

## **REPORT**

# **STRENGTHENING OF THE ROLE OF THE CONFEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS OF ARMENIA IN PROTECTING AND REPRESENTING THE RIGHTS AND INTERESTS OF REFUGEES FROM NAGORNO-KARABAKH**

**2024**

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## INTRODUCTION

The Republic of Armenia (RA), known also as Armenia, declared its independence in 1991, following a referendum held on September 21 of that year. Armenia is a small country of 29,743 km<sup>2</sup>. Armenia has borders with Georgia in north, Azerbaijan in east, Turkey in west and southwest, and Iran in south. Armenia is divided into 11 administrative units: 10 marzes (regions) and the capital city, Yerevan. According to the data of the Statistical Committee of Armenia, Armenia had 2,932,731 permanent population based on the Census of 2022.<sup>1</sup> The indicator of the permanent population of Armenia as of October 1, 2024 was 3,067.4 thousand person, including urban: 1 976.0 thousand and rural: 1 091.4 thousand people.<sup>2</sup> The reason of the increase of the number of permanent populations of Armenia is the mass displacement of the population of the Nagorno-Karabakh. It should be noted that at the moment of drafting this report Azerbaijan has occupied at least 215 square kilometers of Armenian territory since 2020.

The 44-day war in Nagorno-Karabakh (NK) in 2020, along with following ceasefire violations by Azerbaijan in both Nagorno-Karabakh and along the Armenian-Azerbaijani border, led to ongoing tensions. These were further deteriorated by the blockade of Nagorno-Karabakh in December 2022 and a large-scale military offensive in September 2023, which eventually resulted in a ceasefire agreement. This series of events caused a severe humanitarian crisis in Armenia, displacing thousands of individuals from Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia.

The mass displacement in 2023 has created major socio-economic challenges for Armenia as people from NK had to displace forcibly to Armenia. The forcibly displaced people faced and continue facing the numerous barriers to integration, such as limited access to employment, housing, healthcare. This influx has placed significant pressure on Armenia's social and economic infrastructure, particularly impacting the forcibly displaced people and refugees' employment and livelihoods.

Although international efforts have been made to assist these displaced people, there is an increasing need to protect their socio-economic and labor rights, ensuring their access to decent work and protecting them from exploitation, particularly in the informal economy. Addressing these issues is crucial not only for protecting human rights but also for maintaining Armenia's socio-economic stability and national resilience during this crisis.

The Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia (CTUA) has played a key role since the displacement began, offering support to those affected. The CTUA has worked to ensure that no one is left vulnerable in Armenia's labor market, providing technical and legal assistance to displaced people and refugees.

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<sup>1</sup> Statistical Committee of the Republic Armenia: The Main Results of RA Census 2022, December 2023.  
[https://www.armstat.am/file/article/section\\_1.rar](https://www.armstat.am/file/article/section_1.rar)

<sup>2</sup> Statistical Committee of the Republic Armenia: Social-Demographic section  
[https://armstat.am/file/article/sv\\_09\\_24a\\_510.pdf](https://armstat.am/file/article/sv_09_24a_510.pdf)

## OVERVIEW

Armenia has experienced socio-political and economic changes in the recent years caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, by the war in Nagorno-Karabakh and also by the escalating tensions by Azerbaijan on the border with Armenia. While the world was focused on combating COVID-19 pandemic, Armenia faced double challenge of managing the health crisis caused by COVID-19 and the resistance and consequences of the war in Nagorno-Karabakh in 2020. According to the reports of the Migration Service of the Republic of Armenia stated that approximately 90,000 persons came to Armenia from Nagorno-Karabakh and found themselves in a refugee-like situation in Armenia.



Around 88% of these individuals were women, children and elderly<sup>3</sup>.

