

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Common Template of EMN Study 2018

Version: May 2018

Subject: Common Template for the EMN Study 2018 on the "***Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination***"

Action: EMN NCPs are invited to submit their completed Common Templates by **31 July 2018**. If needed, further clarifications can be provided by directly contacting the EMN Service Provider (ICF) at emn@icf.com

1 STUDY AIMS, SCOPE AND BACKGROUND

1.1 TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience is national and EU officials/practitioners concerned with legal and illegal mobility and migration, including but not limited to cooperation with third countries on return and readmission, asylum trends and border control.

The results of the study will assist the target audience to take decisions on the need (or otherwise) to amend current policies and practices used to prevent and combat misuse and/or abuse of the visa-free regime¹, as well as identify the positive impact on Member States (MS) achieved since the introduction of visa liberalisation.

1.2 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The border-free Schengen Area² cannot function efficiently without a common visa policy which facilitates the entry of visitors into the EU. The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) makes a distinction between short stay and long stay for third-country nationals (TCN), covering short stays in the Schengen acquis in Article 77(2) and long stays as part of a Common Immigration Policy in Article 79(2), thus excluding long stays from the scope of this study

The EU has established a common visa policy for transit through or intended stays in the territory of Schengen States of no more than 90 days in any 180-day period. The Visa Code³ provides the overall framework of EU visa cooperation. It establishes the procedures and conditions for issuing visas for short stays in and transit through the territories of EU countries. It also lists the non-EU countries

¹ The misuse of the visa-free regime e.g. entry and stay for purposes other than the intended short-term travel to the EU, overstay etc.

² To date the Schengen Area encompasses most EU States, except for Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Ireland, Romania and the United Kingdom. In some cases, a visa requirement may still be in place for the third countries analysed in this study (e.g. in Ireland and UK).

³ Regulation (EC) No 810/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 establishing a Community Code on Visas (Visa Code)

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

whose nationals are required to hold an airport transit visa when passing through the international transit areas of EU airports and establishes the procedures and conditions for issuing such visas.⁴

According to the Visa Code⁵ '*Bilateral agreements concluded between the Community and third countries aiming at facilitating the processing of applications for visas may derogate from the provisions of this Regulation*'. In line with this provision, Regulation (EC) No 539/2001⁶ establishes the visa requirements and visa exemptions for non-EU nationals entering the EU in view of a short stay. It also provides for exceptions to the visa requirements and visa waivers that EU countries may grant to specific categories of persons.

The regulation provides a common list of countries whose nationals must hold a visa when crossing the external borders of a (Member) State and a common list of those who are exempted from the visa requirement.

The two lists are regularly updated with successive amendments to Regulation (EC) No 539/2001. The decisions to change the lists of non-EU countries are taken on the basis of a case-by-case assessment of a variety of criteria also known as visa liberalisation benchmarks. Those include, *inter alia*:

- migration management;
- public policy and security;
- social benefits;
- economic benefit (tourism and foreign trade);
- external relations including considerations of human rights and fundamental freedoms; and
- regional coherence and reciprocity.

Notably, these decisions are sometimes taken as a result of successful visa liberalisation dialogues with the third countries concerned.⁷ Furthermore, Regulation 1289/2013 establishes a suspension mechanism to respond to emergency situations such as abuse resulting from Visa exemption. In this regard, the instrument sets out conditions under which Visa requirements can be temporarily reintroduced.

1.3 LITERATURE REVIEW AND AIM OF THE STUDY

Visa policies are considered a major instrument to regulate and control mobility and cross-border movements. Border policies dealing with short-term mobility represent the bulk of cross-border movement of people. While on the one hand migration policies have received considerable attention from comparative researchers, much less is known about global shifts in border policies dealing with short term mobility.⁸ Visa requirements often reflect the relationships between individual nations and generally affect the relations and status of a country within the international community of nations.⁹

In the adopted strategy for "A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans", the European Commission stated that visa liberalisation, which fosters mobility, has improved regional cooperation and creates more open societies. The Commission shall monitor the continuous fulfilment of the specific requirements, which are based on Article 1 of Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 as amended by Regulation (EU) No 509/2014 and which were used to

⁴ Based on Regulation 539/2011

⁵ Recital 26

⁶ Council Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 of 15 March 2001 listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement. - Official Journal L 081, 21.03.2001.

⁷ Visa requirements for non-EU nationals -<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legalcontent/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM:jl0031>.

⁸ Mau, Steffan, Gulzau, Fabian, Laube, Lene and Zaun Natascha (2015) The global mobility divide: How visa policies have evolved over time. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 41, (8) pp. 1192-1213. ISSN 1369-183X

⁹ See: <http://www.henleyglobal.com/citizenship/visa-restrictions/> (accessed October 23, 2009)

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

assess the appropriateness of granting visa liberalisation, by the third countries whose nationals have been exempted from the visa requirement when travelling to the territory of Member States as a result of a successful conclusion of a visa liberalisation dialogue conducted between the Union and that third country.¹⁰

Finding actual evidence concerning the effects of visa liberalization appeared to be a difficult task.¹¹ Studies conducted in the last have revealed that visa restrictions were costly, they carried an administrative burden and required additional personnel. The imposition of travel requirements did not reduce only inflows but also outflows, and thus, overall movement of persons.¹² In 2016, the Western Balkan region's total trade with the EU was over EUR 43 billion, up 80% since 2008.¹³ The importance of the visa liberalisation agreements has been demonstrated also by research that was pursued prior to the visa waiver agreements in light of the political commitments between the EU and its eastern neighbours, given the growing need for less division on the European continent.¹⁴ Furthermore, analysis showed that the prospects of visa liberalisation agreements constitute a powerful incentive for far-reaching reforms in the policy areas of freedom, security and justice.¹⁵ What has not been addressed thoroughly however, was whether measures affecting the granting of short-term visas could have an impact not only on short term travel but also on longer-term immigration and residence of foreign nationals.¹⁶ EU Member States have been facing different challenges caused by visa liberalisation, such as persisting irregular migration, and issues related to prevention and fight against organised crime.¹⁷

Whereas the limited research done in this field proved that there were clear benefits for the EU to conclude such agreements with third countries, the overall impact of visa liberalisation agreements with the Western Balkan and the Eastern Partnership countries remains vastly under-researched. Methodological challenges, such as research conducted in a fragmentary manner or the lack of uniform data across (Member) States had so far not allowed for a comparable analysis of the impact of visa liberalisation on the countries of destination.

Consequently, this EMN study aims to offer a comparative overview of (Member) States experiences with the functioning of visa-free regime. It will identify challenges, best practices and positive experience in different Member States and Norway, and provide up-to-date information on the latest tendencies in this area of migration policy. The study will cover Western Balkan and Eastern Partnership countries which have successfully concluded visa liberalisation dialogues according to the relevant action plans and roadmaps.

¹⁰ Councils Regulation (EC) Nr. 539/2001 1a(2b).

¹¹ Forecasting migration between the EU, V4 and Eastern Europe, impact of visa abolition, Centre for Eastern Studies, 2014, https://www.osw.waw.pl/sites/default/files/migration_report_0.pdf

¹² The Effect of Visa Policies on International Migration Dynamics (2014), Working Papers, Paper 89, April 2014, University of Oxford, <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/23ae/89f7acdecb909aaa601210519ef48848917e.pdf>

¹³ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans - Strasbourg, 06.02.2018 COM (2018) 65 final.- https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/communication-credible-enlargement-perspective-western-balkans_en.pdf

¹⁴ Consequences of Schengen Visa Liberalisation for the Citizens of Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, Migration Policy Center, 2012, <http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/23497/MPC-RR-2012-01.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

¹⁵ The Impact of Visa Liberalisation in Eastern Partnership Countries, Russia and Turkey on Trans-Border Mobility, CEPS Paper in Liberty and Security, 2014, <https://www.ceps.eu/publications/impact-visa-liberalisation-eastern-partnership-countries-russia-and-turkey-trans-border>

¹⁶ Forecasting migration between the EU, V4 and Eastern Europe, impact of visa abolition, Centre for Eastern Studies 2014, https://www.osw.waw.pl/sites/default/files/migration_report_0.pdf

¹⁷ Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council First Report under the Visa Suspension Mechanism - Brussels, 20.12.2017 COM (2017) 815 final.- https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-is-new/news/20171220_first_report_under_suspension_mechanism_en.pdf

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination***1.4 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

While there are 60 countries around the world that benefit from visa-free travel to the EU, in some cases, decisions on visa-free access to the Schengen Area may follow from bilateral negotiations (i.e. visa liberalisation dialogues).¹⁸ The visa liberalisation dialogues were successfully conducted between the EU and the **former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro** and **Serbia** (2009), **Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina** (2010) as well as **Moldova** (2014), **Ukraine** (2017) and **Georgia** (2017). They resulted in granting visa-free travel to citizens of these countries.

This study will focus on those **Western Balkan and Eastern Partnership countries** which have successfully reached visa liberalisation agreements according to the relevant action plans and roadmaps, and more specifically on the **impact of visa liberalisation** on countries of destination. The visa-free regime is the most tangible benefit for the citizens of the Western Balkan countries in the process of their integration into the EU and one of the core objectives for the Eastern Partnership countries.

This study will consider the policies and practices of EU Member States and Norway following changes in migration flows raised by visa exemptions in the mentioned third countries. The scope of the study includes the period **2007-2017** and focuses on the immediate years prior to and after the visa waiver agreements entered into force.

Thus, the subjects of the study are third-country nationals¹⁹ from:

- Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (19/12/2009);
- Montenegro (19/12/2009);
- Serbia (19/12/2009);
- Albania (15/12/2010);
- Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010);
- Moldova (28/4/2014);
- Georgia (28/3/2017); and
- Ukraine (11/6/2017).

This study will limit itself in three respects: First, it investigates the impact of short-term Visa liberalisation and thus excludes effects of long-stay residence and Visa permits. Notwithstanding this limitation, the study may display medium and long-term impact on countries of destination ensuing from short-term Visa liberalisation.²⁰

Second, the study is based on the presumption that Visa liberalisation yields effects on cross-border mobility.²¹ Where it relies on quantitative data on short-term Visa mobility, it cannot establish a causal link between Visa liberalisation and cross-border mobility but rather indicates a correlative effect between the two.

Third, the study will not differentiate between TCNs from Visa exempt states who made use of the Visa free regime and those who entered the Union on a conventional short-term Visa regime. This limitation follows from the fact that Visa exemption is exclusively granted to TCNs who provide

¹⁸ See: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-17-5364_en.htm

¹⁹ Holders of biometric passports. The visa-free regime is valid for a period of maximum 90 days in any 180-day period.

²⁰ By doing so, the study tests the hypothesis of Czaika and De Haas who review short and long-term effects of Visa policies, including Visa waivers, on cross border mobility: Czaika, Mathias; De Haas, Hein: The Effect of Visas on Migration Processes. In: International Migration Review, Vol. 51, No. 4, pp. 893-926.

²¹ Which corroborates the findings of Landesmann, Leitner and Mara. Available at: <https://wiiw.ac.at/should-i-stay-should-i-go-back-or-should-i-move-further-contrasting-answers-under-diverse-migration-regimes-dlp-3561.pdf>

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

biometric passports and available data does not state the procedure pursuant to which (s)he entered the state of destination.

1.5 POLICY CONTEXT

At the political level, the Stockholm Programme underlined that the Visa Code “will create important new opportunities for further developing the common visa policy”. The Programme envisaged that “the access to the EU territory has to be made more effective and efficient” and that the visa policy should serve this goal.²² Visa liberalisation is one of the Union's most powerful tools in facilitating people-to-people contacts and strengthening ties between the citizens of third countries and the Union. At the same time, visa regimes are instrumental to restrict unlimited and unwanted migration and trans-border organised crime. Visa liberalisation is therefore granted to countries that are deemed safe and well-governed, meeting a number of criteria in various policy areas.

The EU has conducted bilateral negotiations with the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine.²³ Those dialogues were built upon ‘Visa Liberalisation Roadmaps’ for the Western Balkan countries and ‘Visa Liberalisation Action Plans’ (VLAP) for the Eastern Partnership countries. They included four blocks of requirements which the countries had to fulfil. These benchmarks related to document security, including biometrics; border management, migration and asylum; public order and security; and external relations and fundamental rights. These elements impinged both upon the policy and institutional framework (legislation and planning) as well as the effective and sustainable implementation of this framework.

During the visa liberalisation dialogues, the European Commission closely monitored the implementation of the Roadmaps and Action Plans through regular progress reports. It assessed the progress of all five Western Balkan countries in meeting the visa roadmap requirements first on 18 November 2008 and then on 18 May 2009.²⁴ Likewise, it has delivered progress reports on the implementation of the Action Plans on Visa Liberalisation for the Eastern Partnership countries.²⁵

Third countries that have concluded visa facilitation agreements with the EU should not only meet the benchmark criteria in advance, but continue complying with the visa liberalisation requirements after the agreement is reached. The Commission has the duty to monitor this compliance and report on those matters to the European Parliament and the Council, at least once a year in accordance with Article 1a (2b) of Regulation (EC) No 539/2011.

The European Commission published its First Report under the Visa Suspension Mechanism in December 2017. It focused on specific areas identified for each country where further monitoring and actions were considered necessary to ensure the continuity and sustainability of the progress achieved in the framework of the visa liberalisation process.²⁶

Visa liberalisation with third countries is linked to the return and readmission policy, as well as to asylum applications and border controls. The Frontex alert mechanism is crucial in this regard, providing a detailed analysis of the dynamic migration inflow trends from the two regions. The Frontex alert reports are instrumental for better understanding the phenomenon of the abuse of visa liberalisation, assessing its development and identifying concrete measures to tackle the

²² The Impact of Visa Liberalisation in Eastern Partnership Countries, Russia and Turkey on Trans-Border Mobility, CEPS Paper in Liberty and Security - <https://www.ceps.eu/publications/impact-visa-liberalisation-eastern-partnership-countries-russia-and-turkey-trans-border>

²³ An overview of the progress reports for Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine can be found here: http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/international-affairs/eastern-partnership/visa-liberalisation-moldova-ukraine-and-georgia_en

²⁴ Available at: <http://www.esiweb.org/index.php?lang=en&id=353>

²⁵ Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/international-affairs/eastern-partnership/visa-liberalisation-moldova-ukraine-and-georgia_en

²⁶ Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-is-new/news/20171220_first_report_under_suspension_mechanism_en.pdf

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

challenges.²⁷ The contribution of the (newly adopted) Entry-Exit System is expected to be also significant as, among others, it aims at increasing the efficiency of (border) controls towards third-country nationals.

In this context, the following EMN products are relevant for this study:

- 2017 EMN Study “Challenges and practices for establishing the identity of third-country nationals in migration procedures”²⁸
- 2016 EMN Study “Illegal employment of third-country nationals in the European Union”²⁹
- 2015 EMN Study “Information on voluntary return: how to reach irregular migrants not in contact with the authorities?”³⁰
- 2012 EMN Study “Visa policy as migration channel”³¹
- 2011 EMN Inform “Migration and Development”³²

2 METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The National Reports should be primarily based on secondary sources. In particular, information on national policies and approaches will be a key source of information, while available evaluations and view of experts should provide evidence of good practices and challenges in existing approaches regarding visa liberalisation.

2.1 AVAILABLE STATISTICS

- **Eurostat data**³³: available period 2008 – 2017
 - Number of third-country nationals found to be illegally present – annual data (rounded) [migr_eipre]
 - Number of third-country nationals refused entry at the external borders – annual data (rounded) [migr_eirfs]
 - Number of third-country nationals ordered to leave – annual data (rounded) [migr_eiord]
 - Number of third-country nationals returned following an order to leave – annual data (rounded) [migr_eirtn]
 - Number of return decisions [migr_eiord];
 - Number of return decisions effectively carried out [migr_eirtn];
 - Number of voluntary and forced returns [migr_eirt_vol];
 - Number of asylum applications (monthly and yearly) [migr_asyappctzm and migr_asyappctza];

²⁷ Available at:

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/registre/docs_autres_institutions/commission_europeenne/sec/2011/1570/COM_SEC\(2011\)1570_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/registre/docs_autres_institutions/commission_europeenne/sec/2011/1570/COM_SEC(2011)1570_EN.pdf)

²⁸ Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/00_eu_synthesis_report_identity_study_final_en_1.pdf

²⁹ Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/00_eu_illegal_employment_synthesis_report_final_en_0.pdf

³⁰ Available at: https://emnbelgium.be/sites/default/files/publications/info_on_return_synthesis_report_20102015_final_0.pdf

³¹ Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/migration-channel/00b_synthesis_report_visa_policy_as_migration_channel_final_april2013_en.pdf

³² Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/emn-informs/0a_emn_inform_apr2011_migration-development_january2013_en.pdf

³³ Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

- Number of rejected asylum applications [migr_asydcfsta];
 - Number of first residence permits, by reason [migr_resfirst]:
 - Number of first residence permits for family reasons;
 - Number of first residence permits for study reasons;
 - Number of first residence permits for the purposes of remunerated activity.
 - Third-country nationals who have left the territory by type of assistance received and citizenship [migr_eirt_ass]
 - Third-country nationals who have left the territory to a third country by type of agreement procedure and citizenship [migr_eirt_agr]
 - Third-country nationals who have left the territory to a third country by destination country and citizenship [migr_eirt_des]
- **Frontex data**³⁴: available period 2009 – 2017
 - Number of detections of illegal border-crossings by sea and land
 - **Europol data**³⁵: available period 2007 – 2017
 - Data on criminal proceedings, investigations or suspects of criminal acts
 - **European Commission, DG HOME Schengen Visa statistics**³⁶: available period 2010-2016
 - Uniform visas applied for in Schengen States' consulates in third countries;
 - Total uniform visas issued (including multiple entry visas) in Schengen States' consulates in third countries;
 - Total uniform visas not issued in Schengen States' consulates in third countries.
- **National data**

The Study also requests national-level data (see study section tables). Any statistical indicator that does not have EU level data (e.g. Eurostat) will rely on national data (e.g. year 2007 for which Eurostat data is not available). Should the requested statistics not be available in (Member) State, EMN NCPs are asked to indicate this and specify, to the extent possible, the reasons why this is the case.

- **Other relevant datasets**

The European Visa Database:

<http://www.mogensholth.dk/evd/default.aspx>

University of Oxford's International Migration Institute:

<https://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/data/demig-data>

Aggregated data on the Schengen area as a whole:

<https://www.schengenvisainfo.com/schengen-visa-statistics-third-country-2016/>

The World Bank's World Development Indicators - Movement of people across borders:

<http://wdi.worldbank.org/table/6.13>

³⁴ Available at: <http://frontex.europa.eu/trends-and-routes/migratory-routes-map/>

³⁵ Available at: <https://www.europol.europa.eu/activities-services/main-reports>

³⁶ Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/visa-policy_en#stats

2.2 DEFINITIONS

The following key terms are used in the Common Template. The definitions are taken from the EMN Glossary 5.0 (2017) and should be considered as indicative to inform this study.

When discussing about illegal or irregular migration there is no unified terminology concerning foreigners. The UN and EU recommend using the term irregular rather than illegal because the latter carries a criminal connotation and is seen as denying humanity to migrants. Entering a country in an irregular manner, or staying with an irregular status, is not a criminal offence but an infraction of minor offences or administrative regulations. As a result, referring to Resolution 1509 (2006) of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, 'illegal' is preferred when referring to a status or process, whereas 'irregular' is preferred when referring to a person.

Asylum seeker – In the global context, a person who seeks protection from persecution or serious harm in a country other than their own and awaits a decision on the application for protection under the Geneva Convention of 1951 and Protocol of 1967 in respect of which a final decision has not yet been taken.

Country of destination – The country that is a destination for migration flows (regular or irregular).

European Border Surveillance System – A common framework for the exchange of information and for the cooperation between EU Member States and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) to improve situational awareness and to increase reaction capability at the external borders for the purpose of detecting, preventing and combating irregular immigration and cross-border crime, and contributing to ensuring the protection and saving the lives of migrants.

Facilitators of the unauthorised entry, transit and residence – Intentionally assisting a person who is not a national of an EU Member State either to enter or transit across the territory of a Member State in breach of laws on the entry or transit of aliens, or, for financial gain, intentionally assisting them to reside within the territory of a Member State in breach of the laws of the State concerned on the residence of aliens. Definition is based on Article 1(1)(a) and (b) of Council Directive 2002/90/EC of 28 November 2002 defining the facilitation of unauthorised entry, transit and residence.³⁷

Fraudulent travel or identity document – Any travel or identity document: (i) that has been falsely made or altered in some material way by anyone other than a person or agency lawfully authorised to make or issue the travel or identity document on behalf of a State; or (ii) that has been improperly issued or obtained through misrepresentation, corruption or duress or in any other unlawful manner; or (iii) that is being used by a person other than the rightful holder.

Illegal employment of third-country nationals – Economic activity carried out in violation of provisions set by legislation.

Illegal employment of a legally staying third-country national – Employment of a legally staying third-country national working outside the conditions of their residence permit and / or without a work permit which is subject to each EU Member State's national law.

Illegal employment of an illegally staying third-country national – Employment of an illegally staying third-country national.

Irregular entry – In the global context, crossing borders without complying with the necessary requirements for legal entry into the receiving State. In the Schengen context, the entry of a third-country national into a Schengen Member State who does not satisfy Art. 6 of Regulation (EU) 2016/399 (Schengen Borders Code).

Irregular migration – Movement of persons to a new place of residence or transit that takes place outside the regulatory norms of the sending, transit and receiving countries. There is no clear or universally accepted definition of irregular migration. From the perspective of destination countries it is entry, stay or work in a country without the necessary authorization or documents required under immigration regulations. From the perspective of the sending country, the irregularity is for

³⁷ Available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32002L0090:EN:NOT>

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

example seen in cases in which a person crosses an international boundary without a valid passport or travel document or does not fulfil the administrative requirements for leaving the country.

Irregular stay – The presence on the territory of a Member State, of a third-country national who does not fulfil, or no longer fulfils the conditions of entry as set out in Art. 5 of Regulation (EU) 2016/399 (Schengen Borders Code) or other conditions for entry, stay or residence in force in that Member State.

Overstay(er) – In the global context, a person who remains in a country beyond the period for which entry was granted. In the EU context, a person who has legally entered but then stayed in an EU Member State beyond the allowed duration of their permitted stay without the appropriate visa (typically 90 days), or of their visa and / or residence permit.

Passport – One of the types of travel documents (other than diplomatic, service/official and special) issued by the authorities of a State in order to allow its nationals to cross borders³⁸. All third-country nationals subject to the visa-free regime have to carry a biometric passport to qualify for visa-free travel in the EU (except for UK and Ireland). Non-biometric passport holders from the visa-free third countries require a Schengen visa to enter the EU.

Pull factor – The condition(s) or circumstance(s) that attract a migrant to another country.

Push factor – The condition(s) or circumstance(s) in a country of origin that impel or stimulate emigration.

Refusal of entry – In the global context, refusal of entry of a person who does not fulfil all the entry conditions laid down in the national legislation of the country for which entry is requested. In the EU context, refusal of entry of a third-country national at the external EU border because they do not fulfil all the entry conditions laid down in Art. 6(1) of Regulation (EC) No 399/2016 (Schengen Borders Code) and do not belong to the categories of persons referred to in Art. 6(5) of that Regulation. Regulation (EU) 2017/458 subsequently amended the Schengen Borders Code to reinforce the rules governing the movement of persons across borders and the checks against relevant databases at external borders.

Regularisation – In the EU context, state procedure by which irregularly staying third-country nationals are awarded a legal status.

Return decision – An administrative or judicial decision or act, stating or declaring the stay of a third-country national to be illegal and imposing or stating an obligation to return.

Schengen Borders Code – The rules governing border control of persons crossing the external EU borders of the EU Member States.

Short - stay visa – The authorisation or decision of a Member State with a view to transit through or an intended stay on the territory of one or more or all the Member States of a duration of no more than 90 days in any 180-day period.

Third-country national – Any person who is not a citizen of the European Union within the meaning of Art. 20(1) of TFEU and who is not a person enjoying the European Union right to free movement, as defined in Art. 2 (6) of Regulation (EU) 2016/399 (Schengen Borders Code).

Third-country national found to be illegally present – A third-country national who is officially found to be on the territory of a Member State and who does not fulfil, or no longer fulfils, the conditions for stay or residence in that EU Member State.

Travel document – A document issued by a government or international treaty organisation which is acceptable proof of identity for the purpose of entering another country.

Visa – The authorisation or decision of a Member State required for transit or entry for an intended stay in that EU Member State or in several EU Member States.

