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# EMN Quarterly

Period: October-December 2022

Edition: N.41

The EMN Quarterly provides policymakers and other practitioners with updates on recent migration and international protection policy developments at EU and national level. The 41<sup>st</sup> edition provides information from **October-December 2022**, including the (latest) relevant published statistics.

The Quarterly is organised by policy theme. You can directly access your area of interest by clicking on one of the following themes:

## TEMPORARY PROTECTION DIRECTIVE

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2. INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION INCLUDING ASYLUM
3. UNACCOMPANIED MINORS AND VULNERABLE GROUPS
4. LEGAL MIGRATION
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10. EXTERNAL DIMENSION
11. ANNEX: EU & COMPLEMENTARY STATISTICS, ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, OTHER EMN OUTPUTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

## SPECIAL NOTE

### Recent EMN publications:

- [EMN inform on the Application of the Temporary Protection Directive \(Scope and Registration\)](#)
- [EMN inform on Arrangements for accommodation and housing for beneficiaries of temporary protection](#)
- [EMN inform on Access to services for beneficiaries of temporary protection](#)
- [EMN inform on Measures to support transition to adulthood for unaccompanied minors](#)
- [EMN inform on Prospects of displaced populations in non-EU first reception and transit countries](#)

### Recent EU-level event highlight:

- As the EU designated the year 2022 as the European Year of Youth to highlight the importance of young people's futures by including young people and their priorities in policy-making, the EMN organised a Youth Event on 16 November. The event was organised in hybrid format and consisted of **decentralised in-person national events** in the following countries: Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, France, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Slovenia, Slovakia, Spain. Each national event **joined up at one EU-level online event**, hosted by EMN Luxembourg. A training

session was also held for the EMN educational Tool '[Destination Europe](#)'. More information on the national events is described at the end of this Quarterly and on the EMN webpage.

#### Stay tuned for upcoming EMN publications:

- EMN study on the Integration of international protection applicants in the labour market
- EMN study on Migration and displacement related to climate change, environmental degradation and natural disasters
- EMN inform on Accompanied children's right to be heard in the international protection procedures
- EMN inform on Resettlement, humanitarian admissions and community sponsorship programmes

### TEMPORARY PROTECTION DIRECTIVE

#### EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATE

On 10 October 2022, the European Commission [launched the EU Talent Pool pilot](#) initiative, a new online job search tool that will support people fleeing the war in Ukraine to find employment more swiftly and effectively in the EU.

On 21 October 2022, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) [published its second Ukraine Bulletin](#), covering the broad fundamental rights impact of the war in Ukraine in EU Member States. Also in October, FRA [provided an overview of how the Temporary Protection Directive is applied](#) at national level in 16 EU Member States.

In October 2022, the EUAA, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (IOM) and OECD [published a joint report](#) on profiles, experiences, and aspirations of forcibly displaced people following the war in Ukraine.

By 6 November 2022, there were nearly [4.7 million registrations](#) for temporary protection status recorded since the war in Ukraine had begun.

[Data from Eurostat](#) shows that in December 2022, among the EU Member States for which data are available, Poland granted the highest number of temporary protection statuses to Ukrainians fleeing Ukraine (31 860) as a consequence of Russia's invasion. Poland was followed by Germany (25 110), Romania (11 260) and France (6 070). Eurostat publishes [monthly statistics](#) on Ukrainians granted temporary protection, where the latest data is publicly available.

#### NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

**Austria:** On 30 November 2022, Statistics Austria [published the results of the population forecast](#) in a press release. According to the results, refugee migration from Ukraine will lead to higher immigration in 2022 than in 2015, when many people from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq came to Austria. Due to immigration from Ukraine, Austria's population reached nine-million as early as the first quarter of 2022.

**Bulgaria:** From the beginning of November 2022 to 31 December 2022, the Agency for Social Assistance (through its regional structures) provided recipients of temporary protection with vouchers for food and essential goods. The vouchers are financed by a project under the Operational Programme for Food and/or Basic Material Assistance, 2014 – 2020. The amount of the vouchers is BGN 100 (€ 50). Their validity period is two months from the date of their issuance. As of 13 December 2022, 29 131 persons applied for vouchers with a total of 25 452 vouchers issued.

**Croatia:** On 10 October 2022, after [the EU Talent Pool was launched](#) on the EURES portal, the Croatian Employment Service joined the Pilot project. The National Coordination Office for EURES Croatia was named the national contact point in Croatia. The online tool helps identify and map the skills of those under temporary protection, fleeing the war in Ukraine, and match them with EU employers.

On 15 December 2022, [a meeting was held](#) with the delegation of the Party of Pensioners of Ukraine, to exchange experiences and achievements in the field of social policy, pension insurance and humanitarian aid. The meeting was attended by the president of the Party of Pensioners of Ukraine, Mr. Mykola Kukurika, and representatives of the Croatian Party of Pensioners and the Ministry of Labour, the Pension System, Family and Social Policy - the Directorate for the Pension System and the Directorate for Family and Social Policy.

**Estonia:** In December 2022 a [self-service portal of the Police and Border Guard Board was opened](#) to Ukrainian citizens to whom Estonia has granted temporary protection and who wish to apply for an extension of temporary protection. It is possible to apply for the extension three months before the expiration of the residence permit.

In December 2022 the [Social Insurance Board signed a new contract](#) with Tallink Group for offering short-term accommodation to Ukrainian refugees on the ship Isabelle. In the past eight months more than 5 000 Ukrainian refugees (mostly women and children) have been accommodated on the ship. The new contract has been signed for six months with the possibility to extend it by one month up to a maximum duration of two months.

**Finland:** On 29 December 2022, [a temporary amendment to the Aliens Act was approved](#) by the President of the Republic. The temporary amendment ensures the validity of residence permits issued in Finland to beneficiaries of temporary protection for as long as the temporary protection is in effect in the EU. A person's first residence permit will be issued directly for the entire period of validity of the temporary protection. Moreover, those who have already received residence permits will not need to apply for an extension separately.

On 20 December 2022, [amendments to the Integration Act and Reception Act to secure services for those who have fled Ukraine were approved](#). In order to secure access to integration services, the Integration Act and the Reception Act will be amended to allow the central government to pay compensation to municipalities and wellbeing services in counties for service provision. The amendments to the Reception Act specify how the reception service provision ends when beneficiaries of temporary protection are assigned to a municipality of residence.

**France:** On 5 October 2022, in order to financially support families who voluntarily host displaced persons fleeing Ukraine, [a grant of € 150 per month was announced](#), on the condition of having hosted such beneficiaries for at least 90 days (3 months). It will cover the period from 1 April to 31 December 2022. This support concerns all households hosting beneficiaries of temporary protection as granted by the European Union to all persons displaced by the war, regardless of their nationality.

**Italy:** As of 14 December 2022, the National Association of Italian Municipalities recorded [2 937 Ukrainian citizens accepted and registered](#) in the Reception and Integration System database.

**Latvia:** On 13 December 2022, [Amendments to the Law on Assistance to Ukrainian Civilians came into force](#) which provide for the extension of the deadline for the provision of a number of existing aid measures until 30 June 2023 and include:

- Compensation for accommodation of Ukrainian civilians;
- State aid for accommodation;
- Reimbursement of expenses for the purchase of medicinal products or medical devices to a Ukrainian civilian.

From 1 January 2023 onwards, a temporary residence permit will be issued for a period of two years for those Ukrainian civilians who apply for temporary protection status in Latvia and a document certifying such status will be provided.

For those Ukrainian civilians who received temporary protection status in Latvia in 2022, any long-term visas and residence permits issued by 31 December 2022 will be valid until 4 March 2024, regardless of the period of validity specified.

The documents will continue to be valid in Latvia, but Ukrainian civilians will have the opportunity to request a new residence permit in the following cases:

- Where a person needs to travel outside the territory of the Republic of Latvia (in cases where a person refuses temporary protection status in the Republic of Latvia and travels to another country or returns to Ukraine, a new residence permit will not be issued);
- the visa or residence permit issued to the person has been lost or has become invalid due to damaged or altered data;
- the person has previously been issued a visa, but the person needs to obtain a residence permit in order to make use of the electronic signature, or the validity of the residence permit previously issued by the person has expired, but the person wishes to continue to use the electronic signature facilities.

On 12 October 2022, [Amendments to the Law on Assistance to Ukrainian Civilians came into force](#) including a paragraph on Loss of temporary protection status of Ukrainian civilians in the Republic of Latvia. The aforementioned amendments to the law list the conditions for the loss of temporary protection status.

The European Commission [provided Latvia with € 7.8 million to host Ukrainian civilians](#). The financing agreement between the European Commission's Directorate for Migration and Home Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior was signed on 13 December 2022.

**Lithuania:** On 13 December 2022, the [Ministry of Social Security and Labour reported](#) that of the almost 72 000 Ukrainian nationals who found refuge in Lithuania, approximately 21 000 are employed. The majority of them (75 %) work in jobs requiring medium/high qualifications.

On 16 December 2022, the [Migration Department reported](#) that from the beginning of the new year, Ukrainian nationals residing in Lithuania will be issued only digital temporary residence permits.

On 21 December 2022, the [Ministry of Social Security and Labour announced](#) that in response to the European Commission's decision to extend the Temporary Protection Directive until 4 March 2024, it decided to prolong the provision of compensations for individuals and businesses providing accommodation for Ukrainian refugees until the end of 2023.

**Luxembourg:** On 28 October 2022, a new law on the recruitment of health professionals for the medical and health care of people fleeing the war in Ukraine [came into force](#). The law provides for faster recruitment of health professionals, the only condition being that the person has a license to practice the profession.

On 16 December 2022, the [Ukrainian-Luxembourgish-French dictionary was presented](#), jointly prepared by the Minister of National Education, Childhood and NGO ASTI. Printed in 5 000 copies, this practical tool is intended both for Ukrainian refugees who have arrived in Luxembourg since the invasion of their country by Russia on 24 February 2022, and for those who welcome them, work with them, teach them languages, or are simply curious about the Ukrainian language.

**The Netherlands:** From 6 October 2022, after a temporary pause due to a shortage of essential raw materials, 20 000 beneficiaries of temporary protection from Ukraine can again [collect residence endorsement stickers](#) from the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND). The stickers are distributed in three temporary IND locations. With the stickers, beneficiaries can demonstrate their legal stay in the Netherlands after the visa-free period expires.

On 4 November 2022, the Ministry of Justice and Security [announced amendments to the Regulation Residence Displaced Ukrainians](#) (RooO). As of 1 December 2022, an additional living allowance has been introduced for persons residing long term in a health care institution (€ 56.12 per month), as well as an allowance for performing volunteer work (€14 per week). Further changes came into effect on 1 February 2023.

On 4 November 2022, the Minister for Migration [introduced financial remigration assistance for non-Ukrainian third country beneficiaries of temporary protection](#) who resided legally in Ukraine

prior to the war and fled to the Netherlands. From 15 November 2022 until 1 February 2023, certain groups of third country nationals were offered this extra assistance by the Repatriation and Departure Service (DT&V) if they met all the requirements.

On 2 December 2022 it was announced that the additional funding for the acute reception of displaced persons from Ukraine by the Netherlands' security regions (*veiligheidsregio's*) had been [prolonged](#) until 30 June 2023. The additional funding aims to provide the stability the regions need for executing their tasks, as well as provide space for evaluation in the context of the acute reception of displaced persons from Ukraine.

**Poland:** On 29 November 2022, the Council of Ministers [adopted a draft law amending the Act on assistance to Ukrainian citizens](#) in connection with the armed conflict on the territory of this state and certain other laws. Citizens of Ukraine who stay in Poland in collective accommodation centres will contribute to the costs of accommodation and meals. Citizens of Ukraine, whose stay in Poland exceeds 120 days, will cover 50% of the costs of assistance, but not more than 40 PLN (about € 8,50) per person per day. People who live in collective accommodation centres for more than 180 days will cover 75% of the costs, but not more than 60 PLN (about € 13 EUR) per person per day. The costs will not need to be covered by people who are unable to work, e.g. due to disability, age, difficult life situation, pregnancy or the need to take care of children.

On 10 November 2022, Deputy Minister Paweł Szefernaker, government plenipotentiary for war refugees from Ukraine, presented a report in Brussels [summarising the assistance that Poland has provided to Ukrainian refugees](#) fleeing the war since 24 February 2022. The meeting was also attended by the Undersecretary of State in the Ministry of the Interior and Administration, Bartosz Grodecki, voivodes (representatives of government), representatives of local governments and non-governmental organisations.

**Portugal:** During the reporting period, [amendments came into force on the application of the Temporary Protection Directive](#) to people displaced from Ukraine as a result of the conflict on that territory. The most important changes refer to restrictions for non-Ukrainian third-country nationals who are entitled to benefit from the Temporary Protection of the Portuguese State. For instance, citizens who hold a temporary residence permit or who hold a long-term visa are excluded from access to TPD benefits. Amendments also provided updates to the definition of family members who are third-country nationals or stateless and who can benefit from Temporary Protection.

