term planning of outsourced services based on the assessed needs and estimated numbers of repatriated persons. Furthermore, the MLSW should develop written procedures on information and data transfer for contracted non-governmental and government bodies for the provision of services such as health care and education.

Promotion of employment and social welfare: The MLSW actively promotes key measures of employment including employment counselling and career guidance, provision of information on the labour market, development of trainings, provision of employment subsidies, public works and self-employment programmes. These programmes are implemented by the **department for labour and employment** and are accessible to repatriated persons. The department co-operates with labour and social welfare administration institutions to support repatriated persons with their reintegration. The provision of social welfare can, in many cases, support the reintegration of a repatriated family in Kosovo. The most important social welfare programmes include the basic pension scheme, disability pension scheme, scheme for the families of children with disabilities, and the social assistance scheme. All schemes are administered by the MLSW, which has to ensure the inclusion of eligible repatriated persons in these schemes.

Contact information

Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, department of social welfare, Telephone/Telefax: +381 (0) 38 211 941; department of labour and employment, Telephone/Telefax: +381 (0) 38 211 939; department of pension administration, Telephone/Telefax: +381 (0) 38 211 664; Website: <http://ks-gov.net/mpms/> (available in Albanian, Serbian and English)

Ministry of Health

Mandate

The Ministry of Health's (MH) mandate is, amongst other things, to co-ordinate activities within the health sector in order to promote a coherent development of health policies, to establish standards and issue guidelines for the health sector, to support the development of community activities related to health, to support outreach campaigns in order to increase public awareness on health issues, and to manage the use and development of healthcare infrastructures under the MH's responsibility. In the context of reintegration of repatriated persons, the MH is responsible for facilitating the effective integration of repatriated persons into the health system and ensure their unhindered access to available healthcare services. Responsibilities of the MH include immediate assistance for repatriated persons upon their arrival, the provision of medical services for those accommodated in temporary shelters, and ensuring their integration into the healthcare system.

Responsibilities

Immediate assistance upon arrival: Upon arrival of the repatriated persons, the MH assesses their general health situation at the point of arrival. This assessment shall be guided by an assessment form and conducted by the stationary and/or mobile medical teams, which both still need to be set up. Mobile medical teams will assist those in need of immediate medical attention, in close co-ordination with officials from the MLSW. These mobile teams are responsible for providing services at the arrival point of repatriated persons (border crossings or airport). The MH's medical teams are also responsible for assisting repatriated persons in need at their temporary accommodation. Persons with special needs shall be identified during these first assessments. The information obtained during the assessments shall be forwarded to the respective municipalities to ensure appropriate follow up treatment and provision of healthcare services.

Information and co-ordination: The MH is responsible for co-ordinating with relevant ministries, including the MLSW, the MLGA, and municipalities to ensure the provision of appropriate follow-up treatment to repatriated persons. Additional information on available services needs to be provided at both the central and local level through brochures, public campaigns and health institutions.

Provision of healthcare services: The MH is responsible for ensuring that a certain number of hospital capacities are reserved for repatriated persons and shall provide and update the list of medical services that cannot be offered in Kosovo as well as the list of health services of deficient quality. It is responsible for ensuring that repatriated persons are registered in health institutions and can access health services on a non-discriminatory basis.

Contact information

Ministry of Health, Telephone/Telefax: +381 (0) 38 213 886, +381 (0) 38 200 24 131; Website: <http://www.msh-ks.org/> (available in Albanian, Serbian and English)

Ministry of Local Government Administration

Mandate

The MLGA's mission is to advance local government and, in co-operation with municipalities, to provide effective and responsive services to all residents. In the context of reintegration of repatriated persons, the MLGA holds a co-ordination role between the central government and municipalities. It is further responsible for supporting and monitoring the implementation of the Revised Strategy at the local level. In this regard, it is responsible for supporting local institutions to identify potential donors, develop joint reintegration projects with municipalities, and provide guidance to municipalities on the implementation of the Revised Strategy by sharing good practices and advice on sustainable solutions. The MLGA should have a designated office that will deal with repatriation issues (to be established).