In 2020 the Minister of the Foreign Affairs of Armenia during at Atlantic Council in Washington DC after meeting Secretary of State Mike Pompeo stated that nearly 90,000 citizens of Nagorno-Karabakh have been displaced, lost their homes and property as a result of the Azerbaijani war against Nagorno-Karabakh<sup>4</sup>. On 9 November, 2020, the leaders of

Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia signed the statement which stopped the military actions in Nagorno Karabakh. After this statement, the refugee like population has started to return to Nagorno-Karabakh to their homeland. According to UNHCR, as July, 2021, the number of persons in refugee-like situation living in Armenia was 42,023, including 36,989 persons in a refugee-like situation as a result of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and 4,461 Syrian-Armenian persons in a refugee-like situation living in Armenia, assisted by UNHCR. The majority of this population stayed in Yerevan<sup>5</sup>.

The number indicates that not all people returned to Nagorno-Karabakh.

The situation was followed by the blockage. On September 19, 2023 Azerbaijan began another military operation in Nagorno-Karabakh and according to the Head of the Migration and Citizenship Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of RA 101,848 people forcibly displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh registered and identified in October, 2023. During the press conference of 20 October, 2023, Head of the Migration and Citizenship Service also stated that 12,404 of those

<sup>3</sup> UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency: PROTECTION MONITORING ARMENIA MARCH-APRIL 2021 REPORT #3 [https://www.unhcr.org/am/wp-content/uploads/sites/123/2022/02/2021-03-04\\_Armenia-Protection-Monitoring-Report.pdf](https://www.unhcr.org/am/wp-content/uploads/sites/123/2022/02/2021-03-04_Armenia-Protection-Monitoring-Report.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Nearly 90,000 people displaced, lost homes and property in Nagorno-Karabakh, foreign minister says in Washington <https://www.tert.am/en/news/2020/10/24/mnatsakanyan/3426443>

<sup>5</sup> UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency: Operational update: Armenia July-September 2021 <https://www.unhcr.org/am/wp-content/uploads/sites/123/2022/02/UNHCR-Armenia-Operational-Update-July-September-2021.pdf>

registered are people aged 65 and over, 30,000 are under 19 years old.<sup>6</sup> As of 4 October 2023, refugees were located throughout the country, mostly in Yerevan (43.3%), Syunik (14.6%), Kotayk (8.7%) and Ararat (8.3%). The number of refugees constitutes almost 3% of the entire population of present Armenia. More than half of all refugees are women (52%). Among the new arrivals 26.2% are below 18 years old, 60.2% 18-64 y.o and 13.6% 65+ y.o.. Over half of them left their permanent residence places in Stepanakert, 16.9% - in Martuni region, 14.6% - in Martakert region and 12.3% - in Askeran region (see the Table 1).

Table 1. Distribution of person deported in September 2023 by their location in Artsakh and age groups (% of total)

<b>Residence places in NK</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>0-17 y.o.</b>	<b>18-64 y.o</b>	<b>65+y.o</b>
<b>Askeran</b>	12.3%	12.6%	12.1%	26.6%	60.2%	13.2%
<b>Hadrut</b>	2.4%	2.6%	2.3%	25.4%	61.7%	12.9%
<b>Kashatagh</b>	0.4%	0.4%	0.3%	29.7%	62.5%	7.8%
<b>Martakert</b>	14.6%	15.0%	14.2%	28.6%	58.8%	12.7%
<b>Martuni</b>	16.9%	17.1%	16.6%	25.8%	60.2%	14.0%
<b>Shahumyan</b>	0.7%	0.7%	0.6%	33.9%	57.0%	9.1%
<b>Shushi</b>	1.9%	1.8%	1.9%	24.4%	63.6%	12.1%
<b>Stepanakert</b>	<b>50.7%</b>	49.6%	51.8%	25.7%	60.4%	14.0%
<b>Unnown</b>	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	21.6%	71.6%	6.8%
Total	100%	100%	100%	<b>26.2%</b>	<b>60.2%</b>	<b>13.6%</b>
Total, persons	115202	55430	59772	30237	69332	15632

Source: SMS data, as of March 04, 2024.

Each fourth of refugees (40.1%) is located in Yerevan, Kotayk (15.2%), Ararat (10.9%), Armavir (8.9%) and Syunik (6%; See the Table 2).