³⁸ Available at: [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:52011XC0722\(02\)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:52011XC0722(02))

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Visa Code – Regulation outlining the procedures and conditions for issuing visas for transit through or intended stays in the territory of the Schengen Member States not exceeding 90 days in any 180-day period.

3 ADVISORY GROUP

For the purpose of providing support to EMN NCPs while undertaking this Study and for developing the Synthesis Report, an “Advisory Group” has been established, consisting of the original study proposer, LV EMN NCP, interested EMN NCPs, i.e. BE, CZ, DE, EE, LU, NL, NO, SI, SE, the European Commission and the EMN Service Provider (ICF). EMN NCPs are thus invited to send any requests for clarification or further information on the study to the following “Advisory Group” members:

Advisory Group Members	Email
BE NCP	Peter.VanCostenoble@ibz.fgov.be Geert.tiri@ibz.fgov.be, emn@ibz.fgov.be
CZ NCP	ludmila.touskova@mvcz.cz
DE NCP	paula.hoffmeyer-zlotnik@bamf.bund.de
EE NCP	Borloff@tlu.ee emn@tlu.ee
LV NCP (Lead)	ilze.silina-osmane@pmlp.gov.lv emn@pmlp.gov.lv
LU NCP	Adolfo.sommaribas@uni.lu
NL NCP	J.a.matus@ind.minvenj.nl EMN@ind.minvenj.nl
NO NCP	ssh@udi.no
SE NCP	jonas.hols@migrationsverket.se bernd.parusel@migrationsverket.se EMN@migrationsverket.se
SI NCP	helena.korosec@gov.si emn.mnz@gov.si
UK NCP	Zoe.Pellatt@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk Carolyne.Tah@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk
ICF (EMN Service Provider)	dan.ungureanu@icf.com Sonia.Gsir@icf.com emn@icf.com Neza.Kogovsek@mirovni-institut.si (Odysseus Expert)

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Advisory Group Members	Email
EASO	Teddy.Wilkin@easo.europa.eu Karolina.Lukaszczyk@easo.europa.eu
European Commission	Ramona.TOADER@ec.europa.eu Tania.VERLINDEN@ec.europa.eu Irregular migration and return policy - Dir C Migration and Protection

4 TIMETABLE

Date	Action
12 December 2017	First meeting of the Advisory Group for the Study (ICF Brussels) First draft proposal of the Common Template for review by Advisory Group / Odysseus / COM
6 March 2018	Second meeting of the Advisory Group for the Study Discussion on the revised first draft and work on the second draft of the Common Template begins
26 March 2018	Review by Advisory Group / Odysseus / EASO / COM of the second draft
4 April 2018	Deadline for second draft review of the Common Template by NCPs / Odysseus expert / EASO / COM and work on final draft begins
25 April	Deadline for final draft review and preparation to launch the study
8 May	Launch of the study
31 July	Submission of completed common template by NCPs
14 September	Circulation of the 1st draft of the Synthesis Report to all NCPs + EC + EASO + Odysseus experts to provide comments
28 September	Deadline for the NCPs to provide comments on 1st draft
12 October	Circulation of the 2nd draft of the SR to all NCPs + EC + EASO + Odysseus experts to provide comments
26 October	Deadline for the NCPs to provide comments on 2nd draft
9 November	Circulation of the 3rd draft of the SR to all NCPs+ EC + EASO + Odysseus experts to provide final comments
16 November	Deadline for the NCPs to provide the final comments
30 November 2018	Finalisation of the Study, publication and dissemination

5 TEMPLATE FOR NATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

The template outlines the information that should be included in the National Contributions to this Study in a manner that makes the contributions reasonably comparable. The expected maximum number of pages to be covered by each section is provided in the guidance note. For national contributions the total number of pages should **not exceed 30 pages**, excluding the statistics.

A description of how each section will appear in the Synthesis Report is included at the beginning of each section so that EMN NCPs have an indication of how the contributions will feed into the Synthesis Report.

A limit of **40 pages** will apply to the Synthesis Report, in order to ensure that it remains concise and accessible.

Common Template of EMN Study 2018

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

National Contribution from (**Member**) State³⁹

Disclaimer: The following information has been provided primarily for the purpose of contributing to a Synthesis Report for this EMN Study. The EMN NCP has provided information that is, to the best of its knowledge, up-to-date, objective and reliable within the context and confines of this study. The information may thus not provide a complete description and may not represent the entirety of the official policy of the EMN NCPs' (Member) State.

Top-line "Factsheet"

National Contribution (one page only)

Overview of the National Contribution – drawing out key facts and figures from across all sections of the Study, with a particular emphasis on the elements that will be of relevance to (national) policymakers. Please add any innovative or visual presentations that can carry through into the synthesis report as possible infographics and visual elements.

This European Migration Network study focuses on the impacts of visa liberalisation with the **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Georgia** and **Ukraine** on the member states of the European Union (EU).

Since commencing its full involvement in Schengen cooperation (i.e. since 21 December 2007), the Czech Republic (hereinafter referred to as "CZ") has implemented the EU **common visa policy**. The fundamental document in this area is **Council Regulation (EC) No 539/2001** of 15 March 2001 listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those whose nationals are exempted from that requirement.

At a national level, visa policy is primarily the responsibility of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Ministry focuses mainly on political and economic matters. This issue is also secondarily the responsibility of the Ministry of the Interior which, in cooperation with the Police of the Czech Republic and intelligence services, appraises the security aspect of visa liberalisation.

The intended purpose study was to evaluate what impact the abolishment of visa obligations has had for separate member states. **At the beginning it should be said that no available data at a national level indicates whether or not they concern holders of biometric passports and therefore persons that came and reside in the Czech Republic on the basis of visa liberalisation. Therefore the results may be affected by this distortion. The study describes primarily the situation and trends after visa liberalisation. However in most cases it is not possible to evaluate the direct impacts of visa liberalisation on the CZ.**

After the abolishment of visa obligations for Western Balkan countries (**Serbia, Albania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro** and **Bosnia and Herzegovina**) we have not noticed a rise in applications for international protection on

³⁹ Replace highlighted text with your (**Member**) State name here.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

the part of citizens of those states. As for **Moldova**, the number of applications for international protection remains stable. The same applies for Ukraine, where the number of applications filed is still stable and liberalisation of the visa system did not cause any significant rise in interest in 2017. A different trend was identified in the case of **Georgia**. Georgia is the only country of which it may be said that an increase in the number of applications for international protection occurred after the introduction of visa liberalisation. However, not only in the case of Georgia, we should point out that the data is still limited due to the fact that visa liberalisation began to apply just a year ago and moreover it is impossible to differentiate foreign nationals who applied for international protection after entering our territory when they were already exempted from needing a visa. In addition, the total number of applicants for international protection also includes Dublin cases (see below).

Data concerning the number of persons who crossed the border into the CZ (i.e. by air) according to nationality are available as of 2013 (since the introduction of a new border control system). The numbers of nationals from the Western Balkan countries have risen considerably since 2014. In the case of citizens of **Moldova** (visa liberalisation in 2014) it is apparent that the number of persons crossing the CZ's Schengen border is growing. The number of citizens from **Ukraine and Georgia** fell in 2014, while in 2015 the number rose, falling again in both cases in 2016 and finally in 2017 the numbers of Ukrainians crossing the border reached the highest level of all during the 5 years of monitoring (2013-2017) and numbers of Moldovans crossing the border reached the second highest level of all during the 5 years of monitoring. In any case, it should be added that the total number of all foreign nationals from third countries crossing the border into the CZ has grown since 2013 (with the exception of the drop in 2016) rising to more than 7,000,000 third-country nationals crossing the air border in 2017. Therefore a rise in numbers must have occurred also due to persons entering the country who do not come from countries where visa liberalisation has been introduced.

Citizens of Western Balkan countries almost did not figure at all among persons detected while irregularly crossing the external Schengen border. The exception to this were **Albanian** nationals, where a rise in such cases occurred after visa liberalisation – in 2017 42 persons were identified at the airport, making citizens of **Albania** the most frequently detained group (from countries with visa liberalisation) in connection with irregular migration across the external Schengen border in the year in question. The number of detected persons from Moldova was only in single figures during the last years. 2017, when visa liberalisation took place for citizens of **Georgia**, marked the highest number yet of persons found attempting to cross the external Schengen border (12 persons). 17 citizens of **Ukraine** were found in the CZ while attempting to cross the external border in 2017, which corresponded to the average number for the previous ten year period.

After the introduction of visa exemption, no fundamental changes occurred in the case of citizens of **Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** and **Serbia** in the area of illegal stays. These nationalities figure only minimally in the total number of persons with illegal stays (just in single figures or in the tens at most per year). After 2008, the highest annual number of **Georgian** citizens was recorded in 2009 (163 persons). Over the years, the number of citizens of Georgia in this respect is extremely varied, ranging from 28 to 163 persons. In 2017, the number was 58 persons when the majority of persons (20) reported to the Zastávka u Brna reception centre where it was established that they were in this country irregularly while filing their application for international protection. This trend continues to greater extent in 2018 (a total of 50 Georgians between January and May 2018, 36 of whom at the Zastávka u Brna reception centre). The greatest number of citizens of **Moldova** was between 2008 and 2012 when the annual number ranged between 83 and 140, after which the numbers fell. The number of Moldovans did not rise again until 2016 (2016: 134, 2017: 262) and this

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

trend continues also in 2018 (a total of 171 Moldovans between January and May 2018 alone). Citizens of **Ukraine** have long been those who represent the greatest proportion of persons found to be illegally resident. In 2016 and 2017 the number was around 1,500 persons (which constitutes more than 30 % of all third-country nationals found to be illegally resident). However, citizens of Ukraine are also the most frequent nationality staying in the Czech Republic on long-term basis (117 480 persons authorized to stay in the Czech Republic as of 31 December 2017). Within the introduction of visa liberalisation any fundamental change occurred in illegal stays and no change to the hitherto trend can be seen yet in 2018.

If we look at the number of return decisions issued, no increase in such decisions has occurred after visa liberalisation in the case of citizens of **the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** and **Montenegro**. The number of return decisions issued to citizens of **Serbia** fell after the introduction of visa liberalisation, only rising in 2016 and 2017. As for citizens of **Albania**, in the year following visa liberalisation initially there was a fall in the numbers of return decisions issued and subsequently the numbers began to rise. In 2017, the number of return decisions issued reached the highest for the past 10 years (40 decisions issued) which also corresponds with the fact of a higher number of persons discovered during illegal migration during that year. The numbers of return decisions for citizens of **Bosnia and Herzegovina** began to rise immediately after the introduction of visa liberalisation (the most in 2011, rising from 5 decisions to 20) while in subsequent years the number never exceeded 15. In the case of citizens of **Moldova**, a sharp decline in the number of issued decisions occurred in the year of visa liberalisation (from 85 decisions to 45), while after visa liberalisation the number of return decisions issued returned to figures similar to those before 2014 (when visa liberalisation came about - 90 decisions). Subsequently, in 2016 the number rose to 325 decisions and in 2017 even to 740 decisions. With citizens of **Georgia** and **Ukraine** we may only evaluate only the year when visa liberalisation came into effect. The year-on-year increase of return decisions issued to Georgian citizens was 150 % (in absolute figures this means 15 decisions) and to Ukrainian citizens it was 77.5 % (in absolute figures this means 1,705 decisions).

As for voluntary returns, apart from **Montenegro**, no citizen of which was returned voluntarily to their home country between the years 2009 and 2017, it may be said of citizens of **Western Balkan countries** that the number of voluntary returns rose after visa liberalisation for most of the period of interest. Even though in some cases this meant a great percentage increase, in absolute figures, these changes were just in single figure terms. With the exception of 2014 when 14 persons were returned to Serbia and 2017 when 11 persons were returned to this same country, the numbers of voluntarily returned persons from the **Western Balkan countries** did not exceed ten persons, while numbers voluntarily returned persons from Moldova and Ukraine rose sharply during the last year. After visa liberalisation, the number of voluntarily returned persons from **Moldova** initially rose gently (from 6 to 8 persons), while in 2017 a total of 72 persons were returned to that country (year-on-year increase of 414 %). In the case of citizens of **Georgia and Ukraine** where visa liberalisation did not occur until 2017, on the basis of available data it may be said that a rise in the number of voluntary returns occurred in the same year as visa-free relations were introduced. As for citizens of **Georgia**, a 71 % year-on-year rise in voluntarily returns occurred, and as for Ukrainian citizens this was a 155 % rise (from 121 to 309 persons). If we look at the **total numbers of persons returned voluntarily from all of these visa-free countries** for the past years, we can see steeply rising figures during the last three years. In 2015, persons from these visa-free countries still made up approximately one third of all voluntarily returned third-country persons; in 2016 it was already two thirds and by 2017 almost 80 %. For the year 2017, equally apparent is the **sharp increase in number of all voluntarily returned third-country nationals**. For the period 2016-2017, this concerned a total rise in voluntary returns of

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

citizens from visa-free countries (except Montenegro) of **165 %**. Voluntary returns of all third-country citizens increased between the years 2016 and 2017 by almost **119 %**.

As for economic impacts, according to the Ministry of Industry and Trade, no specific economic benefits arose for the CZ due to liberalisation of the visa system in the field of short-term visas in relation to the affected third countries with the exception of simplifying entry to the CZ for tourists from these countries.

According to the Ministry of Regional Development of the CZ, since 2012 there has been a rise in tourist arrivals to the majority of countries in Europe. Unfortunately it is impossible to specify how much of this rise is the result of visa liberalisation with the countries in question and how much is due to other factors.

On the basis of visa-free relations, foreign nationals may not work or conduct entrepreneurial activities in the Czech Republic; unless they hold a visa or long-term residence permit issued for the purposes of remunerated activities, this would constitute illegal work. In the context of visa liberalisation, the Ministry of the Interior published an information leaflet with detailed information on the conditions of stay and employment of Ukrainian citizens in the Czech Republic. It describes mainly how the conditions for entry into Czech territory and access to remunerated activities have been affected by the introduction of visa-free relations. Nevertheless, over the past few years the Ministry of the Interior and the Foreign Police Directorate have noted a higher number of citizens of **Moldova** and **Ukraine** abusing the purpose of their visit for illegal employment.

According to information gleaned by the Foreign Police Directorate, as a result of illegal employment of citizens of Moldova and Ukraine there has been a rise in the number of administrative expulsion decisions and other measures connected with administrative proceedings.

Ministry of Industry and Trade has not noted any increased interest in conducting entrepreneurial activities in the CZ from the countries in question following visa liberalisation.

According to the Ministry of Industry and Trade, since the introduction of visa liberalisation on the part of the EU, there has been an increase of commercial exchange with all affected countries, with the exception of Ukraine and Georgia where visa liberalisation came about in 2017 and therefore relevant data for comparison is still lacking. However, the aforesaid increase is more due to other factors than to visa liberalisation. In reality, it was primarily due to the fact that liberalisation took place at the peak of the economic crisis or at the beginning of the subsequent boom when commercial exchange understandably was growing. A further important factor was the signing of trade agreements with the countries in question which made trade between them and the entire EU much simpler.

If we look at the situation in the area of the criminal activities of foreign nationals after the abolition of visa obligations, we can see that over the past few years new forms of drug crime have emerged in connection with certain countries and certain foreign nationals have become involved to a greater degree in the aforementioned criminal activities inside the territory of the CZ. This is considered to be a certain security risk.

No significant rise in victims of human trafficking has been noted with respect to the countries in question that might have been caused by visa liberalisation. Therefore no new measures have been adopted in this area.

From the point of view of the CZ, increased infiltration of forged documents and other official documents represents a fundamental security risk in the territory of the CZ where

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

such forgeries are subsequently used. The main purpose for which these forgeries are used is to facilitate the illegal employment of citizens of Ukraine and Moldova (who have often arrived in the CZ via visa-free relations). Regardless of this fact, it must be said that such forgeries are available for other purposes of abuse, including activities involving a high degree of social risk, including terrorist threats.

Due to the fact that the period of interest is short and the statistics for 2018 are incomplete, only preliminary conclusions may be drawn in the area of criminally prosecuted persons from Ukraine and Georgia. According to available data, with regard to criminally prosecuted foreign nationals it may be said that after the introduction of visa liberalisation (March 2017) for citizens of **Ukraine** – year-on-year with the first half of 2018 – the number of prosecuted persons has fallen by 5 % (38 fewer in comparison with the first half of 2017; i.e. 803 persons in the first half of 2017, 765 persons in the first half of 2018). Conversely, in the case of citizens of Georgia, there has been a year-on-year rise of 67 % in criminally prosecuted persons in the CZ (10 more persons in comparison with the first half of 2017, i.e. 25 persons in the first half of 2018).

If we look at the numbers concerning the total number of persons convicted by final court ruling for facilitation of unauthorised entry, transit and residence, no trend can be identified for the period of interest due to the low data sample (the number of citizens of countries exempted from visa obligations convicted by final court ruling for the past 10 years is almost zero). The only exception to this are citizens of Ukraine. The number of convicted persons from Ukraine rose four times in the year in which visa liberalisation occurred (rising from 2 persons in 2016 to 8 persons in 2017), however in absolute figures this means a single figures increase.

Representatives of the CZ have said that communication and cooperation with the embassies of the countries in question is a high level. During returns of foreign nationals, the identity of the persons is verified and these persons are issued with a temporary passport. The Foreign Police Directorate primarily praises cooperation with the Embassy of **Georgia** in Prague which shows an active interest in their citizens who break Czech laws. Cooperation between the Czech Ministry of the Interior and Balkan countries became more intensified in reaction to the migration crisis. Exchange of information in the area of migration is good especially with the **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** and **Serbia**. The CZ contributed financially towards creating capacities in the area of asylum and migration infrastructure of these countries and has organised several study trips and exchanges of experts in the field of asylum. Further trips and exchanges are planned, the organisation of which has become simpler after relaxation of visa relations.

Section 1: The National Framework

National Contribution (max. 6 pages, excluding statistics)

The aim of this Section is to provide an insight into the scale and scope of Member States experiences after the visa-free regime at national and EU level, as evidenced by quantitative and qualitative information. The section will also analyse the short and long-term trends after the visa-free regime entered into force, pull factors and links between the countries of origin and destination.

The synthesis report will aim to include infographics and visuals, therefore please take that into account when answering the questions / filling the tables by adding any innovative or visual presentations in your national reports that can carry through into the synthesis report. We also welcome any photos/images which are captioned, relevant and (data) protected with your national contribution.

When answering the questions in this section please consider the statistical data as presented in the tables listed below and detailed in Section 1.2:

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Table 1.2.1: Total number of external border-crossings (persons) by nationals of visa-free countries;

Table 1.2.2: Total number of detections of irregular border-crossings from nationals of visa-free countries;

Table 1.2.3: Total number of short-stay visa applications by third country;

Table 1.2.4: Total number of short-stay visa application refusals by third country;

Table 1.2.5: Total number of asylum applications received from visa-free countries;

Table 1.2.6: Total number of positive decisions on asylum applicants from visa-free countries;

Table 1.2.7: Total number of negative decisions on asylum applicants from visa-free countries;

Table 1.2.8: Total number of positive and negative decisions on asylum applicants (top five nationalities, not limited to visa-free countries);

Table 1.2.9: Total number of residence permits applications (all residence permits) by third country;

Table 1.2.10: Total number of identity document fraud instances by third country;

If you do not have data as requested in the above tables, please explain why this is the case after each table in the relevant box.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Please do not leave any answer box or table cell blank or empty and insert N/A, NI or 0 as applicable.⁴⁰

SECTION 1.1: DESCRIPTION OF NATIONAL SITUATION

Q1.1 Please provide an analysis of the short term (within two years) and long-term (beyond two years) trends which appeared in your Member State after the commencement of visa-free regimes disaggregated by region and third countries of interest.⁴¹

Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Tables 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.2.5 and 3.2.2.

Western Balkans - FYROM, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina:

NUMBERS OF PERSONS CROSSING THE EXTERNAL SCHENGEN BORDER (Table 1.2.1)

Data concerning the number of persons who crossed the border into the CZ (i.e. by air) according to nationality are available as of 2013 (since the introduction of a new border control system). It may be said that in general the numbers of citizens of **the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina**, have risen significantly since 2014.

While saying this, it should be added that the total number of all foreign nationals from third countries crossing the external borders of the CZ since 2013 has risen (with the exception of a fall in numbers in 2016) and in 2017 exceeded 7,000,000 persons from third countries who crossed our air border. The increase in numbers therefore includes also persons who do not come from countries with whom visa liberalisation has been introduced.

NUMBERS OF PERSONS DETECTED DURING IRREGAL CROSSING OF THE EXTERNAL SCHENGEN BORDER (Table 1.2.2)

As for the **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**, during the reference period⁴² only one of its citizens was detected while attempting irregular crossing of the external Schengen border in 2009; no other national of this country was detained in the remaining years.

As for **Montenegro**, only two of its citizens were detected in 2016 and one in 2017.

As for **Serbian nationals**, this concerns at most 3 persons in 2016. Between 2010-2011 only one person in each year, between 2012 and 2014 nobody and in 2015 two persons.

After visa liberalisation, there was an increase in **Albanian** nationals detected while attempting to cross the external Schengen border irregularly (i.e. by air). While in 2014 no such case was recorded, 4 persons were detained in 2015. In subsequent years the number continued to rise and in 2017 reached 42 persons detained at the airport, making citizens of Albania were the nationality group most frequently detained (from countries

⁴⁰ N/A – not applicable, NI – no information, 0 - collected data resulted in 0 cases.

⁴¹ Please use information such as: increase of entries, number of asylum applications, refusals of entry, return and removal decisions in your answers.

⁴² The Czech Republic acceded to the Schengen Treaty in December 2007, therefore data for the year 2007 cannot be compared with subsequent years because development would be misleading.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

with visa liberalisation) in connection with irregular migration across the external Schengen border in 2017.

In 2015, two citizens of **Bosnia and Herzegovina** were detected while illegally crossing the air border, while in the other years not one national of this country was detained.

NUMBERS OF APPLICATIONS FOR SHORT-TERM VISAS ON THE PART OF CITIZENS EXEMPTED FROM VISA OBLIGATIONS (Tables 1.2.3 and 1.2.4)

After the introduction of the visa-free regime for the **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina** and **Serbia** it is apparent that the number of applications for short-term visas fell rapidly. In connection with this significant fall in applications for short-term visas, a rapid fall in refused applications for this type of visa was also recorded.

If we focus on the total number of applications for short-term visa by citizens of all third countries, in the last year monitored (2017) a substantial increase of applications is apparent (623,515). The number of refused applications for short-term visa also rose significantly during last year 2017 (up to 27,951).

APPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION (Tables 1.2.5, 1.2.6 and 1.2.7)

As far as **Montenegro** is concerned, no change in the trend occurred after liberalisation of the visa regime in 2009, because the CZ did not register any application for international protection from this country either before or after.

This said, neither was the number of applications for international protection from other countries particularly high. As for the **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**, 11 applications were registered in 2007 and in 2008 just 5 applications. As of 2009, when visa liberalisation began, no applications were registered until 2013. Then in 2014 only 5 applications were filed. Between 2015 and 2017 no Macedonian national applied for international protection. It may be said that for Macedonia, visa liberalisation had no effect on the number of applications for international protection filed.

As for **Serbia** we can see a fall in the number of persons applying for international protection after liberalisation of the visa regime in 2009 of 75 % in comparison with 2008 and almost 90 % in comparison with 2007. However, in absolute figures the change was not so dramatic (a fall of 15 applications and 44 applications respectively). Since the introduction of the visa-free regime, the number of applications remains low (between 5 and 15 applications per year).

As for **Albania** no change occurred in the number of applications for international protection in consequence of visa liberalisation. The same applies for **Bosnia and Herzegovina**.

It may be said that in general the **visa liberalisation process did not have a significant effect on the number of applications from Western Balkan countries.**

POSITIVE DECISIONS:

No influence of visa liberalisation has been noted in the number of positive decisions issued on applications for international protection. No positive decision has been issued for Western Balkan countries since 2008.

NEGATIVE DECISIONS:

No changes in trends have been recorded in connection with liberalisation of the visa regime and the number of negative decisions.

ISSUED RETURN DECISIONS (Table 3.2.2)

No rise occurred in return decisions for citizens of the **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** and **Montenegro**.

After visa liberalisation the number of return decisions issued to citizens of **Serbia** fell, a rise occurring only in the years 2016 and 2017.

In the year following visa liberalisation, the number of return decisions issued to citizens of **Albania** initially fell, while subsequently numbers began to rise, reaching the highest figure for the past 10 years in 2017 (40 issued decisions), which is due to a higher number of persons being detained during irregular migration in that year.