Responsibilities

Information, co-ordination and support: In the context of reintegration of repatriated persons, the MLGA serves as the co-ordination mechanism between central and local level. It forwards the information provided by the MIA/department for citizenship, asylum and migration (prior to arrival) and the MLSW (upon arrival) to the respective municipalities in order to provide advance notification on the number and needs of newly repatriated persons. Information should include the number of repatriated families and their composition; their municipalities of destination; the type of special needs including in the areas of health and education; and housing reconstruction and accommodation needs. The MLGA shall further co-ordinate activities with the MLSW and MESP regarding temporary housing solutions for repatriated persons.

Contact information

Ministry of Local Government Administration, department for local self-government Telephone/Telefax: +381 (0) 38 213 157; +381 (0) 38 213 944; department of administration and finance Telephone/Telefax: +381 (0) 38 200 35 550; Website: <http://www.mapl-ks.org/> (available in Albanian, Serbian and English)

Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning

Mandate

The MESP is mandated to draft and implement legislation related to the management of the environment, water, spatial planning and housing. To implement its mandate, several departments and specialised institutions have been created. Within the MESP, the **department of housing and construction** is meant to create the legal, institutional and financial framework, which will provide appropriate housing solutions to all residents, based on their financial abilities and their social and health status. The **Kosovo Cadastral Agency** and **municipal cadastral offices** are mandated to manage and maintain records on immovable property. The Kosovo Property Agency (KPA) is mandated to receive, register and resolve claims resulting from the armed conflict that occurred between 27 February 1998 and 20 June 1999.⁶ In the context of reintegration of repatriated persons, the MESP, in co-operation with other ministries, the KPA and municipalities, is responsible for finding sustainable housing solutions for repatriated persons.

Responsibilities

Provision of housing: After being informed about cases of repatriated persons who do not have housing in Kosovo, the MESP, in co-operation with the KPA, has to make necessary arrangements to accommodate these people upon their arrival. In cases where a repatriated person has in the past filed a property claim with the KPA, the agency shall speed up procedures to ensure that the returnee has the housing facility available upon his/her return. In general, the Revised Strategy foresees three options to address the housing needs of repatriated persons: 1) development of housing programmes in accordance with the law on financing of special housing programs.⁷ The municipalities are obliged to develop three-year housing programmes for their residents, including new housing constructions, rent subsidies and housing bonuses, to be considered for funding by the MESP; 2) (re)construction of individual houses on land owned by a repatriated person; and 3) provision of housing through the Kosovo Property Agency-managed rental scheme. The MESP, in consultation with other ministries, is responsible for finding sustainable housing solutions based on these options.

6 UNMIK Regulation No. 2006/10 on the Resolution of Claims Relating to Private Immoveable Property, including Agricultural and Commercial Property, 4 March 2006.

7 Law No. 03/L-164 on Financing of Special Housing Programs, 12 March 2010.

Contact information

Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, department of housing and construction, Telephone/Telefax: +381 (0) 38 200 32 225; Website: <http://www.mmph-ks.org/> (available in Albanian)

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

Mandate

The MEST is mandated to develop and implement policies and legislation for the development of education and to set up an efficient education system in Kosovo. In the context of reintegration of repatriated persons, the MEST is responsible for ensuring that all repatriated children are provided with adequate information on available education opportunities and services and to facilitate their reintegration into the education system. It is required to develop specific reintegration programmes to accommodate the needs of repatriated children and youth, including for instance native language training, catch-up classes or other extra-curricular activities, and ensure outreach to vulnerable children and families.

Responsibilities

Reintegration in education sector: The MEST is obliged to commit financial means to include repatriated children in the educational system. This includes providing training for teachers, to increase the number of teachers and support staff in schools, providing additional equipment for schools, and ensuring transport for repatriated students based on municipal assessments and plans. In case of a lack of space in existing school buildings, the MEST should review the possibility of building school annexes as necessary. Furthermore, it should ensure that repatriated primary school children are provided with school books and teaching materials for free. It is also required to provide informal education opportunities, e.g., in professional schools, for interested young persons. The MEST should give particular attention to children with special needs. In the case of children from non-majority communities, the MEST is required to ensure classes in non-majority languages in areas where these communities are concentrated and shall offer them school books and teaching materials in their mother tongue.