<sup>6</sup> 101,848 people forcibly displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh registered and identified  
<https://www.gov.am/en/news/item/10410/>

Table 2. Number of persons deported from NK and registered by SMS by gender and location in Armenia (as of March 04, 2024)

<b>Residence Marz</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>% of total</b>
<b>Aragatsotn</b>	1983	2107	4090	3.6
<b>Ararat</b>	6177	6333	12510	10.9
<b>Armavir</b>	5073	5180	10253	8.9
<b>Gegharkunik</b>	1864	1854	3718	3.2
<b>Kotayk</b>	8430	9071	17501	15.2
<b>Lori</b>	2191	2277	4468	3.9
<b>Shirak</b>	1970	2091	4061	3.5
<b>Syunik</b>	3448	3517	6965	6.0
<b>Tavush</b>	1585	1599	3184	2.8
<b>Vayots Dzor</b>	1158	1150	2308	2.0
<b>Yerevan</b>	21551	24593	46144	40.1
<b>Total</b>	55430	59772	115202	100.0

In the beginning of the displacement, people from Nagorno-Karabakh were placed in various region of Armenia, included in Yerevan. They required short-term housing, mental help, and essential items such as clothing, food, hygiene products, and school supplies for children. After the government set up housing or temporary places to stay, many started traveling around the country, seeking longer-term residences or locations nearer to jobs.

According to last updated data of UNHCR as of 18 September 2024, the total figure of the registered forcibly displaced people is 115,366. UNHCR states that these statistics are provided by the Government of Armenia. The statistics by location as of 18 September 2024<sup>7</sup>:

<sup>7</sup> <https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/arm>

Table 3.

Location name	Data date	Population	
Yerevan	18 Sep 2024	40.2%	<b>46,409</b>
Kotayk	18 Sep 2024	15.9%	<b>18,343</b>
Ararat	18 Sep 2024	10.5%	<b>12,100</b>
Armavir	18 Sep 2024	9.3%	<b>10,726</b>
Syunik	18 Sep 2024	5.8%	<b>6,668</b>
Lori	18 Sep 2024	3.7%	<b>4,289</b>
Shirak	18 Sep 2024	3.5%	<b>4,066</b>
Aragatsotn	18 Sep 2024	3.4%	<b>3,906</b>
Gegharkunik	18 Sep 2024	3.2%	<b>3,646</b>
Tavush	18 Sep 2024	2.6%	<b>3,014</b>
Vayots Dzor	18 Sep 2024	1.9%	<b>2,199</b>

## LEGAL STATUS OF THE REFUGEES AND SUPPORT



Armenia ratified the 1951 Convention related to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol in July 1993<sup>8</sup>. According to the Law No. HO-211-N of 27 November, 2008 «On Refugees and Asylum», refugees have these rights<sup>9</sup>:

- the right to appeal to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) at any

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.unhcr.org/countries/armenia>

<sup>9</sup> Law of the Republic of Armenia "On Refugees and Asylum" HO-211-N dated November 27, 2008  
<https://www.arlis.am/documentView.aspx?docid=193804>

time;

- equal rights with Armenian citizens with regard to the acquisition and ownership of movable and immovable property. Refugees do not have the right to own land, since the right to own land is granted only to Armenian citizens and persons with special residence status;
- intellectual property rights;
- the right to free legal aid;
- the right to seek employment and work in Armenia, except for cases established by national law (state civil service, local self-government bodies);
- the right to engage in entrepreneurial activities;
- the right to social security and medical care;
- the right to basic general education. The right to higher education is similar to that of Armenian citizens;
- the right to choose their place of residence and to move freely within the territory of the state;
- the right to apply for Armenian citizenship.

The Government of the Republic of Armenia adopted Decree No. 1864-N “On granting temporary protection status to displaced people from Nagorno-Karabakh and approving the form of the identity document of the temporary protected refugee, as well as the procedure for its issuance” on 26 October 2023 in the light of the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh in September 2023 and the displacement of population to Armenia<sup>10</sup>. This decree grants temporary protection status to those displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh and sets the procedures for issuing their identity documents. The decree applies to displaced persons from Nagorno-Karabakh, except for those who hold citizenship in another country. The protection status is initially valid for one year and may be extended. The law defines that individuals granted temporary protection status are entitled to the same rights and responsibilities as refugees. The process for obtaining temporary protection is less complex than applying for formal refugee status, as it does not require submitting an individual asylum application, participating in interviews, or waiting for a decision from the authorities.