The numbers of return decisions for citizens of **Bosnia and Herzegovina** began to rise immediately after visa liberalisation (most in 2011, from 5 to 20 decisions), while in subsequent years numbers did not rise above 15 decisions.

EXPERIENCES OF EMBASSIES OF THE CZ:**Albania**

An upward trend has been noted in applications for long-term visas for study purposes (Erasmus +), employee cards (especially in the last two years) and subsequent applications for long-term residence permits (family reunification).

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The number of applications for short-term visa (for up to 90 days) shows a sharp downward trend (2010 – 4,339, 2011 – 160, 2012 – 21, 2013 – 30, 2014 – 93, 2015 – 32, 2016 – 46, 2017 – 96).

Conversely, the number of applications for long-term visa (for over 90 days) shows a sharp upward trend (2010 – 99, 2011 – 182, 2012 – 134, 2013 – 77, 2014 – 150, 2015 – 240, 2016 – 292, 2017 – 506).

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

A sharp rise in both short-term and long-term visas for employment purposes occurred after visa liberalisation.

Serbia

The number of applications for short-term visas fell slowly before visa liberalisation.

The number of applications for long-term residence permits and visas shows a downward trend from 2010 to 2014 (the number of applications submitted fell from 248 in 2010 to 135 in 2014). Since 2015 we have noted an increase of interest in long-term visas and residence permits, especially for employment purposes, and the trend is upward (from 362 applications in 2015 to 959 in 2017). Alongside the increase in demand for workers

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

from abroad, the number of short-term visas for employment purposes is also increasing. However, statistics for short-term visas according to purpose of stay are not kept by the embassy.

Eastern Partnership - Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine:

NUMBERS OF PERSONS CROSSING THE EXTERNAL SCHENGEN BORDER (Table 1.2.1)

It is clear in the case of citizens of **Moldova** (visa liberalisation in 2014) that the number of persons crossing the CZ Schengen border is growing.

A fall in the number of citizens of **Ukraine** and **Georgia** crossing the Schengen border occurred in 2014, in 2015 a rise, in 2016 again a fall and finally in 2017 the number of Ukrainians crossing the Schengen border reached the highest of the 5 years monitored (2013-2018) and numbers of Georgians were the second highest since 2013.

All the same, it should be added that the total number of all foreign nationals from third countries crossing the external border of the CZ since 2013 has risen (with the exception of a fall in 2016) and in 2017 reached more than 7,000,000 persons from third countries crossing the air border. Available data therefore shows a rise in numbers also of persons who do not come from countries where visa liberalisation has been introduced.

NUMBERS OF PERSONS DETECTED IN THE COURSE OF IRREGULAR CROSSING⁴³ OF THE EXTERNAL SCHENGEN BORDER (Table 1.2.2)

There was not an immediate rise in the numbers of citizens of **Moldova** detected during irregular crossing of the external Schengen border after the introduction of visa liberalisation; in fact the number fell from 3 persons to zero. Subsequently in 2016, 4 people were detected while attempting to cross the external Schengen border irregularly, and 6 people in 2017. Even though in comparison with 2014 (when visa liberalisation began to apply) this change represents a 100 % increase, in absolute figures this concerns only very few people.

2017, when visa liberalisation began in **Georgia**, marked the highest recorded number of Georgian citizens attempting irregular crossing of the external Schengen border of the CZ – 12 persons. In comparison with preceding years this number was high above average.

17 citizens of **Ukraine** were detected in the CZ during irregular crossing of the external border in 2017 which in comparison with the preceding 10 years was an average figure. Nevertheless, the highest number of Ukrainians - a total of 15 persons detected during irregular border crossing was in 2015, i.e. 2 years before visa liberalisation.

NUMBERS OF APPLICATIONS FOR SHORT-TERM VISA BY FOREIGN NATIONALS EXEMPTED FROM VISA OBLIGATIONS (Tables 1.2.3 and 1.2.4)

Similarly to the Western Balkan countries, in the case of **Moldova** after the introduction of a visa-free regime a rapid fall in applications for short-term visa is apparent. In view of

⁴³ The Czech Republic acceded to Schengen in December 2007, therefore data from 2007 cannot be compared with subsequent data – development would be misleading.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

the fact that visa liberalisation has applied in **Ukraine** and **Georgia** only since 2017, it is not possible to draw any conclusions.

However, if we focus on the total number of applications filed for short-term visa by citizens of third countries, in the last year reported (2017) there is a visible rise in applications (623,515). Also the number of refused applications for short-term visa for all citizens of third countries for the last year 2017 rose significantly (to 27,951).

APPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION (Tables 1.2.5, 1.2.6 and 1.2.7):

The number of applications for international protection from citizens of **Moldova** remains stable.

The number of applications for international protection from citizens of **Ukraine** is also more or less stable and the liberalisation of the visa regime in 2017 did not cause significantly higher numbers than usual (in view of the fact that visa liberalisation occurred just a year ago, it is impossible yet to evaluate the situation in detail). The significant rise in applications by citizens of Ukraine since 2014 is caused by the conflict in that country.

A different trend has been recorded in the case of **Georgia**. Before visa liberalisation in 2017, the number of applications for international protection was not higher than 50 applications per year. In 2017, 130 applications for international protection were registered. Therefore **Georgia is the only country for which it may be said that visa liberalisation meant a rise in the number of applications for international protection**. With Georgia too, it should be pointed out that the data is still limited due to the fact that visa liberalisation was introduced just one year ago. In addition, this total number of applicants also includes Dublin cases, e.g. persons who were issued a visa to enter this country by a Czech embassy but who at once left the CZ for Germany and, if they were detained in Germany, applied for international protection in that neighbouring country. Subsequently such persons were returned to the Czech Republic and are listed as applicants for international protection (i.e. this has nothing to do with visa liberalisation).

POSITIVE DECISIONS:

In the case of **Moldova** international protection was granted only in 2007 (2), 2008 (5), 2010 (5) and 2015 (5). The numbers are very low and it can be said that no link exists between liberalisation of the visa regime and the number of positive decisions.

Citizens of **Georgia** did not receive any positive decisions during the last four years. It may be deduced therefore that citizens of Georgia did not receive any positive decision during the last four years. It may be deduced therefore that in this case too no link exists between liberalisation of the visa regime and the number of positive decisions.

The number of positive decisions for **Ukrainian** citizens between 2007 and 2013 ranged between 10 and 25 decisions per year. As of 2014, the number of positive decisions began to rise (150 in 2014 and 170 in 2015), which was three years before relaxation of the visa regime and as of 2016 the number fell again.

NEGATIVE DECISIONS:

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

The number of negative decisions on applications for international protection for citizens of **Moldova** also remained stable after the introduction of visa liberalisation (slight rise only in 2015).

As for **Ukraine**, the number of negative decisions between 2008 and 2014 ranged from 60 to 220 negative decisions per year. In 2015 the numbers rose to over 400 and for the last three years have remained stable (435-465 per year).

A slight rise in the number of negative decisions is evident in the case of **Georgia** since 2016 in comparison with preceding years (numbers of negative decisions between 2009 and 2015 ranged between 10 and 25 per year). In 2016, 40 negative decisions were issued (167 % more as compared to 2015) and in 2017, 60 negative decisions were issued (50 % more as compared to 2016).

ISSUED RETURN DECISIONS (Table 3.2.2)

A significant fall occurred in the number of decisions issued to citizens of **Moldova** in the year of visa liberalisation (from 85 decisions to 45), whereas after visa liberalisation the number of decisions returned to usual figure values (90 decisions) before 2014 (when visa liberalisation began). Subsequently, in 2017 the number climbed to 325 decisions and in 2017 as many as 740 decisions.

As for citizens of **Georgia** and **Ukraine**, only the year in which visa liberalisation came into effect may be evaluated. A year-on-year rise in the number of return decisions issued to Georgian citizens of 150 % occurred (in absolute figures this meant 15 decisions), while for citizens of Ukraine the rise was 77.5 % (in absolute figures this meant a rise of 1,705 decisions).

EXPERIENCE OF EMBASSIES OF THE CZ:**Georgia**

The Embassy in Tbilisi may evaluate only development before visa liberalisation – numbers of applications for visas by Georgian citizens rose during the preceding 10 years (with the exception of a fall in 2012); a more significant rise in 2015 was caused by the introduction of outsourcing. The proportion of refused visa applications ranged between approx. 13 % to approx. 25 %; in the last 3 years before visa liberalisation the figure was always higher than 14 %.

Moldova

Four years have passed since visa liberalisation in Moldova. In a transitional period lasting approx. one year, Moldavian citizens travelled to the CZ under a visa-free regime. Some of them worked here illegally and their stay was terminated with forbidden entry for a certain time. After such negative experiences, the majority of citizens of Moldova attempt to organise their working stays (both short-term stays/short-term visas and long-term residence permits/long-term visas) in the CZ legally. Therefore for three years in a row now the number of applicants for short-term and long-term visas has been growing, the vast majority of which are short-term visas for employment purposes and for employee cards. The growth in such applications over three years has been almost four-fold and Embassy employees in Kishinev are under unabating pressure from applicants, employers and employment agents.

Ukraine

The structure of applicants after the introduction of the visa-free regime is influenced by the maintenance of visa requirement for travel to the CZ for purposes of remunerated activities.

At the General Consulate in Lvov since the introduction of visa liberalisation, the number of applications for short-term visas has not fallen, because the purpose of remunerated activities even beforehand accounted for more than 80 % of applications filed. In 2017 (the year of introduction of visa liberalisation) 46,735 short-term applications were received, as compared to 45,886 applications in 2016. Against this, the year-on-year increase of applications for long-term stay rose from 1,972 in 2016 to 7,972 applications in 2017 (the vast majority concerning employee cards).

After visa liberalisation there was unlike the General Consulate in Lvov a drop in applications for Schengen visas by around 60 % at the Embassy in Kiev. It should be emphasised that after visa liberalisation a fundamental change occurred at the Embassy in Kiev in the proportion of applications made for remunerated activity reasons. While in the first quarter of 2017, the proportion of these applications filed for short-term visas was 5 %, in the period from August to December 2017, this proportion rose to 64 % and in the period from July to May 2018 applications for working visas represented around 90 % of applications filed. Immediately after the launch of visa liberalisation the fall in receipts was considerable, although as of July the number of applications submitted began to rise gradually until the present time (summer 2018), when the number of applications received is at the same level as before the introduction of visa liberalisation. With regard to the fact that the demand for employees from Ukraine persists and that there is no reason to expect an improvement in the economic situation in Ukraine that would slow migration of workers from Ukraine, there is reason to expect a further rise in applications for short-term visas for purposes of remunerated activities. The structure of applicants for other purposes remains similar to that before liberalisation: applications by applicants without biometric passports are most frequently for purposes of tourism, invitation, business, official invitation and culture. In view of the broad spectrum of exemption from the visa fee for Ukrainian citizens, it is still more convenient for applicants to file an application for a visa than for a biometric passport due to the fact that many applicants already have a long visa history and may therefore receive a visa valid for two years. The unwillingness of Ukrainian citizens to acquire a biometric passport is increased by the currently long waiting time and also due to the prevailing myth that crossing the border on a visa means that holders are subjected to fewer checks and verification than those travelling on a biometric passport. Despite the considerable fall in the number of applications filed for purposes other than employment, it may be said that with such applications the trend of submission of falsified supporting documents, primarily confirmation of employment and bank statements, continues. Fraudulent documents are found among all age-groups and practically for all purposes of stay. At the end of the year, for the first time falsified employment permits were detected. In applications filed for employment purposes it may be said that recently the spectrum of work performed has widened massively – applications are now filed not just for construction work, cleaning or in the manufacturing sector which were predominant in the past. Now new positions such as production line operators, animal feed hand packers, woodwork assembly workers, crop-growing sector workers, building security, draftsmen, gardeners, wooden goods painters and varnishers, waste sorters, bakers, pastry chefs etc. Most applicants are on employment agreements with salaries equal only to the minimum wage, although recently the number of applications where employees are offered a higher rate salary have increased.

A large number of applicants for visas for employment purposes are unemployed first-time applicants, and so the visa granted to them is almost always an one-entry visa. However, more and more applicants repeatedly travel to work for 3 months in each six-

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

month period to the same employer. In view of the fact that many applicants had previously not been granted a Schengen visa, but hold a Polish long-term visa which is very frequently misused for illegal work in the CZ/Schengen Area, interviews with such applicants at embassies and consulates often focus on checking whether Polish D visas were not misused in this manner. In many cases such misuse is confirmed via migration and document liaison officers (for IPDs) and the application is refused on such grounds. Only very rarely is the applicant capable of proving that his work placement to the Czech Republic by a Polish firm during the validity of their Polish long-term visa was actually legal.

After visa liberalisation, the number of appeals fell significantly, despite the fact that the consulate department checks around two thirds of applications for employment purposes and as a result of this the percentage of refused applications rose significantly, representing about 10 % in 2017. The reason for refusal is generally complete lack of knowledge of work and accommodation conditions, incongruity between the applicant's plan of what the work they would do and the job declared in supporting documentation, or partial ignorance of the conditions in combination with other factors. A considerable proportion of refused applications are due to the discovery that the applicant misused a Polish long-term visa for illegal employment in the CZ.

Since the beginning of 2018, there has been a sharp rise in submission of false work permits (by June 2018 the Embassy in Kiev had detected 120).

In the last months of 2017, more and more applicants were found to have filed an application for a working visa despite the fact that they had already exhausted their permitted 90 days either in full or in part during the 180-day period preceding their planned departure for the CZ. Often such applicant submitted documents for their 90-day stay, in spite of not being entitled to be granted permission due preceding a visa-free stay in the Schengen Area (such applications are generally refused because the applicant may not honour their declared purpose of stay, comply with conditions of their contract, accommodation etc.).

Q1.2. What are the main links between the countries of origin and your Member State or the applicable 'pull factors'⁴⁴ disaggregated by region and third countries of interest?

Western Balkans - FYROM, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina:

-

Eastern Partnership - Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine:

In case of Ukrainian nationals the main factors and motivations are similar language, Slavic culture, diasporas on the territory of the CZ, better conditions for finding a job and better wages.

Q1.3. Which national institutions and/or authorities are involved in implementing the visa liberalisation process and what is their respective role in this process?⁴⁵

⁴⁴ These may include: presence of diaspora, historical links between countries, social assistance received by asylum seekers, probability of receiving a residence permit/long-term visa, schemes (tourism, family ties, business) for attracting certain categories of migrants using visa-free regime.

⁴⁵ For example: changes in instructions for border patrol agents and in equipment.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

At a national level, visa policy is primarily the responsibility of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which investigates political and economic contexts.

These issues are only secondarily the responsibility of the Ministry of the Interior which, in cooperation with the Police of the Czech Republic and the intelligence services, assesses the security aspect of visa liberalisation.

Q1.4. Were there changes in your national legislation in connection with the introduction of the visa-free regimes? If yes, please explain their scope and impact on nationals coming from the third countries analysed in this study?

In connection with visa liberalisation the Government Ordinance No. 215/2017 Coll. on stipulation of exceptions from visa obligations and from exemption from visa obligations was issued. The Ordinance stipulates that citizens of the countries whose nationals are exempted from visa obligations for stays in the CZ not exceeding 90 days during any 180-day period, while they are subject to the obligation of holding a visa if the purpose of their stay is performance of remunerated activities. The Ordinance also stipulates a list of activities which are not considered to be remunerated activities (e.g. business meetings, sending a foreign national employed in international transportation to the CZ etc.).

Q1.5. Where there any public/policy debates related to the visa liberalisation process in you (Member) State? If yes, what were the main issues discussed and how did this impact national policy?

The spectrum of media/politicians/general public interests includes the introduction of visa-free relations primarily with Ukraine (a large number of Ukrainian citizens live in this country and the CZ is a popular destination for Ukrainian nationals). The Ministry of the Interior prepared measures of a preventive/informational nature (an information campaign aimed at Ukrainian citizens in which the Ministry of the Interior informed of the rights and obligations connected with visa liberalisation) during which it warned primarily against abuse of this measure for work purposes. Also, the State Security Council was warned of the potential impacts of introduction of visa-free relations with Ukraine. The possible impacts of the introduction of visa-free relations on the security situation in the CZ were discussed in the public space (media).

Q1.6. Do you have any other remarks relevant to this section that were not covered above? If yes, please highlight them below.

-

SECTION 1.2: STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Please provide, to the extent possible, the following statistics (with their source) along with, if necessary, an explanatory note to interpret them in particular when the statistics provided are partial, had to be estimated (e.g. on the basis of available statistics that differs from the below, or of first-hand research) or when they reflect any particular trends (e.g. a change in policy). If statistics are not available, please try to indicate an order of magnitude and why they are not available. When available, statistics from Eurostat should be used and presented annually covering the period between 2008 and 2017 inclusive. For year 2007, national data should be provided, if available.

At a minimum please provide data two years before and after the waiver agreement date for each third country (as highlighted in green in each table). Ideally, the study aims to present data for the whole period if available (e.g. from Eurostat).

When filling in the tables please do not leave blank cells and follow these conventions:

N/A – not applicable, in cases where the question is not applicable to your (Member) State please insert N/A in relevant cells.

NI – no information, in cases where there is no data available please insert NI in relevant cells.

0 – insert 0 whenever you have collected data and the result was 0.

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 1.2.1: Total number of external border-crossings (persons) by nationals of visa-free countries⁴⁶

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
	<i>(insert all available data or <u>at least</u> 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of external border-crossings (persons) by nationals of visa-free countries	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	1,294	1,619	2,198	5,102	4,589	
Montenegro	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	316	1,351	1,887	1,926	1,869	
Serbia	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	2,946	13,179	15,773	14,975	16,008	
Albania	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	556	1,054	1,872	2,348	2,642	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	956	1,433	1,824	1,550	1,868	
Moldova	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	1,721	3,086	4,858	4,581	5,831	
Georgia	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	10,236	7,100	13,521	7,912	11,052	
Ukraine	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	110,405	94,287	142,850	109,926	144,955	
Total	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	128,430	123,109	184,783	148,320	188,814	
Total number of external border crossings (persons)⁴⁷	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	4,905,103	5,395,227	6,085,330	6,042,744	7,171,508	

⁴⁶ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities. The indicator refers to border-crossings at the external borders of the EU plus NO.

⁴⁷ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of border crossings (persons)

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

*Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

Note:

The Foreign Police Service Directorate only has data as of 2013 available to it (since the introduction of a new border control system, KODOX). The parameters of the statistics do not distinguish between visa types, type of stay etc. They are merely numbers of persons (those who enter the territory and those who leave the territory of the CZ).

Addendum: external Schengen border of the Czech Republic = only the air border

Source: Foreign Police Service Directorate

NUMBERS OF PERSONS CROSSING THE EXTERNAL SCHENGEN BORDER DURING THE PERIOD 2013-2017 (Table 1.2.1)

Data concerning persons who crossed the (air) border of the CZ according to nationality have been available since 2013 (since the introduction of a new border control system). In general terms it may be declared that the numbers of nationals of the **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina** since 2014 have grown considerably. It is evident that the number of citizens of **Moldova** (visa liberalisation in 2014) crossing the CZ's Schengen border is growing. The number of nationals of **Ukraine and Georgia** fell in 2014, while rising in 2015, falling again in 2016, and in 2017 the numbers of Ukrainians crossing the border reached the highest values for the 5 years monitored and the numbers of Georgians reached the second highest values since 2013. Even so, it should be added that the total number of third-country nationals crossing the external border of the CZ have grown since 2013 (with the exception of 2016) and in 2017 totalled more than 7,000,000 third country nationals who crossed the air border. The increase in number therefore also involved persons who do not hail from the countries where visa liberalisation has been introduced.

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 1.2.2: Total number of detections of irregular border-crossings from nationals of visa-free countries⁴⁸

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) (insert all available data or <u>at least</u> 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
Total number of detections of irregular border-crossings from nationals of visa-free countries												
FYROM	N/A	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Montenegro	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	
Serbia	N/A	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	3	0	
Albania	N/A	4	2	0	4	10	22	3	21	14	42	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	
Moldova	N/A	30	5	2	1	1	4	3	0	4	6	
Georgia	N/A	3	3	7	1	2	0	0	0	1	12	
Ukraine	N/A	10	20	18	6	6	13	15	32	15	17	
Total	N/A	47	31	28	13	19	39	21	57	39	78	
Total number of detections of irregular border-crossings⁴⁹	N/A	168	190	140	80	119	179	181	240	222	250	

*Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).

⁴⁸ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities. Also see Frontex: Number of detections of illegal border-crossings by sea and land; Available at: <http://frontex.europa.eu/trends-and-routes/migratory-routes-map/>

⁴⁹ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of irregular border crossings.

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

Note:

The data only concerns numbers of persons (those who enter the territory and those who leave the territory of the CZ). The external Schengen border of the Czech Republic is only an air border; therefore this concerns crossing airport border crossing points.

Data are completed as of 2008; the Czech Republic entered Schengen in December 2007, therefore the data for 2007 is incomparable with subsequent years, otherwise development would be misleading.

Source: Foreign Police Service Directorate

NUMBERS OF PERSONS DETECTED DURING IRREGULAR CROSSING OF THE EXTERNAL BORDER FOR THE PERIOD 2008-2017 (Table 1.2.2)

As for the **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**, during the period of interest, just one person was detected attempting to cross the external Schengen border in 2009, while in the other years not one person was apprehended.

As for **Montenegro**, only two persons were apprehended in 2016 and one person in 2017.

As for **Serbian nationals** for the entire period in the year 2016 this concerned at most 3 persons. In 2010-2011 just one person was detected each year, between 2012 and 2014 not one, and in 2015 two persons.

As for nationals of **Albania** the number of persons detected while attempting to cross the external Schengen border (i.e. the air border) increased irregularly after visa liberalisation. While in 2014 not one person was detected, in 2015 4 persons were detected. The following year the number continued to rise (with the exception of 2014) and in 2017 it reached 42 persons detected while attempting to cross the external Schengen border irregularly.

In 2015 two citizens of **Bosnia and Herzegovina** were detected while attempting to cross the air border (i.e. the air border) irregularly, in the other years not one person was detected.

As for citizens of **Moldova** a rise in detected persons did not occur immediately after visa liberalisation, in fact it fell from 3 persons to zero. Subsequently in 2016, 4 persons were detected and, in 2017, 6 persons. Although in comparison with 2014 this change meant a 100 % rise, the absolute number of persons was in single figures.

As for **Georgia**, in 2017, the year in which visa liberalisation occurred, the highest number of persons of the entire period of interest were detected while attempting to cross the external Schengen border irregularly: 12 persons. In comparison with preceding years this number was significantly below average.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

17 persons from **Ukraine** were detected in the CZ while attempting to cross the external Schengen border (i.e. the air border) irregularly in 2017; in comparison with the preceding ten year period, this was an average number, while most Ukrainians, 32 persons, were detected in 2015.

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 1.2.3: Total number of short-stay visa applications by third country⁵⁰

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of short-stay visa applications by third country	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	0	1,236	2,603	920	640	627	910	1,075	726	699	1,078	
Montenegro	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	No visa section
Serbia	37,633	29,737	25,239	244	280	413	398	419	402	459	659	
Albania	1,438	1,500	948	633	6	5	5	4	2	14	13	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	4,505	5,462	5,092	4,339	160	21	30	93	32	46	96	
Moldova	2,955	4,031	4,594	3,593	4,675	4,387	4,522	1,105	201	348	816	
Georgia	5,083	7,671	6,237	5,243	7,556	5,310	8,577	7,826	6,700	7,281	1,511	
Ukraine	111,021	103,151	91,507	113,789	104,759	74,597	79,306	59,529	65,745	88,741	73,981	
Total												

⁵⁰ See DG HOME Schengen Visa statistics, Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/visa-policy_en#stats. For MS that still apply visa requirements, please remove the N/A and complete the table in full.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Total number of short-stay visa applications – all third countries⁵¹	625,686	567,545	457,001	533,404	570,325	593,391	639,320	519,530	421,227	489,812	623,515	Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs as at 19 September 2018
--	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	---

*Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Note:

The data concerns applications filed at embassies of the Czech Republic in individual states. Information on the number of applications is sourced from the Visa Archiving System and does not differentiate between applications filed by citizens of different countries.

Applications for a short-term visas may be made at international airports, although the number of thus issued visas are not included in Table 1.2.3, but appear below. Statistics for applications for short-term visa C at international airports have been recorded since 2013 and are not categorised according to nationality and therefore such data cannot be added to the table above.

Addendum to Table 1.2.3.

Statistics of the Foreign Police Inspectorate at international airports

year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Applications for visa C	48	109	54	26	19

Source: Foreign Police Service Directorate, item monitored since 2013

Data is not categorised according to nationality

⁵¹ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of short-stay visa applications.