Information and co-ordination: The MEST is obliged to produce information material, e.g., brochures for the educational reintegration process, describing available services, legal provisions and responsible institutions. It shall monitor the implementation of the education component of the Revised Strategy by establishing a working group, consisting of ministerial and municipal officials. A particular focus should be put on school attendance of children from non-majority communities. In order to maintain up-to-date information on the education status of repatriated school children, the MEST has to authorize one of its officers to monitor

the situation. In addition, it should develop an Administrative Instruction to establish the conditions, criteria and procedures to implement the Revised Strategy. The MEST should further clarify the responsibilities of the municipal departments for education, and the division of labour between the municipal departments and central level, with a particular emphasis on budget planning and allocation of funds.

Contact information

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Telephone/Telefax: +381 (0) 38 213 327, +381 (0) 38 544 973; Website: <http://www.masht-gov.net> (available in Albanian, Serbian and English)

Roles and responsibilities of municipalities for the reintegration of repatriated persons

Municipalities are responsible for promoting sustainable governance and living conditions for all residents, paying particular regard to the needs and concerns of non-majority communities living within their territory. They play a fundamental role in shaping policies and practices that promote and protect the equal access of all communities to public services and that create conditions for the sustainable return and reintegration of refugees, displaced and repatriated persons. Municipalities are the main actors responsible for facilitating the reintegration of repatriated persons at local level, in close co-ordination and co-operation with relevant central government institutions. Upon arrival of repatriated persons in the municipality of destination, municipal institutions have to ensure their sustainable reintegration, including in the key areas of health, education, employment, social care and housing.

Municipal leadership

Mandate

The mayor (and deputy mayor) leads the municipal government and its administration and conducts the financial administration of the municipality. He/she is responsible for the implementation of legislation and policies in the areas of promotion and protection of the rights of communities, equal access of all communities to public services and the creation of conditions for sustainable return and reintegration, including government strategies and action plans dealing with community protection, return and reintegration.

Responsibilities

Overseeing, monitoring and co-ordinating the implementation of existing policies: The mayor, in co-ordination with the MLGA, bears the overall responsibility for the implementation of the Revised Strategy and Action Plan at the municipal level. He/she is responsible for ensuring full co-ordination and co-operation with central level institutions as well as between relevant municipal institutions and offices, including the deputy mayor for communities (where appointed), the municipal directorates, the deputy chairperson of the municipal assembly for communities (where nominated), the communities committee and the municipal office for communities and return. In close co-ordination with municipal directorates and relevant municipal bodies, including the municipal office for communities and return, the mayor proposes the annual budget to ensure the effective implementation of policies, projects and activities in the areas of community rights and return and reintegration. The mayor is obliged to monitor the implementation of the Revised Strategy and to periodically report to the central government on the achieved progress.

Contact information

See Annex on municipality contact details.

Municipal Assembly, including the Communities Committee

Mandate

The municipal assembly is the highest representative body of the municipality. It adopts acts, including the statute of the municipality, its rules of procedure, municipal regulations and other acts necessary for the efficient operation of the municipality, and approves the budget and investments plans of the municipality. The municipal assembly is required to establish a communities committee composed of members of the municipal assembly and community representatives. Any community living in the municipality should be represented by at least one representative in the committee. The communities committee is responsible for reviewing compliance of municipal institutions with the legal framework and reviewing all municipal policies, practices and activities to ensure that the rights and interests of the communities are fully respected and protected. It recommends to the municipal assembly measures it considers appropriate to ensure the implementation of provisions related to the needs of communities.

Responsibilities

Reviewing municipal policies, practices and activities and budget approval: The municipal assembly and its permanent committees are responsible for reviewing compliance of municipal institutions with the legal framework and for reviewing all related municipal policies, practices and activities to ensure the exercise of basic rights of all residents living within the municipality. This includes reviewing all policy, fiscal and financial documents, plans and initiatives of the municipality including strategic planning documents, and approving budget and investment plans to ensure the effective operation of the municipality.