**Slovenia:** On 1 December 2022, Slovenia [adopted amendments regarding the application of the Temporary Protection Directive](#). The main novelty of the Regulation is that financial support for private accommodation is to be granted for a period of six months or for the duration of the rental contract or the agreement on the use of the property, if the rental period is shorter than six months.

**Spain:** On 25 October 2022 collaboration began with Banco Santander and Accenture in the design of ["TECHO Platform"](#). This is a digital platform that channels offers of rental housing by individuals, organisations, associations and others and is aimed at families with international or temporary protection, sheltered in the reception system. Priority is given to Ukrainian citizens. On 22 December an aggravating circumstance for the crime of trafficking in human beings was added, when the victim is a person whose situation of vulnerability has been caused or aggravated by a displacement resulting from an armed conflict or a humanitarian catastrophe.

**Sweden:** On 28 December 2022, a legal position paper (RS/003/2022) was adopted by the Swedish Migration Agency on the Temporary Protection Directive. Residence and work permits granted according to Directive 2001/55/EC must be valid until 4 March 2024. An extension of residence permits can be applied from 1 February to 4 March. The application is made digitally but followed

by a personal appointment at the Swedish Migration Agency as photo and fingerprints are required for the new residence permit card.

**Montenegro:** In October 2022, the Ministry of Interior of Montenegro completed the procedures for free accommodation for Ukrainian citizens, under the temporary protection programme. More than 200 hotel rooms have been provided in the central and southern regions of Montenegro.

During the last quarter of 2022, 1 096 Ukrainian citizens applied for temporary protection in Montenegro. During the same time period, 1 110 requests were approved.

Preparation of Montenegro's national contingency plan in case of a mass influx of Ukrainian refugees is in its final phase.

A national coordination body for supervising the implementation of the Decision on granting temporary protection to persons from Ukraine has submitted its work report to the Government of Montenegro. In addition, a Decision on Amendments to the Decision on granting temporary protection to persons from Ukraine is being prepared.

## 1. GENERAL POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

### EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATE

On 5 October 2022, the European Commission's Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs [presented awards for innovative projects in civil society](#). One of these awards went to ANYWHERE, a project that reinforces societal resilience by increasing the capacity to respond to extreme climate-induced events through technology for increased civil protection across Europe.

On 22 November 2022, the Council of the EU [held a training session on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights](#) for Justice and Home Affairs Councillors. The training came after finding that the Charter is often not used among national authorities. Tools developed by the European Union Agency on Fundamental Rights (FRA) were presented, such as [Charterpedia](#), a [trainer's manual](#) containing instructor information on the Charter available in nine languages, and [other tools](#) to promote knowledge of the Charter at national level.

In December 2022, the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) [met with representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina](#) to discuss strengthening their international protection systems. This came as the [EU Western Balkans Action Plan](#) begins to be implemented and the country was [granted EU candidate status](#) by the European Council.

During the reporting period, [Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia moved closer to becoming full participants in the Schengen area, with Croatia becoming a full Schengen member at the start of 2023](#). While these countries were already partly bound by Schengen rules, fact-finding missions showed their readiness to fully join Schengen by having established the necessary infrastructure and measures to protect fundamental rights at the external border, combat irregular migration, and tackle trafficking in human beings, amongst others. Next steps include a decision from the Schengen Council, a unanimous approval from all Member States participating fully in Schengen, and agreement from the European Parliament.

In October 2022, [Armenia became an Observer Country in the European Migration Network](#).

### NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

**Austria:** On 30 September 2022 a Federal Law Gazette was [promulgated revising the provision of the COVID-19 Entry Regulation](#) regulating which vaccinations are considered as evidence of a low epidemiological risk.

On 6 October 2022, 28 October 2022, 10 November 2022, 12 December 2022 and on 23 December 2022 an extension of the validity period of the Regulation of the Federal Minister of the Interior on [the temporary re-introduction of border controls at the internal borders with Slovakia](#) was [promulgated](#) in the Federal Law Gazette. According to the latest extension, the Regulation is valid until 26 January 2023.



On 6 November 2022, the new three-year programme [\(2022 to 2024\) of the Austrian Development Agency was adopted](#) in the Council of Ministers. Among other things, the budget for bilateral development aid in 2023 was increased to € 137 million and for humanitarian aid to € 77.5 million.

On 10 November 2022, a [Regulation by the Minister of the Interior was promulgated](#) according to which, in order to ensure public peace, order and security, the internal borders with Slovenia and Hungary may be crossed by land traffic only at border crossing points between 11 November 2022 and 11 May 2023.

**Croatia:** On 8 December 2022, the Council of the European Union [adopted a decision on the full application of the Schengen acquis in Croatia](#). From 1 January 2023, controls on persons at internal land and sea borders between Croatia and other Schengen countries will be abolished. Internal air border checks will be abolished from 26 March 2023.

**Finland:** On 20 December 2022, [the Ministry of the Interior commissioned an external study on the organization of migration administration](#). Requested by the leaders of the five government parties, the study aims to provide an overall picture of migration legislation, processes related to entry into and stay in Finland, and the roles of national authorities.

**Germany:** On 5 December 2022 the Indo-German Migration and Mobility Agreement signed by Federal Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock is [the first comprehensive agreement in the field of migration that Germany has concluded with a country of origin](#). This success is the result of intensive negotiations between the two countries in recent years and especially in recent months. The coalition agreement of the parties forming the Federal Government provides for the conclusion of holistic migration agreements with countries of origin. The agreement with India, therefore, serves as a model for further agreements of this kind.

**Greece:** On 12 December 2022, the Ministry of Migration and Asylum [signed a delivery-receipt protocol](#) for the “Eleonas” facility with the Municipality of Athens. An almost 10-thousand-acre area was given to the municipal authority after the relocation of the last third-country nationals who were hosted there. The area will be placed in a programme of double regeneration, to improve life conditions for those living in the centre of Athens. In total, the 121 facilities, operating in 2019, have been reduced today to 33 fully organised reception facilities, as a result of the swift examination of pending asylum cases and of the qualitative integration of third-country nationals recognized as refugees.

During the reporting period, the Reception and Identification Service (RIS), with support from EUAA, created and deployed a team of Case Management Reception Assistants to reception facilities under its responsibility throughout Greece. Within this framework, a standard operating procedure was drafted to describe the facilities’ functions and regulate their actions. Accompanying referral documents were also drafted to facilitate their work. The aim is to ensure the identification of needs, referral, and follow-up for all persons residing in reception facilities, leading to a harmonised system for case management in first- and second-line reception.

**Latvia:** On 14 December 2022, the [Saeima expressed confidence](#) in a new government led by the former Prime Minister, *Arturs Krišjānis Kariņš*. The aim of the new government, in accordance with [the Declaration](#) is the transformation of the Latvian economy for a better life in Latvia. In the Declaration, the government has committed itself to preventing irregular migration and promoting the remigration of Latvian citizens, by developing remigration programmes, targeted at different population groups and by facilitating their involvement in the labour market.

**Lithuania:** On 22 November 2022, to prevent the entry of foreign nationals deemed to create national security risks, the Ministry of Interior [amended](#) the Law regulating the procedures for the issue of documents giving the right to reside in Lithuania. The changes require foreigners who meet

certain criteria to submit additional documents or information when applying for a visa, residence permit, or residence card as a family member of an EU citizen.

**Poland:** On 1 November 2022, the Regulation of the Minister of the Interior and Administration entered into force, amending the Regulation of the Minister of the Interior and Administration of 19 February 2016, on the amount of aid for foreigners applying for international protection. The Regulation changes the amount of aid for daily alimentation of foreigners seeking international protection staying in so-called Centres for Foreigners from 9 PLN to 11 PLN.

**Slovenia:** On 20 December 2022, the EUAA signed an [Operational Plan](#) with Slovenia, making it the 13<sup>th</sup> EU Member State to benefit from the Agency's operational support with its asylum, reception, and temporary protection activities.

**Spain:** On 20 October 2022, the migration budget increased by 29%, reaching a total of € 814 million. More than € 630 million will be allocated to concerted actions, which will allow for changing the financing model for entities in the Reception System and the Humanitarian Care Programme. This new figure will provide stability, enable multiannual planning and improve transparency.

**Sweden:** On 18 October 2022, a new government took office in Sweden. The government consists of the Moderate Party, the Christian Democrats and the Liberal Party with support of the Sweden Democrats. The basis of the cooperation is the Tidö agreement, in which migration and integration are key issues. In his [statement of government policy](#), Prime Minister Ulf Karlsson announced a paradigm shift in Swedish migration policy. Temporary residence permits to be granted as a general rule instead of permanent resident permits, stricter conditions for family reunification, stricter requirements for Swedish citizenship, increased opportunities to withdraw residence permits and further incentives for voluntary returns are some of the planned reforms.

On 27 October 2022, the Swedish Migration Agency took a decision of strategic orientation for long-term cooperation with the National Government Service Center (Statens servicecenter). The aim is to improve the Swedish Migration Agency's geographical accessibility and service and to have greater flexibility when addressing changes in the number of applicants. This means that there will be more service offices that offer a number of services from the Swedish Migration Agency.

**Georgia:** On 3 November 2022, the Government of Georgia adopted a comprehensive policy document, "Development Strategy of Georgia – Vision 2023." The Strategy along with major policy directions (social, economic, healthcare, education etc.) includes the 2021-2030 Migration Strategy related goals, such as the facilitation of labour migration and strengthening Georgian diaspora abroad.

On 8-9 November 2022, the SCMI Secretariat and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) [held a joint regional conference on the role of local governments in mainstreaming migration in local development](#). The conference focused on successful models of engagement of local authorities in migration governance, in developing migration-related programmes and policies at the local level; models of coordination and cooperation between local authorities and national authorities, etc.

On 23 December 2022, the State Commission on Migration Issues (SCMI) adopted the 2023 Action Plan for the 2021-2030 Migration Strategy. The Action Plan includes 42 objectives and 105 activities to be implemented by SCMI [member and partner agencies](#) in 2023.

**Moldova:** On 23 November 2022, the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Moldova approved the [management of migration flows, asylum and integration of foreigners Program for the years 2022-2025](#). The Program will contribute to ensuring safe migration, establishing well-defined rules on admission and documentation procedures for foreigners, as well as increasing the quality of services provided to them.



It will also strengthen the national asylum system, ensure reception conditions in line with European standards and strengthen response capacities in the event of a mass influx of persons, including the migration crisis caused by the war in Ukraine. The program will enhance the development of the inter-institutional mechanism in order to increase the safety of the population and contribute to the fight against irregular migration. The document also provides activities on the integration of foreigners in the Republic of Moldova.



## 2. INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION INCLUDING ASYLUM EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

In October 2022, the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) [published a practical tool on the design and management of reception facilities](#) with the aim of supporting national and regional authorities.

In November 2022, 16 EU Member States [pledged over 29 000 places for resettlement and humanitarian admissions](#) for 2023, including expanding support for Afghan refugees. The European Commission allocated € 480 million for 2023-2025 to support these efforts once implemented.

In November 2022, [cooperation with civil society and NGOs was strengthened](#) regarding asylum and reception in Europe in the EUAA's Consultative Forum.

In December 2022, the EUAA [began defining standards and indicators on reception conditions and vulnerabilities](#) that will support EU Member States to improve their systems.

### LATEST RELEVANT STATISTICS

In December 2022, the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) released an [analysis on asylum applications](#), reporting that about 107 000 asylum applications were lodged in the EU+ in October 2022. In October, Syrians lodged the most applications (around 18 500), followed by Afghans (15 400) and Turks (7 400). Substantial increases were also seen from Russians (2 200) and Iranians (1 700). Application rates had continued to increase since [Q2 2022](#), when a new high had already been recorded since 2015/16. By 6 November 2022, there were also nearly 4.7 million registrations for temporary protection status recorded since the war in Ukraine had begun. Combined, asylum applications and registrations for temporary protection exceeded 5 million in 2022.

In November 2022, [Eurostat published an article](#) showing data on Ukrainians in the EU preceding the Russian invasion. The years 2013-2021 are covered, including the period of conflict in the Donbas region. At the end of 2021, Ukrainians represented the third biggest group of non-EU citizens in the EU, following Moroccan and Turkish citizens; 1.57 million Ukrainians held a valid residence permit in the EU at the end of 2021, mostly residing in Poland, Italy, and the Czech Republic.

### NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

**Austria:** On 10 December 2022, an amendment to the Agreement between the Federal State and the Provinces on Basic Care - Article 15(a) Federal Constitutional Act was [promulgated](#). According to the law, the Federal State and the provinces set up and operate, if necessary, initial reception centres for displaced persons from Ukraine. The Federal State compensates the provinces for their initial care costs with a flat rate of €190 per person retroactively from 1 March 2022. Furthermore, the scope of application of the Agreement has been extended to (non-Ukrainian) third-country nationals who fled Ukraine and whose entry into Austrian territory is allowed pursuant to Article 6 (5)(c) Schengen Border Code for the purpose of transit and immediate departure. In addition, selected maximum cost rates were increased.