Note Moldova:

In 2014 (when visa liberalisation became effective) a total of 1,105 visas were issued, with 858 visas issued until April, and then 247 after visa liberalisation.

NUMBERS OF APPLICATIONS FOR SHORT-TERM VISAS BY NATIONALS EXEMPTED FROM VISA OBLIGATIONS (Table 1.2.3)

In all countries where visa liberalisation was introduced (i.e. FYROM, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Moldova) and where data is available at least for the year following the abolishment of visa obligations, it is evident that after the introduction of the visa-free regime the number of applications for short-term visas fell rapidly. If we focus on the total number of applications filed for short-term visas by all third-country nationals, in the last year monitored (2017) an increase of applications is evident (623 515).

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 1.2.4: Total number of short-stay visa application refusals by third country⁵²

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) <i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>	
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017		
Total number of short-stay visa application refusals by third country													
FYROM	Visas not processed-	63	383	168	160	145	126	367	161	182	232		
Montenegro	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	No visa section	
Serbia	308	555	220	5	6	2	8	3	2	0	5		
Albania	231	286	111	34	1	0	0	0	0	4	4		
Bosnia and Herzegovina	49	112	142	52	7	0	1	1	0	4	0		
Moldova	322	584	1,022	697	336	233	168	19	0	0	6		
Georgia	256	1,118	1,034	918	1,414	603	841	1,116	1,180	1,091	434		
Ukraine	6,277	3,835	3,865	3,484	2,138	1,117	1,143	1,062	2,877	5,769	2,946		
Total													

⁵² See DG HOME Schengen Visa statistics, Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/visa-policy_en#stats. For MS that still apply visa requirements, please remove the N/A and complete the table in full.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Total number of short-stay visa application refusals – all third countries⁵³	16,927	16,963	16,618	15,669	12,406	9,804	9,717	10,959	13,048	19,092	27,951	Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the CZ as at 19 September 2018
--	---------------	---------------	---------------	---------------	---------------	--------------	--------------	---------------	---------------	---------------	---------------	---

*Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Note:

The data concerns applications filed at embassies of the Czech Republic in individual states. Information on the number of applications is sourced from the Visa Archiving System and does not differentiate between applications filed by citizens of different countries.

Applications for a short-term visas may be made at international airports. From 2013 to 2017, all applications for visa C to foreign police inspectorates were accepted and visas were issued. Therefore they do not need to be added to Table 1.2.4. due to the zero number and moreover refused applications are not categorised according to the nationality of such foreign nationals.

NUMBERS OF REFUSED APPLICATIONS FOR SHORT-TERM VISAS TO NATIONALS EXEMPTED FROM VISA OBLIGATIONS (Table 1.2.4)

In all countries where visa liberalisation has taken place and where data are available at least from the year following abolition of visa obligations (i.e. FYROM, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Moldova), also evident alongside a significant fall in applications for short-term visas is a rapid fall in refused applications for such a visa. Conversely, the number of refused applications for short-term visas for all third-country nationals rose significantly (to 27,951) during the last year 2017.

⁵³ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of short-stay visa application refusals.

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 1.2.5: Total number of asylum applications received from visa-free countries⁵⁴

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) (insert all available data or <u>at least</u> 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)											Data extracted on 11/05/2018
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
Total number of asylum applications received from visa-free countries												
FYROM	11	5	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	
Montenegro	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Serbia	49	20	5	5	0	5	10	15	5	0	0	
Albania	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	0	0	5	0	5	0	5	0	0	0	
Moldova	31	15	20	15	10	10	10	10	20	10	15	
Georgia	45	40	35	10	15	10	15	20	20	50	130	
Ukraine	293	320	200	115	150	175	145	515	695	505	435	
Total	430	400	260	150	175	205	180	570	740	565	580	
Total number of asylum applications – all third countries⁵⁵	1,878	1,645	1,235	775	750	740	695	1,145	1,515	1,475	1,445	

*Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

⁵⁴ See Eurostat: Asylum and first time asylum applicants by citizenship, age and sex Annual aggregated data (rounded) [migr_asyappctza]. For Georgia and Ukraine, monthly date may be considered.

⁵⁵ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of asylum applications.

Source:

Data from 2007 was provided by the Ministry of the Interior of the CZ. The source of data for the period 2008-2017 is Eurostat.

NUMBERS OF APPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION (Table 1.2.5)

As far as **Montenegro**, no change in trend occurred after liberalisation of the visa regime in 2009 because the CZ did not register any application for international protection from this country either before or after visa liberalisation.

Nor was the number of applications for international protection high from other countries. In 2007, 11 applications and in 2008 only 5 applications were registered from the **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**. From 2009, when visa liberalisation took place, until 2013, no applications were registered. In 2014 only 5 applications were submitted. Between 2015 and 2017 no national of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia applied. Simply said, almost no applications were filed from nationals of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

As for **Serbia**, a fall in the number of persons is evident after liberalisation of the visa regime in 2009 - almost of 90 % in comparison with 2007 and of 75 % in comparison with 2008. In absolute figures, however, the change was not so dramatic (a fall of 44 and 15 applications respectively) and since liberalisation of the visa regime, the numbers of applications remain low (a maximum of 5 to 15 applications per year).

As for **Albania**, no changes occurred in the number of applications for international protection in consequence of visa liberalisation. The same applies to **Bosnia and Herzegovina**.

In general it can be stated that **the process of liberalisation of the visa regime did not have a great influence on the number of applications from Western Balkan countries.**

The number of applications from **Moldova** remains stable.

The number of applications for international protection from citizens of Ukraine is more or less stable and liberalisation of the visa regime did not produce higher numbers than usual.

A different trend has been noted in the case of **Georgia**. Before visa liberalisation in 2017, the number of applications for international protection was no higher than 50 applications per year. In 2017, 130 applications for international protection were registered. **Georgia is the only country about**

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

which it may be claimed that a rise occurred in the number of applications for international protection after visa liberalisation. But it should also be pointed out in the case of Georgia that visa liberalisation came into effect only very recently (2017). In addition to this, the total number of applicants for international protection also include Dublin cases, in other words persons who were issued a visa by a Czech embassy for entry to our territory and who, shortly afterwards, left the CZ for Germany and when they were apprehended in Germany, they applied for international protection in that neighbouring country. Subsequently these persons were returned to the CZ and are now listed as applicants for international protection (i.e. they have nothing to do with visa liberalisation).

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 1.2.6: Total number of positive decisions on asylum applicants from visa-free countries⁵⁶

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) <i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											Data extracted on 11/05/2018
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
Total number of positive decisions on asylum applicants from visa-free countries												
FYROM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Montenegro	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Serbia	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Albania	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Moldova	2	5	0	5	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	
Georgia	9	0	0	5	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	
Ukraine	21	25	15	15	15	10	10	150	170	50	35	
Total	33	30	15	25	15	10	20	150	175	50	35	

*Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

Source:

⁵⁶ See Eurostat: First instance decisions on applications by citizenship, age and sex Annual aggregated data (rounded) [migr_asycdfsta]; Total positive decisions, including only refugee status and subsidiary protection, rounded up to the unit of 5.

Data from 2007 was provided by the Ministry of the Interior of the CZ. The source of data for the period 2008-2017 is Eurostat.

NUMBERS OF POSITIVE DECISIONS ON ISSUANCE OF INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION (Table 1.2.6)

No influence of visa liberalisation has been noted on the number of positive decisions on international protection issued. As for Western Balkan countries, no positive decision has been issued since 2008.

As for **Moldova**, international protection has been granted only the years 2007 (2), 2008 (5), 2010 (5) and 2015 (5). The numbers are low and it may be said that no link exists between liberalisation of the visa regime and the amount of positive decisions.

Citizens of **Georgia** have received no positive decisions in the last four years. It may be deduced from this fact that no link exists between the visa liberalisation process and the number of positive decisions.

As for **Ukraine** the number of positive decisions between the years 2007 and 2013 fluctuated between 10 and 25 decisions. As of 2014, the number of positive decisions began to rise (150 in 2014 and 170 in 2015), which was three years before starting of the visa-free regime and from 2016 the number fell again.

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 1.2.7: Total number of negative decisions on asylum applicants from visa-free countries⁵⁷

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) <i>(insert all available data or <u>at least</u> 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											Data extracted on 11/05/2018
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
Total number of <u>negative</u> decisions on asylum applicants from visa-free countries												
FYROM	9	5	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	
Montenegro	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Serbia	46	25	5	0	0	5	10	15	5	0	0	
Albania	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	
Moldova	23	10	10	5	10	5	10	10	15	10	10	
Georgia	47	25	15	10	10	10	10	20	15	40	60	
Ukraine	293	165	70	60	125	185	150	220	445	465	435	
Total	421	230	100	75	145	205	185	270	480	515	505	

*Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

⁵⁷ See Eurostat: First instance decisions on applications by citizenship, age and sex, Annual aggregated data (rounded) [migr_asydcfsta]

Source:

Data from 2007 was provided by the Ministry of the Interior of the CZ. The source of data for the period 2008-2017 is Eurostat.

NUMBERS OF NEGATIVE DECISIONS ON ISSUANCE OF INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION (Table 1.2.7)

As for Western Balkan countries, no trends in the correlation between liberalisation of the visa regime and the number of negative decisions were recorded.

The numbers of negative decisions on international protection for citizens of **Moldova** are also stable (with a slight rise only in 2015).

As for **Ukraine**, the number of negative decisions between 2008 and 2014 ranged from 60 to 220 negative decisions. In 2015, numbers rose to over 400 and have been stable for the last three years (435-465 per year).

A slight rise in the number of negative decisions can be seen from 2016 in the case of **Georgia** in comparison with preceding years (numbers of negative decisions range from 10 to 25 per year between 2009 and 2015). In 2016, 40 negative decisions were issued (+167 % in comparison with 2015) and in 2017, 60 negative decisions were issued (+50 % in comparison with 2016).

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 1.2.8: Total number of positive and negative decisions on asylum applicants (top five nationalities, not limited to visa-free countries)⁵⁸

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) <i>(insert all available data)</i>											Data extracted on 11/05/2018 Ordered by the "total"
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
Total number of <u>positive</u> decisions on asylum applicants (top five nationalities, not limited to visa-free countries)												
Ukraine	N/I	25	15	15	15	10	10	150	170	50	35	The TOP 5 according to the total number of positive decisions for the entire period 2008-2017. In individual years, these nationals did not necessarily rank among the 5 most frequent nationalities issued with positive decisions.
Syria	N/I	5	0	5	0	10	105	75	130	95	35	
Iraq	N/I	30	5	15	5	5	15	10	15	150	15	
Belarus	N/I	40	0	5	30	30	65	25	15	5	5	
Cuba	N/I	5	5	15	10	15	30	30	55	45	5	
Total	N/I	105	25	55	60	70	225	290	385	345	95	

⁵⁸ This is to provide a broader context; any nationality may be included in the top five. See Eurostat: First instance decisions on applications by citizenship, age and sex Annual aggregated data (rounded) [migr_asydcfsta]; Total positive decisions, including only refugee status and subsidiary protection, rounded up to the unit of 5.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Total number of <u>negative</u> decisions on asylum applicants (top five nationalities, not limited to visa-free countries)	N/I	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
Ukraine	N/I	165	70	60	125	185	150	220	445	465	435	The TOP 5 according to the total number of positive decisions for the entire period 2008-2017. In individual years, these nationals did not necessarily rank among the 5 most frequent nationalities issued with positive decisions.
Vietnam	N/I	60	20	20	35	50	55	40	70	70	60	
Turkey	N/I	280	10	10	35	10	15	20	10	10	25	
Mongolia	N/I	120	95	45	20	25	15	20	15	5	10	
Russia	N/I	55	15	15	15	40	55	30	35	40	60	
Total	N/I	680	210	150	230	310	290	330	575	590	590	

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

Source: Eurostat

Note: Comments on the table appear in question Q1.1.

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 1.2.9: Total number of residence permits applications (all residence permits) by visa-free country⁵⁹

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) <i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											Data extracted on 11/05/2018
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
Total number of residence permits applications (all residence permits) by visa-free country												
FYROM	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	518	574	672	Applications for long-term visas, long-term residence permits made in the territory, long-term residence permits made at embassies, temporary residence of a family member – EU citizen, extension of long-term residence, extension of temporary residence of a family member – EU citizen, change of purpose, permanent residence
Montenegro	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	59	62	58	
Serbia	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	885	899	1 288	
Albania	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	141	159	214	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	562	476	797	
Moldova	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	1,053	1,096	1,266	

⁵⁹ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities. Also see Eurostat - Number of first residence permits issued by reason, EU-28, 2008-2016 [migr_resfirst]

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Georgia	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	455	406	450	
Ukraine	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	28,837	24,236	32,461	
Total	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	32,510	27,908	37,206	
Total number of residence permits applications (all residence permits)⁶⁰	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	90,293	83,484	101,340	Only third-country nationals

*Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

Note:

Data are available for the period 2015-2017.

Source: Ministry of the Interior of the CZ

TOTAL NUMBER OF ALL APPLICATIONS FOR RESIDENCE PERMITS FILED BY CITIZENS OF COUNTRIES EXEMPTED FROM VISA OBLIGATIONS

From available data it is not possible to deduce much. It is evident that for the last year the number of all applications filed by nationals of countries exempted from visa obligations has risen, while at the same time the total number of applications from all third countries has also risen. This increased number may also be due to migration projects which are effective tool for supporting the migration of selected target groups of nationals of third countries whom the Czech state is keenly interested in encouraging to enter and stay in the CZ. The aim of migration projects is to streamline migration procedures by making the procedure for filing and processing applications for stay or work permits simpler. In 2017, implementation of all projects launched in previous years continued and also new projects were created.

⁶⁰ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of residence permit applications.

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 1.2.10: Total number of identity document fraud instances by visa-free country⁶¹

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) (insert all available data or <u>at least</u> 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Montenegro	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Serbia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Albania	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Moldova	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Georgia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Ukraine	2	4	4	1	13	12	3	9	9	7	5	
Total	4	5	4	1	14	12	3	9	9	7	5	
Total number of identity document fraud instances⁶²	547	239	482	371	446	390	266	358	495	829	1,032	

*Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

⁶¹ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities.

⁶² All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of identity document fraud instances.

Source: Foreign Police Service Directorate, National Centre for Document Verification

TOTAL NUMBER OF DETECTED PRESENTED FRAUDULENT DOCUMENTS ISSUED BY STATES EXEMPTED FROM VISA OBLIGATIONS (Table 1.2.10)

After the introduction of visa liberalisation, an increase in presented fraudulent documents issued by any of these eight countries did not arise. However, it should be added that these numbers do not specify the nationality of the persons who presented the document (these statistics are in table below).

TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS FROM VISA-FREE COUNTRIES WHO PROVED THEIR IDENTITY THROUGH FRAUDULENT TRAVEL DOCUMENTS AT THE AIRPORTS OR INLAND (Table 1.2.10b.)

Table 1.2.10b.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
FYROM	0	0	0	2	3	2	1	1	8	1	1
Montenegro	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Serbia	1	0	4	1	2	1	1	2	5	0	0
Albania	2	4	2	2	7	6	19	1	16	9	14
Bosnia and Hercegovina	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	3	1
Moldova	72	50	17	30	22	35	14	8	13	106	147

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Georgia	3	4	9	9	8	5	8	3	2	4	7
Ukraine	181	46	54	64	114	88	76	90	151	410	494
Total	261	106	86	108	156	137	120	105	196	533	664

Source: Foreign Police Service Directorate, National Centre for Document Verification

It is apparent from the table above, that in the last two years there was a significant rise in number of persons from Ukraine and Moldavia, who proved their identity via irregular travel documents at the airports or inland.

Furthermore, according to the Ministry of the Interior's Report on the Situation of Foreigners, Migration and Integration in the Czech Republic 2017, using the fraudulent document during the border or residence control was one of the reasons for issuing a decision on administrative expulsion in 2017 (393 reasons, i.e. 6.5% of all reasons), an increase was registered year-on-year (+121 reasons, ie. +44.5 %). This was mainly due to the citizens of Ukraine (288 reasons) and Moldova (54 reasons), with a year-on-year increase especially for citizens of Ukraine (+103 reasons, i.e. +55.7%).

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination**Section 2: Positive impact of visa liberalisation on (Member) States****National Contribution (max. 6 pages, excluding statistics)**

The aim of this Section is to analyse the positive impact of short-term visa liberalisation on countries of destination (i.e. Member States) and third-country nationals as evidenced by quantitative and qualitative information.

The synthesis report will aim to include infographics and visuals, therefore please take that into account when answering the questions / filling the tables by adding any innovative or visual presentations in your national reports that can carry through into the synthesis report. We also welcome any photos/images which are captioned, relevant and (data) protected with your national contribution.

When answering the questions in this section please consider the statistical data as presented in the tables listed below and detailed in Section 2.2:

Table 2.2.1: Total number of visitors staying in hotels and other accommodation establishments from the visa-free countries;

Table 2.2.2: Total number of first-time residence permit applications received from visa-free country nationals;

Table 2.2.3: Total number of first residence permits issued for remunerated activities reasons to visa-free country nationals;

Table 2.2.4: Total number of first residence permits issued for education reasons to visa-free country nationals;

Table 2.2.5: Total number of first residence permits issued to entrepreneurs (including self-employed persons) from visa-free countries.

If you do not have data as requested in the above tables, please explain why this is the case after each table in the relevant box.

Please do not leave any answer box or table cell blank or empty and insert N/A, NI or 0 as applicable.

SECTION 2.1: DESCRIPTION OF NATIONAL SITUATION

Q2.1. What impact did the visa liberalisation have on your (Member) State? Please provide a short description of your national situation.

Not much can be deduced from available data concerning applications by citizens of such states on first-time resident permits or any other authorisation of stay after the introduction of visa liberalisation (data are available for the period 2015-2017). It is evident that during the last year the number of applications submitted by nationals of countries exempted from visa obligations rose and in the same way total number of applications by third-country nationals has also risen (table 1.2.9). The increased number may also have been due to migration projects which are effective tool for supporting the migration of selected target groups of nationals of third countries whom the Czech state is keenly interested in encouraging to enter and stay in the CZ. The aim of migration projects is to streamline migration procedures by making the procedure for filing and processing applications for stay or work permits simpler. In 2017, implementation of all projects launched in previous years continued and also new projects were created. Further according to available statistics (table 2.2.2) is evident that during the last year the number of applications submitted by nationals of countries exempted from visa obligations rose, and in the same way total number of applications by all third-country nationals has also rise. The increased number may also have been due to migration projects.

The positive impact of visa liberalisation may be seen in that it has made it easier for those interested to acquaint themselves with a potential employer in the course of their visa-free stay, organise necessary formalities and subsequent filing of application at the consulate after their return to their home country.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Q2.1.1 If applicable, please categorise your answer to **Q2.1** by third country:

Western Balkans - FYROM, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina:

-

Eastern Partnership - Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine:

Ukraine

With regard to Ukraine, visa liberalisation was implemented at a time of increased interest among Czech companies in employing Ukrainian workers. In this respect, visa liberalisation in the area of short-term visas was perceived as a step supporting this tendency.

Despite the fact that after visa liberalisation an approximately 60 % decrease in intake of applications for Schengen visas occurred at the Embassy in Kiev, it should be emphasised that after visa liberalisation the proportion of applications for employment purposes filed at the Embassy in Kiev underwent a fundamental change. While such applications still accounted for just 5 % of all applications submitted in the 1st quarter of 2017, by the period August-December 2017 the proportion was 64 % and in the period January-May 2018 applications for work visas accounted for around 90 % of applications filed. In view of the fact that the demand for employees from Ukraine persists and in Ukraine no improvement of the economic situation can be anticipated which might slow work migration from Ukraine, there is reason to expect a further rise in intake of applications for visas for the purpose of remunerated activities also in 2018.

The opportunity for foreign nationals of making their first journey to the CZ visa-free, acquainting themselves with an employer, obtaining the required documentation and then returning home to file an application for a work visa at the consulate encourages increased interest in short-term work permits. Visa liberalisation has therefore simplified administrative complications involved with obtaining documents and finding a potential employer. Therefore in this area, visa liberalisation has certainly had a positive effect.

Q2.2. Did your (Member) State assess the impact of visa liberalisation as positive? If yes, please explain the reasons for your positive assessment and how this was reached (i.e. who was involved in the assessment and how they reached this conclusion). If no, explain why this is the case.

Impossible to assess on the basis of statistics.

According to the Ministry of Regional Development of the CZ, since 2012 a rise in the numbers of tourists arriving in most European countries has been noted. Unfortunately it cannot be said how much of this rise is due to visa liberalisation with the countries in question and how much is due to other factors. The change in trend is not significant with any country. In addition, the positive benefits are very hard to measure, could be materialise in the area of tourism, although according to information from the Ministry of Regional Development, this authority has not conducted any study of the impacts on tourism of visa liberalisation with the countries in question (nor has the Ministry of Industry and Trade performed any assessment of the impact of visa liberalisation).

However, the benefit is certainly understood from a foreign policy point of view and economic point of view (see information from Embassies below).

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

In the short term, at some embassies the reduced burden of migration capacities was monitored.

EXPERIENCES OF EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC:**Montenegro**

From the point of view of Montenegro the benefit of visa liberalisation is indisputable, mainly for political and economic reasons, whereby due to the current visa-free regime the country is not isolated from other states in the region.

Georgia

Visa liberalisation with Georgia is understood to be positive primarily from a foreign policy point of view, which was the main reason for its introduction. At the same time, it is too early to make a more detailed and more in-depth evaluation of all political and/or social aspects.

Moldova

For Moldovan citizens travelling on short-term basis for the purposes of tourism or trade/training etc., relaxation of the visa regime was certainly a benefit.

However, in addition to visa liberalisation, the problem of the use of two passports should have been addressed. Moldovan legislation allows its citizens to own two biometric passports at the same time; many Moldovans have also gained double citizenship (in relation to the EU this concerns mainly Moldovan/Romanian – this applies to as many as 400,000 dual-citizens of Moldova). Two biometric passports allow Moldovan citizens to travel visa-free and to work illegally, e.g. in the interim to obtain a short-term visa in their second passport and to travel repeatedly. The situation is not helped by imperfect control systems on the borders which are not capable of detecting the same person with a different biometric passport travelling within the 180-day limit. This results in breach of the principles of visa liberalisation, facilitating overstaying, breach of the residence rules etc.

Visa liberalisation leads to mass workforce migration abroad (about 60 % of working migrants travel to the EU, with the remaining 40 % travelling to Russia, Belarus and Ukraine).

Serbia

Yes, the security and migration risks are minimal from our point of view, reducing the workload for the consular section of the Embassy.

Ukraine

Although visa liberalisation has undoubtedly simplified movement of Ukrainian citizens to the CZ, and so into Schengen (making trade contacts, short-term study stays, learning European values, etc.) and so it may be said that its objectives have been achieved, the General Consulate in Lvov and the Embassy in Kiev consider it to be a problem that, according to their findings and those of immigration police officers of the Ministry of the Interior working intermittently at the Embassy, Ukrainian citizens abuse the visa-free regime for remunerated activities. Quite often they do this by combining 90 days of work on a visa in an old type travel document with a further 90 days visa-free on a biometric

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

passport, therefore illegally. Many of them come to the CZ to firms established by Ukrainians, which deal quite often with illegal intermediary activities and who fail to pay compulsory deductions on behalf of their employees.

Q2.2.1. Did your collaboration with relevant third countries improve within the field of migration since the introduction of visa liberalisation?⁶³ If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples.

As part of partnership for mobility, the Czech Republic participated in the multi-lateral project Support for the Moldovan Republic for Implementation of the EU-Moldova Visa Liberalisation Action Plan established in June 2015 for supporting the implementation of the EU-Moldova Visa Liberalisation Action Plan.

According to the Foreign Police Service Directorate it may be said that collaboration with the Embassies of the countries in question is excellent, especially with respect to the issuance of replacement travel documents.

Q2.2.2. Did your (Member) State identify specific economic benefits?⁶⁴ If yes, please list them and provide a short description for each.

According to the Ministry of Regional Development of the CZ, since 2012 a rise in the numbers of tourists arriving in most European countries has been noted. Unfortunately it cannot be said how much of this rise is due to visa liberalisation with the countries in question and how much is due to other factors. Also in this area we come up against a lack of relevant data due to the low number of tourists coming from the countries in question.

According to the Ministry of Industry and Trade, no special economic benefits have been identified as a result of liberalisation of the visa regime in the area of short-term visas in relation to the affected third countries with the exception of simplifying entry of tourists from these countries to the CZ.