According to data provided by UNHCR, 91,479 people from Nagorno-Karabakh have received refugee documentation, and 1,855 have applied for naturalization as of 13 May 2024<sup>11</sup>.

Under the February 24, 1999 Agreement between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, residents of Nagorno-Karabakh were allowed to obtain Armenian blue passports coded «070». These passports were issued only as travel documents to facilitate free movement which meant that the holders were not considered to be Armenian citizens. This clarification was once again stated by the Head of the Migration and Citizenship Service of Armenia’s Ministry of Internal Affairs during the television interview with the Public TV Channel on November 2, 2023. He emphasized that these passports were provided to enable Nagorno-Karabakh residents to exercise their rights, particularly their right to free movement<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> Decree No. 1864-N “On granting temporary protection status to displaced people from Nagorno-Karabakh and approving the form of the identity document of the temporary protected refugee, as well as the procedure for its issuance

<https://www.arlis.am/documentView.aspx?docid=198590>

<sup>11</sup> UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency: Armenia Refugee Situation; Population Factsheet as of 13 May 2024

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=byyNp7bWxG8&t=507s>

Above mentioned agreement was cited in the «EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS GRAND CHAMBER CASE OF CHIRAGOV AND OTHERS v. ARMENIA<sup>13</sup>», includes the following clauses:

- The Parties agree that their citizens have the right to free movement and residence on the territory of each of the Parties.
- Within the scope of this Agreement, until the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh is internationally recognized, the citizens of the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh willing to leave the territory of either the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh or the Republic of Armenia may apply and obtain a passport of the Republic of Armenia.
- The Parties agree that within the scope of this Article obtaining a passport of the Republic of Armenia by the citizens of the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh does not mean granting a citizenship of the Republic of Armenia. Those passports can be used only for travel outside of the territory of the Republic Armenia and the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh by the citizens of the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh, and cannot be used as an identification document internal use in the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh and in the Republic of Armenia.



<sup>13</sup> CASE OF CHIRAGOV AND OTHERS v. ARMENIA  
<https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/fre?i=001-155353>

## PROGRAMS

In response to the displacement crisis, the Armenian government introduced several social support measures for individuals displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh:

- **One-Time Financial Support:** In October 2023, each displaced person (DP) received a one-time payment of 100,000 drams.
- **Monthly Assistance for Housing and Utilities:** From October 2023 to March 2024, DPs were provided with 40,000 drams per month for temporary housing and 10,000 drams per month for utility bills. This program has been extended through the end of 2024. Notably, the assistance also covers those displaced in 2020, excluding beneficiaries of the housing program introduced in 2022. DPs who own real estate in Armenia do not qualify for the housing allowance. However, a recent amendment allows those who own a single property under shared or common joint ownership, with a total area of less than 20 square meters, to receive the 40,000 drams for rent<sup>14</sup>.
- **Support for Basic Living Expenses:** To address essential consumer needs, the government approved additional monthly payments of 50,000 drams for November -December 2023<sup>15</sup>.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia presented the housing programme. Depending on the preferred area, it can get from 2.000.000 to 5.000.000 AMD per family member. The Government adopted the procedure for the realization of the state support program for refugees. Regarding the issuance of certificates to the refugees displaced after September 27, 2020 and who qualify under the program, use of funds for supporting repayment of monthly mortgage amount both principal and interest and the conditions for termination of the support was prescribed. provision and use of support funds for the repayment of monthly mortgage payments (principal amount and interest), as well as the grounds and procedure for the termination of support. The program is supported by any of the following methods: issuance of a certificate for the purchase of an apartment (the right to buy an apartment in a building under construction) or an individual residential house; issuance of a certificate for the construction of an individual residential house; existing mortgage loan repayment assistance.

The value of housing certificates provided under the government program varies based on the location and type of property, on the number of family members and the location.