**Belgium:** On 9 December 2022 the Belgian government granted the Brussels Capital Region € 20 million to cover the costs of emergency accommodation. This is linked to the struggle over the past few months for the federal reception agency Fedasil to provide accommodation for asylum seekers.

To tackle the saturation of the reception network, Fedasil has recently created several reception centres. To staff these new centres, a call was launched on 28 October 2022 by the Council of Ministers for civil servants to temporarily join Fedasil.

**Bulgaria:** In November 2022, training sessions for officials of the State Agency for Refugees were held in order to implement a measure, "Support for professional development, training and administrative capacity" of the Operational Support Plan signed between the Republic of Bulgaria and the European Union Agency for Asylum. Topics included the following:

- Temporary protection in the EU;
- Communication and provision of information;
- Communication with children and people who have experienced traumatic events.

**Croatia:** In November 2022, the project "Repairing the Reception Centre for International Protection Seekers in Kutina," with a total value of € 1 251 000 was finalised and the first applicants were moved into the facility after its renovation.

During the reporting period, the number of applications for international protection has increased significantly in Croatia. In the last quarter, Croatia recorded 5 012 international protection applications, which is an increase of 358% compared to the same period last year, when the number was a record 1 095 applications. Most applicants came from Russia, Burundi, Iraq, Cuba and Türkiye.

**Cyprus:** On 19 December 2022, the first relocation flight under the voluntary solidarity mechanism took place. Within this framework, 48 persons were transferred from Larnaca to Munich. So far, seven EU Member States (Bulgaria, Finland, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Portugal and Romania) and Norway have expressed their interest in the relocation mechanism from Cyprus. Contacts and communications along with lists of potential candidates have been developed by the competent authority in accordance with the requirements of interested Member States.

According to a decision of the Council of Ministers dated 28 July 2022, from 1 September 2022 the Social Welfare monthly benefits for housing for asylum seekers who do not have a rental agreement were reduced based on the number of persons per household. Details can be found on the relevant websites of the [Social Welfare Services](#) and the [Deputy Ministry of Social Welfare](#).

**Finland:** On 20 December 2022, The President of the Republic [approved an amendment on the family reunification process for minors](#). When a family member of a minor who has been granted international protection applies for family reunification, the family member may be granted a residence permit without the requirement for sufficient financial resources of sponsors who are minors. This will promote the protection of family life and the realization of the best interest of the child.

On 15 December 2022, the Finnish government [decided that to ease the pressure on the reception systems in the EU Member States in the Mediterranean](#), Finland will take up to 175 asylum seekers relocated from the region. The asylum seekers can be relocated to Finland if they are likely to need international protection.

**France:** On 15 December 2022, the capacity of temporary accommodation centres was reinforced by creating 1 000 new places in response to the increase in the number of beneficiaries of international protection. These centres represent temporary accommodation that offers the most vulnerable refugees who lack autonomy a temporary housing solution coupled with reinforced social support towards employment and housing.

**Germany:** Germany [launched the federal admission programme for particularly vulnerable Afghans](#) in mid-October 2022 to continue to support the people of Afghanistan as part of international efforts even after the Taliban seized power. The Federal Government has offered the prospect of admission to Germany to over 40 000 particularly vulnerable Afghans and their eligible family

members. These include, in particular, more than 24 800 former local Afghan forces and their family members, as well as 15 300 Afghans at particular risk, whom the Federal Government has identified with the help of civil society and who are exposed to particular individual danger because of their commitment to a democratic Afghanistan.

**Greece:** On 18 October 2022, a [Joint Ministerial Decision](#) entered into force. The Decision concerns the issuance of social number “PAAYPA”, which ensures access of applicants for international protection in the health services, medical care, social security and the labour market and inserts a new procedure (reduction of required documents) for eliminating administrative burden. More specifically, electronic communication with the competent Asylum Service and ‘e-Government Centre (competent authority of Ministry of Digital Governance) for Social Security *Societe Anonyme*’ (I.D.I.K.A. S.A.) is simplified. Also, according to Article 6 of the decision, all unaccompanied minors retain the right to access the above services until they reach adulthood, even if their application for international protection is rejected.

On 25 November 2022, another [Joint Ministerial Decision entered into force](#), that recast the national list of “safe countries of origin”, following the mandatory revision of up-to-date international sources. For a particular applicant, a country of origin is safe only if, after an individual examination of the application, it is demonstrated that the applicant (a) has the nationality of that country or is a stateless person and was previously a habitual resident of that country; and (b) has not submitted any serious grounds for considering the country not to be a safe country of origin in his or her particular circumstances and in terms of his or her qualification as a beneficiary of international protection. Currently, the following countries are characterized as safe countries of origin: Egypt, Albania, Algeria, Armenia, Georgia, Gambia, Ghana, India, Morocco, Bangladesh, Benin, Nepal, Pakistan, Senegal, Togo and Tunisia. Ukraine is no longer included in the list, as it cannot currently be characterized as such.

According to [Law 4939/2022 \(G.G. A' 111\)](#), art. 91, par. 3, the Director of Asylum Service conducted a special contribution on the latest developments on asylum policy for countries designated by national list as “safe third countries”. The designation of Turkey as a safe third country has been an important step for tackling illegal migration flows and the criminal activity of smuggling networks and for the full and unwavering implementation of the EU-Turkey Joint Declaration. Turkey remains as a designated safe third country for asylum-seekers from Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Somalia. The other two countries of the list are Albania and North Macedonia. Between October and December 2022, the Asylum Service efficiently completed the backlog of pending cases together with current cases. In cooperation with UNHCR, a quality review of 150 cases was issued and presented during a two-day conference to the Heads of Regional Asylum Offices and Quality Focal Points. Furthermore, the final Quality Feedback Report of the Asylum Service was completed, which entailed two cases per case officer and the results will be notified to all members of staff by the end of January 2023.

The Asylum Service published the “Annual Series of the Greek Asylum Service miscellaneous writings” by Nomiki Vivliothiki, which is a compilation of academic writings on Country of Origin Information and asylum issues.

**Ireland:** From 8 November 2022, new procedures were introduced, which are intended to establish an accelerated process for international protection applicants from safe countries of origin. The procedures were introduced by way of the [European Communities \(International Protection Procedures\) Regulation](#) and the [International Protection Act 2015 \(Procedures and Periods for Appeals\) \(Amendment\) Regulations](#). All applicants must now complete a preliminary interview and the International Protection Questionnaire regarding their application and the reasons they are looking for protection, on presentation at the International Protection Office.

**Italy:** On 4 November 2022, the SMAcc (Reception Monitoring System) computer application was released. This application provides access to shared assessment tools and methodologies and

supplies a database that collects the results of the monitoring activities carried out by each prefecture at the national level. Within the SMAcc platform, there are assessment tools that allow the monitoring of first emergency and aid centres, governmental first accommodation centres, temporary reception facilities for applicants for international protection, and detention facilities for forced returns. *"Monitoring Guidelines on Reception Conditions and Services"* drafted with the support of the EUAA and in cooperation with UNHCR and IOM have been disseminated via an internal newsletter.

On 17 November 2022, [the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies published a decree](#) dated 22 September 2022 concerning contribution reductions or allowances for the recruitment of persons recognized as beneficiaries of international protection. Social cooperatives will be able to apply for up to € 350 per month of exemption on the payment of social welfare contributions for each holder of international protection hired on a permanent basis during 2018. The benefit will be applied for the years 2018, 2019 and 2020 to social cooperatives that apply. To cover the measure, € 500 000 have been allocated, subject to possible changes within an overall maximum limit foreseen for the three-year period 2018, 2019 and 2020 equal to € 1.5 million.

**The Netherlands:** On 13 December 2022, the Minister for Migration [announced that the decision and departure moratorium for Russian conscripts had been prolonged](#) for six months. The exempted group consists of Russian men between the ages of 18 and 27, who refuse to serve in the military or who desert due to the war in Ukraine. This means that no decisions on asylum applications by Russian conscripts will be taken and they do not have to return for the duration of the moratorium. On 20 December 2022, the Hague Court of Appeal [ruled that the reception of applicants for international protection is not in line with international standards](#), while also ruling that, because of current labour and housing shortages, it is impossible to expect the State to immediately realise the necessary improvements. As a result, the State is not bound to comply with international standards in the short term.

**Portugal:** Between October and December 2022, 578 asylum applications were registered. During the fourth quarter of 2022, evacuations from Afghanistan were ongoing. An additional group of 17 Afghans was brought to Portugal, which makes a total of 902 Afghans evacuated since mid-August 2021.

**Luxembourg:** On 19 October 2022, the Minister of Immigration and Asylum [inaugurated](#) the temporary accommodation structure for applicants for international protection in Weilerbach. The accommodation structure has a maximum capacity of 190 beds. It is managed by the Red Cross and welcomes a mixed population of families, women and single men. The structure has been undergoing renovation since 2019.

**Slovenia:** On 1 December 2022, the government of Slovenia [announced that 50 refugees from Afghanistan and Syria will be moved from Türkiye to Slovenia](#) as part of a resettlement plan that will be finalised at the end of January 2023.

**Spain:** On 24 November 2022, the Secretary of State for Migration and the representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Spain presented the results of the protocol to combat cases of gender-based violence implemented in centres of the International and Temporary Protection Reception System. This tool seeks to improve prevention, mitigate risks and respond through a National Standard Operational Procedure for Gender Violence.

**Sweden:** On 3 November 2022, the Swedish Migration Agency was [tasked by the new government to plan for a reduced number of quota refugees](#) from 5 000 per year to 900 in 2023.

On 6 December 2022, a legal position paper on the assessment of protection needs of applicants from Afghanistan (RS/089/2021) was revised by the Swedish Migration Agency. Being a woman from Afghanistan is now enough to get protection in Sweden as the situation for women in the country has gradually deteriorated since the Taliban movement took power.

**Georgia:** On 5 October 2022, representatives from the Human Rights Protection and Investigation Quality Monitoring Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) organised a meeting in the Asylum Seekers' Reception Centre to raise awareness among asylum seekers in Georgia on the issues of gender-based violence. Asylum seekers were also informed on protection measures against violence.

On 17-19 October 2022, Georgia [hosted an official delegation from Tajikistan](#) aiming to introduce its asylum system and share good practices in the area of international protection. The delegation from Tajikistan consisted of members of the Parliament, representatives of the Office of the President, Ministry of Interior and non-governmental organizations.

On 7-9 December 2022, representatives of the MIA Migration Department and the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Health, Labour and Social Affairs (MoH) participated in a study visit in Finland. [Participants became acquainted with Finnish good practices regarding asylum seekers' reception](#) and Refugee Status Determination procedures.

On 14-16 December 2022, MIA in cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) conducted training on international protection issues for the Georgian media representatives.

**Montenegro:** In October 2022 an EUAA delegation visited Montenegro and presented good practices from EU Member States in order to support the development of standard operating procedures related to the registration and processing of requests for international protection. Employees of the Asylum Department have become certified national trainers through the EUAA's regional training, module for interviewing vulnerable groups.

On 22- 23 November 2022, officials from the Ministry of Interior visited Finland and attended an International Workshop on Asylum and Integration. The main goal of the workshop was to exchange experiences and good practice with experts from Finland working in all different areas of asylum. The experts discussed efficient asylum procedures, reception standards, integration and sustainable solutions.



### 3. UNACCOMPANIED MINORS AND VULNERABLE GROUPS

#### EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

During the reporting period, EU Member States [continued to develop a new alert system to protect vulnerable people](#) (adults and children) that will increase detection of risk for both children and adults from becoming victims of human trafficking, gender-based violence, and terrorist offenses. The system introduces changes to border controls, identification of individuals, and security to prevent vulnerable groups from being taken unlawfully abroad or to prevent them from travelling without the necessary authorisations.

The renewed Schengen Information System (SIS) goes [into force](#) in March 2023.

#### NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

**Bulgaria:** On 17 October 2022, rules governing the organisation and coordination of the accommodation of unaccompanied minors who have received international protection, in a foster family, social or integrated health-and-social service for residential care were approved by the chairperson of the State Agency for Refugees (SAR). The purpose of these rules is to harmonise the requirements for the activities of SAR's social experts, representatives of unaccompanied minors who are applicants for international protection, social experts from the Child Protection Department in the Social Assistance Directorate and social service providers. The Rules set out the conditions and the order in which these activities shall be carried out. The envisaged protection measures are in full compliance with the requirements of the Law on Child Protection and the Law on Asylum and Refugees.