Q2.2.3. Did your (Member) State experience a growth in tourism⁶⁵ from third-country nationals under the visa liberalisation regime? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples.

Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Table 2.2.1.

Due to the problem with data inputs, the Ministry of Regional Development of the CZ cannot provide information on this matter (as has been stated under Q2.2.2).

According to information from embassies in the separate states, these authorities also do not have the necessary data available to them, although it may be said in general that no significant growth in tourism from most of these countries has occurred.

⁶³ For example: in cases of return and readmission.

⁶⁴ For example: an increase in direct investments from the respective third countries to your (Member) State.

⁶⁵ For example: third-country national visitors staying in hotels and other accommodation establishments increased.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

As for the Ukraine, their citizens are traditionally the most frequent nationality staying in the Czech Republic on long-term basis (as at 31.12.2017, 117,480 Ukrainians were resident in our territory with authorisation of stay for over 90 days); embassies do not have data on the influence of the visa-free regime on the influx of tourists to the CZ. The number of visas for purposes of tourism among the total number of applications is negligible. In the opinion of the Embassy and consulate, the CZ is not a popular destination for Ukrainian tourists. Also, before the introduction of visa liberalisation, applications for tourist visas were often a screen for hiding other reasons, which was often revealed during interviews conducted with applicants. The tourist destination was often a different country than the CZ (most often Croatia). Hundreds of cases of falsified or invalid accommodation booking confirmations, air ticket bookings and bank statements were found. The applicants were aware of the false nature of these documents and claimed at interviews that they had obtained them from third parties for a fee.

Q2.2.4. Did your (Member) State experience an impact on its labour market since the introduction of visa liberalisation? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples, including background information on the link between visa free travel and access to the labour market in the national context.

Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Table 2.2.3.

A foreign national may not work in the territory of the CZ without a visa – this would constitute illegal work.

No information is available on whether visa liberalisation has positively impacted the labour market of the CZ.

The positive impact of visa liberalisation can be seen in the the opportunity for foreign nationals of making their first journey to the CZ visa-free, acquainting themselves with an employer, obtaining the required documentation and then returning home to file an application for a work visa at the consulate encourages increased interest in short-term work permits.

Q2.2.5. Did your (Member) State experience a growth in the number of students arriving from third countries since the introduction of visa liberalisation? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples.

Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Table 2.2.4.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport monitors numbers of students according to nationality. The following data related to students of the relevant nationalities in all forms of study. The statistics do not include students on short-term study stays, i.e. those studying for periods not exceeding 3 months. It is therefore possible only to describe the indirect impact – this mostly concerns a rise in long-term visas or long-term residence permits.

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination***Numbers of students at Czech universities according to nationality
(students with long-term authorisation of stay)**

Year	FYROM	Monte-negro	Serbia	Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Moldova	Georgia	Ukraine
2005	71	1	37	40	43	50	31	623
2006	62	3	100	47	53	60	40	700
2007	64	4	126	48	65	76	54	819
2008	63	7	130	52	93	95	76	1,018
2009	67	13	119	59	113	135	99	1,364
2010	67	12	138	57	108	158	116	1,460
2011	66	13	150	58	109	170	107	1,615
2012	62	14	157	53	110	160	114	1,736
2013	53	14	145	42	111	154	118	1,963
2014	51	13	162	45	99	149	130	2,202
2015	50	16	169	53	95	143	135	2,536
2016	56	16	172	55	91	134	136	2,878
2017	61	21	183	58	91	131	156	3,082

Note: Green boxes indicate year of introduction of visa liberalisation

Source: Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport

Numbers of students who are nationals of **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** with long-term authorisation of stay studying in the CZ have fallen slightly since visa liberalisation in 2009.

As for **Montenegro**, a rise is evident in the numbers of students after visa liberalisation, because the number of students almost doubled in and continued to rise gently (while in absolute numbers this was a rise of just 6 persons).

No change in the situation is evident for **Serbia** after 2009, because the numbers of students had risen significantly three years previously, however the numbers continue to rise continually which may have been encouraged by visa liberalisation.

The number of students from **Albania** did not change significantly after visa liberalisation.

As for **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, the number of students rose before visa liberalisation and for several years a fall in numbers of students followed.

The number of students from **Moldova** dropped slightly after visa liberalisation.

A fairly significant rise in student numbers occurred in **Georgia** in 2017, but a growing trend had been evident for several years previously and therefore it is hard to decide how much was due to visa liberalisation which occurred in the same year.

As for **Ukraine** the number of students had risen already before visa liberalisation.

Q2.2.6. Did your (Member) State experience a growth of entrepreneurship, including of self-employed persons from third countries since the introduction of visa liberalisation? If yes,

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

please provide a short description and specific examples, including background information on the access to self-employment from visa free regimes in the national context.

Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Table 2.2.5.

It should be added that under the visa-free regime foreign nationals may not conduct entrepreneurial activities or work without a visa or long-term residence permit issued for remunerated activities, because this would constitute illegal work.

The Ministry of Industry and Trade did not record any increased interest in conducting entrepreneurial activities in the CZ from the relevant countries due to visa liberalisation. Third-country nationals may, however, come to the CZ without a visa, get their bearings in this country, obtain the necessary documents and subsequently apply for a D visa/residence permit. By choosing this option they then have generally more expedient conditions for commencing entrepreneurial activities in the CZ.

Q2.2.7. Did your (Member) State experience a growth in trade with third countries since the introduction of visa liberalisation? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples (i.e. in which sectors / what type of goods or services).

According to the Ministry of Industry and Trade, growth in reciprocal trade occurred for all affected countries from the instant of introduction of visa liberalisation by the EU, with the exception of Ukraine and Georgia, where visa liberalisation was introduced in 2017 and so relevant data for comparison is lacking. For the other countries, growth in trade with the CZ is evident. This growth was probably influenced by factors other than visa liberalisation. This involved primarily the fact that liberalisation was carried out at the peak of the economic crisis or at the beginning of the upswing where subsequently reciprocal trade was understandably growing. Another factor was the signing of trade agreements with the countries in question, making trade between them and the entire EU easier.

EXPERIENCES OF EMBASSIES OF THE CZ:

Albania

The Embassy believes that it may be beneficial, but that cannot be confirmed with certainty.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Embassy cannot objectively evaluate the direct impact of visa liberalisation between both countries. Other factors must be considered such as the global economic crisis, the Double Taxation Avoidance Treaty (2010), etc. It may be stated however that in 2011 a significant increase in the balance of trade occurred, followed in 2012 by its sharp fall.

Montenegro

The balance of trade between the CZ and Montenegro for the year 2017 was EUR 39,933,000 – which corresponds with the average for the last 4 years. It is likely that visa liberalisation contributes positively to this situation.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination**Georgia**

The Embassy has not noticed any significant trend (since visa liberalisation, imports from Georgia seem to be decreasing). Short-term visas are generally not an obstacle to trade. It cannot therefore be expected that any potential growth in foreign trade has been/is caused by visa liberalisation.

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Definitely not, because growth in trade did not begin until 2015.

Moldova

The growth in reciprocal trade between the CZ and Moldova is unrelated to visa liberalisation. The stable growth is caused by economic recovery and positive developments in the Moldovan market.

Serbia

Over the past 5-6 years, the turnover of mutual trade has been rising; nevertheless this growth is put down more to growth of global and especially European economy. We believe that no direct link between the visa-free regime and the rise in trade can be found.

Ukraine

The Embassy does not have information about the influence of the visa-free regime on the growth in trade relations; in general business entities from the CZ treat Ukrainian partners with caution (unstable banking sector, customs obstacles etc.).

Q2.2.8. What other benefit (or positive impact) was identified by your (Member) State in relation to visa liberalisation that was not already captured in the previous questions, if applicable?⁶⁶

EXPERIENCES OF EMBASSIES OF THE CZ:**Ukraine**

Some restriction of the activities of third persons/entities operating in the area of provision of (usually falsified) documentation required for filing visa applications.

⁶⁶ For example: agreements with third countries for exchange of students, scholars; social benefits (social assistance, social trust and cooperation).

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination**SECTION 2.2: STATISTICAL INFORMATION**

Please provide, to the extent possible, the following statistics (with their source) along with, if necessary, an explanatory note to interpret them in particular when the statistics provided are partial, had to be estimated (e.g. on the basis of available statistics that differs from the below, or of first-hand research) or when they reflect any particular trends (e.g. a change in policy). If statistics are not available, please try to indicate an order of magnitude and why they are not available. When available, statistics from Eurostat should be used and presented annually covering the period between 2008 and 2017 inclusive. For year 2007, national data should be provided, if available.

At a minimum please provide data two years before and after the waiver agreement date for each third country (as highlighted in green in each table). Ideally, the study aims to present data for the whole period if available (e.g. from Eurostat).

When filling in the tables please do not leave blank cells and follow these conventions:

N/A – not applicable, in cases where the question is not applicable to your (Member) State please insert N/A in relevant cells.

NI – no information, in cases where there is no data available please insert NI in relevant cells.

0 – insert 0 whenever you have collected data and the result was 0.

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 2.2.1: Total number of visitors staying in hotels and other accommodation establishments from the visa-free countries⁶⁷

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
	<i>(insert all available data or <u>at least</u> 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of visitors staying in hotels and other accommodation establishments from the visa-free countries	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Montenegro	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Serbia and Montenegro⁶⁸	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	28,944	31,263	35,018	44,896	42,325	38,877	
Albania	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Moldova	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Georgia	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Ukraine	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	133,366	144,440	115,811	104,113	120,501	147,570	
Total	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	162,310	175,703	150,829	149,009	162,826	186,447	

⁶⁷ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities.⁶⁸ Arrivals from these countries are recorded collectively by the Czech Statistical Office.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Total number of visitors staying in hotels and other accommodation establishments⁶⁹	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	7,647,044	7,851,865	8,095,885	8,706,913	9,321,440	10,160,468	All non-residents, i.e. persons from all countries of the world other than the CZ.
---	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------	-------------------	--

*Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the box below:

Source: Ministry of Regional Development

TOTAL NUMBER OF VISITORS FROM VISA-FREE COUNTRIES STAYING IN HOTELS OR OTHER ACCOMMODATION FACILITIES IN THE CZ IN THE PERIOD 2012-2017 (Table 2.2.1)

Data concerning the stays of nationals of third countries exempted from visa obligations are available only as of 2012 (when the Czech Statistical Office performed a methodological change) and only citizens of **Ukraine** and also **Serbia** and **Montenegro** (arrivals from these two countries are recorded collectively by the Czech Statistical Office). The remaining five states are categorised into one group identified as "other European countries". Also available are **data on all eight visa-free countries together and data on all visitors from the entire world (other than Czech citizens) staying in the CZ in mass accommodation facilities.**

Visa liberalisation occurred in **Serbia** and **Montenegro** in 2009. Since data on accommodation facilities are only available as of 2012, it is impossible to link these to the visa liberalisation process. Since 2012, the number of visitors from these countries has risen. However, it cannot be claimed that this means a continual rise. The highest number of accommodation of nationals from these countries was in 2015 and subsequently the number fell by a couple of thousand persons.

We have data available on **Ukraine** for five years before the introduction of visa liberalisation. Between 2012 and 2016 the highest number of Ukrainian nationals accommodated in mass accommodation facilities was in 2013, totalling 144,440 persons. In 2017 there was an increase in accommodated Ukrainians - the number reached 147,570 persons.

Similarly, **the highest number of accommodated nationals from all eight visa-liberalised countries for 6 years was recorded in 2017.**

⁶⁹ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of tourism visitors staying in hotels and other accommodation establishments.

It should be mentioned that a continual rise in numbers of **all visitors from the entire world (other than Czech citizens) accommodated in the CZ** may be observed during the last six years. Between 2012 and 2017 their numbers have grown by more than 2.5 million. Therefore during the last year a significant rise occurred not only in the total number of persons from visa-free countries, but of all foreign nationals accommodated in the CZ.

More concrete conclusions cannot be made on the basis of too little available data.

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 2.2.2: Total number of first-time residence permit applications received from visa-free country nationals⁷⁰

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
	<i>(insert all available data or <u>at least</u> 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of first-time residence applications received from the respective visa-free country	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	309	387	467	Applications for long-term visas, long-term residence permits from the embassy, temporary residence of a family member, permanent residence (all filed at the embassy)
Montenegro	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	42	38	30	
Serbia	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	482	571	944	
Albania	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	89	107	139	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	381	330	581	
Moldova	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	604	802	910	
Georgia	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	200	221	262	
Ukraine	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	12,636	12,409	18,895	
Total	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	14,743	14,865	21,928	

⁷⁰ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Total number of first-time residence applications⁷¹	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	42,262	44,258	57,169	Just third-country nationals
---	------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	---------------	---------------	---------------	------------------------------

**Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).*

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

Notes:

Data are available for the period 2015-2017.

Source: Ministry of the Interior of the CZ

TOTAL NUMBER OF ALL FIRST APPLICATIONS FOR AUTHORISATION OF STAY SUBMITTED BY NATIONALS OF COUNTRIES EXEMPTED FROM VISA OBLIGATIONS AT EMBASSIES

Not much can be deduced on the basis of available data. It is evident that during the last year the number of all first-time residence permit applications submitted to Embassies by third-country nationals exempted from visa obligations rose, however the total number of first applications submitted to Embassies by all third-country nationals has also risen. However, migration projects may also have an influence on the increased numbers.

⁷¹ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of first-time temporary residence applications.

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 2.2.3: Total number of first residence permits issued for remunerated activities reasons to visa-free country nationals⁷²

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) (insert all available data or <u>at least</u> 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)											Data extracted on 11/05/2018
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
Total number of permits issued for remunerated activities reasons to visa-free country nationals												
FYROM	N/I	484	158	90	23	112	92	99	173	257	215	
Montenegro	N/I	1	4	0	0	2	6	2	6	10	6	
Serbia	N/I	124	72	48	13	138	136	118	316	485	411	
Albania	N/I	10	7	1	0	12	6	3	14	26	27	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	N/I	704	112	34	6	263	121	109	325	410	417	
Moldova	N/I	3,178	1,021	673	83	494	330	194	354	579	494	
Georgia	N/I	109	57	58	9	32	58	31	50	63	67	
Ukraine	N/I	15,605	4,069	7,057	1,657	10,914	9,324	5,029	8,051	7,607	9,768	
Total	N/I	20,215	5,500	7,961	1,791	11,967	10,073	5,585	9,289	9,437	11,405	
Total number of permits issued for remunerated activities reasons⁷³	N/I	43,282	11,312	11,606	3,315	17,888	18,263	11,083	19,931	23,097	23,426	Data for 2017 provided according to Eurostat methodology. Source: Eurostat

⁷² See Eurostat: Number of first residence permits issued by reason, EU-28, 2008-2016 [migr_resfirst]

⁷³ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of permits issued for remunerated activities reasons.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

*Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

Source: Eurostat

TOTAL NUMBER OF FIRST AUTHORISATIONS OF STAY FOR REMUNERATED ACTIVITY REASONS GRANTED TO NATIONALS OF COUNTRIES EXEMPTED FROM VISA OBLIGATIONS AT EMBASSIES

On the basis of available data, a large rise in first residence permits for remunerated activity reasons granted to persons from countries exempted from visa obligations may be seen during the last three years (2015-2017). Likewise a large rise is evident in first authorisations of stay for remunerated activity reasons granted to all nationals of third countries during the last three years as compared to the preceding period. The largest number of granted authorisations for this reason for both groups mentioned was in 2017. In 2017 visa liberalisation began to apply to **Ukraine** and **Georgia**, and it was in this year that the highest number of authorisations of stay for remunerated activity reasons was granted to nationals of both of these states. In the case of Georgia, in absolute figures this meant a rise in just units; for Ukraine the rise was more than 22 %. Especially in the case of Ukraine this growth was caused by the migration project "Ukraine Regime". It should be said, however, that approximately the same number (and higher) of authorisations was issued in the case of Ukraine before the crisis began and only in 2013 alone, numbers rose to around 5,500 issued authorisations. Moreover, as has already been pointed out, this was a growth not only in nationals of countries with visa liberalisation, but in all third-country nationals.

*Please note that Total is not extra-EU nationalities, but all nationalities including unkonw data, stateless and recognised non-citizens. Extra-EU not available on Eurostat f

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 2.2.4: Total number of first residence permits issued for education reasons to visa-free country nationals⁷⁴

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
	<i>(insert all available data or <u>at least</u> 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of permits issued for education reasons to visa-free country nationals	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	N/I	35	20	24	29	35	8	16	33	45	25	
Montenegro	N/I	3	4	8	7	12	8	8	16	26	34	
Serbia	N/I	20	26	31	71	71	76	56	113	120	65	
Albania	N/I	14	14	22	17	12	19	22	52	55	65	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	N/I	36	27	35	32	46	35	23	52	67	60	
Moldova	N/I	42	29	26	32	34	32	35	73	84	33	
Georgia	N/I	32	49	53	38	37	51	59	139	173	107	
Ukraine	N/I	245	224	337	283	516	512	712	1,649	1,947	1,045	
Total	N/I	427	393	536	509	763	741	931	2,127	2,517	1,434	
Total number of permits issued for education reasons⁷⁵	N/I	4,220	4,142	5,153	4,988	6,381	6,215	6,030	13,658	17,099	11,078	Data for 2017 provided according to Eurostat methodology. Source: Eurostat

⁷⁴ See Eurostat: Number of first residence permits issued by reason, EU-28, 2008-2016 [migr_resfirst]

⁷⁵ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of permits issued for education reasons.

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 2.2.5: Total number of first residence permits issued to entrepreneurs (including self-employed persons) from visa-free countries⁷⁶

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of first residence permits issued for entrepreneurs (including self-employed persons) from visa-free countries	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	5	4	3	
Montenegro	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	0	0	1	
Serbia	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	8	3	6	
Albania	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	2	1	0	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	0	2	2	
Moldova	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	0	0	0	
Georgia	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	0	0	1	
Ukraine	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	35	22	20	
Total	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	50	32	33	
Total number of first residence permits issued	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	742	661	756	National methodology – long-term visas and long-term residence permits from the

⁷⁶ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

for entrepreneurs (including self-employed persons)⁷⁷												Embassy for self-employed persons and entrepreneurs
---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

**Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).*

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

Note:

Data are available for the period 2015-2017.

Source: Ministry of the Interior of the CZ

TOTAL NUMBER OF FIRST AUTHORISATIONS OF STAY FOR ENTREPRENEURS (INCLUDING SELF EMPLOYED PERSONS) AT EMBASSIES GRANTED TO NATIONALS OF COUNTRIES EXEMPTED FROM VISA OBLIGATIONS

Only limited data are available. Statistics indicate that the total numbers of authorisations of stay (applied for at Embassies) for entrepreneurs to persons from countries exempted from visa obligations fell during the last two years. With the exception of **Bosnia and Herzegovina** a fall has occurred in the case of all **Western Balkan** countries. As for Eastern Partnership countries, during the last three years no citizen of **Moldova** received authorisation of stay for entrepreneurs or self-employed persons. Only one citizen of **Georgia** has received such authorisation during the entire three-year period, specifically in 2017. A reduction also occurred in citizens of **Ukraine** (in 2015, 35 authorisations were granted, in 2017, 20 authorisations). Conversely, if we count all citizens of third countries, a slight increase occurred even though the authorisations granted during the last three years was stable, ranging between 600 and 750.

⁷⁷ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of first residence permits issued for entrepreneurs (including self-employed persons).

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Section 3: Challenges of visa liberalisation on (Member) States

National Contribution (**max. 6 pages**, excluding statistics)

The aim of this Section is to investigate migratory risks since the introduction of visa-free regimes and the differences in the capacity of (Member) States to meet emerging challenges after the visa-free regimes were established as evidenced by quantitative and qualitative information.

The synthesis report will aim to include infographics and visuals, therefore please take that into account when answering the questions / filling the tables by adding any innovative or visual presentations in your national reports that can carry through into the synthesis report. We also welcome any photos/images which are captioned, relevant and (data) protected with your national contribution.

When answering the questions in this section please consider the statistical data as presented in the tables listed below and detailed in Section 3.2:

Table 3.2.1: Total number of nationals from the visa-free countries refused entry at the external borders;

Table 3.2.2: Total number of return decisions issued to nationals from the visa-free countries;

Table 3.2.3: Total number of voluntary returns (all types) by nationals of visa-free countries;

Table 3.2.4: Total number of forced returns by visa-free country;

Table 3.2.5: Total number of nationals from the visa - free countries found in illegal employment;

Table 3.2.6: Total number of smuggled persons from the visa-free countries (final court rulings);

Table 3.2.7: Total number of trafficked persons from the visa-free countries (final court rulings);

Table 3.2.8: Total number of identified facilitators of unauthorised entry, transit and residence from the visa-free countries (final court rulings);

Table 3.2.9: Total number of nationals found to be illegally present from the visa-free countries;

Table 3.2.10: Total number of overstayers from the visa-free countries.

If you do not have data as requested in the above tables, please explain why this is the case after each table in the relevant box.

Please do not leave any answer box or table cell blank or empty and insert N/A, NI or 0 as applicable.

SECTION 3.1: DESCRIPTION OF NATIONAL SITUATION

Q3.1. Did your (Member) State face certain challenges (if any) since the introduction of visa liberalisation? Please provide a short description of your national situation.

Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Section 3.2, while specific challenges can be detailed in sub-questions **Q3.1.2** to **Q3.1.7**.

The National Central Unit for Combating Organised Crime does not keep any statistical indicators on the basis of which it would be possible to illustrate to what degree abolishment of visa obligations has affected the security situation in the CZ. In general terms it may be said that in the opinion of the National Central Unit for Combating Organised Crime, the abolition of visa obligations has not been an issue in criminal proceedings concerning illegal migration or human trafficking. The proportion of persons appearing in such proceedings is constant as concerns the nationalities in question and no fundamental fluctuation has occurred, which does not mean that such fluctuation cannot occur in the future (due to the current constantly changing social, military and political situation in each country). Nevertheless, especially citizens of Ukraine frequently feature as illegal employees without the necessary work permit which is confirmed by the experiences of other relevant authorities (see text below).

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Visa-free relations for nationals of the states of Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine do not apply to the conduct of economic activities in the territory of the Czech Republic. Citizens of the aforesaid countries that arrive in the CZ on short-term authorisations for remunerated activity purposes must still apply to a Czech embassy for a short-term visa in the standard manner. Consequently, visa liberalisation therefore has no positive/negative impact on the labour market in the CZ. However, a negative effect may be abuse of visa-free relations for performance of work "on the black".

According to the Ministry of the Interior and the Foreign Police Service Directorate, in connection with visa liberalisation the Czech Republic is facing a significant rise in the use of falsified identity documents of EU Member States (mainly Romania, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Poland, Bulgaria, Slovakia and Slovenia) primarily for illegal employment in the territory of the CZ. Right from the start, Ukrainian and Moldovan citizens have abused visa-free relations in order to perform illegal employment in the territory of the Czech Republic. And to circumvent the rules that apply to the Czech labour market, they pretend to be citizens of EU Member States and elements of Ukrainian organised crime sell them falsified EU Member State identity documents for this purpose, which these Ukrainian and Moldovan citizens present to their employers.

These citizens of Ukraine and Moldova also identify themselves using such falsified documents during inspections organised by the Police of the Czech Republic or other competent state authorities (table 1.2.10b.). In doing so, they are committing the crime of "forgery and alteration of public documents" according to the provisions of Section 348 of Act No. 40/2009 Coll., the Penal Code.

In consequence of the aforementioned illegal activities, a significant increase of dangerous forms of illegal employment of foreign nationals has occurred.

After the abolishment of visa obligations, no significant rise in the number of persons from almost any visa-free country being refused entry to Czech territory at the external borders of the CZ (airports) has been registered – in some years conversely a reduction in the number of persons occurred. Only in the case of citizens of Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia a rise of more than 100 % was recorded the year following the introduction of visa-free relations, while in absolute numbers this concerned just 13 persons.

In the year that visa-free regime began to apply or in subsequent years, no significant rise occurred in the number of forced returns of citizens of any of the relevant countries.

Q3.1.1 If applicable, please categorise your answer to **Q3.1** by third country:

Western Balkans - FYROM, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina:

According to the National Central Unit for Combating Organised Crime, recent operative information exists concerning increased movement of perpetrators of crimes including robbery, drug trafficking and money laundering within the CZ and EU, mainly by nationals of **Serbia, Albania** and **Bosnia and Herzegovina**.