- 5 million AMD for purchasing or constructing a house or apartment in any of the 242 designated urban and rural settlements.
- 4 million AMD for purchasing or constructing a house or apartment in any of the 148 designated urban and rural settlements.
- 3 million AMD for properties in all other settlements, excluding the 1st and 2nd zones of Yerevan.
- 2 million AMD for individuals who already have a mortgage, provided the property is not located in the 1st and 2nd zones of Yerevan<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?docid=191297>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?docid=185611>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=192950>

The Government plans to complete the program by 2029, it is assumed that about 25 thousand families will benefit from it. From June 15, beneficiaries can already submit applications online.<sup>17</sup> The certificate for the purchase of an apartment will also be sent electronically, it will be sent to e-mail addresses with a QR code on the certificate, with which they can approach their preferred bank cooperating with the state within the framework of the program and start the process. Before that the refugees obtained the Armenian citizenship should choose the house or apartment that will correspond to the amount and conditions of the support of the program<sup>18</sup>.

The program will be carried out in three stages. In the first stage, it will include families with three or more minors, families with two minors in the case of house construction, families of a victim or others in vulnerable situations, families with an existing mortgage, and any other families considered creditworthy who will receive at least 50% additional loan support from the bank. During this phase, the beneficiary application process will begin once the program implementation order is approved. In the second stage, families with two minors will be eligible, and in the case of house construction, families with one minor. The second phase is scheduled to start no later than January 1, 2026. In the third stage, families of all compositions will be included, and this phase is set to begin no later than January 1, 2027.

## **NEEDS ASSESMENT OF THE SOCIO -ECONOMIC NEEDS OF REFUGEES FROM NAGORNO- KARABAKH AND CTUA'S RAPID RESPONSE**

In Armenia, the workers face many challenges in the process of the realization their labor, social, economic and professional rights and interests. The main mechanism of the representation and protection of the workers' labor, social, economic and professional rights and interest is the trade unions. According to Labor Code of Armenia, trade union realize the non governmental control over the execution of the labor legislation. The governmental control is entitled to the Health and Labor Inspection Body. The workers can also to apply to courts to realize their right to judicial protection. The article 61 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia defines that «Everyone shall have the right to effective judicial protection of his or her rights and freedoms».

Trade unions have also increased their supervisory role, especially in recent years, and are actively using their legally granted powers.

According to January 1, 2024, 18 branch republican unions are affiliated with the CTUA, which comprise 587 trade union organizations with 189,479 trade union members<sup>19</sup>.

In addition to the ongoing issues related to labor rights and the high unemployment rate (according to data from the Statistics Committee of the Republic of Armenia, as of the second quarter of 2024, the unemployment rate is 13.8 percent. The rate for men is 12.9 percent, while for women it is 14.9 percent) there are also significant challenges in integrating forcibly displaced persons into the labor market, safeguarding their rights throughout this process, and ensuring they have a decent living and working environment.

The forcibly displaced people from Nagorno-Karabakh face problems on the way to find a job.

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.primeminister.am/en/press-release/item/2024/06/14/Cabinet-meeting/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://hamk.am/story>

They mostly look for a job in the field of trade, construction, food, service and security. Nagorno-Karabakh citizens due to the absence of a permanent place of residence: a house, an apartment find themselves in uncertainty while planning their future. As a result, they do not try to integrate in labor market and are satisfied with benefits. Moreover, the settlement in border villages isn't often considered by them because of the objective feeling of anxiety, unstable security environment.

They mainly work on short-term labor contracts or with civil service providing contracts. It is an exception when persons are employed in education and government systems.

Referring to the manifestation of discrimination, it is worth noting that in this regard, those forcibly displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh face problems that exist in the RA labor market in general.

Those forcibly displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh, together with RA citizens, face such problems as high unemployment, manifestations of discrimination, low wages and other problems, which objectively exist in the RA labor market and are the same for everyone.

Therefore, many aspire to become self-employed, joining the ranks of informal workers at home, or register as an individual entrepreneur and provide various services. However, other difficulties also appear here: the need for professional training, the need to learn languages, problems related to the documentation of loans and citizenship. It is also noted that in order to register a legal entity and fill out the subsequent reports correctly, support is needed, for example, accounting, which many of them do not have the opportunity to do. In both cases, both workers and beneficiaries mention that the income is not enough to buy only essential food, heating is also expensive, house rents are more than received income.

