



ERSO Network Common Standards

This document describes the service principles and best practice adopted by the ERSO Network¹. All ERSO members² will adhere to these standards. The full recognition of the common standards is a condition for an organisation to join the ERSO Network.

Basic Principles and Standards

Principles

1. ERSO members respect human dignity and human rights.
2. ERSO members stand for fair procedures and high quality standards in return and reintegration counselling, assistance and The ERSO members' services are led by the best interest of the client and the principle of sustainable return.
3. The ERSO members' approach is based on the principles of impartiality, trust, confidentiality, independence.
4. ERSO members will never pressurize an individual to return, or not to return, but will provide them with information and support to enable them to make their own decision in the host country and in the country of return (CoR).
5. ERSO members aim to empower clients to be self-sufficient.
6. ERSO members adhere to the principles of both child-sensitive and gender-sensitive approach.
7. ERSO members support any migrant considering a voluntary return to his/her home country.

Standards

1. ERSO members' services aim at a return in dignity. Observing the above principles is a pre-condition for the sustainability of return.
2. ERSO members' counselling services comprise of:
 - a. assisting a person in his/her decision making process;
 - b. the organisation and implementation of his/her return;
 - c. any practical steps towards a return;
 - d. ongoing support after return, if feasible.
3. ERSO members' comprehensive counselling approach enables a client to take a well-informed decision, free of pressure and interference by the counsellor and third parties.
4. ERSO members respect a person's right of self-determination.
5. ERSO members will inform the person considering return about his/her legal and social options in the host country or CoR and, as far as possible, about his/her individual opportunities and situation in the country of return.
6. ERSO members will give special consideration to persons and groups in vulnerable situations, as outlined in the Mission Statement, and will comply with the principle of family unity. They will provide people in vulnerable situations, such as unaccompanied children, victims of trafficking, lone parents, people with a mental or physical illness and elderly people, with the attention and specific assistance required in order to meet their needs.
7. ERSO members consider each client's personal situation, socio-cultural background, resources, physical and psychological/mental condition.
8. ERSO partners' reintegration work consists of social, financial, administrative, educational, vocational, psychological and legal support. It aims to enable the returnee to integrate in their local society and to achieve an independent and dignified life.
9. An individual approach, resulting in different solutions for different individuals and situations, is preferred over a large scale standard programme offering the same support for everyone.
10. The cooperation among the ERSO network members shall be aimed at enhancing the quality of their reintegration counselling services for the benefit of the potential returnees/beneficiaries.
11. The implementation of the return programs will be consistently monitored and programs will be improved on the basis of regular assessment with regards to the quality of the return and reintegration support offered to migrants.

¹ ERSO is an international network of non-governmental return counselling and reintegration support organisations working and closely cooperating in the field of migration and development.

² For the definition of ERSO member see annex 2.