Contact information

See Annex on municipality contact details.

Municipal Office for Communities and Return

Mandate

The specific mandate of the municipal office for communities and return is to enhance the protection of community rights, ensure the equal access of communities to public services, and to facilitate the sustainable return and reintegration of refugees, displaced and repatriated persons. It monitors the situation of non-majority communities and returnees and reports their needs and concerns to relevant municipal bodies.

Responsibilities

Co-ordination: The municipal office for communities and return is responsible for co-ordinating activities with municipal institutions and the central government in the field of return and reintegration of repatriated persons. It should closely co-operate with the deputy mayor for communities, the municipal directorates, the deputy chairperson of the municipal assembly for communities, and the communities committee to ensure that repatriated persons are adequately assisted upon their return. It is also responsible for co-ordinating activities with relevant central level institutions, including the Office of the Prime Minister and responsible ministries, within the framework of existing policies for the reintegration of repatriated persons.

Information and outreach: The municipal office for communities and return often represents the first point of contact for repatriated persons at the municipal level. It is responsible for providing returnees with information on their rights and available support, and at the same time reports the needs of repatriated persons to other competent offices within the municipal administration. Furthermore, the municipal office for communities and return maintains a database on repatriated persons, including basic personal data and special needs of repatriated persons. In this regard, the office shall closely co-ordinate with the MLGA to ensure that information is received prior to the arrival of repatriated persons in order to adequately address their needs.

Identification, promotion, implementation and monitoring of policies, activities and programmes in the area of return and reintegration: The duties and responsibilities of the municipal office for communities and return further include assessing the needs of returnees, conducting outreach visits and promoting awareness on communities' rights, facilitating

access to public services, and developing, implementing and monitoring projects and activities for the protection of the rights and interest of persons returning or being repatriated to the municipality.

Contact information

See Annex on municipality contact details.

Municipal civil registration centre and municipal civil status office

Mandate

Civil registration is a pre-requisite for access to civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, such as the right to health care, employment, education, social welfare, pension, property and voting. At the municipal level, the municipal centres for civil registration and municipal offices of civil status are responsible for the implementation of civil registration policies and procedures and the issuance of civil documents in close co-ordination with the MIA. The MIA, in co-operation with the MLGA, should provide instructions to local institutions in order to facilitate the repatriated persons access to personal documents.

Responsibilities

Civil registration and issuance of identification documents and travel documents: Municipal centres for civil registration are responsible for registering repatriated persons and issuing identity cards and travel documents in co-ordination with the MIA. They have to raise awareness among repatriated persons of the importance of civil registration and provide them with information on venues and procedures through which they can register or apply for civil documents in order to promote access to public services.

Issuance of civil status documents: The municipal offices for civil status are responsible for registering the civil status of repatriated persons and for facilitating their access to civil status documents, including birth certificates, marriage certificates, life certificates, certificates of marital status and death certificates. These documents serve as a precondition for access to other municipal services. The office has to ensure that repatriated persons are adequately informed about procedures and locations. In cases of late registration, or when repatriated persons do not have the required documents, an appeals board (to be created in each municipality) should decide on their application. If a board decision is appealed, the case is reassessed by the department of civil registration and civil status of the agency for civil registration within the MIA.

Contact information

See Annex on municipality contact details.

Municipal Directorates

Mandate

Municipalities, through their respective municipal directorates, are responsible for implementing concrete measures to facilitate the reintegration of repatriated persons in the key areas of health, education, employment, social welfare and housing. Within the municipal administration, the directorates are obliged to co-operate with relevant municipal bodies, including the municipal office for communities and return, to ensure the implementation of policies, activities and programmes related to the reintegration of repatriated persons and the creation of conditions for sustainable return and reintegration.

Responsibilities

Facilitating access to health care services: The **municipal directorate of health** deals with emergency and primary health services at the municipal level. If a repatriated person is identified as a person with special medical needs, specific arrangements should be carried out by the municipality of destination in co-operation with the MH to provide this person with the necessary medical treatment. During the reintegration period, repatriated persons should be registered in health institutions and should be included in relevant health schemes. Furthermore, until their full integration and depending on their level of income, repatriated persons should receive health services free of charge. The municipal directorate for health should inform repatriated persons of public primary health care services available in the municipality through public awareness campaigns and health institutions.

Facilitating access to education: The **municipal directorate of education** is responsible for facilitating the reintegration of repatriated children into public pre-primary, primary and secondary education. It shall adopt policies and plans and, in co-operation with school principals, include specific programmes for repatriated children who were born or have grown up abroad. This includes the organization of native language courses, in schools where students are enrolled or centres in which students can gather from the nearby schools, as well as catch-up classes or other extra-curricular activities to support their reintegration. Municipalities are further obliged to provide schooling for children with special needs. Municipal directorates have to ensure that repatriated children are informed about education opportunities, available services, relevant legal provisions and institutions in charge, including through conducting outreach activities to

rural areas or areas inhabited by non-majority communities, in order to facilitate their enrolment in educational institutions.

Facilitating access to employment and social welfare: Each municipality, through its relevant directorate, is responsible for facilitating access to employment and ensuring the provision of social services within its territory, to the standard specified by the MLSW. Through the activities of **regional employment centres, municipal employment offices** and **vocational training centres**, municipalities, in co-operation with the MLSW, have to ensure that repatriated persons have access to employment services, vocational training programmes and specific government programmes/projects to enhance employment opportunities for repatriated persons. The centres for social work administer the social assistance scheme at municipal level and identify repatriated families which may be in need of, and eligible for, social assistance. Furthermore, they shall advise repatriated persons on other social welfare programmes available. Responsible officials have to regularly inform repatriated persons about social schemes available and how to enrol on them.

Facilitating access to housing: Municipalities in close co-operation with relevant central government institutions are responsible for securing accommodation/housing for vulnerable families, including repatriated persons in need, through the development and implementation of housing programmes and rental schemes. Assistance to vulnerable families can include rental schemes and rent subsidies in municipality-owned buildings, housing bonuses for private accommodations and reconstruction of houses within the framework of specific housing programmes financed by the municipality, central government or donors. The municipality, in close co-operation with relevant central institutions (including the MIA, MESP, MLSW), shall identify any property of the repatriated person prior to his/her arrival in Kosovo and, following a housing needs assessment, develop housing solutions to address the needs of vulnerable families including the allocation of municipal land for construction. Furthermore, municipalities shall support the KPA in identifying repatriated persons who have filed requests for property restitution in the past. This will allow the KPA to speed up procedures and, if the claim is valid, have the property available upon arrival of the repatriated person.

Contact information

See Annex on municipality contact details.

Annex I – Contact details of municipalities

	Municipality	Address	Phone number
1.	Deçan/Deçane	Square Mentor Tolaj	+381 (0) 390 361 100
2.	Dragash/Dragaş	Str. Sheshi i Dëshmorëve	+381 (0) 29 281 005
3.	Ferizaj/Uroševac	Str. Dëshmorët e Kombit	+381 (0) 290 320 150
4.	Fushë Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje	Str. Nëna Terezë	+381 (0) 38 536 006
5.	Gjakovë/Đakovica	Str. Nëna Terezë, No. 469	+381 (0) 390 321 100
6.	Gjilan/Gnjilane	Mayor's building, Str. Adem Jashari, municipal executive building, Square Rexhep Mala e Nuhi Berisha	+381 (0) 280 323 311 +381 (0) 280 226 428 Executive building number: +381 (0) 280 320 490
7.	Glogoc/Glogovac	Str. Fehmi e Xhevë Lladrovci	+381 (0) 38 584 074
8.	Gračanica/ Graçanicë	Dukat Hotel	no phone number
9.	Han i Elezit/ Đeneral Janković	Str. Nuri Bushi	+381 (0) 290 385 112 +377 (0) 44 381 314
10.	Istog/Istok	Str. 2 Korriku	+381 (0) 39 451 202
11.	Junik	Centre of town	+381 (0) 390 370 114
12.	Kaçanik/Kaçanik	Str. Emin Duraku	+381 (0) 290 380 005 +381 (0) 290 380 047 +377 (0) 44 225 315
13.	Kamenicë/ Kamenica	Kriva Reka building, Str. Skenderbeu, Municipal returns officer: cultural house premises Isa Kastrati, Str. Skenderbeu	Mayor's office: +381 (0) 280 371 969
14.	Klinë/Klina	Str. Abedin Rexha	+381 (0) 39 471 306
15.	Klokot/Kllokot	Vrbovac/Vërboc, Klokot/Kllokot	Mayor's office: +381 (0) 280 385 470
16.	Leposavić/ Leposaviç	Str. JNA, Municipal Communities Office: Haki Imeri, Head, Bistricë/Bistrica village	+381 (0) 28 83 860
17.	Lipjan/Lipljan	Str. Shqipëria	+381 (0) 38 581 255 +381 (0) 581 258 +381 (0) 581 505
18.	Malishevë/Mališevo	Str. Gjerg Kastrioti Skenderbeu	+381 (0) 29 269 043
19.	Mamuša/Mamushë/ Mamuša	Municipal building on the main square	+381 (0) 29 273 260
20.	Mitrovicë/Mitrovica	Str. Mbretëresha Teutë, Municipal Returns Office Str. Mbretëresha Teutë	+381 (0) 28 532 104

21.	Novo Brdo/ Novobërdë	Village Bostane/Bostan	+381 (0) 38 576 012 Mayor's office: +381 (0) 38 576 009
22.	Obiliq/Obilić	Str. Hasan Prishtina, Obiliq/Obilić	+381 (0) 38 561 536
23.	Parteš/Partesh	Municipality not yet functioning	MPT contact +377 (0) 45 386 489
24.	Pejë/Peć	Str. Mbretëresha Teuta, No. 59	+381 (0) 39 432 875 +381 (0) 39 434 875
25.	Podujevë/Podujevo	Str. Zahir Pajaziti	no phone number
26.	Prishtinë/Priština	Str. UCK, No. 2, 10000	no phone number
27.	Prizren	Main municipal building (MRO/ MCO offices), Str. Remzi Ademi, White House municipal building (D/M for Communities, D/MA Chairperson for Communities), Str. Adem Jashari	+381 (0) 29 241 925 Mayor's Office: +381 (0) 29 242 406
28.	Ranilug/Ranillug	Village Veliko Ropotovo/ Ropotovë e Madhe (no street name or number)	+381 (0) 280 76 010 Mayor's office: +381 (0) 280 375 422
29.	Rahovec/Orahovac	New municipal building (D/Mayor for Communities, Head of MCO) Str. Xhelal Hajda – Toni	+381 (0) 29 276 037 +381 (0) 29 276 737 +381 (0) 29 276 039
30.	Štrpce/Shtërpce	Štrpce/Shtërpce town (no street name or number)	Mayor's secretary: +381 (0) 290 370 005
31.	Shtime/Štimlje	Str. Tirana	no phone number
32.	Skënderaj/Srbica	Str. 18 Qershori MCO Banja/Bajë village	+381 (0) 28 582 124
33.	Suharekë/Suva Reka	Main building (MWGR, CC) main Prishtinë/Priština-Prizren road Old municipal building next to the river (MRO office)	no phone number
34.	Viti/Vitina	Str. 28 Nëntori	Mayor's office: +381 (0) 280 381 626
35.	Vushtrri/Vučitrn	Str. Adem Jashari, MCO in Priluzje/Prelluzhë village	+381 (0) 28 571 408; +381 (0) 28 571 524
36.	Zubin Potok	Str. Kolasinskih Knezeva, No. 27 MCO Çabër/Çabra village	+381 (0) 28 460 048
37.	Zvečan/Zveçan	Str. Kralja Milutina 5 MCO in Lipë/Lipa village	+381 (0) 28 664 728