The most striking changes of all countries of the Western Balkans have been noted at **Serbian citizens**. Their involvement in indoor cultivation of cannabis in the territory of the CZ, production of marijuana from such cannabis and export of marijuana to other EU countries and investment of the proceeds from this activity in Serbia is a significant change in the Czech illegal drug scene and is a significant problem. On the other hand, good cooperation with the Serbian police authorities in investigation of such cases and their active approach to cooperation should be highlighted.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

A major problem **in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** continues to be **Macedonian citizens of Albanian ethnic origins** who are involved in illegal drug trade in the territory of the CZ. Cooperation with the Macedonian police authorities may be described as satisfactory.

A certain increase in the numbers of citizens of **Bosnia and Herzegovina** involved in drug crime in connection with the CZ has also been registered in recent years. Under a project organised by the Ministry of the Interior of the CZ oriented on the Western Balkans, the CZ sent experts to Bosnia and Herzegovina, amongst other places, where they made direct contact with the police authorities of that country concerned with this issue. Cooperation works, even though it is made more difficult due to the three very autonomous ethnic units that make up that country.

We are aware of the troubled situation in the areas of drugs in **Montenegro** where serious violence connected with drug trafficking took place in April 2018. Nevertheless, the drug-related activities of Montenegrin citizens are currently a marginal problem in the CZ.

Nor do citizens of **Albania** represent a fundamental problem in the Czech illegal drug scene, unlike the citizens of neighbouring Kosovo. Cooperation with the Albanian police is on a good level especially due to the posting of a Czech liaison police officer in Tirana.

Eastern Partnership – Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine:

In connection with abolition of visa obligations for **states of the so-called Eastern Partnership**, increased movement of perpetrators of crime in the CZ, and other EU states, both as a destination and as a transit country has been registered. A reason for such increased movement of such undesirable persons is the interest of these persons in occupying the territory of the CZ (EU) either as a new destination for committing various criminal activities or as a return to territories where they have committed crimes in the past for which they were convicted or deported by administrative authorities. This concerns primarily criminally active persons who commit violent crimes, property crimes, economic crimes, drug crimes etc. mainly in conjunction with organised criminal groups.

Involvement of **Moldovan citizens** in illegal trade in drugs in the territory of the CZ has been recorded. Previously Moldovan citizens have featured in such criminal activities only very rarely. The police authorities of Moldova cooperate very well in investigations in this respect.

To a certain extent **Ukraine** represents a special problem in the area of drug crime connected with the CZ. The very populous Ukrainian community in the CZ represents an excellent foundation for involving Ukrainian citizens in the drug trade. Ukrainians are the largest minority in the territory of the CZ, representing a cheap workforce and also an opportunity to conduct criminal activities such as smuggling various illegal commodities (intoxicating and psychotropic substances, cigarettes, weapons etc.) provision and operation of prostitution and other types of crime. Criminally active persons from Ukraine organised into criminal gangs organise, commit and control criminal activities and also generate their profits from these various forms of crime for the benefit of these organised criminal gangs which they subsequently launder in the territory of the CZ (EU) by acquiring real estate and other property, establishing various companies etc. In contrast to the situations described above, cooperation with the Ukrainian side is less efficient. This seems to be due to the fact that the Ukrainian law enforcement authorities understandably concentrate more on problems relating to the armed conflict in the east of the country and therefore capacities are lacking to deal with problems such as drug trafficking.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Georgia represents only a marginal problem in context with drug crime connected with the CZ.

Problems registered involving citizens of **Moldova** and **Ukraine** include primarily abuse of purposes of stay for illegal employment and involvement in criminal activities connected with illegal migration, including forgery and alteration of travel documents and abuse thereof (table 1.2.10b.).

Some citizens of **Moldova** are involved in misuse of two biometric passports for exceeding their stay in the Schengen Area. Moldovan legislation allows its citizens to own two biometric passports at the same time; many Moldovans have also gained double citizenship (in relation to the EU this concerns mainly Moldovan/Romanian – this applies to as many as 400,000 dual-citizens of Moldova). Two biometric passports allow Moldovan citizens to travel visa-free and to work illegally, e.g. in the interim to obtain a short-term visa in their second passport and to travel repeatedly. The situation is not helped by imperfect control systems on the borders which are not capable of detecting the same person with a different biometric passport travelling within the 180-day limit. This results in breach of the principles of visa liberalisation, facilitating overstaying, breach of the residence rules etc. The problem lies also on the part of employers in the CZ who allow illegal work by Moldovan nationals using repeated short-term periods by alternate authorised stays by using two passports and two short-term visas per year. A huge problem since last year is the growth of a network of intermediaries in the CZ and in Moldova. In the CZ this was allowed to happen by the passing of Act No. 222/2017 Coll., amending Act No. 435/2004 Coll., on Employment. After visa liberalisation organised groups headed for Moldova; the intermediaries organising working stays hail from Ukraine (Russia), seeing an opportunity for quick enrichment in trafficking people. Human trafficking is investigated by Moldovan police in cooperation with the Police of the CZ.

Applicants from **Ukraine** initially preferred to receive a visa in their old, non-biometric passports, rather than travelling without a visa on a biometric passport. The reason for this was fear of border controls which they expected would be easier if they had a visa. They expressed a fear that travelling with a biometric passport they would not be able to reliably prove the purpose of their journey and financial security. Many of them also believed that liberalisation would be temporary and “would not last long”. Later they attempted speculatively to combine a stay on a visa with a visa-free stay, hoping that they could circumvent the 90-day rule during a 180-day period. Citizens of Ukraine abuse the visa-free regime for remunerated activity purposes fairly often by combining 90 days of work on a visa in an old-type travel document, followed by 90 days on a biometric passport without a visa, and therefore illegally. Many of them in the CZ go directly to Ukrainian owned companies often involved in illegal intermediary activities, which do not pay the legally required deductions on behalf of their employees. Active cooperation with law enforcement authorities in Ukraine is stagnating. This is primarily due to the overall internal political situation in Ukraine.

Q3.1.2 Did your (Member) State encounter a rise in illegal employment since the introduction of visa liberalisation? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples.

Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Table 3.2.5.

TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS FROM COUNTRIES WITH VISA LIBERALISATION FOUND WORKING ILLEGALLY IN THE PERIOD 2015-2017 (Table 3.2.5)

During the entire year of 2017, i.e. up until 31. 12. 2017, a total of 9,707 inspections were conducted aimed at illegal employment and **1,917** third-country foreign nationals were found working illegally (foreign nationals from all countries outside the EU). **An increase was registered in the number of foreign nationals from non-EU**

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

countries performing illegal work in 2017 as against 2016. Year-on-year increase was also registered in 2016. This upward trend may be attributed to the current economic situation which has resulted in a hunger among employers for work force, meaning ever increasing numbers of foreign nationals in the labour market. Hand in hand with this the unemployment rate in the CZ is constantly falling. It should be added, however, that during the last year of interest, 2017, the number of inspections carried out by the State Labour Inspection Authority has also risen and the aforementioned increased number of inspections could be also the reason for the rise in persons found working illegally (year-on-year 399 more inspections aimed at illegal employment of persons were carried out in 2017)⁷⁸. It should also be borne in mind that on the basis of the provided data (table 3.2.5) we cannot specify what proportion of persons found during illegal employment came to the CZ under the visa-free regime, and therefore what impact visa-free relations have had on illegal employment.

Not much data concerning illegal employment of foreign nationals that come from countries with visa liberalisation are available. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has data at its disposal as of 2015.

The total number of all citizens from countries exempted from visa obligations found working illegally rose significantly during the last two years. In 2015, 617 persons were detected, in 2016, 1,192 persons and in 2017, 1,729 persons.

No particularly significant numbers of persons from **Western Balkan** countries detected performing illegal work in the CZ are evident for the last three years. The most persons detected were from **Serbia** in 2016, a total of 37 persons. In other years and other nationalities the numbers did not exceed 13 persons per year. No citizen of **Montenegro** was detected during the last three years working illegally in the CZ, and as for citizens of **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, only one person was identified in 2016.

The situation in **Moldova** where visa liberalisation occurred in 2014 may be described only in very limited terms and this applies also to **Georgia** and **Ukraine**, where visa liberalisation occurred in March 2017.

The number of **Moldovans** identified working illegally rose significantly from 2015 to 2017 (from 48 to 145 persons).

As for citizens of **Georgia**, only 1 person was detected in 2015, nobody in 2016 and two persons in 2017 (the year of visa liberalisation). In view of such low numbers, we cannot talk of growth in persons identified.

The situation concerning citizens of **Ukraine** however is different. Although the number of Ukrainians found working illegally had already risen dramatically before visa liberalisation (between 2015 and 2016 almost by 82 %), in the year of visa liberalisation the number of Ukrainians found rose by 57 % as against 2016 and making a total of 1,563 Ukrainians found working illegally in 2017.

Since 2016, citizens of **Ukraine** and **Moldova** have been found working illegally in significantly greater numbers. An upward trend is detected also in 2018. Most of these persons have valid legal stays, with the citizens of Ukraine mostly holding Polish Schengen visas, or they are staying under the visa-free regime (this also applies to citizens of Moldova).

However, on the basis of available data, the influence of visa liberalisation on illegal employment in the CZ cannot be examined.

⁷⁸ Source: Ministry of the Interior's Report on the Situation of Foreigners, Migration and Integration in the Czech Republic 2016 and 2017

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Q3.1.3 Did your (Member) State encounter a rise in smuggled and/or trafficked persons from the visa-free countries since the introduction of visa liberalisation? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples.

Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Tables 3.2.6 and 3.2.7.

No significant growth in trafficked persons was recorded in the monitored countries.

After visa liberalisation, victims from **Moldova** and **Ukraine** were placed in the Ministry of the Interior Support and Protection of Human Trafficking Programme (hereinafter the Programme) where potential victims of human trafficking are placed both by the Police of the CZ and by a specialised non-government organisation.

Since the beginning of the Programme, the following numbers of potential victims of human trafficking from those countries where visa liberalisation applies have been recorded: **Moldova** - 2003 (3), 2011 (1), 2017 (5) and **Ukraine** - 2004 (1), 2005 (6), 2006 (3), 2007 (3), 2008 (7), 2009 (8), 2011 (1), 2015 (1), 2016 (2), 2017 (5).

A branch of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) operates in **Moldova**, in cooperation with Moldovan authorities focusing on prevention, protection and assistance with respect to human trafficking. According to information from those authorities, assistance and financial aid was provided to Moldovan citizens upon their return to the CZ as follows:

2009 – 2010: 11 persons,

2013 – 1 person,

2014 – 2 persons,

2015 – 1 person.

Between 2009 and 2017 this concerned 15 persons, 4 of whom were women and 11 men.

Q3.1.4 Did your (Member) State encounter a rise in the number of identified facilitators of unauthorised entry, transit and residence since the introduction of visa liberalisation? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples.

Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Table 3.2.8.

TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS CONVICTED BY FINAL COURT RULING FOR FACILITATION OF UNAUTHORISED STAY, TRANSIT AND RESIDENCE FROM THE VISA-FREE COUNTRIES for the period 2007-2017 (Table 3.2.8)⁷⁹

As for the citizens from countries with visa liberalisation listed in table 3.2.8., it is impossible to identify any trend in view of the low number of data sample (numbers of convicted persons almost equal zero for the past 10 years for these nationalities).

Citizens of **Ukraine** are the only exception. The number of convicted Ukrainian nationals rose four times in the year in which visa liberalisation occurred (a rise from 2 persons in 2016 to 8 persons in 2017).

The CZ recorded a fall in the total number of persons convicted by final court ruling for facilitation of unauthorised stay, transit and residence (Section 340 and Section 341 of Act No. 40/2009 Coll., or else Section 171a and Section 171d of Act No. 141/1961 Coll.) between the years 2014-2016 and subsequently a 20 % rise in 2017 (from 39 person in 2016 to 47 persons in 2017).

However, the structure of nationalities convicted by final court ruling for the aforementioned crimes (table 3.2.8) changed significantly in 2015. While the citizens of the questioned eastern European countries with visa liberalisation were convicted almost exclusively between the years 2007 and 2013, absolutely dominated by citizens of the Czech Republic, citizens of Western countries* dominated in 2015 (the numbers of citizens of the CZ fall rapidly; see statistics below):

	2014	2015
Citizens of the CZ	68	12
Western European countries*	0	19

* *DE, SE, FR, AT, IT, GB*

Q3.1.5 Did your (Member) State encounter a rise in the number of nationals found to be illegally present from the visa-free countries since the introduction of visa liberalisation? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples.

Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Table 3.2.9.

NUMBERS OF NATIONALS FROM COUNTRIES WITH VISA LIBERALISATION STAYING ILLEGALLY IN THE TERRITORY OF THE CZ 2008–2017 (Table 3.2.9)

No fundamental change occurred in the area of illegal stays as for nationals of **Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia** after the introduction of the visa-free regime. These nationalities are represented only minimally in the total number of persons staying illegally (annual numbers in the units or tens).

⁷⁹ The data does not differentiate between different types of authorisation of stay, therefore it is impossible to give data only for foreign nationals staying in the CR for up to 90 days.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

The annual number of citizens of **Albania** between the years 2008 and 2014 ranged from 2 to 11 persons, from 2015 a rise occurred, but the numbers were still low (between 2015 and 2017 numbers ranging from 20 to 27 persons). Citizens of Albania are most frequently discovered in the interior of the country and also on the internal Schengen land border between Germany and the CZ. Nationals of Albania tend to be detected on the external Schengen border while attempting to leave via the airport border for the United Kingdom/Ireland with irregular travel documents having arrived legally in the CZ (transit).

The highest number of citizens of **Georgia** since 2008 was reached in 2009 (163 persons), when the main modus operandi was illegal entry via Poland with the intention of continuing to Austria and often these were people seeking asylum in Poland. Over the years, their numbers fluctuate significantly between 28 and 163 persons. Concretely during the last few years, 2014-2016, the number was 28-36 persons. In 2017 there was an increase to 58 persons, when the majority of persons (20) reported to the Zastávka u Brna reception centre and upon filing an application for international protection their illegal stay was discovered. This trend continues considerably also in 2018 (from January to May 2018, a total of 50 Georgians, 36 of whom in the Zastávka u Brna reception centre).

The annual number of nationals from **Moldova** between 2008 and 2012 ranged between 83 and 140, then falling between 2013 and 2015 to 51 and 59 persons. Their numbers begin to rise from 2016 (2016: 134, 2017: 262). This upward trend continues also in 2018 (from January to May 2018, a total of 170 Moldovan citizens).

Citizens of **Ukraine** have long been among the nationalities which contribute the most to the number of persons found during an illegal stay (the exception was only 2015, when citizens of Syria were deported due to irregular transit migration – they had crossed the internal Schengen Czech-Slovak border, or the Austrian border with the intention of proceeding to Germany). The annual number of citizens of Ukraine between 2008 and 2009 was in the region of 1,500 persons, then falling between 2010 to 2015 fluctuating between 888 to 1,224 persons. In 2016 and 2017 an increase occurred and their number was again around 1,500 persons. Therefore between 2016 and 2017 no fundamental change occurred in illegal stays upon the introduction of visa-free relations. And the trend in 2018 so far shows no sign of change (from January to May 2018 a total of 587 citizens of Ukraine).

Q3.1.6 Did your (Member) State encounter a rise in the number of overstayers since the introduction of visa liberalisation? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples.

Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Table 3.2.10.

Statistics for overstayers are not monitored independently (more details under Table 3.2.10).

Q3.1.7 Did your (Member) State encounter any signs of possible misuse of the visa liberalisation?⁸⁰ If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples.

⁸⁰ For example, dealing with cases when persons enter the country legally but later become illegally employed, are staying in the country legally, but are working without a work permit or apply for asylum without reasonable grounds.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

In the Czech Republic, foreign nationals may not work or conduct entrepreneurial activities under the visa-free regime, they must hold a visa or long-term residence permit for remunerated activity purposes, otherwise this would constitute working illegally.

Since 2015, significantly higher numbers of citizens of **Ukraine** and **Moldova** have been found conducting unauthorised remunerated activities. The upward trend is detected also in 2018. Most of these persons have a valid legal authorisation of stay, with Ukrainian citizens holding mainly Schengen visas or staying under the visa-free regime (this also applies to citizens of Moldova).

Since 2017, the number of Moldovan citizens returned by the Germany authorities under the institution of readmission has been rising significantly. According to information from our German colleagues, these foreign nationals cross the border to conduct illegal remunerated activities despite declaring tourist purposes.

Q3.2. Did your (Member) State as a country of destination face any administrative burden⁸¹ since the introduction of the visa-free regime? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples.

Certain state authorities point out that it is impossible to give a clear answer to this question since each set of proceedings requires a different number of administrative and procedural steps which are essential for performing the tasks.

The National Central Unit for Combating Organised Crime has reported an irregular increase in administrative burden in connection with the growing number of applications for temporary stays, long-term residence, permanent residence, Czech citizenship and also in connection with applications for intermediation of employment in the territory of the CZ or acquiring employee cards for the territory of the CZ. Furthermore, applications for asylum and subsidiary protection all representing their opinion concerning the applicants with the aim of identification of criminally active persons who abuse the aforementioned types authorisation of stay or who are legalising their longer-term presence in the territory of the CZ and other EU Member States – all states of the Eastern Partnership. Thus it is possible to speak about indirect impact.

According to the findings of the Foreign Police Service Directorate, in consequence of illegal employment of citizens of **Moldova** and **Ukraine** (see answers to Q3.1.1 and Q3.1.7) a rise has occurred in the number of decisions on administrative expulsion and steps connected with administrative proceedings.

According to the findings of embassies, it is impossible to say whether in general a rise in administrative burden has or has not arisen. Some embassies have registered a rise of certain administration (e.g. **Albania**) others conversely a fall (e.g. **Serbia**).

The Embassy in **Ukraine** stated that the problem on the part of the Ukrainian authorities was the waiting time for issuing biometric passports when applicants had to wait as long as 6 months and longer.

Q3.2.1. If applicable, please list the institutions that faced administrative burdens.

⁸¹ For example: significant increase of residence permit applications, increased demand for work permits, more time-consuming border control procedure due to the lack of visas. etc.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

See above.

Q3.3. Did your (Member) State as a country of destination face any security risks since the introduction of the visa-free regime? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples.

Any abolition of measures intended to protect the Czech Republic and its citizens may be a security risk. In this respect, from the point of view of representatives of the CZ there exists the risk that with the abolition of visa obligations it will be easier for persons linked to international criminal organisations, terrorism etc. to enter the territory of the CZ (the risk is entry to the CZ by persons that have not undergone a security check).

As indicated by the answers to question 3.1.1, the introduction of a visa-free regime in some countries has led to new forms of drug crime, potentially to greater involvement of citizens of the affected countries in such criminal activities. This fact is considered to be a certain security risk.

It may be expected in general that visa liberalisation expands the opportunities to break the law, especially in the area of breach of the rules of stay.

As concerns criminally prosecuted persons, in the case of Ukraine and Georgia with respect to the shortness of the period monitored and availability of statistics for 2018, only very precursory conclusions may be made. On the basis of available data, it may be said that, with respect to criminally prosecuted foreign nationals, a fall in numbers citizens of **Ukraine** has occurred since the introduction of visa liberalisation (March 2017) – year-on-year there has been a fall of 5 % (38 fewer persons in comparison with the first half of 2017; i.e. 803 persons in the first half of 2017, 765 persons in the first half of 2018). Conversely, a rise of 67 % in criminally prosecuted persons in the CZ can be seen in citizens of **Georgia** in the first half of 2018 (+10 persons, i.e. 25 persons for the first half of 2018 in comparison with the first half of 2017).

A fundamental security risk from the perspective of the Czech Republic is the increased incursion of forged identity documents and other public documents to the territory, where these forgeries are subsequently misused. In the course of 2017 and the first half of 2018, significant growth in the portfolio of forged EU Member State identity documents has been recorded, manufactured by Ukrainian organised crime structures and subsequently transferred to the territory of the Czech Republic. As we have stated in item 3.1., currently the main application of these documents is to facilitate illegal employment of citizens of Ukraine and Moldova. Regardless of this fact, we must state that these forgeries are utilisable for other misuse purposes, including activities with a high degree of social risk, including terrorist risks.

Q3.3.1. Did the visa liberalisation regime increase the security risks in your (Member) State? If yes, please provide a short description explaining why and provide examples.⁸²

In view of the fact that certain security risks described above in 3.3. (certain forms of drug crime) did not exist before the introduction of the visa-free regime, we can undoubtedly talk of increased security risk.

⁸² For example: did your (Member) State identify any increased terrorism risks arising from the entry or residence of respective TCNs.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Another rise in threats is related to the production, distribution and use of forged EU Member State identity documents.

Q3.3.2. If applicable, what types of offences⁸³ were committed by third-country nationals in your (Member) State after the commencement of the visa-free regime?⁸⁴ Where there any significant differences compared to the time before the visa-free regime started?

NUMBER OF PROSECUTED PERSONS FROM VISA-FREE COUNTRIES IN THE CZ

The only data available is on prosecuted selected foreign nationals in the CZ with no differentiation of their authorisation of stay in the territory of the CZ (it is not possible to provide data just on foreign nationals present in our territory on a short stay of up to 90 days).

A fall in criminally prosecuted citizens of the **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** occurred at the time of visa liberalisation in 2009 and from that year until 2017 the figures have not reached those before visa liberalisation.

A rise in the numbers of criminally prosecuted citizens of **Montenegro** is evident only in 2009, at the end of which visa liberalisation took place. During the subsequent years there was a fall in the number of prosecuted persons in the CZ in comparison with that year, and in 2010 and 2017 not one citizen of Montenegro was prosecuted.

The number of criminally prosecuted citizens of **Serbia** after the introduction of visa liberalisation in 2009 at first rose sharply and in 2017 the number of criminally prosecuted citizens of Serbia almost doubled in comparison with 2009.

The number of criminally prosecuted **citizens of Albania** in the CZ rose slightly after the introduction of visa liberalisation in 2010. In subsequent years the number of criminally prosecuted Albanians remained in approximately the same values (apart from 2014 when a fall occurred).

The number of prosecuted persons from **Bosnia and Herzegovina** rose slightly after visa liberalisation in 2010, but in some years it almost doubled. Conversely in 2016 the number fell and in 2017 the number of criminally prosecuted citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the CZ was at the same level as before the introduction of visa liberalisation.

The number of criminally prosecuted citizens of **Moldova** in 2014, when visa liberalisation came into effect fell slightly (from 94 persons to 88 persons). Conversely, in subsequent years a significant rise occurred and in 2017 there were 231 criminally prosecuted citizens of Moldova in the CZ.

On the basis of available data, it can be said that from a point of view of the number of criminally prosecuted foreign nationals, a year-on-year drop of 5 % in citizens of **Ukraine** occurred after the introduction of visa liberalisation (March 2017) in comparison with the first half of 2018 (-38 persons in comparison with the first half of 2017; in the first half of

⁸³ Please use this pre-defined list of categories: cybercrime; drugs offences; economic and financial offences; illicit immigration; illicit trafficking (not drug related); offences against property; offences against public order and safety; offences against public trust (e.g. fraud, forgery, counterfeiting); offences against the person; sexual exploitation of children (including child pornography); sexual offences against adults; terrorism-related activity; trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants.

⁸⁴ This applies to third-country nationals who do not live your country, but visited (short stay of up to 90 days).

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

2017 803 persons were being prosecuted, while in the first half of 2018 the figure was 765 persons).

Conversely, we can see a rise in criminally prosecuted citizens of **Georgia** in the CZ of 67 % for the first half of 2018 (+10 persons, i.e. 25 persons for the first half of 2018 in comparison with the first half of 2017).

Prosecuted persons in the CZ of selected nationalities											
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
FYROM	48	49	38	28	37	38	41	30	41	31	42
Montenegro	1	1	8	0	2	2	2	5	4	3	0
Serbia	17	19	47	34	56	53	51	44	45	55	86
Albania	9	10	11	15	16	16	15	9	13	12	15
Bosnia and Herzegovina	28	21	20	21	21	40	40	17	38	25	20
Moldova	125	102	109	105	111	118	94	88	110	207	231
Georgia	50	42	67	24	35	23	33	27	22	20	31
Ukraine	1,520	1,601	1,570	1,107	1,101	1,061	990	994	1,055	1,310	1,470
TOTAL (total for visa-free countries)	1,798	1,845	1,870	1,334	1,379	1,351	1,266	1,214	1,328	1,663	1,895

Source: Police Presidium of the Czech Republic

As for types of criminality in separate nationalities, despite data being available (see tables below), it should be borne in mind that in 2016 the methodology of calculation of prosecuted persons was changed (no longer just serious crimes, but all crimes are recorded) and therefore the number of prosecuted foreign nationals in the territory of the CZ according to type of crime for 2016-2017 (and later years) cannot be compared with the situation before 2016.