As a social partner to the Government of Armenia, CTUA was quick to respond when the displacement crisis began, establishing immediate communication with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of Armenia to offer support and coordination for the displaced people from Nagorno-Karabakh. This collaboration enabled CTUA to be actively involved in the humanitarian response from the very first day, offering both direct and indirect assistance to those in need. With the support of the International Labour Organization (ILO), the CTUA took a step by organizing a significant seminar on November 23-24, 2023, in Tsakhkadzor. The seminar, titled «Trade Union Strategy for the Integration of Forcibly Displaced People from Artsakh into the Labor Market of the Republic of Armenia» focused on how trade unions can play a central role in the integration process of displaced populations into the Armenian labor market. During the seminar, participants discussed strategies for creating opportunities for displaced people, while also identifying key challenges and potential solutions. The outcome of this seminar was a strategy, developed and adopted by CTUA, which aims to support the economic and social integration of displaced persons. The strategy emphasizes creating sustainable opportunities, providing training and reskilling/upskilling training, and fostering an inclusive labor market that can include the needs of the displaced individuals. In addition to strategic planning, CTUA has been actively involved in providing humanitarian aid. The CTUA president, along with representatives, visited various regions across Armenia, engaging with displaced people and their families, including children, to offer humanitarian aid. These visits were not only to distribute humanitarian aid but also to provide emotional and psychological support, offering hope and solidarity during a challenging period for them. Furthermore, CTUA has worked to support displaced individuals who have managed to establish small businesses in Armenia. These individuals were provided with essential materials, tools, and resources to help them build a

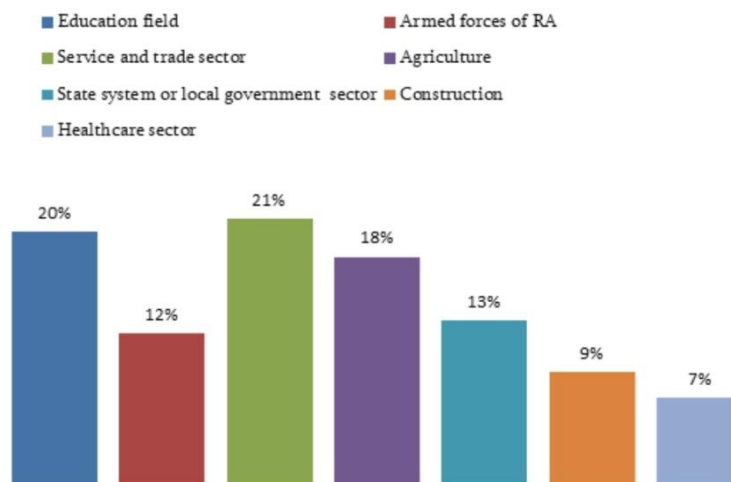
foundation for sustainable employment, and some have even gone on to hire other displaced individuals.



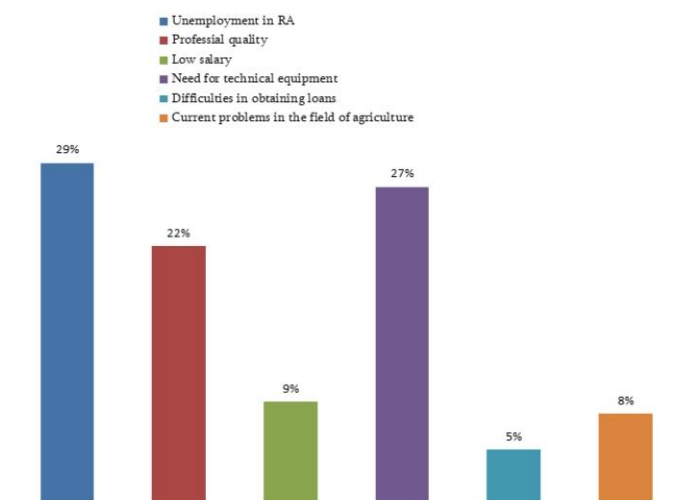
A cornerstone of CTUA's support for the forcibly displaced persons is helping them to organize and establish the trade union. This trade union, known as «Veratsnund» (Renaissance), provides a platform for displaced persons to collectively address issues related to labor rights, working conditions, and integration into the Armenian workforce. «Veratsnund» is a groundbreaking initiative, as it not only serves the displaced population but also includes refugees who are seeking employment in Armenia. To further enhance the effectiveness of this union, CTUA organized a specialized seminar for the members of the «Veratsnund» trade union.