**Croatia:** In the period from October to December 2022, there was an increase in the number of unaccompanied minors in Croatia. In this last quarter of 2022, Croatia recorded 135 unaccompanied minors who applied for international protection, showing an increase of 188% compared to the same period last year when the number of unaccompanied minors was 42.

**France:** On 21 November 2022, a [Decree](#) provided that if departments had welcomed more unaccompanied minors before 31 December 2021 compared to 31 December 2020, [additional funding will be allocated](#) to them from the State. The amount of this funding is set at € 6 000 per young person for 75% of the additional young people taken into care by the child welfare system over the course of 2021.

**Italy:** On 13 October 2022, the ranking list for [the 'Language Literacy and Access to Education for Unaccompanied Foreign Minors' project was approved](#). This promotes the role of schools in the inclusion route of minors, facilitating their path towards full integration into Italian society. Approximately € 370 000 have been allocated to the project. [The monthly report on the presence of unaccompanied minors in Italy was published](#), covering information until 31 October 2022. The report is based on data contained in the Unaccompanied Minors Information System (SIM), managed by the General Directorate for Immigration and Integration Policies of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies. As of 31 October 2022, there were 18 876 minors in reception facilities (compared to 6 054 in 2019).

**The Netherlands:** On 4 November 2022, the Minister for Migration [announced a temporary measure related to unaccompanied minors](#) reaching the age of 17 years and 9 months. If appropriate, these unaccompanied minors will be transferred to regular reception facilities for asylum seekers. Before transferal, the unaccompanied minor needs to pass a check by a social worker and is assigned a guardian. This policy change is a temporary measure to create more specialised reception spots for younger and particularly vulnerable unaccompanied minors.

**Portugal:** During the reporting period, 42 unaccompanied minors and young adults were relocated to Portugal, in line with the [European Programme of Voluntary Relocation from Greece](#) of unaccompanied minors and families. By the end of 2022, a total of 325 unaccompanied minors and young adults had been transferred to Portugal.

**Spain:** The reform of the Regulation of the Aliens Law that entered into force in November 2021 has already exceeded the scope of initial forecasts. As of 6 November 2022, one year after its launch, a total of [16 716 files of unaccompanied minors and young people previously in foster care have been processed](#) in order to favour their inclusion, when the original estimate was to reach approximately 15 000. As for their employment situation, the numbers of employees in the Social Security system have multiplied three-fold during the initial months following the reform.

**Georgia:** On 20-21 October 2022, the chairperson of the PSDA [shared Georgia's best practice on statelessness at the UNHCR's regional consultations dedicated to the identification of stateless persons](#) and statelessness determination procedures, held in Madrid. From 26 October 2022, the [service fee for issuing an electronic residence card](#) to persons holding stateless status in Georgia decreased by 50%. On 8 November 2022, Georgia [hosted a study visit](#) of representatives from the governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The study visit aimed to facilitate the sharing of experiences and best practices by the Georgian authorities dealing with citizenship and statelessness issues, including: coordination mechanisms; inter-agency cooperation between government, civil society and international organizations and other stakeholders; and the impact of acceding to the UN Statelessness Conventions. On 14 December 2022, the SCMI Working Group on Statelessness approved the Statelessness Action Plan for 2023. The Action Plan consists of activities aimed at further improving

statelessness related procedures, facilitation of naturalisation and enhancing integration services for stateless persons.

On 20 December 2022, the Public Service Development Agency (PSDA) and UNHCR Georgia [held the joint event “Achievements of #IBelong Campaign – implementation of pledges and progress made in the area of statelessness in Georgia”](#). The aim of the event was to highlight the progress achieved by Georgia in the field of statelessness and to discuss the results of ongoing information campaigns in cooperation with UNHCR, which serve to identify and register stateless persons. The results of the “door-to-door” campaign, progress and future plans in the area of statelessness were also discussed at the event.

**Montenegro:** In cases when a Ukrainian minor has been found outside of their place of residence without the supervision of a parent, adoptive parent or legal guardian and in order to implement the procedure for issuing a document on approved temporary protection in a timely manner, local centres for social work were immediately provided with the data on minors and the persons accompanying them, in order to determine a guardian in accordance with the jurisdiction of the guardianship authority.



#### 4. LEGAL MIGRATION

##### EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

*No new developments.*

##### NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

**Austria:** On 21 October 2022, [an amendment to the Settlement and Residence Act entered into force](#) allowing third-country nationals to file an initial application for a Red-White-Red Card in Austrian territory after their lawful entry and during their lawful stay in Austria. The Red-White-Red Card is a residence permit which allows qualified third-country nationals to settle in Austria for a limited period of time and to engage in gainful employment with a particular employer.

On 1 November 2022, [an amendment to the Act Governing the Employment of Foreign Nationals entered into force](#) allowing a waiver of the one-year suspension of an employment permit in case of repeated unauthorized employment if considerable grounds exist and after consultation with the regional advisory council.

In December 2022, two regulations entered into effect implementing the annual [list of shortage occupations](#) and specifying the [quotas for the temporary employment of foreigners in tourism and agriculture and forestry](#).

**Estonia:** In November 2022, the [Estonian government set the new immigration limit](#). According to the government's decision, the immigration limit for 2023 is 1 307 persons, and based on the regulation of the Minister of the Interior, it will be distributed according to the reason for applying for a residence permit and the basis for granting a residence permit according to the proposals of the ministers responsible for the field.

**Finland:** On 20 December 2022, the President of the Republic [approved amendments to the Aliens Act that will extend the use of the long-term D visa](#). In the future, D visas can be issued to students, researchers, persons in managerial positions in companies and family members of the above-mentioned individuals. The Finnish Immigration Service will issue a D visa in connection with a favorable decision on a residence permit.

On 22 November 2022, [the Talent Boost Summit was held for the fifth time](#). The event is based on the national Talent Boost programme, which promotes the attraction, immigration and establishment of international talents in Finland. The Talent Boost Summit presents services that support international recruitment and strengthen Finland's attractiveness.

**Greece:** On 14 November 2022, the electronic submission of applications for the initial granting of residence permits for third-country nationals was established, by a [Decision of the Minister of](#)

[Migration and Asylum](#), and will take place exclusively via the e-services of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

On 12 December 2022, a [Joint Ministerial Decision](#) was issued regarding issues of the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Greek Government and the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh on Migration and Mobility (law 4959/2022, G.G. A'144).

On 23 December 2012, law 5007/2022 (article 91) recast the provision regarding admission of third country nationals who apply for a residence permit as investors due to the purchase of real-estate property in Greece (Article 20(B) of Law 4251/2014) and the minimum value of the real estate property, for certain geographical areas, was set at 500,000 euros for the Regional Units of the North, Central and South Sectors of Athens and the Municipality of Vari, Voula, Vouliagmeni (Attica Region), the Municipality of Thessaloniki (Central Macedonia Region) and the Regional Units of Mykonos and Santorini (South Aegean Region). The new threshold is applicable as from the 1 May 2023. The € 250 000 threshold applies to all other geographical areas in Greece.

**Ireland:** From 9 December 2022 to 31 January 2023, non- EEA nationals legally resident in Ireland were as long as they submitted an application for renewal in advance of their IRP card's expiry date. They needed to present a notice, expired IRP card, and proof of renewal application to do so. to present a notice, expired IRP card, and proof of renewal application to do so.

On 31 December 2022, the [Atypical Worker Scheme](#) for non-EEA Crew in the Irish Fishing Fleet will close for new applications in order to provide for the transition to a new employment-permit based system.

**Italy:** Between October and November 2022, within the framework of the Protocol for the implementation of "Humanitarian Corridors from Lebanon", 101 beneficiaries arrived in Italy; 182 beneficiaries arrived in Italy under the Protocol of "Humanitarian Corridors to Afghanistan"; and the Protocol of "Humanitarian Corridors/Evacuations from Libya" concluded on 30 November 2022 with the arrival of 114 beneficiaries.

In October 2022, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies drafted the "[Vademecum Activation of Educational Traineeships for Foreign Citizens Residing in a Third Country](#)" which subsequently came into force. The aim is both to provide an instructive tool to support the competent Administrations in the various stages of the activation procedure of educational traineeships for foreign citizens abroad and to inform the main stakeholders of the labour market about the functioning and potentiality of this initiative.

On 1 November 2022, the [bilateral youth mobility agreement on training and work between Italy and Canada went into force](#). The agreement offers vocational training opportunities to young Italians and Canadians between the ages of 18 and 35. By 2023, 2 000 young people from each side will be able to benefit from the agreement. The new agreement replaces the 2006 Memorandum of Understanding between Italy and Canada on 'Working Holidays' and expands its scope, with the Italian side extending the work permit to 12 months and introducing new categories of participants.

**Lithuania:** On 6 December 2022, [the Migration Department announced](#) that from January 2023 onwards, foreigners intending to apply for a temporary residence permit will have the opportunity to do so before arriving in Lithuania through an external service provider. The external service provider is authorised to inform applicants about temporary residence permits, receive their applications and documents, collect personal and biometric data, and transmit all necessary information to the Migration Department's specialists.

**Luxembourg:** On 27 December 2022, a ministerial regulation came into force [setting the average gross annual salary for a highly qualified worker](#) in execution of the law of August 29, 2008 on free movement of people and immigration. Thus, the threshold of the minimum level of remuneration for a highly qualified worker is set at € 84,780. For jobs in professions belonging to

specified groups (1 and 2 of the [International Standard Classification of Occupations \(ISCO\)](#)), for which a particular need for third-country national workers is noted by the government, the threshold of the minimum level of remuneration is set at € 67 824.

**The Netherlands:** On 1 October 2022, the au pair regulation was [tightened](#) by adding one additional requirement for candidates who want to work as an au pair in the Netherlands. The au pair needs to be unmarried and without any (foster) children. Besides, the existing age limit has been lowered. The au pair should not be older than 25 at the moment the residence application is filed.

**Poland:** On 12 December 2022, the [Office for Foreigners launched a new service](#) called MOS 1.0, available at [mos.cudzoziemcy.gov.pl](https://mos.cudzoziemcy.gov.pl). The portal allows foreigners to submit an application for a residence permit, fill in forms, correctly prepare documents and find out information on migration procedures. The website is available in seven languages. The work to develop version 2.0 of the website is already underway.

**Portugal:** During the reporting period, the new Aliens' Act entered into force that updated legal requirements for entry, stay, exit and expulsion of foreign citizens in Portugal. Thematic areas covered include the issuing of visas for persons who are part of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries, creating a visa for job-seekers, ending the quota regime for immigration, making it easier for foreign students attending education in Portugal to obtain a residence visa, and granting residence permits/temporary stay visas to digital nomads.

On 30 December 2022, a law entered into force that extends the validity of various documents that are pertinent to stay within national territory. This measure arises from the impact that COVID-19 had on the granting and renewal of residence permits, where certain expired documents continued to be accepted due to the difficulty of obtaining renewals. The law aims to ensure continuity regarding the serviceability of expired documents if certain conditions are met (e.g. if the holder proves that they have already scheduled the respective renewal) and does not apply to temporary protection granted to displaced persons from Ukraine.

On 30 December 2022, a law that simplified the granting and renewal of residence permits went into force. The simplified procedures now also cover the renewal of residence permits linked to investments and family reunification.

**Spain:** The Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration has [approved the annual procedure for collective management of hiring workers in their country of origin](#). The newly approved text opens the possibility of promoting circular migration projects in all sectors of labour activity for the first time; previously, it was restricted to the agricultural sector.

On 22 December 2022, the law on the promotion of the ecosystem of emerging companies ([Startup law](#)) introduced improvements in the regime of residence permits, with the aim of improving the attraction of talent and foreign investment and creates a new type of authorisation for teleworkers (digital nomads).

**Georgia:** On 21 November 2022, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia (MFA) [launched a renovated consular and citizen service centre](#) at the new building of the MFA. The service centre is adapted to modern requirements and offers various consular services to Georgian and foreign citizens.

With a view of facilitating the enrollment of foreign students in Georgian universities, the [rules and procedures of granting the right to study](#) to foreign citizens at Georgian higher education institutions were amended and enacted from 3 October 2022 onwards. Based on the amended rules the application processing has become more rapid, simplified and flexible. Beside this, on 15 December 2022, an annual information meeting on residence permit procedures was held for the representatives of Georgian universities with the highest number of foreign student enrolments.

University representatives were updated on residence permit procedures to support their students in obtaining study residence permits.

**Montenegro:** On 28 July 2022 the Parliament of Montenegro adopted Amendments to the Law on Foreigners (Official Gazette of Montenegro No. 86/22). Following the latest amendments to the law, on 28 November 2022, the Rulebook regulating the conditions of issuing a temporary residence permit for a digital nomad, as well as members of the digital nomad's immediate family, was adopted. The main reason behind these amendments was the need to provide an opportunity for foreigners working remotely for foreign companies or foreign entrepreneurs to regulate their legal status in Montenegro.

On 24 November 2022 the Government of Montenegro adopted the Decision on determining the annual quota of permits for temporary residence and employment of foreigners for 2023. In 2023, Montenegrin authorities can issue up to 21 454 work and temporary residence permits.

During the reporting period, the Montenegrin authorities issued 9 962 permits for temporary residence.

## STUDENTS AND RESEARCHERS

*No new developments.*



## 5. INTEGRATION

### EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

On 10 October 2022, the European Commission [launched the EU Talent Pool pilot](#) initiative, a new online job search tool that will support people fleeing the war in Ukraine to find employment more swiftly and effectively in the EU.

On 29 November 2022, Commissioner for Home Affairs, Ylva Johansson, [announced that €5.5 million would be awarded](#) to a project managed by the Red Cross to support Ukrainians fleeing the war to find potential hosts and provide them with additional guidance.

On 7-8 December 2022, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) presented new [guidance tools for national level](#) to support EU Member States design, implement, and monitor national action plans against racism and discrimination.

## NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

**Austria:** On 1 December 2022, Statistics Austria [presented in a press release the key Austrian results of the module "labour market situation of migrants"](#) of the EU Labor Force Survey. For example, about a quarter of foreign-born 15- to 64-year-olds face obstacles in their job search. The biggest challenges include insufficient German language skills (43.6%), finding a job that matches their qualifications (16.8%) and the lack of recognition of foreign educational qualifications (15.2%).

**Croatia:** On 13 and 14 October 2022, an international [conference entitled "Integration of persons granted international protection – transfer of good practices at the European and international level" was held](#) in Zagreb. The conference served as a platform for discussion on various aspects of the socio-economic integration of third-country nationals, with an emphasis on persons granted international protection.

On 29 November 2022, a training was held on the use of the online platform with a database of statistical data on the social inclusion of persons granted international protection, organised by the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities. Earlier this year, data collection coordinators were appointed and will participate in updating the database, which was created as part of the project "INCLuDE - Interdepartmental cooperation in the empowerment of third country nationals". The database will be located within the existing [network platform](#), which was upgraded.

On 19 December 2022, the [Protocol of Procedure for the integration process of persons granted international protection was adopted](#). The Protocol was drafted in a participatory process and



through cooperation with representatives of local and regional authorities, public institutions and local organisations.

**Estonia:** In October 2022, the Estonian government approved the cohesion plan for the years 2022-2023, which aims to ensure the stability and cohesion of society, prevention of possible conflicts and strong relations between communities within the context of the war in Ukraine, and a large number of Ukrainian refugees.

**Finland:** On 6 October 2022, [the Government's proposal for a comprehensive reform of the Integration Act was submitted to Parliament](#). The reform would support the integration and employment of immigrants by developing early-stage integration services. Another aim is to ensure that the entire service system considers the needs of immigrants.

On 18 November 2022, the Centre of Expertise in Immigrant Integration of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment [published a new policy brief that presents ways to strengthen the political participation of people with a foreign background](#). According to the policy brief, expanding voting rights could support integration.

On 7-8 November 2022, [the biannual Integration event was held with a focus on current themes in integration and reception of refugees](#). The overall theme of this year's event was change and the changing operating environment. The programme tracks dealt with employment, education, receptiveness of society, wellbeing and health, and the integration of refugees of different ages.

**Greece:** The last amendment of the programmatic agreement between IOM and the Ministry of Migration and Asylum took place in October 2022 and provided that the implementation of the [HELIOS integration programme](#) would continue through direct funding from the Ministry of Migration and Asylum until 31 January 2023, with plans to integrate and fund it through the European Social Fund (ESF+) in the framework of the new programming period 2021-2027. Since October 2022 (when the relevant Document of Action was signed), the Social Integration Directorate of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum has been receiving Technical Support, funded by the European Commission's DG REFORM and provided by IOM. The provision of Technical Support is based on the need to find ways to connect immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees with the labour market and to match their educational and professional skills with available jobs, while: a) planning a database for registering the skills/qualifications of those concerned, b) mapping their skills/educational background, c) organising relevant information campaigns, d) better understanding potential migrant/refugee capacity, e) outreach in companies/ with employers to screen workforce needs, f) matching skills and qualifications with job opportunities, g) designing the specifications for a tool for the geographical distribution of beneficiaries of international/temporary protection in Greece.

Three nationwide online educational meetings, planned by the Directorate of Social Integration, were carried out in December 2022: on 5 December representatives of the competent Ministries presented legislative changes and practices in the fields of migration, asylum, integration and citizenship, while on 6 and 20 December, the meetings focused on topics that concern the Intercultural Mediators of the Migrant Integration Centers, such as their role and practices and ways they can use to cope with stress at the workplace.

**Ireland:** On 9 November 2022, the Immigrant Council of Ireland [published Indicators for Migrant Local Integration](#), on the findings of a survey of local authorities in Ireland. The report finds some progress in developing policies and practices to support and enhance migrant integration, but considerable room for improvement.

On 25 November 2022, the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth [announced grants totalling € 2.7 million](#) to fund seven projects proposed by non-governmental organisations across Ireland providing employment supports for migrants. The grants will be made available over three years under the European Social Fund Plus.

On 5 and 6 December 2022, approximately 3 500 people from over 130 countries were [conferred with Irish Citizenship](#) in a ceremony in Killarney. The top five nationalities for Irish Citizenship across the two days were the United Kingdom, India, Pakistan, Poland, and the Syrian Arab Republic.

**Italy:** On 26 September 2022, an additional [2 066 reception places were granted](#) until 31 December 2022, with resources transferred from the Civil Protection emergency fund to the Ministry of the Interior.

On 5 October 2022, Italy adopted the new National Plan for the Integration of Persons with International Protection Rights 2022-2024. It is a programmatic tool that identifies the priority areas of intervention and concrete protection measures in favour of the integration of holders of international protection into economic and social systems. The plan is in line with the new European Action Plan for Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027.

In November 2022, [the new “Annual Reports on the presence of migrants in Metropolitan Cities”, edited by the Directorate General for Immigration and Integration Policies, was published](#). There are nine monographs for Metropolitan Cities with high numbers of non-EU migrants, together with a Summary of the non-EU migrants' presence in all 14 Metropolitan Areas.

**Lithuania:** On 14 November 2022, the government [allocated the premises of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences for three years to the International School of Ukraine](#). The school also has a branch in Klaipėda and has almost 1 200 Ukrainian students who fled the war in their country.

**Luxembourg:** On 9 November 2022, the ninth edition of [the Local Integration Exchange and Support Group](#) (GRESIL) took place under the topic ‘Citizen and political participation following the modification of the Electoral Law: raising awareness and motivating non-Luxembourgers to participate in the municipal elections of 11 June 2023.’

On 14 December 2022, the Minister of Education, Children and Youth, accompanied by the Commissioner for the Luxembourgish language, presented [the action plan for the Luxembourgish language](#), adopted the same day by the Council of Government. The action plan for the Luxembourgish language consists of a package of 50 concrete measures for the promotion, development and consolidation of the Luxembourgish language.

On 27 December 2022, [the law amending the Social Security Code came into force](#). Luxembourg legislation on granting family allowances and parental leave has now been aligned with European law following the judgments of the Court of Justice of the European Union of 2 April 2020 (Judgment C-802/18) and 25 February 2021 (Judgment C-129/20). The new law puts an end to discrimination in the right to family allowances between children residing in Luxembourg and children of cross-border workers.

**Malta:** On 24 October 2022 and 17 November 2022 respectively, the University of Malta and the Malta College of Arts, Science & Technology (MCAST) delivered courses in Maltese language, English language, and cultural orientation, to migrants living in Malta and following the ‘I Belong’ Programme. Included in one of these contracts are provisions for the delivery of Foundation courses, in Maltese and English literacy and digital literacy, to provide additional support to students with literacy difficulties.

On 23 December 2022, [servizz.gov, an agency serving as a one-stop-shop for government services](#), began to make the ‘I Belong’ Programme application form available at its hubs. This will ensure a better, more accessible service and streamline the application process for migrants living in Malta and wishing to follow the programme, which aims to facilitate their integration into society and the labour market through language and cultural orientation training.

**Spain:** On 22 December 2022, the Minister of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration and the President of the Spanish Olympic Committee (COE) signed an agreement to promote the sports integration of migrants in the reception system. The text includes the commitment to build facilities

and spaces that reinforce participation in sport in the system's centres, with the aim of promoting the integration of users in the localities in which they are located.

**Sweden:** On 4 November 2022, [a number of measures were presented in the Budget Bill for 2023 for improved integration](#). Investments in the sport movement, health promotion and prevention work among children and young people, increased opportunities for women and girls to organise themselves, investments in the work against honour crimes and repression are some of the measures that are planned to ensure that residents in exposed areas are further included in the Swedish society.

**Georgia:** In order to promote the integration of migrant children into the general education system, Ministry of Education and Science expand existing service and from 2023 offer Georgian language course to asylum seekers, refugees and persons with international protection.

**Montenegro:** During the reporting period, there were 47 foreigners with approved international protection (15 under subsidiary protection and 32 foreigners with approved asylum). 20 foreigners were assisted in integrating into Montenegrin society through the development and monitoring of the implementation of individual integration plans.

During this period of time, beginner and intermediate level Montenegrin language courses were organized for asylum seekers and foreigners under subsidiary protection, as well as a course on Montenegrin history and culture.

Iran, Yemen and Russian Federation have been recognized as the most common countries of origin of persons with approved international protection status.

## 6. MANAGEMENT OF THE EU EXTERNAL BORDERS

### EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

In October 2022, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) [published guidance on monitoring fundamental rights at EU external borders](#) for EU Member States to apply in their independent national schemes.

In November 2022, [a workshop was held for legal practitioners](#) to discuss current issues and challenges in search and rescue missions at sea, providing tools and insights to work with these cases. The workshop included representatives from the UN Refugee Agency, the EU Asylum Agency, the EU Court of Justice, the European Court of Human Rights, the European Union Agency for Fundamental rights.

In November 2022, the European Commission [presented an EU Action Plan for the Central Mediterranean](#) to address challenges along these migratory routes in line with the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum.

In December 2022, the European Commission [released an EU Action Plan on the Western Balkans](#) which included 20 operational measures in 5 pillars: strengthening border management along the routes; swift asylum procedures and supporting reception capacity; fighting migrant smuggling; enhancing readmission cooperation and returns; and achieving visa policy alignment.

### NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Croatia:** On 16 December 2022, the Croatian [Parliament passed amendemnts to the Law on State Border Control](#). The adoption of the law was necessary in order to adapt all the provisions of this Act to the full application of the Schengen acquis in Croatia. The law determines which provisions of the Act apply to external borders and the tasks of border police inland of the state territory.

On 16 December 2022, the Croatian Parliament [passed the Law on Amendments to the Law on Foreigners](#). The adoption of this Act enables the implementation of several Acts of the European Union, including on the European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS); Entry/Exit

System (EES); the Convention implementing the Schengen Agreement and Regulations; and on forms for refusal, annulment or revocation of a travel authorisation.

**Estonia:** On 28 November 2022, [five Ukrainian border guards started to work](#), as observers, at the eastern border of Estonia to contribute to the improvement of cooperation and the exchange of best practices with Ukraine in the field of border activities. Ukrainian border guards arrived at the Estonian eastern border with the assistance of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex).

**Finland:** On 17 November 2022, the Government [proposed that € 39 million would be allocated to the Border Guard for the construction of the first phase of the fence on the eastern border](#). The Border Guard considers that the fence, which is to be built in critical sections of the border, will significantly increase border security, especially if attempts are made to use large-scale immigration to exert pressure on Finland.

**Latvia:** On 3 November 2022, [Amendments to the Cabinet Order No. 518 “Regarding the Declaration of Emergency Situation”](#) came into force which prolongs the emergency situation, regarding irregular crossings on the border with Belarus, until 10 February 2023 in specified administrative territories.

**Lithuania:** On 21 October 2022, the Ministry of Interior reported that, in response to the deliberate attempts by Belarusian authorities to damage the physical barrier at the Lithuania-Belarus border, [the State Border Guard Service invested € 4.5 million](#) in necessary materials for its repair and further operation.

On 9 December 2022, seeking to strengthen border protection measures, the State Border Guard Service announced [plans to construct a border patrol path along the Lithuania-Belarus border](#). According to the authorities, the border patrol path will strengthen the capacity of border guards to respond rapidly to border violations and attempts to damage the physical barrier.

On 20 December 2022, [Lithuanian Armed Forces stopped assisting the State Border Guard Service in patrolling the border with Belarus](#) as the inflow of irregular migrants has gone down significantly, the construction of a physical barrier was completed, and the installation of surveillance systems at the Lithuania-Belarus border is nearing completion.

**Poland:** On 9 December 2022, the [Border Guard signed a contract for the construction of an electronic barrier](#) on the border with Russia. The electronic barrier will be 199 km long and will cover the entire land border with the Kaliningrad Oblast. The electronic barrier will ensure the detection of all events related to border crime, primarily related to illegal migration and the smuggling of goods.

**Portugal:** In November 2022, the government approved a national contingency plan on irregular migration. In the context of the national strategy on integrated border management (IBM), the approved plan is risk-analysis based and establishes a mechanism of response in case of unexpected incidents of irregular migrants arriving by sea and by air. The document defines the tasks, responsibilities and capacities of all national relevant authorities aiming to reinforce interagency cooperation in these situations.

In November 2022, a cooperation protocol was signed by all IBM national partners, aiming to reinforce operational cooperation and exchange information as regards border control activities (border checks and surveillance), joint risk analysis products, integrated national plans that include operational and capability development. It was established in this quarter that all EU Member States should submit their national capability development plans for border management and return them to Frontex.

On December 2022, Portugal subsequently submitted their national capability plan to FRONTEX. The plan identifies the needs of national IBM partners on a technical, human, organisational and procedural level, in order to develop the measures foreseen in the national strategy, until the end

of 2023. The plan is perceived to be relevant particularly from a strategic point of view in the context of integrated border management.

**Slovenia:** Slovenia is preparing new concept for compensatory measures at the border with Croatia after 1 January 2023 when Croatia becomes part of Schengen area, because the land border with Croatia on land will become an internal border.

**Spain:** On 16 December 2022, the remaining restrictions due to COVID-19 at the Spanish external borders came to an end.

For public order reasons, the land Border Crossing Points with Morocco at Ceuta and Melilla remain closed to local border traffic.

**Georgia:** Based on the Entry/Exit Law requirements, from 1 October to 15 December 2022, 726 citizens of Georgia intending travel to the EU/Schengen area were refused permission to depart from the country.

In the framework of MIA-Frontex cooperation, Frontex officers were deployed to the Tbilisi and Kutaisi International Airports of Georgia, while two Georgian patrol police officers were placed from 5 October to 2 November in Spain and from 12 to 16 December in Moldova.

On 8 December 2022, a Partnership Agreement was signed between the heads of the MIA Border Police of Georgia (GBP) and the State Border Guard of Latvia. Under the above-mentioned Agreement, the State Border Guard of Latvia will hand over an Augusta Bell 206b Jet ranger III type helicopter to GBP. In addition to that, the above-mentioned agreement entails handover of spare parts and training for the GBP pilots and engineers.

Within the reporting period, the arrangement of the Border Surveillance System has been completed on the Georgia-Azerbaijani Segment of the State Border of Georgia to improve the border management capabilities of the country.



## 7. IRREGULAR MIGRATION

### EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

*No new developments.*

### NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

**Croatia:** On 4 November 2022, [a new Agreement on the Independent Monitoring Mechanism was signed](#). This is a continuation of the mechanism implemented from June 2021 to June 2022. This Mechanism can serve as a model for the establishment of the Monitoring provided for in the draft Regulation on screening at the external borders under the Pact for Migration and Asylum. This mechanism ensures effective and fully independent monitoring of police treatment of irregular migrants and international protection seekers, in the context of the protection of human rights.

**Finland:** On 20 December 2022, [legislative amendments on undocumented persons right to receive necessary healthcare services were approved](#). From 1 January 2023 onwards, the wellbeing service counties must provide necessary non-urgent healthcare services for undocumented persons and persons whose status resembles that of an undocumented person.

**France:** On 27 December 2022 a Decree [created an Office to combat migrant smuggling](#) (*Office de lutte contre le trafic illicite de migrants - OLTIM*) within the border police's central directorate. It replaced the central Office for the repression of illegal immigration and the employment of foreign nationals without permits (*Office central pour la répression de l'immigration irrégulière et de l'emploi d'étrangers sans titre - OCRIEST*). The strong inter-ministerial dimension of this new Office should make it possible to improve the fight against transnational criminal networks facilitating illegal entry, residence and movement on national territory, the dismantling of organised structures employing illegal foreign nationals and of false document offices linked to these activities, the identification of illicit financial flows generated by this trafficking and the seizure of criminal assets.



**Italy:** As of 19 December 2022, the post-return reintegration services set up by Frontex's Joint Reintegration Service (JRS), as part of the RIAT platform, were officially operational in 16 Italian police headquarters (in the pilot phase) and in the Immigration Service (which will also take care of the *operational manager* and *coordinator* profiles).

**Poland:** On 21 November 2022, Bohdan Paszkowski, the voivode of Podlasie (representative of government), [signed an ordinance extending the ban](#) on being physically present within 200 m of the state border with Belarus. The ban was in force until 31 December 2022. It is related to the installation of electronic elements on the barrier on the Polish-Belarusian border.

On 18 November 2022, [works on the first section of the electronic barrier on the Polish-Belarusian border were completed](#). The need to build a physical and electronic firewall was forced by the aggressive actions of Belarus and the Russian Federation. The construction of a barrier on the Polish-Belarusian border resulted in a significant decrease in the number of recorded events related to migration pressure.

**Slovenia:** There were positive results with the usage of cameras for detecting migrants under train carriages.

**Sweden:** On 11 November 2022, the government [decided to prolong border controls](#) at Sweden's internal borders from 12 November 2022 to 11 May 2023. The decision is based on the Government's assessment that there is a serious threat to public order and internal security in Sweden.

**Montenegro:** The route that leads from Turkey, Greece, through Albania, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina to EU countries is still active. For the reporting period, a total of 2 801 migrants were registered in Montenegro.

In order to cope with increased migratory pressure, the Ministry of Interior undertook activities to amend the existing Action Plan in case of a mass influx of migrants and refugees in transit through the territory of Montenegro. One of the key priorities of the Ministry of the Interior is the establishment of a system for the electronic identification and registration of migrants, which will enable the timely exchange of information with other countries. To this end, a detailed sustainability study was prepared in cooperation with the European Commission and FRONTEX, that assessed the IT and communication infrastructure in order to support the process of identification and registration of mixed migration flows in accordance with European standards, i.e. the EURODAC system.

## 8. RETURN

### EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

#### Judgment of the European Court of Justice

##### [Joined Cases C-704/20 and C-39/21](#)

On 8 November 2022, the European Court of Justice ruled that a national court is required to ascertain of its own motion whether a detention measure taken in respect of an illegally staying foreign national or an asylum seeker is lawful.

In the Netherlands, decisions to detain a third country national are taken by the administration. The detention decision is reviewed by judges. When reviewing these decisions judges must take into consideration all the elements brought to its knowledge and, on the basis of these elements, raise, where appropriate, the failure to comply with a condition governing lawfulness arising from EU law, even if that failure has not been raised by the person concerned.

##### Case [C-69/21](#)

On 22 November 2022, the CJEU ruled that a third-country national suffering from a serious illness cannot be the subject of a return decision if it would risk significantly increasing their pain or significantly reduce their life expectancy, given that there are no fitting healthcare provisions in the country of origin. The case concerned a Russian patient with leukaemia in the Netherlands using cannabis as pain medication, which is not legal in Russia.

The Court distinguished the thresholds on risks for increased pain to which the ruling refers, namely if (i) the effective pain treatment cannot be lawfully administered in the country of return and (ii) that the absence of such treatment would increase the level of pain to the degree that it would impede living with human dignity, including psychological suffering that could lead to suicide. The court gave the ruling reading the Returns Directive 2008/115 in conjunction with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

### NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

**Cyprus:** On 21-25 November 2022 a training course in relation to forced return escorts took place in the Cyprus Police Academy. The training programme was coordinated by the National Frontex Coordination Office of Aliens and Immigration Unit with the support of Frontex. The training programme included a variety of theoretical and practical subjects in relation to returns, such as EU return policy, fundamental rights, best practices on return, escorts on return flights, practice on an aircraft etc. 23 members of the Aliens and Immigration Unit were trained and assessed capable and qualified for different kinds of return operations.

**Finland:** On 22 December 2022, the Ministry of the Interior [commissioned a study that will assess which new client groups should be included in the target group for voluntary return](#). According to the Action Plan for the Prevention of Irregular Entry and Stay, expanding the target group for assisted voluntary return is justified to prevent the emergence of a parallel society.

**Greece:** During the reporting period, the Asylum Service and the Directorate of Returns and Withdrawals participated in one Joint Return Operation and two National Return Operations in which eight third-country nationals from Bangladesh, 40 third-country nationals from Pakistan and 20 from Georgia departed to their countries of origin via charter flights. Counselling was given to the 112 beneficiaries (administratively detained third-country nationals against whom a return decision has been issued), in order to motivate them to depart voluntarily, through the AVVR program provided by IOM Greece. According to IOM Greece, between 1 October 2022 and 12 December 2022, 601 third-country nationals departed voluntarily to their country of origin, while according to the Hellenic Police, 456

forced returns were carried out during October and November. Finally, 268 third-country nationals also departed voluntarily to their country of origin.

**Germany:** Germany uses the Joint Reintegration Services (JRS) programme for 18 target countries (excluding Russia and Ukraine). The implementation of the RIAT tool in Germany is still ongoing (including the onboarding of 1,200 Return Counselling Centres). So far, the implementation of the programme is going positively and as of January 2023, the JRS programme will be expanded to four more target countries. In addition, the list of countries of origin eligible for support under the StarthilfePlus programme, which has been providing reintegration assistance to returnees as a complement to REAG/GARP since 2017, has been expanded.

**Malta:** On 15 December 2022, the Returns Unit attended a stakeholder event organised by IOM Malta. Several stakeholders attended the virtual meeting, including Government departments/agencies/units and NGOs, each having an important role in migration management. The Unit gave a presentation on the Government of Malta's immigration priorities and the voluntary return context in Malta.

**Portugal:** During the reporting period, the Portuguese Immigration Act was updated according to [Regulation 2018/1860](#) and to [Regulation 2018/1861](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council. Alerts for refusal of entry and stay were updated. Entry ban for third-country nationals benefiting of IOM's AVR are registered on SEF's database and also on SIS.

**Georgia:** From 1 October to 23 December 2022, MIA Georgia participated in six Collecting Return Operations (CRO) coordinated by Frontex. As a result, 293 Georgian citizens were safely returned from EU Member States.

Within the reporting period, expulsion decisions on 54 foreigners were issued and 35 foreigners left the country based on those decisions.

**Montenegro:** In order to establish long-term cooperation mechanisms and enable close cooperation in the process of returning foreigners to the country of origin, the procedure for full harmonization and signing of the Memorandum on Cooperation between the Ministry of Interior of Montenegro and IOM has been initiated. The memorandum concerns procedures for the voluntary return of foreigners and reintegration with assistance in the country of return.

Montenegro has taken steps to sign readmission agreements with the most common countries of origin of irregular migrants. Despite the initiation of signing readmission agreements with the main countries of origin of irregular migrants, such as Pakistan, Iraq, Iran, Morocco and Algeria, Montenegro has not signed agreements on readmission with any of the abovementioned countries yet.

Representatives of the Ministry of Interior had meetings with representatives of the embassies of Pakistan, Morocco and Algeria in order to establish and develop modus operandi for future cooperation.

During the reporting period, 6 migrants were returned with the assistance of the police (provided travel tickets and documents) and 1 migrant was returned in cooperation with the IOM through the AVRR programme.

During the reporting period, Montenegrin authorities received 23 requests for the readmission of 42 persons. 14 requests for the readmission of 28 persons were approved, while 9 requests for the readmission of 14 persons were rejected, i.e. no consent for acceptance was given.

## 9. ACTIONS ADDRESSING TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

### EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

On 4 October 2022, the European Commission [discussed lessons learned and policy measures](#) to increase swift coordination efforts to combat and prevent human trafficking in conflict and post-conflict situations. Cooperation with international organisations, including members of the Inter-

Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking (ICAT) will continue to draw on experience to strengthen effective measures.

## NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

**Croatia:** On 5 and 6 October 2022 the National Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings participated as a panellist in the [regional expert group meeting on combating labour exploitation](#), with a focus on due diligence in supply chains in South East Europe. This meeting was co-organized by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in cooperation with the State Office of Moldova and the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of France. On 18 October 2022, the Department for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings of the Council of Europe, in cooperation with the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, organised a roundtable. [Croatia's progress in implementing the Convention on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings was discussed](#). The third report of the Council of Europe's Expert Group on Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA), published on 3 December 2020, resulted in related recommendations provided for by the Committee of the Parties to the Croatian authorities, adopted one day after the publication of the report. The roundtable detailed specific actions that have been taken at national level since then and resulted in the identification of additional concrete measures to strengthen the implementation of the Convention.

On 21 October 2022, in Rovinj, a working meeting of the National Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, members of the Operational Team for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings with coordinators of mobile teams for adults, for children and regional coordinators was held. The meeting was held within the project of the Croatian Red Cross "Support to the work and strengthening of the capacity of mobile teams for the identification and provision of the first forms of assistance to adult victims of trafficking in human beings."

On 23 November 2022, [the third meeting of the National Committee on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings was held](#). The meeting was led by the President of the National Committee and Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia for Social Activities and Human Rights, Mrs. Anja Šimpraga. A schedule of activities was presented as part of the development of key strategic documents in this area: the National Plan for Combatting Human Trafficking for the period from 2022 to 2027 and the Action Plan for the period from 2022 to 2024.

**Finland:** On 29 December 2022, the President of the Republic [approved legislative amendments which will improve the status and the right to services of victims of human trafficking](#) as the help provided through the Assistance System will no longer depend on the progress of the criminal proceedings related to human trafficking. Assistance will be based on an assessment of the victim's individual situation.

**Greece:** During the reporting period, a training took place for 236 health professionals on trafficking in human beings. The purpose of the training was to support healthcare and frontline service providers to identify, safely refer and provide gender- and trauma-sensitive services for trafficked persons. The project is funded by AMIF and implemented by KMOP, a Social Action and Innovation Centre and facilitated by the Reception and Identification Service (RIS). The project falls under the AMELIE project (Enhancing Mechanisms of identification, protection and multi-agency

### Judgment of the European Court of Justice

#### [Case C-66/21](#)

On 20 October 2022, the CJEU gave a judgement that EU Member States must grant a reflection period to victims of human trafficking in which expulsion is prohibited and Dublin transfers are halted. The case concerned a Nigerian national who applied for asylum in the Netherlands after having applied in Italy. This will support the dismantling of criminal networks by increasing the likelihood of victims to cooperate with authorities in addition to safeguarding the rights of the victims.

collaboration through transnational and multi-sectoral actors' Engagement), which is being implemented in Greece, Belgium, Germany and Italy.

During the reporting period, another training took place using training modules designed by the EUAA with the purpose to enable reception staff understand the concept of vulnerability and how to identify vulnerable persons.

**Italy:** On 19 October 2022, the new National Anti-Trafficking Plan was presented. The Plan is integrated with a unitary strategy of interventions that contribute to the definition of consistent protection for the victim. It is connected with the National Strategy for Gender Equality and the Plan, the National Strategic Plan on Male Violence against Women 2021-2023, the new National Plan for Preventing and Countering the Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Minors, the Fifth National Plan of Action and Interventions for the Protection of the Rights and Development of Persons of Developmental Age 2022-2023, and the Plan approved by the European Commission for Ukrainian refugees.

**Malta:** On 18 October 2022, the Human Rights Directorate convened the Anti-Human Trafficking Inter-Ministerial Committee for the first time, composed of focal persons representing each Ministry. The committee acts as a mechanism for coordination, reporting and monitoring purposes on matters related to trafficking in human beings. The Committee will also serve as a mechanism for the Communication Plan emerging from the Technical Support Instrument Project for the coordination, drafting and implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan against Human Trafficking.

On 9 December 2022, [the Human Trafficking Monitoring Committee was re-composed](#). Amongst its tasks, the Monitoring Committee will be responsible for assessing trends in human trafficking, measuring the results of anti-trafficking actions, monitoring anti-trafficking activities of State institutions and implementing national legislation requirements.

**Poland:** [An open competition for the implementation of the public task entitled 'Running the National Intervention and Consultation Centre for Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings in 2023' was held](#). The Minister of the Interior and Administration entrusted the implementation of the above-mentioned task to two non-governmental organisations: La Strada – Foundation Against Trafficking in Human Beings and Maria Immaculate Association "Po MOC" for Women and Children.

**Portugal:** Between 11 and 13 of October 2022, [the Observatory on Trafficking in Human Beings \(Ministry of Home Affairs\) received the Cape Verde National Observatory on Trafficking in Persons \(Ministry of Justice\)](#). The visit to Portugal, framed within the Project "Strengthening the Cape Verde's Capacity to Combat Trafficking in Persons (OBSERVE-CV)", aimed to reinforce the cooperation between the two observatories as well as to exchange best practices between countries. The Cape Verde delegation also met with several national bodies, such as law enforcement agencies, National Rapporteur to NGOs and IOM Portugal.

Between 23-29 October 2022, the National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings participated in the "Human Trafficking on Migration Routes," organised by the Council of Europe within the framework of its joint programmes in the European Union and in partnership with the Government of Malta. The overall objective was [to create a simulation of the victim's Referral Process for Better Protection](#), serving to strengthen regional cooperation.

On 14 December 2022, two leaflets were launched, aimed at the reception and integration of migrant citizens in Portugal and for East Timorese citizens (in Portuguese, English and in Tetum - with the support of the East Timor Embassy in Lisbon). One leaflet provides information on [relevant services and responses in Portugal for a more conscious integration process](#), and the other provides information [on the prevention of trafficking in Human Beings](#).

**Slovenia:** On 18 October 2022 (European Anti-trafficking Day), Slovenia in cooperation with the International Center for Migration Policy Development and the Network of National Anti-trafficking



Coordinators from South-Eastern Europe (NATC SEE) [launched an online campaign](#) which addressed the vulnerability to human trafficking among the people fleeing the war in Ukraine. Representatives of the NATC SEE network also adopted a joint statement highlighting key recommendations for the prevention of trafficking in human beings involving people fleeing from the war in Ukraine.

**Georgia:** On 21 December 2022, the Interagency Coordinating Council for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings [approved the “2023-2024 Action Plan on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings”](#).

On 7-11 November 2022, [the first national simulation-based training on trafficking in human beings was held](#) in Georgia. The event was conducted under the leadership of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), in close cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Swiss Embassy in Georgia. About 40 investigators, prosecutors, labour inspectors, psychologists, social workers and staff working with victims took part in the training.

On 6-8 December 2022, in close coordination with the Ministry of Justice, IOM [conducted training for border control officials on trafficking in human beings](#). The training was led by subject-matter expert from Greece. About 25 participants representing different state institutions and deployed at land, air and sea border crossing points of Georgia benefited by the training.

## 10. EXTERNAL DIMENSION

### EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

*No new developments.*

### NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

**Czech Republic:** On 24-25 October 2022, [the Prague Process Ministerial Conference on migration took place](#) in Prague, under the auspices of the Czech Presidency of the Council of the EU.

Established in 2009 with a ministerial conference held during the Czech Republic's first EU Presidency, the Prague Process has returned to Prague after 13 years. Now, in 2022, the Czech Republic once again took on the role of the host with the aim of taking cooperation in this migration process a step further. At the event, ministers of the participating countries responsible for migration approved a political declaration and an action plan that will shape the framework of cooperation for 2023-2027.

In October 2022, [the Czech Ministry of the Interior supported four projects](#) in the external dimension for a total amount of 82 million CZK (approx. € 3.3 million). Three projects – in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Libya and Ukraine – will be implemented by ICMPD. The project in Bosnia and Herzegovina is focused on strengthening the national returns system, the project in Libya is focused on border management and the project in Ukraine supports the Ukrainian State Migration Service as well as Ukrainian consular services abroad. Finally, voluntary returns from Cyprus were supported in the framework of the Solidarity Declaration.

**Croatia:** On 4 October 2022, [the Ordinance on issuing a certificate for the purpose of submitting an application for regulating the stay of a member of the Croatian people with foreign citizenship or statelessness was adopted](#). The certificates are mostly issued to scholarship holders for learning the Croatian language, who do not have Croatian citizenship, as well as to Croatian emigrants and descendants of Croatian emigrants residing in Croatia.

**Italy:** In November 2022, the three-year-long Civil Project began, aiming to strengthen the capabilities of the Ivorian authorities in border and irregular migration management, in particular through the construction of four border posts at land borders and the implementation of training courses and study visits.

On 6 December 2022, [the project “Draft the future! Towards the National Diaspora Forum” was launched](#). Following steps included: setting up the first Steering Committee; calls for funding of projects submitted by diaspora associations; first round of meetings with territorial and [regional diaspora networks](#).

During the reporting period, activities for the MobiTRE initiative continued (Migration as a resource: Mobilisation of the Tunisian Diaspora and Stabilisation of Disadvantaged Communities in Tunisia), funded by AICS and consisting of two main components: 1) support for micro and small enterprises in Tunisia through the investments of Tunisian Residents in Italy (TRI) and financial grants made available by the Project, and 2) the launch of awareness-raising campaigns on the risks of irregular migration.

**Portugal:** Between 15 and 17 November 2022, a meeting took place at the premises of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries in Lisbon. Over the course of the three days, relevant delegations from Members of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP) shared updates on the status of implementation of the Agreement on Mobility and discussed the next steps necessary to strengthen the mobility within the Community. As a result, it is noteworthy to mention that the Agreement has already been registered with the United Nations and ratified by Member States. The Agreement is currently being implemented by the majority of Member States, with the remaining currently conducting legislative changes to affect its implementation.

**Georgia:** On 7 November 2022, the MFA Georgia announced the launch of the programme “High-Profile Diaspora Engagement”. The main goal of the programme is to encourage and therefore increase the involvement of high-profile diaspora representatives for the development processes of the country. The programme is being implemented in close cooperation with ICMPD.

On 17-18 November 2022, [the “Globalise” UK Conference was held](#) in London. The aim of the conference was to share experience in the field of technology development, export opportunities and innovation, and to disseminate information about investment programmes. Particular attention at the event was paid to the involvement of the Georgian diaspora in the process of promoting Georgia’s business environment and investment potential, economic development and bringing it closer to the international community.

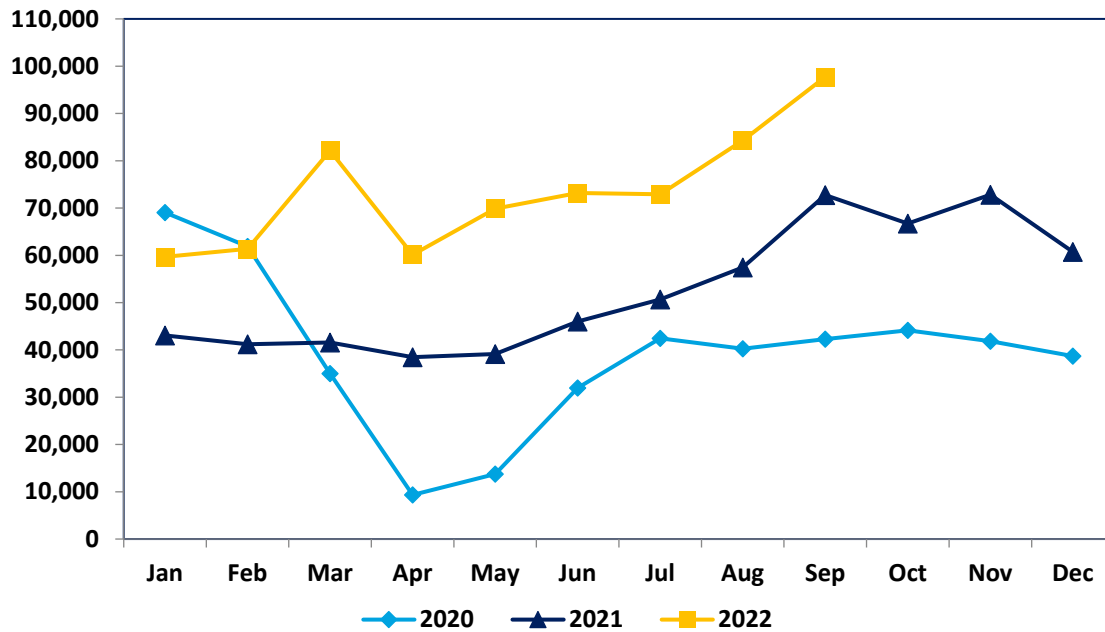
On 24 November 2022, the MFA Georgia [announced the launch of grants for three flagship diaspora programmes](#) to be implemented in 2023: 1) “Support for Diaspora Initiatives,” 2) “Become a Young Ambassador of your Country,” 3) “Supporting Georgian Dancing and Singing Groups Abroad.”

On 30 December 2022, [the fourth Georgia Diaspora Award Ceremony on the “Recognition of Diaspora Achievements” was held](#) in Tbilisi. The high-level event aims at engaging high-profile diaspora representatives and the recognition of their achievements.

**Moldova:** On 20 December 2022, the ICMPD organised a workshop for Moldovan stakeholders as part of [the project “Capacity for a Rights-Based Reception System for Moldova” \(CareFor\)](#) to exchange experiences on risk analysis. The war in neighbouring Ukraine brought new risks and thus the need for an increased risk analysis capacity of the Bureau for Migration and Asylum. The project “CareFor” funded by the Polish Ministry of the Interior and Administration, aims to contribute to a functioning human rights compliant migration management system in Moldova while addressing some of the more immediate needs caused by the unprecedented inflow of displaced people from Ukraine.

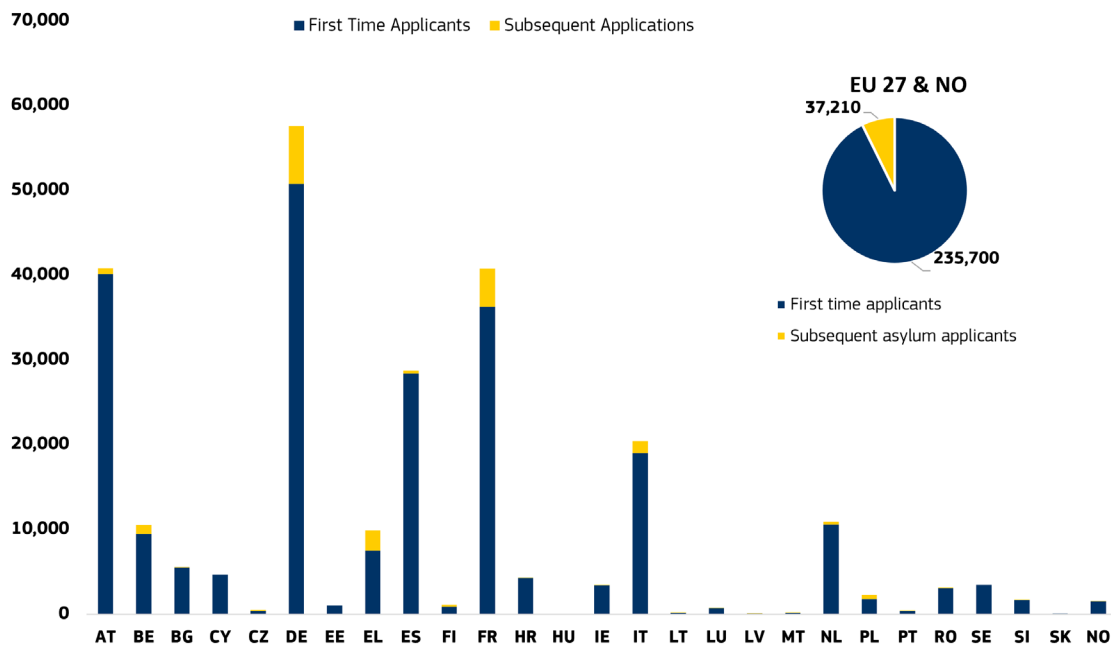
**ANNEX: EU & COMPLEMENTARY STATISTICS, ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, OTHER EMN OUTPUTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Figure 1: Asylum applications in the EU-27, January – September 2022**



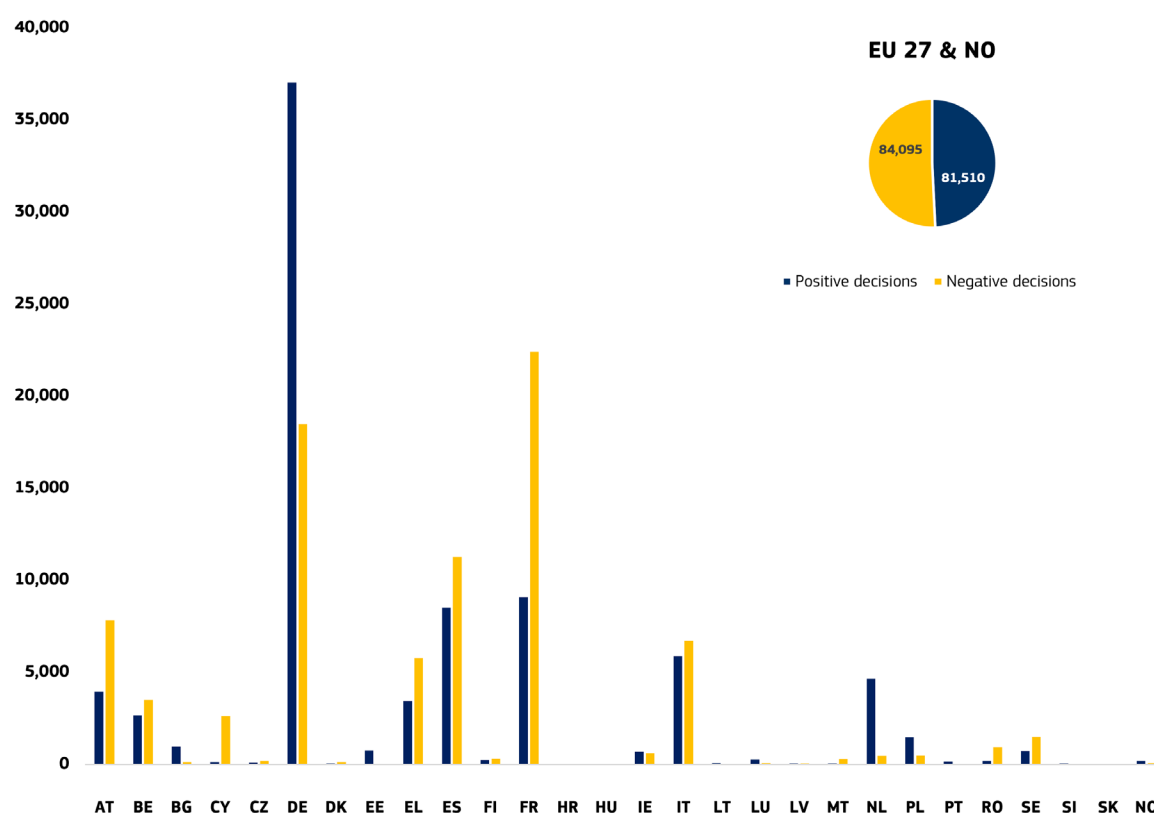
Source: Eurostat [[migr\\_asyappctzm](#)], total asylum applicants, extracted on 12 January 2023.

**Figure 2: First time asylum applicants and subsequent applicants (together, total asylum applicants) in the EU-27 and Norway, Q3 2022 (quarterly data)**



Source: Eurostat [[migr\\_asyappctzm](#)], extracted on 12 January 2023.

Figure 3: First instance asylum decisions in EU-27 and Norway for non-EU citizens, Q3 2022



Source: Eurostat [[migr\\_asydcfstq](#)], extracted on 12 January 2023.

### Updates on EU legislation transposition

No new developments.

### EMN National Contact Points: National Events and Publications

#### Recent National EMN conferences:

- **EMN Austria:** On 21 October 2022, EMN Austria organised an event discussing [the integration of displaced persons from Ukraine in the context of the Temporary Protection Directive](#). The aim of this event was to provide food for thought on the development of integration measures in Austria. By bringing together seven experts and academics from different disciplines the complexity of the topic, the importance of academic exchange and evidence-based policy-making was highlighted.
- On 30 November and 6 December 2022, EMN Austria hosted two half-day workshops to learn ["state-of-the-art" moderation techniques](#) for online, hybrid and physical events. Under the guidance of a professional moderation trainer, the 12 participants received an introduction to the tasks and responsibilities of moderators and were able to further consolidate the newly learned skills in role plays.
- **EMN Croatia:** On 16 December 2022, the [thirteenth meeting of the National Migration Network](#) was held in Zagreb. The meeting was attended by about 20 participants of the National Migration Network. A presentation on the subject of the TALENT POOL pilot project for displaced persons from Ukraine was held together with usual part of meetings, tour de table. During it, the members of the National Migration Network presented information on the news regarding migration within their organizations or institutions.
- On 16 December 2022, a panel discussion entitled ["International protection seekers and the labour market"](#) was held in Zagreb. A panel discussion was held by the Reception Center for

International Protection Seekers in Zagreb who talked about how international protection seekers look for work and where they are employed. The Croatian Employment Service talked about their rights and formal employment processes.

- **EMN Cyprus & EMN Luxembourg:** On 13-14 October 2022, a Joint National conference “[Six months into applying the Temporary Protection Directive](#)” took place in Limassol, Cyprus in hybrid format. A plethora of experts in the field of asylum and migration, who have worked closely on the implementation of the Temporary Protection Directive since 2022 and the Russian invasion in Ukraine, presented and shared their experiences on the topic on an EU level. The first part of the workshop was mainly oriented on internal topics of the EMN. During the second part, a number of participants, professionals in the field of migration, asylum and education, participated in an engaging discussion on the Destination Europe Educational Tool. Conference materials as well as the video recording of the conference are available [here](#).
- **EMN Cyprus:** On the 8 December 2022, the EMN Cyprus, the Youth Board Cyprus and European University Cyprus, co-organised an event dedicated to young people and migration. The event was entitled “Youth in Migration: Stories to be shared, Stories to be heard.” As 2022 was the European Year of Youth, the three institutions invited nine young people to share their inspirational stories on migration related topics. The event was held in person at the Cultural Centre of the European University of Cyprus. A highlight video from the event can be found [here](#).
- **EMN Estonia & EMN Luxembourg:** On 7 December 2022, the Joint technical meeting “Children’s right to nationality” was held as a hybrid event. The event was organised within the scope of the EMN Platform of Statelessness. The event summary is available [here](#).
- **EMN Finland:** [EMN Finland took part in the EMN Youth Day](#) by organizing its own Youth Day event on 16 November 2022. The event was moderated by Anna Peltoniemi, the Finnish coordinator of the European Year of Youth from the Finnish National Board of Education and Lotta Tuominen, the Finnish EU Youth Delegate 2022. A total of 10 young people from different upper secondary schools, universities and NGOs took part.
- On 25 November 2022, [EMN Finland organised a national conference](#) to explore the reasons for the weak labour market integration of migrant women in Finland. The conference also included presentations on projects that have had a positive impact on the employment of migrant women, both nationally and internationally. The event was attended in person by about 100 people and streamed as a webinar for about another 100 viewers.
- **EMN Hungary:** On the occasion of the EU Anti-Trafficking Day, EMN Hungary, the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (Budapest Process) and the Ministry of Interior of Hungary [organised a conference on the issue of trafficking in human beings in the context of migration](#). Topics discussed included the latest trends of illegal migration and trafficking, challenges related to the identification of third-country nationals, screening methods during visa procedures, and national experience of law enforcement and border management authorities. Experts shared good practices in preventing and tackling trafficking in human beings and gave insights into the protection structures of the countries along the migration routes.
- **EMN Latvia:** Participated in the EMN Youth Day event, which was held on 16 November 2022.
- **EMN Lithuania:** On 24-25 November 2022, EMN Lithuania with Migration Department [organised](#) a two-day event about [digitalisation in migration processes](#), specifically focusing on issues related to issuing temporary residence permits to applicants from abroad. The event aimed to provide specialists from Migration Department with insights and good practices from other countries. As such, colleagues from EMN Georgia were invited to share their experiences.
- **EMN the Netherlands:** On 9 February 2023 EMN Netherlands organised a national conference in cooperation with the Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers



(COA) on the flexible reception capacity in the Netherlands and Europe at the Europe House in The Hague. The aim was to discuss challenges, good practices and lessons learned when dealing with pressures on the asylum housing system and the creation of flexible housing capacities, including special attention in the context of Temporary Protection for Ukrainians.

- **EMN Italy:** On 15 December 2022, EMN Italy hosted a national conference "[Countering human trafficking in Europe: learning from best practices and designing joint interventions.](#)" The event was organized by the Central Directorate for Migration Policies; the Asylum, Migration Integration Fund Authority of the Department of Civil Liberties and Immigration of the Ministry of the Interior, in its role as Italy's National Contact Point within the European Migration Network.
- **EMN Ireland:** On 15 December 2022, the [Annual Report on Migration and Asylum 2021: Ireland](#) was published.
- **EMN Portugal:** EMN National Network Work Meeting on 21 November 2022.
- **EMN Slovenia:** On 21 November 2022, EMN Slovenia organized a [capacity building event on the topic of anti-trafficking](#) intended for national practitioners dealing with vulnerable groups, particularly unaccompanied minors. 75 people attended the event, ranging from legal guardians for unaccompanied minors, social workers, government officials dealing with international protection and return procedures, reception and integration of third country nationals, refugees and asylum seekers to representatives of NGOs involved in philanthropic activities.
- EMN Slovenia participated in the [EMN Youth Day](#) event, which was held on 16 November 2022. As part of the event, EMN Slovenia organised an additional day on 15 November to present the national migration system in an interactive way.
- **EMN Spain:** On 1 December 2022 the national conference "[the Importance of Narratives in the Migration Discourse: analysis, impact and good practices](#)" was held.
- EMN Spain participated in the [EMN Youth Day](#) event, which was held on 16 November 2022. As part of the event, EMN Spain organised a visit to a Refugees Reception Centre.

#### Upcoming EMN National conferences

- **The EMN Swedish Presidency Conference** will take place on 11-12 May 2023 in Stockholm on 'Displacement and migration related to disasters, climate change and environmental degradation.'
- **EMN Montenegro** will host an event together with the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEECP) on 24 April 2023 in Podgorica on 'Migration Challenges on the Western Balkans Route.'