With regard to the change in methodology for statistical calculation of crimes in 2016, comparison in this area for the monitored countries would not paint an objective picture.

A certain type of conclusion may be drawn concerning citizens of **Ukraine** and **Georgia** due to the fact that visa liberalisation took place in 2017 and to some extent also for **Moldova**, where exemption from visa obligations has applied since 2014. However, since only the data for the period 2016-2017 is comparable it is too early to make a more detailed description of trends.

It may be said in general that the crime of "falsification and alteration of public documents" according to the provisions of Section 348 of Act no. 40/2009 Coll., the Penal Code (in the table under the category "economic criminality") represents the most frequent type of crime in citizens of Moldova and Ukraine for the years 2016 and 2017. This fact is confirmed in practice by representatives of state authorities, primarily the Ministry of the Interior and the Foreign Police Service Directorate. They add that the most fundamental security risk from the point of view of the CZ is the increased incursion of forged identity documents and other public documents to the territory, where these forgeries are subsequently

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

misused. The main aim of application of such forgeries is to facilitate illegal employment of citizens of Ukraine and Moldova.

Prosecuted persons in the CZ involving nationals of Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia according to type of criminality									
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
violent criminality	10	9	10	6	8	4	7	4	
vice criminality	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	
burglaries	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	
simple theft	5	4	4	2	2	5	5	3	
other property crime	4	2	0	2	1	4	1	2	
other criminality	12	12	7	5	14	14	17	6	1
remaining criminality	6	16	9	9	6	7	4	8	1
economic criminality	7	6	6	4	4	4	7	6	
military and anti-constitutional criminality	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Prosecuted persons in the CZ involving Montenegrin nationals according to type of criminality									
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
violent criminality	0	0	2	0	1	2	0	0	
vice criminality	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
burglaries	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	
simple theft	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	
other property crime	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
other criminality	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	
remaining criminality	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	
economic criminality	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	
military and anti-constitutional criminality	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Prosecuted persons in the CZ involving Serbian nationals according to type of criminality									
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
violent criminality	3	1	7	5	9	4	11	7	1
vice criminality	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	
burglaries	0	3	0	0	0	3	3	3	
simple theft	1	0	3	1	6	11	6	5	
other property crime	0	2	2	5	2	0	1	2	
other criminality	6	7	19	13	18	15	12	12	
remaining criminality	4	2	5	5	8	10	10	10	
economic criminality	3	4	11	5	12	9	8	5	1
military and anti-constitutional criminality	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Prosecuted persons in the CZ involving Albanian nationals according to type of criminality									
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
violent criminality	1	1	3	1	2	3	1	2	
vice criminality	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
burglaries	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	
simple theft	0	1	2	2	3	3	4	1	
other property crime	0	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

other criminality	3	2	1	5	5	6	3	3	
remaining criminality	4	2	1	3	2	1	2	1	
economic criminality	0	1	2	3	4	2	5	1	
military and anti-constitutional criminality	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Prosecuted persons in the CZ involving nationals of Bosnia and Herzegovina according to type of criminality									
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
violent criminality	3	3	2	1	2	7	3	2	
vice criminality	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	
burglaries	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	
simple theft	3	0	2	2	0	8	13	4	1
other property crime	0	2	0	0	0	2	2	0	
other criminality	6	1	0	5	10	9	11	2	
remaining criminality	8	9	15	9	4	6	7	8	
economic criminality	6	5	1	4	3	8	4	1	
military and anti-constitutional criminality	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Prosecuted persons in the CZ involving Moldovan nationals according to type of criminality									
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
violent criminality	16	14	10	15	10	16	12	7	1
vice criminality	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	
burglaries	1	2	2	0	1	4	3	6	
simple theft	17	4	7	6	4	8	6	6	
other property crime	2	2	6	2	5	4	2	5	
other criminality	28	28	14	15	23	28	21	19	1
remaining criminality	26	42	55	33	36	28	27	24	3
economic criminality	33	9	14	32	31	29	22	20	2
military and anti-constitutional criminality	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Prosecuted persons in the CZ involving Georgian nationals according to type of criminality									
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
violent criminality	5	3	7	2	7	3	6	3	
vice criminality	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	
burglaries	0	1	0	0	3	4	1	1	
simple theft	13	17	26	8	5	1	9	3	
other property crime	5	0	1	0	0	2	0	1	
other criminality	21	12	21	6	8	7	9	8	
remaining criminality	1	4	6	2	4	2	4	4	
economic criminality	5	4	6	6	7	3	4	7	
military and anti-constitutional criminality	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Prosecuted persons in the CZ involving Ukrainian nationals according to type of criminality									
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
violent criminality	169	149	151	137	138	109	106	115	113
vice criminality	24	26	24	23	10	23	14	8	17
burglaries	28	36	29	39	24	25	37	17	13
simple theft	111	110	90	73	91	100	104	79	79

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

other property crime	28	24	40	37	29	31	33	34	30
other criminality	535	466	369	281	320	304	315	263	241
remaining criminality	482	669	732	358	311	325	248	313	330
economic criminality	143	121	135	159	178	144	133	165	232
military and anti-constitutional criminality	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Police Presidium of the Czech Republic

Q3.3.3. If applicable, what was the rate of offences (final court rulings) committed by third-country nationals⁸⁵ in your (Member) State after the commencement of the visa-free regime? Where there any significant differences compared to the time before the visa-free regime started?

TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS CONVICTED BY FINAL COURT RULING FOR FACILITATION OF UNAUTHORISED ENTRY, TRANSIT AND RESIDENCE FOR THE PERIOD 2007–2017 (Table 3.2.8)

As for citizens from countries with visa liberalisation listed in table 3.2.8., it is impossible to identify any trend in view of the low number of data sample (numbers of convicted persons almost equal zero for the past 10 years for these nationalities).

Citizens of Ukraine are the only exception. **The number of convicted Ukrainian nationals rose four times in the year in which visa liberalisation occurred (a rise from 2 persons in 2016 to 8 persons in 2017).**

For more information see table 3.2.8 (note: the data do not differentiate between types of authorisation of stay; it is not possible therefore to provide data applying to foreign nationals staying in the territory of the CZ for up to 90 days).

Q3.4. What is the role and impact of irregular migration facilitators that provide their services to third-country nationals with an entry ban? Please provide a short description with specific examples about your (Member) State situation and make a clear distinction between people who assist migrants and people who are profiting from facilitation.

Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Table 3.2.6, 3.2.7 and 3.2.8.

The CZ does not have data available concerning people who assist migrants with an entry ban. Therefore it is impossible to investigate their role and impact.

We only come across individual cases where criminal proceedings are underway according to substantive and local competency applies.

⁸⁵ See above.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Q3.4.1 How did the activities of irregular migration facilitators impact your (Member) State?⁸⁶
Please provide a short description with specific examples about your (Member) State situation.

No relevant information available.

Q3.4.2. If applicable, please list and explain any challenges and risks identified by your country related to the activities of irregular migration facilitators, while making a clear distinction between people who assist migrants and people who are profiting from facilitation.

No relevant information available.

Q3.5. What other challenge (or negative impact) was identified by your (Member) State in relation to visa liberalisation that was not already captured in the previous questions, if applicable?

No relevant information available.

⁸⁶ Did their activities lead to increases in irregular border-crossings, enhanced border controls or document fraud?

SECTION 3.2: STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Please provide, to the extent possible, the following statistics (with their source) along with, if necessary, an explanatory note to interpret them in particular when the statistics provided are partial, had to be estimated (e.g. on the basis of available statistics that differs from the below, or of first-hand research) or when they reflect any particular trends (e.g. a change in policy). If statistics are not available, please try to indicate an order of magnitude and why they are not available. When available, statistics from Eurostat should be used and presented annually covering the period between 2008 and 2017 inclusive. For year 2007, national data should be provided, if available.

At a minimum please provide data two years before and after the waiver agreement date for each third country (as highlighted in green in each table). Ideally, the study aims to present data for the whole period if available (e.g. from Eurostat).

When filling in the tables please do not leave blank cells and follow these conventions:

N/A – not applicable, in cases where the question is not applicable to your (Member) State please insert N/A in relevant cells.

NI – no information, in cases where there is no data available please insert NI in relevant cells.

0 – insert 0 whenever you have collected data and the result was 0.

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 3.2.1: Total number of nationals from the visa-free countries refused entry at the external borders⁸⁷

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) <i>(insert all available data or <u>at least</u> 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											Data extracted on 11/05/2018
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
Total number of nationals from the visa-free countries refused entry at the external borders												
FYROM	N/A	2	11	24	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Montenegro	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	
Serbia	N/A	2	4	7	4	0	0	0	2	3	0	
Albania	N/A	0	2	0	1	2	2	1	6	6	7	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	N/A	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	
Moldova	N/A	7	3	2	0	0	3	4	0	4	4	
Georgia	N/A	1	5	10	10	9	11	5	24	17	18	
Ukraine	N/A	29	40	19	16	10	9	10	13	11	15	
Total	N/A	42	66	62	43	21	25	20	46	43	45	
Total number third-country nationals refused entry at the external borders⁸⁸	N/A	256	378	331	358	190	311	333	464	367	231	

⁸⁷ See Eurostat: Third-country nationals refused entry at the external borders - annual data (rounded) [migr_eirfs]⁸⁸ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number third-country nationals refused entry at the external borders.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

*Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

Source: Foreign Police Service Directorate

Note: 2007 has not been completed because the Czech Republic entered Schengen in December 2007 and so data is incomparable with subsequent years.

TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS FROM VISA-FREE COUNTRIES REFUSED ENTRY AT THE EXTERNAL BORDERS FOR THE PERIOD 2008-2017 (Table 3.2.1)

The number of persons from most **Western Balkan countries** with visa-free relations refused entry at the external borders of the CZ did not exceed units of persons after the introduction of visa liberalisation. Only in the case of citizens of **Macedonia** was a more significant number of persons refused entry recorded after introduction of visa-free relations, in 2010 and 2011 (24 persons and 11 persons). No increase in the number of citizens of **Moldova** refused entry occurred during the last three years, i.e. since the introduction of visa-free relations, the number never exceeding 4 persons, as it was in the year of visa liberalisation. Nor was any significant trend (either upward or downward) identified in the case of citizens of **Ukraine** and **Georgia**.

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 3.2.2: Total number of return decisions issued to nationals from the visa-free countries⁸⁹

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) (insert all available data or <u>at least</u> 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)											Data extracted on 11/05/2018
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
Total number of return decisions issued to nationals from the visa-free countries												
FYROM	N/I	55	40	20	20	25	25	30	15	15	25	
Montenegro	N/I	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Serbia	N/I	40	35	30	10	20	20	15	15	55	40	
Albania	N/I	5	5	5	0	10	25	5	25	15	40	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	N/I	5	0	5	20	10	10	15	5	15	10	
Moldova	N/I	145	140	130	105	95	85	45	90	325	740	
Georgia	N/I	110	170	50	45	25	25	25	10	10	25	
Ukraine	N/I	1,835	1,575	1,210	1,160	1,115	1,025	940	1,330	2,200	3,905	
Total	N/I	2,200	1,970	1,450	1,360	1,300	1,215	1,075	1,490	2,635	4,785	
Total number of return decisions issued to third-country nationals⁹⁰	N/I	3,770	3,805	2,915	2,520	2,375	2,405	2,460	4,510	3,760	6,090	

⁸⁹ See Eurostat: Third-country nationals ordered to leave - annual data (rounded) [migr_eiord]⁹⁰ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of nationals ordered to leave.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

*Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

Source: Eurostat

ISSUED RETURN DECISIONS FOR THE PERIOD 2008–2017 (Table 3.2.2)

Growth in returns of citizens of the **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** and **Montenegro** did not occur after visa liberalisation.

The number of decisions issued to citizens of **Serbia** mainly fell after visa liberalisation, rising only in the years 2016 and 2017.

Initially, the year after visa liberalisation a fall occurred in return decisions issued to citizens of **Albania** and subsequently rose until reaching the highest number for the last 10 years in 2017 (40 decisions issued).

The numbers of return decisions for citizens of **Bosnia and Herzegovina** began to rise immediately after visa liberalisation (the most in 2011, from 5 to 20 decisions), but in subsequent years the number did not exceed 15 decisions.

In the year of visa liberalisation a significant fall in the number of decisions issued to citizens of **Moldova** occurred (from 85 to 45 decisions) while following visa liberalisation the number of decisions issued (90 decisions) returned to the same value as before 2014 (when visa liberalisation came about). Subsequently in 2016 the number rose to 325 decisions and in 2017 up to 740 decisions.

We may only assess the year in which visa liberalisation for **Georgia** and **Ukraine** came into effect. The rise in the number return decisions issued to citizens of Georgia was of 150 % (in absolute values this involved 15 decisions), and to citizens of **Ukraine** a rise of 77.5 % (in absolute values this involved 1,705 decisions).

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Table 3.2.3: Total number of voluntary returns (all types) by nationals of visa-free countries⁹¹

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) (insert all available data or <u>at least</u> 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)											Data extracted on 11/05/2018
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
Total number of voluntary returns (all types) by nationals of visa-free countries												
FYROM	N/I	N/I	1	0	4	1	2	2	3	5	3	
Montenegro	N/I	N/I	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Serbia	N/I	N/I	1	5	1	3	6	14	6	2	11	
Albania	N/I	N/I	0	0	0	1	3	1	6	4	6	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	N/I	N/I	4	0	8	1	0	2	0	3	1	
Moldova	N/I	N/I	0	15	10	5	7	6	8	14	72	
Georgia	N/I	N/I	2	7	2	2	4	3	6	7	12	
Ukraine	N/I	N/I	10	27	18	26	21	37	48	121	309	
Total	N/I	N/I	18	54	43	39	43	65	77	156	414	
Total number of voluntary returns (all types) – all third-country nationals⁹²	N/I	N/I	375	300	267	259	189	205	257	238	523	

*Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).

⁹¹ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities. Also see Eurostat: Number of voluntary and forced returns [migr_eirt_vol];

⁹² All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of voluntary returns.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

Note:

Data are available for the period 2009-2017.

Source:

Period 2009-2016:

Returns implemented by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) (in cooperation with the Foreign Police Service Directorate) and the Refugee Facility Administration.

In 2009, the data for separate nationalities does not include numbers of persons returned by IOM. The total number of returns of third-country nationals (375 persons) for 2009 includes IOM data.

2017:

Returns implemented by IOM, the Refugee Facility Administration and the Ministry of the Interior of the CZ.

NUMBER OF VOLUNTARY RETURNS OF CITIZENS FROM COUNTRIES EXEMPTED FROM VISA OBLIGATIONS FOR THE PERIOD 2009-2017 (TABLE 3.2.3)

Visa liberalisation took place in **Western Balkan countries** between 2009 and 2010. With the exception of Montenegro for which no voluntary return of citizens of that country took place between 2009 and 2017, it can be said of the citizens of Western Balkan countries that the number of voluntary returns rose for most of the period of interest after visa liberalisation. Even though this was a large percentage increase in some cases, in absolute figures these changes represented just units of persons. With the exception of 2014, when 14 persons from Serbia were returned voluntarily, and 2017, when 11 persons from this country were returned, the number of voluntary returns of nationals of Western Balkan countries did not exceed ten persons.

The numbers of voluntarily returned persons from Moldova and Ukraine rose considerably during the last year.

The number of voluntary returns of citizens of **Moldova** after visa liberalisation began to rise slightly at first (from 6 to 8 persons). By 2017, already 72 persons from this country were returned (year-on-year increase of +414 %).

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

On the basis of available data, we can say that, in the year that visa-free relations began, a rise occurred in the number of voluntary returns of citizens of **Georgia** and **Ukraine** where visa liberalisation came about in 2017. This represented a year-on-year rise of 71 % for citizens of **Georgia** (from 7 to 12 persons) and of 155 % for citizens of **Ukraine** (from 121 to 309 persons).

If we look at the **total numbers of persons voluntarily returned from these visa-free countries**, we can see a sharp rise in numbers during the last 3 years. In 2015, nationals of these visa-free countries constituted approximately one third of all voluntarily returned third-country persons, in 2016 already two thirds and in 2017 almost 80 %.

During the last year, i.e. 2017, a **large rise in number of all voluntarily returned third-country nationals** is also evident. **It should be added that as of February 2017, voluntary returns became the responsibility of the voluntary returns section of the Ministry of the Interior department of asylum and migration policy, and the total number of voluntary returns has risen considerably. In addition, voluntary returns of former applicants for international protection continued to be implemented by the Refugee Facility Administration.**

The number of voluntary returns performed for seven of the countries exempted from visa obligations (with the exception of Montenegro) rose year-on-year. **In total this was a year-on-year rise in voluntary returns of citizens of countries exempted from visa obligations of 165 %. Voluntary returns of all third-country nationals** rose year-on-year **by almost 119 %** between 2016 and 2017.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Table 3.2.4: Total number of forced returns by visa-free country⁹³

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) (insert all available data or <u>at least</u> 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)											Data extracted on 11/05/2018
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
Total number of forced returns by visa-free country												
FYROM	N/I	N/I	7	3	8	9	3	6	0	4	9	
Montenegro	N/I	N/I	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Serbia	N/I	N/I	9	6	12	10	12	7	10	5	7	
Albania	N/I	N/I	3	3	0	0	0	0	3	3	2	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	N/I	N/I	0	2	1	0	2	0	2	2	2	
Moldova	N/I	N/I	59	54	17	14	6	5	5	4	9	
Georgia	N/I	N/I	11	9	2	5	5	4	1	5	5	
Ukraine	N/I	N/I	487	468	234	131	87	74	62	60	66	
Total	N/I	N/I	576	545	274	169	115	96	83	83	100	
Total number of forced returns - all third-country nationals⁹⁴	N/I	N/I	899	829	432	338	268	322	1,532	265	265	

*Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).

⁹³ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities. Also see Eurostat: Number of voluntary and forced returns [migr_eirt_vol];

⁹⁴ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of forced returns.

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

Source: Foreign Police Service Directorate

Note: Data for the period 2009-2016 was retroactively selected according to methodology for generating data for Eurostat that was performed in 2017.

NUMBER OF FORCED RETURNS OF CITIZENS OF VISA-FREE COUNTRIES FOR THE PERIOD 2009-2017 (Table 3.2.4)

No significant increase in forced returns of citizens of such countries occurred in the year in which the visa-free regime became effective or in subsequent years. In all cases the rise was at most a matter of units, conversely in some years there was a decrease.

Table 3.2.5: Total number of nationals from the visa - free countries found in illegal employment⁹⁵

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
	(insert all available data or <u>at least</u> 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)											
Total number of nationals from the visa-free countries found in illegal employment	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	6	2	6	Please name the top 5 labour sectors where TCNs were illegally employed (see footnote list for pre-defined sectors). ⁹⁶
Montenegro	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	0	0	0	Please see above.
Serbia	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	1	37	13	Please see above.
Albania	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	12	12	0	Please see above.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	0	1	0	Please see above.
Moldova	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	48	143	145	Please see above.
Georgia	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	1	0	2	Please see above.

⁹⁵ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities. Also see Eurostat: Third-country nationals found to be illegally present annual data (rounded) [migr_eipre]

⁹⁶ Agriculture, forestry and fishing; Mining and quarrying; Manufacturing; Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply; Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities; Construction; Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles; Transportation and storage; Accommodation and food service activities; Information and communication; Financial and insurance activities; Real estate activities; Professional, scientific and technical activities; Administrative and support service activities; Public administration and defence; compulsory social security; Education; Human health and social work activities; Arts, entertainment and recreation; Other service activities; Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of households for own use; Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Ukraine	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	549	997	1 563	<i>Please see above.</i>
Total	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	617	1,192	1,729	
Total number third-country nationals found in illegal employment⁹⁷	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	858	1,337	1,917	Nationals of all third countries in 2017 most often worked illegally in the following sectors according to NACE: Professional, scientific and technical activities (363 persons found), manufacturing (332 persons), construction (302 persons), accommodation and food service activities (185 persons), administrative and support service activities (174 persons).

*Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

Source: Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS FROM COUNTRIES EXEMPTED FROM VISA OBLIGATIONS DISCOVERED WORKING ILLEGALLY IN THE PERIOD 2015–2017 (Table 3.2.5)

In 2017 a rise was recorded as against 2016 in the number of nationals of non-EU countries working illegally. A year-on-year rise was also recorded in 2016. This upward trend may be attributed to the current economic situation which has resulted in a hunger among employers for work force, meaning ever increasing numbers of foreign nationals in the labour market. Hand in hand with this the unemployment rate in the CZ is constantly falling. It should be added, however, that during the last year of interest, 2017, the number of inspections carried out by the State Labour Inspection Authority has also risen and the aforementioned increased number of inspections could be the reason for the rise in persons found working illegally (year-on-year 399 more inspections aimed at illegal employment of persons were carried out in 2017)⁹⁸. It

⁹⁷ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number third-country nationals found in illegal employment.

⁹⁸ Source: Ministry of the Interior's Report on the Situation of Foreigners, Migration and Integration in the Czech Republic 2016 and 2017

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

should also be borne in mind that on the basis of the provided data (table 3.2.5) we cannot specify what proportion of persons found during illegal employment came to the CZ under the visa-free regime, and therefore what impact visa-free relations have had on illegal employment.

Not much data concerning illegal employment of foreign nationals that come from countries with visa liberalisation are available. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has data at its disposal as of 2015.

The total number of all citizens from countries exempted from visa obligations found working illegally rose significantly during the last two years. In 2015, 617 persons were detected, in 2016, 1,192 persons and in 2017, 1,729 persons.

No particularly significant numbers of persons from **Western Balkan** countries detected performing illegal work in the CZ are evident for the last three years. The most persons detected were from **Serbia** in 2016, a total of 37 persons. In other years and other nationalities the numbers did not exceed 13 persons per year. No citizen of **Montenegro** was detected during the last three years working illegally in the CZ, and as for citizens of **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, only one person was identified in 2016.

The situation in **Moldova** where visa liberalisation occurred in 2014 may be described only in very limited terms and this applies also to **Georgia** and **Ukraine**, where visa liberalisation occurred in March 2017.

The number of **Moldovans** identified working illegally has risen significantly since 2017 (from 48 to 145 persons).

As for citizens of **Georgia** only 1 person was detected in 2015, nobody in 2016 and two persons in 2017 (the year of visa liberalisation). In view of such low numbers, we cannot talk of growth in persons identified.

The situation concerning citizens of **Ukraine** however is different. Although the number of Ukrainians found working illegally had already risen dramatically before visa liberalisation (between 2015 and 2016 almost by 82 %), in the year of visa liberalisation the number of Ukrainians found rose by 57 % as against 2016 and making a total of 1,563 Ukrainians found working illegally in 2017.

Since 2016, citizens of **Ukraine** and **Moldova** have been found working illegally in significantly greater numbers. An upward trend is detected also in 2018. Most of these persons have valid legal stays, with the citizens of Ukraine mostly holding Polish Schengen visas, or they are staying under the visa-free regime (this also applies to citizens of Moldova).

However, on the basis of available data, the influence of visa liberalisation on illegal employment in the CZ cannot be examined.

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 3.2.6: Total number of smuggled persons from the visa-free countries (final court rulings)⁹⁹

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
	<i>(insert all available data or <u>at least</u> 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of <u>smuggled</u> persons from the visa-free countries (final court rulings)	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Montenegro	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Serbia	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Albania	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Moldova	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Georgia	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Ukraine	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Total	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Total number of <u>smuggled</u> persons from third countries (final court rulings)¹⁰⁰	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	

*Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

⁹⁹ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities.

¹⁰⁰ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of smuggled persons from third countries.

The Czech Republic has not numbers of smuggled persons at its disposal.

Table 3.2.7: Total number of trafficked persons from the visa-free countries (final court rulings)¹⁰¹

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
	(insert all available data or <u>at least</u> 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)											
Total number of <u>trafficked</u> persons from the visa-free countries (final court rulings)	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Montenegro	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Serbia	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Albania	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Moldova	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Georgia	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Ukraine	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Total	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Total number of <u>trafficked</u> persons from third countries (final court rulings)¹⁰²	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	

*Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).

¹⁰¹ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities.

¹⁰² All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of trafficked persons from third countries.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

The Czech Republic has not numbers of trafficked persons at its disposal.

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 3.2.8: Total number of identified facilitators¹⁰³ of unauthorised entry, transit and residence¹⁰⁴ from the visa-free countries (final court rulings)¹⁰⁵

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) (insert all available data or <u>at least</u> 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
Total number of identified facilitators of unauthorised entry, transit and residence from the visa-free countries (final court rulings)												
FYROM	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Montenegro	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	
Serbia	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	
Albania	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	
Moldova	3	5	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	
Georgia	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Ukraine	0	1	0	3	4	0	2	5	1	2	8	It should be borne in mind that Ukrainians are the largest group of foreign nationals with long-term authorisation of stay in the CZ (117,061 citizens legally staying in the territory of the CZ

¹⁰³ This refer to the nationality of the facilitators. EU nationalities can be provided in the second part of the table.

¹⁰⁴ Facilitators of the unauthorised entry, transit and residence - intentionally assisting a person who is not a national of an EU Member State either to enter or transit across the territory of a Member State in breach of laws on the entry or transit of aliens, or, for financial gain, intentionally assisting them to reside within the territory of a Member State in breach of the laws of the State concerned on the residence of aliens (see Article 1(1)(a) and (b) of Council Directive 2002/90/EC).

¹⁰⁵ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

												for a period longer than 90 days as of 31 December 2017). Source: Foreign Police Service Directorate, Department of asylum and migration policy
Total	6	7	1	7	4	3	2	5	3	2	9	
Total number of identified facilitators of unauthorised entry, transit and residence (final court rulings)¹⁰⁶	92	109	67	62	85	82	121	99	83	39	47	For all data in this table: Sections 340 and 341 of Act No. 40/2009 Coll. (Penal Code) and Sections 171a and 171d of Act No. 140/1961 Coll. (Penal Act).
TOP 5 EU Member States (if we count the total number for the period 2007-2017)												
Czech Republic	74	73	48	46	60	62	99	68	12	11	26	
Hungary	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	2	0	
Poland	0	2	2	0	1	3	3	1	1	1	0	
Slovakia	2	3	5	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	
Germany	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	1	

¹⁰⁶ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of identified facilitators of unauthorised entry, transit and residence.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

*Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

Source: Ministry of Justice of the Czech Republic

TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS CONVICTED BY FINAL COURT RULING FOR FACILITATION OF UNAUTHORISED ENTRY, TRANSIT AND RESIDENCE FOR THE PERIOD 2007–2017 (Table 3.2.8)¹⁰⁷

As for citizens from countries with visa liberalisation listed in table 3.2.8., it is impossible to identify any trend in view of the low number of data sample (numbers of convicted persons almost equal zero for the past 10 years for these nationalities).

Citizens of Ukraine are the only exception. The number of convicted Ukrainian nationals rose four times in the year in which visa liberalisation occurred (a rise from 2 persons in 2016 to 8 persons in 2017).

The CZ recorded a fall in the total number of persons convicted by final court ruling for aiding and abetting unauthorised stay, crossing the state border and transit stay (Section 340 and Section 341 of Act No. 40/2009 Coll., or else Section 171a and Section 171d of Act No. 141/1961 Coll.) between the years 2014–2016 and subsequently a 20 % rise in 2017 (from 39 person in 2016 to 47 persons in 2017).

However, the structure of nationalities convicted by final court ruling for the aforementioned crimes (table 3.2.8) changed significantly in 2015. While the citizens of the questioned eastern European countries with visa liberalisation were convicted almost exclusively between the years 2007 and 2013, absolutely dominated by citizens of the Czech Republic, citizens of Western countries* dominated in 2015 (the numbers of citizens of the CZ fall rapidly; see statistics below):

_____ 2014 2015

¹⁰⁷ Data does not differentiate between different types of authorisation of stay, therefore it is impossible to give data only for foreign nationals staying in the CR for up to 90 days.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Citizens of the CZ	68	12
Western European countries*	0	19

* DE, SE, FR, AT, IT, GB

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 3.2.9: Total number of nationals found to be illegally present from the visa-free countries¹⁰⁸

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
	<i>(insert all available data or <u>at least</u> 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of nationals found to be illegally present from the visa-free countries	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	N/I	40	45	20	40	25	25	25	20	30	30	
Montenegro	N/I	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	
Serbia	N/I	50	35	30	25	35	25	35	35	35	40	
Albania	N/I	0	5	5	0	5	5	10	25	20	20	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	N/I	10	0	5	20	5	5	15	10	15	10	
Moldova	N/I	95	140	95	85	85	60	50	50	135	260	
Georgia	N/I	95	165	30	70	65	45	30	30	35	60	
Ukraine	N/I	1,545	1,500	955	1,125	1,065	890	1,020	1,225	1,550	1,510	
Total	N/I	1,835	1,895	1,140	1,365	1,285	1,055	1,185	1,400	1,825	1,930	
Total number of third-country nationals found to be illegally present¹⁰⁹	N/I	3,335	3,955	2,655	3,085	3,315	3,695	4,430	8,165	4,885	4,360	

¹⁰⁸ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities. Also see Eurostat: Third-country nationals found to be illegally present - annual data (rounded) [migr_eipre]

¹⁰⁹ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of third-country national found to be illegally present.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

*Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

Note:

Data from Eurostat was compared with national data. The data was almost identical, the only difference being that Eurostat rounds to the nearest five.

Source: Eurostat

NUMBERS OF NATIONALS FROM COUNTRIES WITH VISA LIBERALISATION STAYING ILLEGALLY IN THE TERRITORY OF THE CZ 2008–2017 (also provided for question 3.1.5)

No fundamental change occurred in the area of illegal stays as for nationals of **Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia** after the introduction of the visa-free regime. These nationalities are represented only minimally in the total number of persons staying illegally (annual numbers in the units or tens).

The highest number of citizens of **Georgia** since 2008 was reached in 2009 (163 persons), when the main moderm operandi was illegal entry via Poland with the intention of continuing to Austria and often these were people seeking asylum in Poland. Over the years, their numbers fluctuate significantly between 28 and 163 persons. Concretely during the last few years, 2014-2016, the number was 28-36 persons. In 2017 there was an increase to 58 persons, when the majority of persons (20) reported to the Zastávka u Brna reception centre and upon filing an application for international protection their illegal stay was discovered. This trend continues considerably also in 2018 (from January to May 2018, a total of 50 Georgians, 36 of whom in the Zastávka u Brna reception centre).

The annual number of nationals from **Moldova** between 2008 and 2012 ranged between 85 and 140, then falling between 2013 and 2015 to 51 and 59 persons. Their numbers begin to rise from 2016 (2016 - 135, 2017 - 260). This upward trend continues also in 2018 (from January to May 2018, a total of 170 Moldovan citizens).

Citizens of **Ukraine** have long been among the nationalities which contribute the most to the number of persons found during an illegal stay (the exception was only 2015, when citizens of Syria were deported due to irregular transit migration – they had crossed the internal Schengen Czech-Slovak border, or the Austrian border with the intention of proceeding to Germany). The annual number of citizens of Ukraine between 2008 and 2009 was in the region of 1,500 persons, then falling between 2010 and 2015 to figures fluctuating between 890 and 1,225 persons. In 2016 and 2017 an increase occurred and their number was again around 1,500 persons. Therefore between 2016 and 2017 no fundamental change occurred

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

in illegal stays upon the introduction of visa-free relations. And the trend in 2018 so far shows no sign of change (from January to May 2018 a total of 590 citizens of Ukraine).

Table 3.2.10: Total number of overstayers from the visa-free countries¹¹⁰

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of overstayers from the visa-free countries	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Montenegro	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Serbia	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Albania	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Moldova	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Georgia	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Ukraine	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Total	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	
Total number of third-country nationals overstayers¹¹¹	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	

¹¹⁰ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities. Also see Eurostat: Third-country nationals found to be illegally present - annual data (rounded) [migr_eipre]

¹¹¹ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of third-country national overstayers.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

**Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).*

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

Note:

The category "overstayers" represents a subset of persons found to be staying illegally (here table 3.2.9.), but are not recorded at statistics separately by the Foreign Police Service Directorate and so the table has not been filled.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination**Section 4: Measures put in place to deal with possible misuse of visa-free regimes by (Member) States*****National Contribution (max. 6 pages)***

The aim of this Section is to evaluate the measures put in place by Member States to deal with the possible misuse of visa-free regimes, how effective these measures were and more generally how did Member State respond and cooperate in cases of an influx of asylum seekers from the visa-free countries.

The synthesis report will aim to include infographics and visuals, therefore please take that into account when answering the questions by adding any innovative or visual presentations in your national reports that can carry through into the synthesis report. We also welcome any photos/images which are captioned, relevant and (data) protected with your national contribution.

Please do not leave any answer box empty and insert N/A or NI as applicable.

SECTION 4.1: DESCRIPTION OF NATIONAL SITUATION

Q4.1. Did your (Member) State implement certain measures (if any) to deal with the challenges that appeared after the commencement of the visa-free regime? Please provide a short description of your national situation.

Specific measures can be detailed in sub-questions **Q4.1.2** to **Q4.1.7**.

In the Czech Republic the **Analytic Centre for State Border Protection and Migration (ANACEN)**, where information is shared on trends and new findings in the area of migration and border protection from various Czech state institutions concerned with legal and illegal migration, exists. Its interdepartmental nature is important because all the bodies involved in the system for managing the protection of state borders and international migration participate in the activities of ANACEN through close cooperation and information exchange, which allows for a flexible and quick response to any problems that arise.

Representatives of the National Central Unit for Combating Organised Crime also cooperate closely with the **Foreign Police Service Directorate** and the **National Centre for Document Verification (run by the Foreign Police Service Directorate)** in the area of identification of forgery workshops and information on smuggling groups in Europe. In connection with the issue of illegal migration they also participate in production of weekly materials for the **Integrated Political Crisis Response arrangements** questionnaire. The aim of these arrangements is to share the most relevant and current trends in the area of illegal migration, new migration flows, routes, changes and predictions, new methods of illegal migration/smuggling people with other European police authorities. Representatives of the Human Trafficking and Illegal Migration Department also take part in specialised meetings with representatives of Member States of the **Salzburg Forum (Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia)**, and also with partner states at various levels. The meetings are held at a level of police chiefs responsible for addressing the issue of illegal migration and also at expert level where representatives of the National Central Unit for Combating Organised Crime discuss the most efficient strategy for combating organised smuggling groups, share best practices and plan combined action mainly by forming joint investigative teams (JIT), focusing on new migration routes and flows with an aim to creating a tool for real-time information sharing. The activities of National Central Unit for Combating Organised Crime representatives also entail performing tasks connected with the CZ joining an **EMPACT project** focused on the priority of Illegal Migration in the EU policy cycle for the fight

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

against serious international and organised crime. In cooperation with **EUROPOL**, National Central Unit for Combating Organised Crime representatives actively participate in activities organised under this project with an accent on the matter of illegal migration/smuggling. Under the **EMPACT Illegal Migration** project, the National Central Unit for Combating Organised Crime representatives participate in preparative and strategic meetings of the **EUROPOL** section **European Migrant Smuggling Centre** for joint action days focusing on current trends in the area of illegal migration with the objective of breaking up organised groups of smugglers. Recently, the National Central Unit for Combating Organised Crime representatives have become involved in the priority Document Fraud which is very closely linked to the matter of illegal migration. Operative information is passed on by the National Central Unit for Combating Organised Crime to the locally and substantively relevant units of the Police of the Czech Republic; close cooperation takes place with the Ministry of the Interior (the Department of asylum and migration policy), the Foreign and Border Police and Czech intelligence services.

Measures in the area of returns are important items on the agenda of the voluntary returns unit and immigration unit of the Department of asylum and migration policy of the Ministry of the Interior. These measures also affect citizens of the visa-free countries that are the subject of this study, but these are universal measures that are not aimed exclusively on the countries selected for this study.

In the course of the actions of the Interdepartmental Authority for Combating Illegal Employment of Foreign Nationals, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs maps the current situation and assesses the risks linked to the issue of potential abuse of visa-free relations for remunerated activity of foreign nationals living in the territory of CZ. If illegal behaviour is found in foreign nationals, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs proposes joint action for dealing with the situation at hand.

No new measures have been adopted in the area of human trafficking in view of the fact that no significant increase in victims of trafficking in persons from the countries studied that might have been caused by visa liberalisation.

Q4.1.1 If applicable, please categorise your answer to **Q4.1** by third country:

Western Balkans - FYROM, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina:

-

Eastern Partnership - Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine:

Especially after the introduction of visa liberalisation with Ukraine, inspections aimed at detecting illegal employment of these citizens intensified.

Furthermore, the Embassy and consulates in Ukraine has registered an increasing number of work permits issued by Labour Offices of the CZ. This prompted calls for a system for online viewing of a database of issued work permits for state institutions, which deal with illegal employment. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is currently working on this solution.

Q4.1.2. If applicable, did your (Member) State implement measures to increase the efforts to promote voluntary return? If yes, for which nationalities and explain their impact.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

With respect to raising the efficacy of returns, including returns to the countries focused on in this study, the Ministry of the Interior has taken certain measures intended to make voluntary returns more attractive. One such measure is fundamental enlargement of the target group of foreign nationals to whom, under the law, the Ministry of the Interior may provide help to with their return to their home state. In addition to third-country nationals issued with an administrative expulsion decision, the target group would also include persons who have received a sentence of expulsion and also persons whose authorisation of stay in the territory has been terminated and those who terminate their authorisation of stay at their own request and also those whose authorisation of stay in the territory has not been extended.

Another fundamental measure is the legally formalised possibility of significant reduction of the length of a ban on entry to the territory in the event that the foreign national honours his/her obligation to leave the country under voluntary return.

The aforementioned measures are contained in an amendment to Act No. 326/1999 Coll. on Residence of Foreign Nationals, which is currently in the approval process.

In addition to legislative measures, the Ministry of the Interior is attempting to raise awareness in foreign nationals who are required to leave the country by an administrative decision about the possibility of applying for assistance with their return to their country of origin, i.e. raising awareness of the options offered by voluntary return. We are preparing broadly focused measures under which all foreign nationals issued with such decision will also receive a written offer to participate in the voluntary returns programme.

Q4.1.3. If applicable, did your (Member) State implement measures to expand the legal possibilities of stay? If yes, for which nationalities and explain their impact.

Not at all. Legislation is sufficiently liberal.

Q4.1.4. If applicable, did your (Member) State implement measures to fight illegal employment? If yes, please explain their impact and add specific examples.

Illegal employment inspections in 2017 were made one of the main inspection tasks of the State Labour Inspection Authority, fully in line with the priorities of Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and with the internal policy of the European Union.

Procedures for inspections aimed at detecting illegal employment were laid down and gradually modified. For ensuring efficiency and efficacy of the inspections performed, it is essential to react to new trends in the area of illegal employment in the course of the monitoring activities of inspectorate department's inspectors.

Advice and consultation provided in the course of inspections and via electronic communication was also an integral component of the inspection duties of the illegal employment section.

Q4.1.5. If applicable, did your (Member) State implement measures to fight the smuggling and/or trafficking of persons from the visa-free countries? If yes, please explain their impact and add specific examples.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

No new measures have been adopted in the area of human trafficking in view of the fact that no significant increase in victims of trafficking in persons from the countries studied that might have been caused by visa liberalisation.

Q4.1.6. If applicable, did your (Member) State implement measures to fight the activities of facilitators of unauthorised entry, transit and residence? If yes, please explain their impact and add specific examples.

Such measures did not have to be implemented.

Q4.1.7. If applicable, did your (Member) State implement measures to reduce the incidence of nationals found to be illegally present in your country? If yes, please explain their impact and add specific examples. Please also see **Q4.4** (on overstayers) before answering to avoid overlap.

In connection with visa liberalisation in Ukraine, the Ministry of the Interior published an information leaflet with detailed information on the conditions of stay and employment of Ukrainian citizens in the Czech Republic. It describes mainly how the conditions for entry into Czech territory and access to professional activity have been affected by the introduction of visa-free relations. The information leaflet was produced in Czech and Ukrainian language versions, was published on the Ministry of the Interior website and that of many other institutions. The impact of this measure was not monitored. The aim was to inform Ukrainians that in the course of a visa-free stay working is not possible.

Q4.1.8. If applicable, what was the effectiveness of the measures listed above and which of them were most successful in reaching their intended goals? Please provide any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

To facilitate effective cooperation during inspections for illegal employment, tried and tested cooperation continued between labour inspectorates and security units, primarily the Foreign Police Service and also with other relevant institutions including the Labour Office of the CZ and the Czech Social Services Administration both at a regional and central level. When expedient, the inspectorates passed on the results of their inspection and administrative activities to other authorities – register courts, trades licensing authorities and to tax offices.

Q4.2. Did your (Member) State implement measures to deal with administrative burdens since the introduction of the visa-free regime?¹¹² If yes, please list and explain these measures, their impact / effectiveness and add any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

- Increase of inspections of illegal employment
- Increased numbers of checks performed by Foreign Police Service Directorate

¹¹² For example: significant increase of residence permit applications, increased demand for work permits, more time-consuming border control procedure due to the lack of visas. etc.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Q4.3. Did your (Member) State implement measures to deal with the possible misuse of visa liberalisation?¹¹³ If yes, please list and explain these measures, their impact / effectiveness and add any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

The National Drug Headquarters is attempting to overcome problems connected with visa liberalisation in the area of drug crime by more intensive and effective cooperation with police forces of the countries concerned. In this respect, for instance joint investigation teams (JITs) have proved their worth.

The National Central Unit for Combating Organised Crime cooperates and actively exchanges information with the Foreign Police Service, the Police Presidium and the Department of asylum and migration policy of the Ministry of the Interior and cooperates with foreign partners of the relevant states by active exchange of information.

A possible tool for combating the misuse of visa would be greater involvement of law enforcement authorities of the countries in question in joint action plans, joint investigation teams, particularly within the EU/EMPACT Policy Cycle.

In the course of the actions of the Interdepartmental Authority for Combating Illegal Employment of Foreign Nationals, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs maps the current situation and assesses the risks linked to the issue of potential abuse of visa-free relations for remunerated activity of foreign nationals living in the territory of CZ. If illegal behaviour is found in foreign nationals, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs proposes joint action for dealing with the situation at hand.

Q4.4. How did your (Member) State deal with cases when third-country nationals entered the country legally, but did not legalize their stay after 90 days (overstayers)? Please provide a short description of such instances while highlighting any measures implemented by your country to deal with this. If applicable, what was the impact / effectiveness of these measures and are there any good practices / lessons learned you have identified?

Proceedings for administrative expulsion are initiated in accordance with Act No. 326/1999 Coll., on the Residence of Foreign Nationals in the Territory of the CZ. In connection with this fact, also increased numbers of stay authorisation checks performed by separate departments of the Foreign Police at regional police directorates aimed at detecting illegal employment are also conducted.

Q4.4.1 In the case of overstayers from the visa-free countries, does your (Member) State apply a different return procedure compared to the usual procedure? If yes, please provide a short description of such instances while highlighting any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

No special measures in the area of returns which would concern visa-free countries that are the subject of this study have been introduced. We apply an identical approach to nationals of all third countries.

¹¹³ For example, dealing with cases when persons enter the country legally but later become illegally employed, are staying in the country legally, but are working without a work permit or apply for asylum without reasonable grounds.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Q4.4.2 Does your (Member) State apply any special procedures in cases where overstayers have lost their identification documents or in instances where there are problems with their identification? If yes, please provide a short description of such instances while highlighting any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

The individual departments of the Foreign Police at Regional Police Directorates detain persons without documents in accordance with Act No. 326/1999 Sb., on the Residence of Foreign Nationals in the Territory of the CZ in foreign national detention facilities; the Foreign Police Service Directorate then takes steps towards verification of their identity (via the relevant embassy) and subsequently implement their expulsion from the territory of the CZ or EU Member States.

Q4.4.3 If applicable, what was the effectiveness of these procedures (see **Q4.4.1** and **Q4.4.2**) and were they successful in reaching their intended goals? Please provide any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

The Foreign Police Service Directorate finds that communication with the relevant embassies is of a high standard and problem-free. The identity of persons tends to be verified and those persons are issued with a replacement travel document. The Foreign Police Service Directorate praises cooperation with the Georgian Embassy in Prague, which shows an active interest in nationals of Georgia who break Czech laws.

Q4.5. How did your cooperation with the visa-free countries evolve over time in terms of assistance and information exchange, before and after the visa-free regime commencement?¹¹⁴ Please provide a short description and specific examples of your national situation disaggregated by region and third countries of interest.

Western Balkans - FYROM, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina:

Cooperation between the Czech Ministry of the Interior and Balkan countries has become more intensive mainly in reaction to the migration crisis. Exchange of information in the area of migration works well especially with the **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** and **Serbia**. The Czech Republic has contributed financially to building capacities in the area of asylum and migration infrastructure of those countries and made several study visits and exchanges of experts in asylum and other activities are planned. Organisation of these activities is simpler after relaxation of the visa regime.

Eastern Partnership - Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine:

Georgian authorities are very open to cooperation and are trying very hard to maintain visa liberalisation.

Q4.5.1. If applicable, how effective was the cooperation with third countries to reach your desired goals? Where there any particular differences in your interactions with different third countries and did you identify any good practices / lessons learned?

¹¹⁴ For example, in terms of information campaigns in the third countries working on the elimination of 'push factors' – unemployment, poverty, poor conditions in the national health system, assistance to visa-free countries from Member States and reintegration assistance to returnees.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

In the area of asylum and migration, the Czech Ministry of the Interior has very firmly rooted cooperation especially with the **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia**.

Q4.6. If applicable, how did your (Member) State respond to the influx of asylum seekers from the visa-free countries? Please provide a short description of the measures taken and any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.¹¹⁵

In general terms, it may be said that the process of liberalisation of the visa regime has not had a great influence on the number of applications for international protection from **Western Balkan countries**.

As for **Moldova**, the number of applications for international protection remains stable. The number of application for international protection from citizens of **Ukraine** is more or less stable and liberalisation of the visa regime did not provoke higher numbers than usual (in view of the fact that visa liberalisation took place just a year ago, it is impossible for the time being to assess the situation in any detail).

A different trend has been registered in the case of Georgia. Before visa liberalisation in 2017, the number of applications for international protection was never more than 50 applications per year. In 2017, 130 applications for international protection were registered. **Georgia therefore is the only country when an increase in the number of applications for international protection has risen.** Even when talking of Georgia, it should be pointed out that the data is still limited due to the fact that visa liberalisation was introduced just one year ago. In addition, this total number of applicants also includes Dublin cases, e.g. persons who were issued a visa to enter this country by a Czech embassy but who at once left the CZ for Germany and, if they were detained in Germany, applied for international protection in that neighbouring country. Subsequently such persons were returned to the Czech Republic and are listed as applicants for international protection (i.e. this has nothing to do with visa liberalisation).

Q4.6.1 If applicable, were the measures of your (Member) State effective to manage the influx of asylum seekers from the visa-free countries? Please provide a short description of your national situation highlighting any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

-

Q4.6.2 If applicable, how did your (Member) State cooperate with other (Member) States found in a similar situation (i.e. influx of asylum seekers from the visa-free countries)? Please provide a short description of your national situation and any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

-

¹¹⁵ For example, using the concept of safe country of origin.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Q4.6.3 Did you receive assistance from the EU to deal with the influx of asylum seekers from the visa-free countries? If yes, how effective was the assistance in supporting your (Member) State? Please provide a short description of your national situation and any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

No

Q4.7. What other measure (or good practice / lesson learned) was adopted by your (Member) State in relation to visa liberalisation that was not already captured in the previous questions, if applicable?

At the same time, are there any planned measures that will be adopted in the nearby future?¹¹⁶

Primarily increasing cooperation with partners abroad in the area of organised crime.
To facilitate effective monitoring of trends relating to liberalisation of the visa regime, the Czech Republic has decided to introduce the possibility of including information in several national information systems on whether a person in question arrived in the CZ on a visa or under the visa-free regime.

¹¹⁶ For example, in relation to Ukraine or Georgia for which the visa waiver agreement entered into force in 2017.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination**Section 5: Conclusions****National Contribution (max. 3 pages)**

The aim of this Section is to outline the main findings of the Study and present conclusions relevant for policymakers at national and EU level.

The synthesis report will aim to include infographics and visuals, therefore please take that into account when answering the questions by adding any innovative or visual presentations in your national reports that can carry through into the synthesis report. We also welcome any photos/images which are captioned, relevant and (data) protected with your national contribution.

Please do not leave any answer box empty and insert N/A or NI as applicable.

Q5.1. With regard to the aims of this Study, what conclusions would you draw from the findings reached in elaborating your National Contribution?

The aim of the study was to assess what impact the abolition of visa obligations had on separate Member States. In view of the fact that no data at national level differentiates between persons coming to the CZ under the visa-free regime or on a visa or with a long-term residence permit, it is impossible to assess the direct impacts of visa liberalisation with the individual states. Therefore the study mainly describes the situation and trends following visa liberalisation and indirect impact (see introduction section for more detailed description).

Q5.2. What do you consider to be the relevance of your findings to (national and/or EU level) policymakers?

-