This seminar aimed to provide union members with detailed information about available programs and initiatives that could assist them in finding stable employment. In addition, the seminar focused on evaluating the employment needs of forcibly displaced individuals with refugee status, analyzing the gap between available specialists and the demands of the Armenian labor market. The ultimate goal of the seminar was to develop practical steps and solutions to match the skills and qualifications of displaced persons with the current needs of the job market, thereby improving their chances of finding meaningful work and securing financial independence. The CTUA is providing the free legal advice on labor rights. Through these collective efforts, CTUA is playing an important role in ensuring that forcibly displaced individuals from Nagorno-Karabakh are not left behind. By focusing on integration, empowerment and collective action, CTUA is helping to create a more inclusive and resilient society where displaced people can rebuild their lives with dignity and stability.

With the support of the ILO, CTUA conducted the need assessment of the needs of the forcibly displaced. The study was conducted in August-September, 2024 by the method of quantitative sociological research. The respondents were 350 persons across Armenia. According to study the forcibly displaced people are working in the vulnerable sector which are service and trade sector, agriculture and construction:



The study identifies the obstacles for forcibly displaced people to find a job which are the following:



## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The challenges faced by forcibly displaced persons from Nagorno-Karabakh in Armenia are complex, with significant barriers to securing stable employment, housing, and overall integration into the labor market. CTUA has played a key role in responding to these challenges by establishing the "Veratsnund" trade union, organizing seminars, and offering both humanitarian and legal support. These efforts have been essential in advocating for the rights of displaced people and assisting them in their integration into Armenia's labor market. However, many displaced persons still face persistent difficulties such as limited access to formal employment, lack of professional training, and insufficient information about available state programs and legislation, trade unions. In order to integrate into the labor market in various sectors the refugees need assistance in acquiring computers, financial software, hairdressing tools, sewing machines, agricultural machinery, beehives and other logistics. Educational - language learning - Armenian, English, professional trainings, retrainings (upskilling and reskilling), psychological help at workplaces. Unfortunately, there is a lack of social partnership in Armenia. There is a necessary to adopt the national policies and national action plans for ensuring the refugees and forcibly displaced people in the labor market and the respect of access to decent work.

In order to strengthen the CTUA's role in protecting and representing the rights and interests of the refugees of NK:

1. To include the provisions for drafting national policies and action plans for the integration of forcibly displaced people and refugees into the labor market in the Republican Collective Agreement.
2. To implement the projects to raise awareness about leaving the informal economy and promoting legal labor relations, strengthening trade union capacities, and organizing them.
3. To provide remote and direct counseling on legal issues.
4. To organize the seminars and training sessions on labor rights, collective bargaining, and on trade union rights to help individuals understand that by establishing and joining trade unions, they can raise their voices.
5. To organize job fairs.
6. To Implement monitoring projects on state programs and submitting advisory opinions to the government.
7. To continue the holding face-to-face meetings with forcibly displaced persons to understand their needs and provide legal assistance.
8. To continue organizing informational sessions to prevent labor exploitation and discrimination.
9. To establish hotlines via phone, email, and messenger.
10. To enhance the roles and capacities of trade union leaders to promote, represent, and protect the fundamental rights and principles of work for refugees and other forcibly displaced persons.
11. To work with youth and women from Nagorno-Karabakh to promote labor rights, including through lifelong learning.
12. To require the information from the Ministry of the Labor and Social Affaires about the approved social programmes and to be involved in the discussion of the drafting of main social

policies.

13. To continue the cooperation with international partners, especially with International Labor Organisation, in order to incorporate the international labor standards.

## ABBREVIATIONS

CTUA	Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia
ILO	International Labour Organization
NK	Nagorno-Karabakh
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees