

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Common Template of EMN Study 2018

Version: May 2018

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

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

1 STUDY AIMS, SCOPE AND BACKGROUND

1.1 TARGET AUDIENCE

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

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

1.2 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

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

The EU has established a common visa policy for transit through or intended stays in the territory of Schengen States of no more than 90 days in any 180-day period. The Visa Code³ provides the overall framework of EU visa cooperation. It establishes the procedures and conditions for issuing visas for short stays in and transit through the territories of EU countries. It also lists the non-EU countries whose nationals are required to hold an airport transit visa when passing through the international transit areas of EU airports and establishes the procedures and conditions for issuing such visas.⁴

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

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

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

⁴ Based on Regulation 539/2011

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

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

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

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

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

1.3 LITERATURE REVIEW AND AIM OF THE STUDY

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

In the adopted strategy for "A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans", the European Commission stated that visa liberalisation, which fosters mobility, has improved regional cooperation and creates more open societies. The Commission shall monitor the continuous fulfilment of the specific requirements, which are based on Article 1 of Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 as amended by Regulation (EU) No 509/2014 and which were used to assess the appropriateness of granting visa liberalisation, by the third countries whose nationals have been exempted from the visa requirement when travelling to the territory of Member States

⁵ Recital 26

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

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

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

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

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as a result of a successful conclusion of a visa liberalisation dialogue conducted between the Union and that third country.¹⁰

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

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

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

1.4 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

While there are 60 countries around the world that benefit from visa-free travel to the EU, in some cases, decisions on visa-free access to the Schengen Area may follow from bilateral negotiations

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

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

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

¹³ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans - Strasbourg, 06.02.2018 COM(2018) 65 final.-

https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/communication-credible-enlargement-perspective-western-balkans_en.pdf

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

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

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

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

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(i.e. visa liberalisation dialogues).¹⁸ The visa liberalisation dialogues were successfully conducted between the EU and the **former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia** (2009), **Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina** (2010) as well as **Moldova** (2014), **Ukraine** (2017) and **Georgia** (2017). They resulted in granting visa-free travel to citizens of these countries.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Third, the study will not differentiate between TCNs from Visa exempt states who made use of the Visa free regime and those who entered the Union on a conventional short-term Visa regime. This limitation follows from the fact that Visa exemption is exclusively granted to TCNs who provide biometric passports and available data does not state the procedure pursuant to which (s)he entered the state of destination.

1.5 POLICY CONTEXT

At the political level, the Stockholm Programme underlined that the Visa Code “will create important new opportunities for further developing the common visa policy”. The Programme

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Visa liberalisation with third countries is linked to the return and readmission policy, as well as to asylum applications and border controls. The Frontex alert mechanism is crucial in this regard, providing a detailed analysis of the dynamic migration inflow trends from the two regions. The Frontex alert reports are instrumental for better understanding the phenomenon of the abuse of visa liberalisation, assessing its development and identifying concrete measures to tackle the challenges.²⁷ The contribution of the (newly adopted) Entry-Exit System is expected to be also significant as, among others, it aims at increasing the efficiency of (border) controls towards third-country nationals.

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

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

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

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

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

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

²⁷ Available at: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/registre/docs_autres_institutions/commission_europeenne/sec/2011/1570/COM_SEC\(2011\)1570_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/registre/docs_autres_institutions/commission_europeenne/sec/2011/1570/COM_SEC(2011)1570_EN.pdf)

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

2 METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

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

2.1 AVAILABLE STATISTICS

- **Eurostat data**³³: available period 2008 – 2017
 - Number of third-country nationals found to be illegally present – annual data (rounded) [migr_eipre]
 - Number of third-country nationals refused entry at the external borders – annual data (rounded) [migr_eirfs]
 - Number of third-country nationals ordered to leave – annual data (rounded) [migr_eiord]
 - Number of third-country nationals returned following an order to leave – annual data (rounded) [migr_eirtn]
 - Number of return decisions [migr_eiord];
 - Number of return decisions effectively carried out [migr_eirtn];
 - Number of voluntary and forced returns [migr_eirt_vol];
 - Number of asylum applications (monthly and yearly) [migr_asyappctzm and migr_asyappctza];
 - Number of rejected asylum applications [migr_asydcfsta];
 - Number of first residence permits, by reason [migr_resfirst]:
 - Number of first residence permits for family reasons;
 - Number of first residence permits for study reasons;
 - Number of first residence permits for the purposes of remunerated activity.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- **National data**

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

- **Other relevant datasets**

The European Visa Database:

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

University of Oxford's International Migration Institute:

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

Aggregated data on the Schengen area as a whole:

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

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

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

2.2 DEFINITIONS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Irregular migration – Movement of persons to a new place of residence or transit that takes place outside the regulatory norms of the sending, transit and receiving countries. There is no clear or universally accepted definition of irregular migration. From the perspective of destination countries it is entry, stay or work in a country without the necessary authorization or documents required under immigration regulations. From the perspective of the sending country, the irregularity is for example seen in cases in which a person crosses an international boundary without a valid passport or travel document or does not fulfil the administrative requirements for leaving the country.

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

Overstay(er) – In the global context, a person who remains in a country beyond the period for which entry was granted. In the EU context, a person who has legally entered but then stayed in

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

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an EU Member State beyond the allowed duration of their permitted stay without the appropriate visa (typically 90 days), or of their visa and / or residence permit.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

3 ADVISORY GROUP

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

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

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Advisory Group Members	Email
E NCP	er.VanCostenoble@ibz.fgov.be ert.tiri@ibz.fgov.be, emn@ibz.fgov.be
Z NCP	mila.touskova@mvr.cz
E NCP	ula.hoffmeyer-zlotnik@bamf.bund.de
E NCP	rloff@tlu.ee n@tlu.ee
V NCP (Lead)	e.silina-osmane@pmlp.gov.lv n@pmlp.gov.lv
U NCP	olfo.sommarribas@uni.lu
L NCP	.matus@ind.minvenj.nl FN@ind.minvenj.nl
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CF MN Service Provider)	h.ungureanu@icf.com nia.Gsir@icf.com n@icf.com za.Kogovsek@mirovni-institut.si (Odysseus Expert)
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European Commission	mona.TOADER@ec.europa.eu nia.VERLINDEN@ec.europa.eu egular migration and return policy - Dir C Migration and Protection

4 TIMETABLE

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

5 TEMPLATE FOR NATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

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

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

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

Common Template of EMN Study 2018

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

National Contribution from Italy³⁹

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

Top-line "Factsheet"

National Contribution (one page only)

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

For many years, the beneficiary countries of the visa liberalisation process (henceforth "visa-free countries") have maintained important economic, trade and political relations with Italy, including in terms of regulating movement and combatting irregular immigration. In particular, the Balkan countries represent an area of strategic importance. In fact, Italy is the Western Balkans' second largest trading partner after Germany, with over 20 billion euro worth of trade. Italy is also Serbia and Albania's largest trading partner. Furthermore, the Balkan states and Italy share substantial historic and linguistic ties, which play a part in attracting Balkan citizens to Italy.

At least three of the visa-free countries correspond with the main foreign communities present in Italy: Albania (second), Ukraine (fourth) and Moldova (ninth). Considering Italy is a relatively recent destination country for immigration, the flows from these countries are long-standing (dating back at least 20 years) and are now consolidated. Within all three communities, the proportion of people with long-term residence permits are 70% or above.

The launch of the visa liberalisation process did not trigger significant public debate, having largely coincided with the major influx of people, which affected Italy in two large waves from 2011 (the Arab Spring, followed by the so-called migrant crisis from 2015). Media attention was more focused on the landings and the rise in applicants for international protection.

In terms of legislation, no specific action has been taken. In general, particularly in 2008 and 2009, interventions to reinforce the framework for repressing illegal immigration were adopted (in particular, with the revision of the guidelines, the penalties for encouraging irregular immigration and the criminalisation of the act of entering and staying in violation of immigration legislation), but the changes made were general in scope and did not target specific nationalities.

With almost all the visa-free countries, there is consolidated and longstanding co-operation in terms of migration, policing and jurisdiction. It is likely that, coordination and collaboration, within an already tested and structured framework, has encouraged better control and so the flows have not increased significantly. The data on refusals at the border (table 3.2.1) and people found to be irregularly residing in the country (table 3.2.9) do not point to significant increases post liberalisation. The only exception is Albania.

Section 1: The National Framework

National Contribution (max. 6 pages, excluding statistics)

The aim of this Section is to provide an insight into the scale and scope of Member States experiences after the visa-free regime at national and EU level, as evidenced by quantitative and qualitative information. The section will also analyse the

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

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short and long-term trends after the visa-free regime entered into force, pull factors and links between the countries of origin and destination.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SECTION 1.1: DESCRIPTION OF NATIONAL SITUATION

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

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

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

Short-term trends (up to two years after liberalisation).

For all countries involved (FYROM, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina), there has been a drastic fall in short-term visa requests (table 1.2.3). As regards the visa refusals, these remain stable for FYROM and Bosnia, while they have increased for Serbia and Montenegro (from 1 to 4 refusals) and particularly for Albania (rising from 1 refusal to 21) (table 1.2.4).

With reference to asylum requests, based on data available on Eurostat and reported in table 1.2.5, the situation for FYROM, Serbia and Montenegro - with requests from these countries increasing significantly in the first year after visa liberalisation, before resuming largely pre-liberalisation levels as early as the following year - is distinct from that of Albania and Bosnia, where, after liberalisation in 2010, a different outcome was seen: Albania saw an increase (from 35 to 65 over two years), whilst, for Bosnia, there was an overall increase in 2010, reaching a rate of 815 requests compared to 100 in the previous year, followed by an equally drastic fall in 2011 (285 requests), which was corroborated, albeit to a lesser degree, in 2012 (275 requests).

Repatriation decisions (table 3.2.2) have decreased, after an initial, if restrained, increase for FYROM and Serbia; whilst Albania and Bosnia saw an almost immediate drop.

Long-term trends

All countries in the area in question have seen a gradual drop in visa requests (table 1.2.3), albeit not in a consistent fashion. In this regard, Bosnia saw a small increase in 2012 (155 requests compared to 133 the previous year), followed by a new drop (118 requests). Montenegro, Bosnia and Albania presented slight fluctuations in visa requests. In the case of FYROM, however, there

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

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

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have been no requests since 2012. In terms of visa refusals (1.2.4), the data reveals a downward trend from 2012, the year in which all the countries in the region (except FYROM with no requests) saw an increase in visa refusals.

The long-term situation with regard to asylum requests is more complex. While Serbia and Albania saw a gradual increase in requests for protection, FYROM and Montenegro presented varying trends (for FYROM, there was a fall in requests for protection between 2012 and 2015, followed by an increase for the two-year period 2016–2017; and for Montenegro, there was a slight initial increase followed by a drop between 2013 and 2015). Bosnia, meanwhile, saw a reduction. Finally, repatriation decisions appear to have stabilised substantially, despite minor fluctuations, with the exception of Bosnia, where the last two years (2016-2017) saw a drastic increase in decisions (from 41 in 2015 to 1496 and 1580 respectively in 2016 and 2017).

Eastern Partnership - Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine:

Eastern Partnership - Short and long-term trends.

Estimating the impact of liberalisation seems more complex for the countries of the Eastern Partnership, given their more recent access to the visa liberalisation process. In any case, as regards **Moldova**, which gained access to visa liberalisation in 2014: in the first two years after liberalisation, visa requests (already falling) diminished drastically (from over 9,000 requests to 307 in 2014) and continued to fall over the following two years, from 437 to 333. Refusals are steadily falling, whilst asylum requests rose from 65 in 2008 to 105 in 2013, before falling in 2014 (90 requests) and finally rising to 195 in 2016. Repatriation decisions are also steadily falling: from 2,230 in 2008 to 370 in 2014 and 295 in 2016.

For **Georgia** and **Ukraine**, where liberalisation was implemented in 2017, there is no suitable data for assessing the trends. Both countries show a fall in the number of visa requests. Whereas in both cases there is an upward trend in asylum requests, it must be pointed out that whilst for Georgia the increase is fairly small and evident only after visa liberalisation, for Ukraine the increase was recognisable from 2014 and in much higher proportions, presumably due to the conflict that has affected the country. Repatriations, however, have remained largely stable in Georgia, whilst in Ukraine they fell continually until 2014 before increasing slightly in 2015.

Q1.2. What are the main links between the countries of origin and your Member State or the applicable ‘pull factors’⁴² disaggregated by region and third countries of interest?

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

As well as representing a priority area of interest on a political and security level, for Italy, the Western Balkans are a region of strong and deep-rooted economic value, both in terms of trade and investment. In fact, Italy is the Western Balkans’ second largest trading partner after Germany, with over 20 billion euro worth of trade. In particular, Italy is also Serbia and Albania’s

⁴² These may include: presence of diaspora, historical links between countries, social assistance received by asylum seekers, probability of receiving a residence permit/long-term visa, schemes (tourism, family ties, business) for attracting certain categories of migrants using visa-free regime.

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largest trading partner. The Balkan states and Italy also share substantial historic and linguistic ties, which play a part in attracting Balkan citizens to Italy.

ALBANIA. According the Report of the Directorate General of Immigration and Integration Policies of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy "with the support of ANPAL Servizi S.p.A (<http://www.lavoro.gov.it/>), the Albanian community, for years the second largest legally-resident foreign community, on 1 January 2017 comprised 442,838 holders of valid residence permits, which is around 12% of the total number of non-EU citizens in Italy. The Albanian community has one of the oldest histories of migration to Italy of all foreign communities in the country. In fact, the number of Albanian migrants to Italy first reached significant figures in the 1990s in the wake of the socio-political changes affecting the Balkan country; however geographical proximity and historic links also played a role (wide-spread knowledge of the Italian language). The presence of this community is now stable and is the second largest in terms of long-term residents representing a quota of 71.3% on 1 January 2017. The building sector is the primary work provider for Albanian citizens, 29% of whom find employment in this sector. On 1 January 2017, there were 31,358 sole-proprietor business owners of Albanian origin, or 8.6% of non-UE entrepreneurs in the country, making the Albanian community the third largest group in terms of sole-proprietor businesses owned by non-EU citizens.

FYROM: The resident population in Italy from the Republic of Macedonia on 1 January 2018 numbered 65,347 people (ISTAT data). Indeed, from the 2nd century BC, Macedonia was under the rule of the Roman Empire, followed by the Byzantine Romans and the latter's gradual substitution by the Bulgarian Empire.

SERBIA and MONTENEGRO also have strong historical and cultural ties with Italy. Italy is a strategic partner for Montenegro, where Italy is the most common second foreign language, to the close cultural and educational collaboration between the counties: there is a small but settled and dynamic Italian community in Montenegro, whose autochthonic status has recently been officially recognised (with the attribution of particular linguistic rights). In 2017, Italy was Serbia's second largest trading partner (its second supplier country and followed by China; and its primary purchasing country followed by Germany and Bosnia and Herzegovina). The resident population in Italy from the Republic of Serbia and Montenegro on 1 January 2018 comprised 39,690 and 20,144 people (ISTAT data).

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA: Here, too, there is an Italian community dating back to the Habsburg era, recognised as one of the 17 national minorities groups in this Balkan country (See LAW ON RIGHTS OF NATIONAL MINORITIES of 12 April 2003, which granted national minorities special rights to protect and preserve their cultural and linguistic identity). The resident population in Italy from Bosnia-Herzegovina on 1 January 2018 numbered 25,034 people (ISTAT data). Italy and Bosnia Herzegovina have strong ties in terms of political cooperation and Italy is traditionally one of the country's main trading partners.

Citizens from the countries in question (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Ukraine) have benefitted, albeit in different years, from reserved labour quotas in terms of planning entry flows of third-country nationals.

The following table illustrates the quotas reserved for citizens from the visa-free countries, in the various annual decrees on planning entry flows. N.B. depending on the year, reserved quotas may relate to subordinate, autonomous or seasonal labour.

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PROGRAMMAZIONE TRANSITORIA DEI FLUSSI D'INGRESSO DI CITTADINI DI PAESI TERZI.																		
NAZIONALITÀ BENEFICIARIE DI QUOTE RISERVATE	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Albania	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X
Bosnia H.					X							X			X	X	X	X
Ex Repubblica di Macedonia					X							X			X	X	X	X
Serbia					X							X			X		X	X
Montenegro					X							X			X		X	X
Ucraina											X	X			X		X	X

Eastern Partnership - Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine:

GEORGIA: has always been a transit region for Italian merchants and missionaries en route to Asia; there remain a certain number of Italian investors in Georgia. The resident population in Italy of people from Georgia on 1 January 2018 was 15,203 (ISTAT data).

Migrants from Moldova and Ukraine have similar characteristics in terms of the overall prevalence of women and a very small number of minors. In the latter regard, only 8.7% of Ukrainian migrants are minors, ranking the country bottom in terms of this measure. The female labour force from these countries is largely employed in providing services to individuals, particularly in domestic help positions. It is likely that the role assumed by these two communities, in providing services to individuals, and the network of contacts that this creates are appealing factors.

MOLDOVA: Moldovan immigration to Italy began at the end of the 1990s, during a serious economic and employment crisis in the Republic of Moldova, but particularly during a period of delicate political transition. The resident population in Italy from the Republic of Macedonia on 1 January 2018 numbered 131,814 people (ISTAT data), representing the 9th largest foreign community in Italy. It is characterised by its stable residency (over 70% have a long-term residence permit) and prominent female component (just under 70%). The community specialises largely in providing assistance to the elderly and families, with 48% of workers employed in public and social services, and services to individuals. Like Albania, Moldova is a longstanding strategic partner in managing migration, for which reason flow decrees have often granted entry quotas for seasonal work to its citizens.

UKRAINE: again, this country has historical and trade links and study exchange links with Italy. These links have also been important with regard to granting periods of residence for children exposed to radiation from Chernobyl to receive medical attention. These children's residences, fixed at a maximum duration of 120 days within a one-year period take place in particular in the summer months and at Christmas holidays. Over the course of around 20 years of these programmes, Italian families have hosted over 500,000 children, primarily from Belarus, followed by the Ukraine (15-20%). The development of these programmes has also encouraged the relationships and links to form between the two countries. The resident population in Italy from the Ukraine on 1 January 2018 numbered 237,047 people (ISTAT data). This is the 4th largest foreign community in Italy, in terms of the number of holders of valid residence permits. It is characterised by its stable residency (over 70% have a long-term residency permit) and prominent female component (just under 80%). The community specialises largely in providing assistance to the elderly and families, with 67% of workers employed in public and social services, and services to individuals.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

Q1.3. Which national institutions and/or authorities are involved in implementing the visa liberalisation process and what is their respective role in this process?⁴³

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Consulate and embassy authorities.

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

No specific guidelines in relation to the liberalisation of visas has been adopted. However, the years 2008 and 2009, in particular, saw an overall tightening of the legislative framework against irregular immigration (targeting any migrant with irregular status rather than specific nationalities).

In 2009, law no. 94 modified the *Testo Unico* (Consolidated Law) on immigration (i.e. the consolidated text providing the regulations on the status of aliens), introducing article 10-bis, which punishes the conduct of foreign nationals entering or remaining in the state in violation of the provisions regulating the entry and residence in Italy of non-EU citizens (not including, therefore, EU citizens, for whom this offence does not apply).

The penalty is a 5,000-10,000 € fine: because this is considered a minor offence, with a purely financial penalty, no possible means of limiting personal liberty are available, such as arrest or police custody, because our criminal justice system does not permit the jailing of a person for an offence for which no custodial sentence can apply.

However, there are no nationality-disaggregated statistics available to enable us to evaluate the impact of this measure on citizens from the visa-free countries.

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

The topic does not appear to have been discussed particularly on a political level, with the exception of the liberalisation process applied to Turkey. In that case one much-discussed issue has been the question of conceding visa liberalisation to countries with poor human rights records, or who appear culturally distant.

The topic appears to receive more attention on an academic level i.e. among experts and academics specialising in issues related to migration, who consider it within a broader context, in relation to migratory-flow management and the risk of this representing a compensatory tool in response to the request for greater collaboration in combating irregular flows, with potential risks of basic rights violations.

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

⁴³ For example: changes in instructions for border patrol agents and in equipment.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination**SECTION 1.2: STATISTICAL INFORMATION**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destinationTable 1.2.1: Total number of external border-crossings (persons) by nationals of visa-free countries⁴⁴

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) <i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>	
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017		
Total number of external border-crossings (persons) by nationals of visa-free countries													
FYROM													
Montenegro													
Serbia													
Albania													
Bosnia and Herzegovina													
Moldova													
Georgia													
Ukraine													
Total													
Total number of external border crossings (persons)⁴⁵													

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

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

--

⁴⁴ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities. The indicator refers to border-crossings at the external borders of the EU plus NO.

⁴⁵ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of border crossings (persons)

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destinationTable 1.2.2: Total number of detections of irregular border-crossings from nationals of visa-free countries⁴⁶

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) <i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>	
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017		
Total number of detections of irregular border-crossings from nationals of visa-free countries													
FYROM													
Montenegro													
Serbia													
Albania													
Bosnia and Herzegovina													
Moldova													
Georgia													
Ukraine													
Total													
Total number of detections of irregular border-crossings⁴⁷													

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

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

--

⁴⁶ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities. Also see Frontex: Number of detections of illegal border-crossings by sea and land; Available at: <http://frontex.europa.eu/trends-and-routes/migratory-routes-map/>

⁴⁷ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of irregular border crossings.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destinationTable 1.2.3: Total number of short-stay visa applications by third country⁴⁸

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

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
	(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior the visa waiver agreement date)											
Total number of short-stay visa applications by third country	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	7654	9114	7027	961	337	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Montenegro						3	3	1	3	2	1	
Serbia	50800	63117	46793 ⁴⁹	1321	1073	727	658	561	432	391	230	
Albania	33512	37088	35727	26573	775	519	439	439	383	427	338	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	13530	14466	11487	11779	202	133	155	118	124	101	63	
Moldova	1963	2608	7013	9313	10609	11991	12490	2983	307	204	185 ⁵⁰	
Georgia	4124	4793	4628	5093	5426	7392	13779	15014	13465	13830	2728	
Ukraine	50215	50318	43465	46337	49819	54476	67367	58565	56053	68233	35564	
Total	161798	181504	156140	101377	68241	75241	94891	77682	70767	83188	39109	
Total number of short-stay visa applications – all third countries⁵¹												

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

⁴⁸ See DG HOME Schengen Visa statistics, Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/visa-policy_en#stats. For MS that still apply visa requirements, please remove the N/A and complete the table in full.

⁴⁹ Visas issued on valid passports issued by the Authorities of Serbia-Montenegro before 2006 referendum.

⁵⁰ Under the Schengen visa waiver regime, short-stay visas are still issued for some categories of travelers (i. e. applicants travelling to Schengen for remunerated activities).

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

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

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) (insert all available data or at least 2 years prior the visa waiver agreement date)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
Total number of short-stay visa application refusals by third country												
FYROM	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Montenegro	3	0	1	1	4	2	1	0	0	0	0	
Serbia						107	30	22	7	7	7	
Albania	0	0	0	1	21	24	9	1	3	2	4	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	0	0	0	0	14	0	1	0	1	2	
Moldova	2	1	1	4	4	822	847	204	12	3	6	
Georgia	0	0	0	0	17	464	1417	2006	2269	1436	308	
Ukraine	9	0	1	6	24	1840	1496	1638	2356	1692	729	
Total	14	1	4	12	70	3273	3800	3872	4647	3141	1056	
Total number of short-stay visa application refusals – all third countries⁵³												

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

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

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

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

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

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) <i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>	
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017		
Total number of asylum applications received from visa-free countries													
FYROM	n.a.	50	20	100	25	20	20	15	10	30	50		
Montenegro	0	0	10	155	20	35	30	10	10	15	10		
Serbia	423	130	210	495	210	95	115	125	140	145	195		
Albania	39	50	60	35	45	65	115	175	425	365	470		
Bosnia and Herzegovina	7	20	100	815	285	275	180	170	135	130	85		
Moldova	32	20	25	15	15	10	5	20	35	35	45		
Georgia	19	65	85	80	30	65	105	90	135	195	540		
Ukraine	34	15	10	20	20	35	35	2080	4665	2570	2745		
Total													
Total number of asylum applications – all third countries⁵⁵	13,310	30,140	17,640	10,000	40,315	17,335	26,620	64,625	83,540	122,960	128,850		

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

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

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

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

Total number of <u>positive</u> decisions on asylum applicants from visa-free countries	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
FYROM	69	5	0	5	20	0	15	10	5	5	10	
Montenegro	0	0	0	5	10	0	10	20	10	15	5	
Serbia	7	115	60	50	80	80	125	50	60	85	50	
Albania	3	20	40	30	65	30	55	70	110	100	110	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	5	5	40	135	70	150	105	105	90	60	
Moldova	0	5	10	10	10	5	5	5	10	35	15	
Georgia	3	15	15	20	20	15	25	25	60	70	85	
Ukraine	0	5	20	20	25	5	20	165	1635	1850	1265	
Total	82	170	150	180	245	205	405	450	1995	2250	1600	

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

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

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

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) <i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
Total number of <u>negative</u> decisions on asylum applicants from visa-free countries												
FYROM	879	0	10	100	35	10	10	5	5	5	15	
Montenegro	0	0	10	180	20	10	20	15	0	10	0	
Serbia	186	40	75	475	135	30	135	85	25	60	20	
Albania	13	30	50	25	25	15	40	75	130	125	125	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	4	10	25	490	510	35	225	55	50	60	20	
Moldova	22	20	20	10	10	5	10	0	5	10	20	
Georgia	7	20	60	50	45	20	85	35	55	45	45	
Ukraine	24	0	10	180	20	10	20	15	0	10	0	
Total	1135	120	260	1520	800	135	545	285	270	325	245	

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

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

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

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

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) (insert all available data)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)	
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017		
Total number of <u>positive</u> decisions on asylum applicants (top five nationalities, not limited to visa-free countries)													
<i>Nationality 1</i>	Eritrea	Somalia	Somalia	Afghanistan	Afghanistan	Mali	Somalia	Afghanistan	Afghanistan	Afghanistan	Somalia		
<i>Nationality 2</i>	Afghanistan	Eritrea	Eritrea	Eritrea	Somalia	Somalia	Afghanistan	Somalia	Pakistan	Pakistan	Afghanistan		
<i>Nationality 3</i>	Iraq	Afghanistan	Afghanistan	Iraq	Pakistan	Afghanistan	Eritrea	Pakistan	Nigeria	Nigeria	Pakistan		
<i>Nationality 4</i>	Ethiopia	Iraq	Unknown	Pakistan	Cote d'ivoire	Pakistan	Mali	Eritrea	Somalia	Mali	Iraq		
<i>Nationality 5</i>	Turkey	Costa d'avorio	Costa d'avorio	Turchia	Eritrea	Costa d'avorio	Pakistan	Nigeria	Mali	Somalia	Nigeria		
Total	631	6525	5195	1845	2395	4025	6005	7465	8480	10780	7240		
Total number of <u>negative</u> decisions on asylum													Additional Information
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017		

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

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applicants (top five nationalities, not limited to visa-free countries)												(e.g. data source(s) , explanati on of trends and numbers for this indicator)
<i>Nationality 1</i>	Nigeria	Nigeria	Nigeria	Nigeria	Tunisia	Nigeria	Nigeria	Nigeria	Nigeria	Nigeria	Nigeria	
<i>Nationality 2</i>	Bangladesh	Ghana	Ghana	Ghana	Nigeria	Pakistan	Pakistan	Pakistan	Mali	Pakistan	Pakistan	
<i>Nationality 3</i>	Mali	Bangladesh	Pakistan	Bosnia Herz.	Ghana	Tunisia	Tunisia	Gambia	Gambia	Gambia	Banglades h	
<i>Nationality 4</i>	Turkey	Costa d' Avorio	Bangladesh	Serbia	Mali	Senegal	Senegal	Mali	Pakistan	Senegal	Gambia	
<i>Nationality 5</i>	Cote d'Ivoire	Afghanistan	Costa Avorio	Pakistan	Pakistan	Bangla	Syria	Senegal	Senegal	Banglades h	Senegal	
Total	1907	6115	8400	3530	9760	3285	3925	11405	28685	36506	30000	

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

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

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) (insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)	
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017		
Total number of residence permits applications (all residence permits) by visa-free country													
FYROM		11687	9081	7623	4843	3484	2585	2192	2149	2015	11687		
Montenegro		25	272	169	196	206	156	179	180	105	25		
Serbia		10941	6907	6631	4133	3093	2670	1785	1917	1336	10941		
Albania		64297	46674	47602	24316	18398	15890	14591	16477	17167	64297		
Bosnia and Herzegovina		5008	3342	3226	1908	1920	1689	1402	1556	1040	5008		
Moldova		39071	31040	41806	16186	8671	6170	3814	3148	2507	39071		
Georgia		1091	3590	5898	1483	1952	2573	1402	689	807	1091		
Ukraine		42328	39640	48249	15409	8493	13996	8761	7850	6867	42328		
Total		174,448	140546	161204	68474	46217	45729	34126	33966	31844	17448		
Total number of residence permits applications (all residence permits)⁶⁰		550,226	506,883	589,998	331,083	246,760	243,954	204,335	178,884	222,398			

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

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

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

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

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

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) <i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM		0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0		
Montenegro		0	0	5	0	5	5	5	5	0		
Serbia		5	0	5	11	0	0	0	0	0		
Albania		20	20	15	0	15	5	20	25	30		
Bosnia and Herzegovina		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	
Moldova		45	5	10	0	0	5	0	5	0		
Georgia		0	0	5	0	5	5	5	5	0	-	
Ukraine		5	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	-	
Total		75	25	40	16	30	20	30	40	30		
Total number of identity document fraud instances⁶²		835	565	390	390	410	435	340	255	215		

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

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

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

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

Section 2: Positive impact of visa liberalisation on (Member) States

National Contribution (max. 6 pages, excluding statistics)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SECTION 2.1: DESCRIPTION OF NATIONAL SITUATION

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

Based upon the available data it can be assessed the following:

1. for FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (2009 liberalisation), Albania and Bosnia Herzegovina (2010 liberalisation) and Moldova (2014), a significant reduction in the number of residence permits for remunerated activities issued after visa liberalisation (table 2.2.3). For Georgia and the Ukraine, it is not possible to assess the impact, with the liberalisation process being implemented in 2017. However, in these two cases, there has been a decline since 2014. Moreover, in the last two years, asylum requests from these two countries have greatly increased.
2. In terms of study visas, numbers fell significantly from 2014 for FYROM, MON and SERBIA (2009 liberalisation); and for Albania and Bosnia from 2011 (the year immediately following liberalisation). For Georgia and Ukraine, the figure has been falling since 2008. However it is not yet possible to estimate the impact of liberalisation, which was implemented in 2017.
3. Data on business visas is very limited. 2014 saw the launch of the Start-Up Visa Programme. The results are extremely limited, and cannot be used to identify a trend. (Reports on the performance of the programme can be found here <http://www.mise.gov.it>)

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

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

See above Q. 2.1.

Eastern Partnership - Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine:

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See above Q. 2.1.

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

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

FYROM, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia, Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia are strategic partners in the management of migration. Co-operation with these countries has intensified over time, and visa liberalisation has reinforced this process. Consequently, cooperation over migratory issues has also intensified. All the countries covered by this study (except Ukraine and Georgia) are involved in implementing the IPA project to combat organised crime and corruption through international co-operation in the area of criminal law. Key objectives are: 1. The improvement of cooperation on a legal and policing level 2. The most intense degree of data exchange 3. Enhanced data protection 4. Enhanced investigative and technological methods.

Italy has now been cooperating with **Albania** on controlling migration since the 1990s. A readmission agreement was signed in 1997 to control irregular immigration. Indeed, on the back of the effectiveness of the agreement, Italy established a rewards policy, reserving entry quotas for new Albanian workers (see table Q. 1.2). Over the years, new initiatives supplemented the framework of bilateral cooperation in terms of managing migratory flows, including a few in loco training initiatives to encourage the insertion of Albanian nationals into the annual quotas. On 19 July 2011, Italy signed an agreement with Albania regarding work-related migration, which reinforced and built on the previous bilateral arrangement on the matter signed in 2008 (providing for the Italian assessment of the attribution of a reserved entry quota to the benefit of Albanian citizens), introducing important innovations aimed, on the one hand, at responding to the powerful economic and social impact of Albanian emigration by means of circular migration mechanisms; and, on the other, at shaping the migratory phenomenon itself through language training, professional qualification and mechanisms for selecting from among the Albanian workforce wishing to emigrate. A further innovation was the establishment, in Tirana, under the auspices of the Italian Embassy, of a local Ministry of Labour coordinating office to support both the selection and recruitment of Albanian workers, and the cooperative educational interventions, further promoting the networks of the Italian businesses and operators responsible for matching labour supply and demand. Police cooperation to combat irregular immigration has also been gradually reinforced and structured over the course of around 20 years.

With **Montenegro** (2009 visa liberalisation) cooperation on readmission has been in place since 1997 (in force since 2005), with the stipulation of agreements and an executive protocol. In 2014 an integrated border strategy 2014-2018 was adopted, following on from the IPA-funded project "Support for managing migration in Montenegro". This strategy created the conditions for a structure to manage migratory flows, thereby contributing to overall stability, in line with EU rules and standards. https://www.senato.it/application/xmanager/projects/leg17/attachments/documento_evento_proc_edura_commissione/files/000/002/033/Senato_11_novembre_2014.pdf Cooperation intensified in terms of security, leading to the adoption of the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Italy and the Government of Montenegro on the matter of cooperation in the area of defence, signed in Rome on 14 September 2011) and the intensification of both information

⁶³ For example: in cases of return and readmission.

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exchange and the fight against organised crime.

In **Macedonia**, too, a readmission agreement was signed in 1997 and, more recently, cooperation on the matter of migration was underpinned by police force reinforcement. In 2014, a first agreement was made and then renewed in 2016. <http://www.altalex.com/documents/leggi/2017/12/28/ratifica-ed-esecuzione-accordo-tra-italia-e-macedonia>.

Cooperation with **Bosnia-Herzegovina** is in place in terms of readmission (signed in 2004, in force from 2007). Cooperation between police forces has also been developed.

The Italian and **Ukrainian** Ministries of the Interior have been collaborating since 1998 in the fight against drugs and organised crime.

A bilateral agreement was signed with **Moldova** in 2011 on migration for work (together with an executive protocol), whereby Italy committed "on the basis of labour market conditions and in accordance with national legislation, to encourage, in the case of issuing a flow decree, the attribution of a special entry quota for Moldovan citizens". Since 2002, there has been cooperation between the two countries on the readmission of migrants with irregular status.

With Moldova and Montenegro protocols were signed (in 2015 and 2014 respectively) to implement conclusive agreements with the European Community on the readmission of people residing with irregular status.

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

Italy is the Western Balkans' second largest trade partner, both as a purchasing and supplying country, with a market share of 18.6 % and 12.8% respectively.

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

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

There are no data available on touristic flows disaggregated per nationality. Thus it is not possible to assess if the liberalisation process has had an impact on tourism.

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

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

According the Report **of the Directorate General of Immigration and Integration Policies of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy with the support of ANPAL Servizi S.p.A** (<http://www.lavoro.gov.it/documenti-e-norme/studi-e-statistiche/Documents/Rapporti%20annuali%20sulle%20comunit%C3%A0%20migranti%20in%20Italia%20-%20anno%202017/Albania-Report-2017.pdf>), the foreign workforce in Italy responds historically to the demand for unqualified labour including low-paid work, and is therefore "complementary" rather than competing with the native workforce".

In general, the number of permits issued for subordinate labour activities to citizens from visa-free countries has fallen steadily since 2011. In this regard, it is nevertheless necessary to think more

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

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

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broadly, beyond the process of liberalisation.

The entry system for work in Italy is regulated on the basis of a quota system, making three-year entry plans based on labour market demands. The plans are implemented on a yearly basis by special decree. Now, this mechanism, introduced in 1998, seems to have undergone a process of substantial change in practice, running parallel to a significant increase in migration flows to Italy in recent years (firstly with the so-called Arab Spring and later with the migrant crisis). Eurostat data shines a spotlight on the drastic reduction of permits for remunerated activities issued in Italy, with the figure falling from 272,292 in 2008 to 8,409 in 2017, of which around half (3,593) were for seasonal activities (permit numbers were more than halved in 2011, and have dropped significantly every year since then). At the same time, there was a significant increase in the number of permits released for international protection purposes (from 20,220 in 2008 to 89,875 in 2016, falling slightly in 2017). Added to this scenario is the economic crisis that the Italian economy has undergone during the same period, which made the country less attractive to foreign nationals seeking work opportunities.

Flow decrees in recent years have focused particularly on entries for subordinate seasonal employment (in the agricultural and tourist sector), autonomous labour and the conversion of non-seasonal subordinate work permits granted on other bases, or for study, internships or professional training, or long-term EU permits issued to third-country nationals by other EU states.

These elements, which have had a significant impact on opportunities for gaining work-related entry, appear to have had a more important impact than the visa liberalisation process.

- **Macedonia.** The number of permits issued for remunerated activities is gradually and steadily falling.
- **Montenegro.** Swings between *ten and thirty*. But steadily falling since 2011.
- **Serbia.** The number of permits issued for remunerated activities is gradually and steadily falling.
- **Moldova.** The number of permits issued for remunerated activities is gradually and steadily falling.
- **Ukraine.** The number of permits issued for remunerated activities has been gradually and steadily dropping. This decline has been particularly significant among Ukrainian citizens, falling from over 40,000 in 2010 to just under 400 in 2016.
- **Georgia.** The number of permits issued for remunerated activities is gradually and steadily falling.

The drop in the number of residence permits issued is larger and more marked in relation to the three main communities in Italy (Albanians, Ukrainians and Moldovans), for whom the number of permits issued for remunerated activities fell drastically in 2011. Given that the implementation of the liberalisation process occurred at a different time, it does not seem that these figures can be related to the elimination of visas, but depend on other factors instead, including, in particular, the reduction in the annual quotas for subordinate labour that was seen in Italy's first year of the migrant crisis associated with the "Arab Spring", which shifted attention onto international protection permits.

Q2.2.5. Did your (Member) State experience a growth in the number of students arriving from third countries since the introduction of visa liberalisation? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples. Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Table 2.2.4.

There is no increase in the number of permits issued for educational purposes in any country (table 2.2.4). In fact, in all the countries, there was a fall in the number of issues of such permits

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for 2016.

Q2.2.6. Did your (Member) State experience a growth of entrepreneurship, including of self-employed persons from third countries since the introduction of visa liberalisation? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples, including background information on the access to self-employment from visa free regimes in the national context.

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

The following data is available in the Reports of the Directorate General of Immigration and Integration Policies of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy with the support of ANPAL Servizi, available at <http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it>

In total, there were 366,425 sole-proprietor businesses run by non-EU citizens in Italy on 31/12/2016. It is only possible to identify the single non-EU citizen of the owner in this kind of company. Between 2011 and 2016, the number of sole-proprietor businesses owned by non-EU saw gradual and steady growth from 285,671 in 2011 to 366,425 in 2016, with growth in the last year equalling 3.5%, in contrast to the overall fall in the number of businesses (-0.4%).

The owners of sole-proprietor businesses of **Albanian origin** on 31 December 2016 was 31,358, or 8.6% of non-UE businesses in Italy. Compared with the previous year, the number of sole-proprietor businesses owned by Albanians increased by 1.5% (+455).

The owners of sole-proprietor businesses of **Moldovan origin** on 31 December 2016 was 4,902, or 1.3% of non-UE businesses in Italy. Compared with the previous year, the number of sole-proprietor businesses owned by Moldovans increased by 6.4% (+293), showing more dynamism than non-EU citizen owned businesses as a whole, which grew by 3.5% in the same period. The Moldovan community, the 9th largest group of non-EU citizens in Italy, ranks 11th in terms of sole-proprietor businesses, suggesting a reasonable degree of participation by the community in the area of foreign business

On 31 December 2016 there were 4,323 sole-proprietor business owners of **Ukrainian origin**, or 1.2% of non-EU businesses in our country. Compared with the previous year, the number of sole-proprietor businesses with Ukrainian owners has increased by 3.3% (+140 units). The Ukrainian community, fourth in terms of the number of non-EU nationals in Italy, does not even rank among the top ten for sole-proprietor business owners, demonstrating a propensity for more collective business activities.

There is no available data updated at least to 2016 for the other communities in the study.

NOTE)

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

The following data was taken from

http://www.infomercatiesteri.it/section7_exp.php?id_paesi=57.

To establish a link with the visas would mean collecting more precise data in relation to the development of trade relations over time.

Italy plays a major role in the **Albanian economy**. In 2016, Italy represented 36.77% of all Albania's trade activities, up slightly from 2015 (36.64%). Trade between Italy and Albania in 2016 amounted to around 2.2 billion euro. Italy is clearly Albania's largest purchasing trade partner, receiving 54.57% of its exports, up from 2015 (50.87%); it is also the largest supplier to

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Albania, with a 29.28% share of the volume of imports, slightly down compared the 2015 figure (30.29%). In the first 5 months of 2017, trade data between Italy and Albania already showed a significant +7.1% compared with the equivalent point in 2016, confirming the continual upward trend of this indicator.

In 2017, Italy was **Serbia's** second largest trading partner (its second supplier country and followed by China; and its primary purchasing country followed by Germany and Bosnia and Herzegovina). According to data from the Serbian statistics office, 2017 saw 3.9 billion euro of trade, with 1.95 billion in Italian exports (10.1% of Serbia's total import – main items: automobiles, textile products and machines) and 1.99 billion in Italian imports (13.2% of Serbia's total export – main items: automobiles, clothing and footwear). According to data from the Agency for Serbian Development (RAS), Italy is also the country's main foreign investor, with around 600 companies, an estimated quota of 3 billion euro in invested capital and a business volume exceeding 2.5 billion euro. Among the main sectors of activity is the automobile industry (Fiat, which in the city of Kragujevac, produces the "500L", represents the largest foreign investment in Serbia, with €1.2 billion euro and 3,000 employees; as well as the largest exporter in the country, with over 1 billion euro in 2016 and 562.2 million euro from January to June 2017). After the Turin came several ancillary businesses; banking, insurance, textiles, footwear and agriculture.

Italy represents a partner of the utmost importance for **Montenegro**. There is dynamic collaboration between the countries, which extends to every field, from political dialogue to the economic sector, and the cultural, scientific and technological arenas. In the energy sector, Italy is the lead investor. An overall intensification of the exchange of institutional visits has contributed to the dynamism of bilateral relations. Overall trade between Montenegro and Italy in 2016 was worth 170.4 million euro: 153 million euro was the value of Italian exports, with 17.4 million the value of imports from Montenegro. The trade balance remains in favour of Italy: 135.6 million euro. Italy is the fourth supplier to Montenegro and the fifth end customer, whilst it is second among the EU-28 countries with exports from Montenegro equalling 17.4 million euro. In the last three years, Italy maintained its position in relation to the importing of Italian products, whilst there was a mild downturn in relation to exports of Montenegrin exports.

On 10 February 2005 the "Agreement on the Promotion and Protection of Investments between the Government of the Republic of Italy and the Government of **Bosnia Herzegovina**" came into force, signed on 19 May 2000. A bilateral agreement for economic collaboration is also being defined, which will provide the framework for intensifying bilateral economic relationships, particularly in the industrial and technology sectors. In 2015, with 1.52 billion euro of trade, or 11.9% of total foreign trade, Italy was Bosnia's second largest trading partner (exceeded only by Germany) enjoying an upward trend since 2014. Exports from Bosnia Herzegovina to Italy came to 623 million euro, up 1.6% on 2014. Exports from Bosnia Herzegovina to Italy came to 901.7 million euro, up 6.3% on 2014.

Italy is the third largest European trading partner for **Georgia**, and 8th on a global scale. Moreover, Italy has for many years steadily occupied third place in terms of money transferred to Georgia (around 12% of GDP). Moreover, Italian products are well renowned in Georgia, and there is certainly space for an increase in exports: this goes both for products generally considered expressions of Italian style (clothing, footwear, cosmetics, food products, furniture, etc.) and technological products as well (machines, kitchens etc.).

There are over 300 companies with Italian interests officially registered with the **Ukrainian** Authority. These established presences assume the form of representative offices and private Ukrainian companies with 100% Italian capital or in joint ventures with local companies (after "green-field" investments or the acquisition of pre-existing plants). The largest Italian investments are in the financial, food-processing, ceramic, wood, textiles and footwear sectors. Commodities, the strong point of Italian exports, include: fashion/personal-care products, machines for the industry and building sectors, as well as construction materials, accessories for homes and commercial spaces, and domestic equipment. The furniture and footwear

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sectors deserve a special mention here, featuring in promotional exhibitions where Italy always comes out first each year in terms of the number of companies exhibiting. Other key sectors, in the field of mechanical automation, are metalworking, food packaging and wood and natural stone processing, particularly granite and clay. Italy is, in particular, the largest supplier of machines for manufacturing tiles and other ceramics-based items (bathroom fixtures and boilers). In terms of services, areas of interest - besides banking - include engineering consultancy in the construction sector. In the last three years, there has been an increase in both exports and imports.

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

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

SECTION 2.2 : STATISTICAL INFORMATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) (insert all available data or <u>at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date</u>)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)	
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017		
Total number of visitors staying in hotels and other accommodation establishments from the visa-free countries													
FYROM													
Montenegro													
Serbia													
Albania													
Bosnia and Herzegovina													
Moldova													
Georgia													
Ukraine													
Total													
Total number of visitors staying in hotels and other accommodation establishments ⁶⁸	131.487	126.432	121.335	124.592	135.428	136.330	141.313	146.713	157.750	165.919	184.296	http://www.bancaditalia.it/statistiche/tematiche/rapporti-estero/turismo-internazionale/tavole	

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

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

Data have been requested to the competent Italian associations for tourism and hotel accommodation (Federalbergh, Federturismo). There are no available data per nationality but only aggregated data for touristic flows.

⁶⁷ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities.

⁶⁸ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of tourism visitors staying in hotels and other accommodation establishments.

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 2.2.2: Total number of first-time residence permit applications received from visa-free country nationals⁶⁹

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) <i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>	
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017		
Total number of first-time residence applications received from the respective visa-free country													
FYROM													
Montenegro													
Serbia													
Albania													
Bosnia and Herzegovina													
Moldova													
Georgia													
Ukraine													
Total													
Total number of first-time residence applications⁷⁰													

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

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

Data not available

⁶⁹ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities.

⁷⁰ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of first-time temporary residence applications.

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 2.2.3: Total number of first residence permits issued for remunerated activities reasons to visa-free country nationals⁷¹

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) <i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
Total number of permits issued for remunerated activities reasons to visa-free country nationals												
FYROM		6,257	3,932	3,183	1,266	769	406	228	174	151		
Montenegro		1	25	38	30	27	14	23	13	7		
Serbia		5,512	3,441	3,747	1,645	1,291	1,113	548	445	297		
Albania		25,151	12,772	21,341	6,222	3,465	3,257	2,187	1,151	1,218		
Bosnia and Herzegovina		3322	1783	1647	840	655	662	543	612	375		
Moldova		29,122	17,846	29,955	7,151	3,331	2,840	1,164	374	222		
Georgia		595	3,165	5,424	838	1,308	1,916	753	76	10		
Ukraine		32,177	29,080	40,082	8,176	2,516	8,581	3,890	889	371		
Total		102137	72,044	105417	26,168	13362	18,789	9,336	3,734	2,651		
Total number of permits issued for remunerated activities reasons⁷²		272,791	235,966	359,051	119,342	66,742	80,726	53,327	17,370	9389		

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

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

Table 2.2.4: Total number of first residence permits issued for education reasons to visa-free country nationals⁷³

⁷¹ See Eurostat: Number of first residence permits issued by reason, EU-28, 2008-2016 [migr_resfirst]

⁷² All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of permits issued for remunerated activities reasons.

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Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
	(insert all available data or <u>at least 2 years</u> prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)											
Total number of permits issued for education reasons to visa-free country nationals	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM		209	107	102	110	110	71	90	60	32		
Montenegro		5	54	39	74	80	49	76	62	29		
Serbia		706	444	260	334	269	253	202	215	117		
Albania		1729	1692	1029	702	564	466	412	402	321		
Bosnia and Herzegovina		98	82	47	62	54	43	45	47	20		
Moldova		232	212	149	106	63	49	46	32	16		
Georgia		119	93	92	96	90	109	92	78	77		
Ukraine		308	268	230	260	285	284	265	261	160		
Total		3406	2952	1948	1744	1515	1324	1228	1157	772		
Total number of permits issued for education reasons ⁷⁴		28,509	32,634	25,676	30,260	30,631	27,083	24,373	22,080	16,847		

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

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

⁷³ See Eurostat: Number of first residence permits issued by reason, EU-28, 2008-2016 [migr_resfirst]

⁷⁴ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of permits issued for education reasons.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destinationTable 2.2.5: Total number of first residence permits issued to entrepreneurs (including self-employed persons) from visa-free countries⁷⁵

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) (insert all available data or <u>at least</u> 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)	
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017		
Total number of first residence permits issued for entrepreneurs (including self-employed persons) from visa-free countries													
FYROM								-	-	-	-	Start-Up Visa Programme http://www.sviluppoeconomico.gov.it	
Montenegro								-	-	-	-	Start-Up Visa Programme http://www.sviluppoeconomico.gov.it	
Serbia								-	-	-	0	2 unapproved applications to the Start-Up Visa Programme http://www.sviluppoeconomico.gov.it	
Albania								-	-	-	-	Start-Up Visa Programme http://www.sviluppoeconomico.gov.it	
Bosnia and Herzegovina								-	-	-	-	Start-Up Visa Programme http://www.sviluppoeconomico.gov.it	
Moldova								-	-	2	-	2018 number- Start-Up Visa site http://www.sviluppoeconomico.gov.it	
Georgia								-	-	-	-	Start-Up Visa Programme http://www.sviluppoeconomico.gov.it	
Ukraine								10 between 2014 and 2015	-	5	1	1 unapproved application http://www.sviluppoeconomico.gov.it	
Total													
Total number of first residence permits issued for entrepreneurs (including self-employed persons)⁷⁶													

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

⁷⁵ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities.

⁷⁶ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of first residence permits issued for entrepreneurs (including self-employed persons).

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination

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

The data relates to the "Start-Up Visa" programme, which covers the years from 2014 onwards. For companies only, there is no accessible data broken down into nationalities.

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

National Contribution (max. 6 pages, excluding statistics)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SECTION 3.1 : DESCRIPTION OF NATIONAL SITUATION

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

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

Following visa liberalisation, it appears an **increase in the number of instances of refusal at the border**, particularly in the immediate wake of liberalisation.

At the same time, we find, among citizens of the countries in question, a **constant, gradual reduction in repatriation decisions** following visa liberalisation (it is not possible to assess Georgia and Ukraine).

We must also consider, however, **the increase in voluntary repatriations** among the citizens of all the countries in question. This increase does not seem (taking into account the limited nature of the available data) closely connected to liberalisation. The data on voluntary repatriations does reveal, however, an abrupt increase for all the countries in this study between 2012 and 2015. There has been a general drop in the number of irregular presences.

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

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

- FYROM: we see an immediate increase in instances of refusal at the border (from 25 in 2009 to 215 in 2010), followed by a tendency towards stabilisation; and a reduction in repatriation decisions after 2010. Since 2014, however, voluntary repatriations have increased. Irregular presences have decreased since 2011.
- Montenegro: we see an immediate increase in instances of refusal at the border from 0 to 20), followed by a stabilising period; and an immediate increase in repatriation decisions, followed by a drop of 50% in 2012 and a subsequent stabilisation period. No voluntary repatriations have been recorded. Irregular presences seem to have increased after border

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liberalisation, and then stabilised.

- Serbia: here, the trend is different to a degree, because we see an initial increase in refusals, followed by a gradual reduction, ending up below the 2008 levels. There is a constant decline in repatriation decisions. Since 2014, however, voluntary repatriations have increased. Irregular presences have decreased since 2010.
- Albania: gradual increase in the wake of liberalisation (575-5280). A constant decline in repatriation decisions. Irregular presences decline overall, despite an interim increase between 2012 and 2015.
- Bosnia: instances of refusal at the border increased immediately after liberalisation, dropping in the following years, however. A constant decline in repatriation decisions. From 2014, however, voluntary repatriations increased. Irregular presences have decreased since 2009.

Eastern Partnership - Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine:

- Moldova: here, too, we saw an increase in instances of refusal at the border in the immediate wake of liberalisation, followed by its reduction. There has been a constant decline in repatriation decisions. From 2014, however, voluntary repatriations have increased. Irregular presences have decreased since 2014.
- It is not possible to assess Georgia and Ukraine because liberalisation was implemented in 2017. From 2014, however, voluntary repatriations increased. Irregular presences have decreased throughout the whole period of the study.

Q3.1.2 Did your (Member) State encounter a rise in illegal employment since the introduction of visa liberalisation? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples.
Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Table 3.2.5.

According to ISTAT, the use of irregular labour by companies and families is a structural feature of the Italian labour market. In 2015, there were 3 million and 724 thousand active persons in non-regular conditions, mostly working as employees (2 million and 651 thousand people). The rate of irregularity rose to 15.9%.

The rate of irregular employment is particularly high in the sector of service provision to individuals (47.6% in 2015, 0.2 percentage points above 2014) but is also very high in the agricultural (17.9%), construction (16.9%), trade, transport, housing and catering sectors (16.7%).

No analyses reveal a link between the elimination of visas and an increase in unreported employment. Although, as illustrated previously in the report, a few of the sectors with high levels of irregular labour are also those in which the majority of the roles are filled by citizens from the visa-free countries (in particular, individual services for Moldovans and Ukrainians, and construction for Albanians), the data reported in table 3.2.5 do not show an increase.

On the contrary the number of people found in a position of irregular employment from the visa-free countries is in constant decline.

Q3.1.3 Did your (Member) State encounter a rise in smuggled and/or trafficked persons from the visa-free countries since the introduction of visa liberalisation? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples.
Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Tables 3.2.6 and 3.2.7.

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

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

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

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

In general, we can see that the number of people from the visa-free countries staying irregularly has fallen.

There are, however, a number of differences. For Albania, the figure has fallen, but to a lesser degree than for other countries. The number was largely constant between 2012 and 2017, with very slight fluctuations of a few dozen people.

For Georgia and Ukraine, the data reveals a slight increase following visa liberalisation.

It appears that the figure for Serbia fell to the greatest degree after the launch of the liberalisation process.

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

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

Q3.1.7 Did your (Member) State encounter any signs of possible misuse of the visa liberalisation?⁷⁷ If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples.

Q3.2. Did your (Member) State as a country of destination face any administrative burden⁷⁸ since the introduction of the visa-free regime? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples.

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

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

⁷⁷ For example, dealing with cases when persons enter the country legally but later become illegally employed, are staying in the country legally, but are working without a work permit or apply for asylum without reasonable grounds.

⁷⁸ For example: significant increase of residence permit applications, increased demand for work permits, more time-consuming border control procedure due to the lack of visas. etc.

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Q3.3.1. Did the visa liberalisation regime increase the security risks in your (Member) State? If yes, please provide a short description explaining why and provide examples.⁷⁹

Q3.3.2. If applicable, what types of offences⁸⁰ were committed by third-country nationals in your (Member) State after the commencement of the visa-free regime?⁸¹ Where there any significant differences compared to the time before the visa-free regime started?

Q3.3.3. If applicable, what was the rate of offences (final court rulings) committed by third-country nationals⁸² in your (Member) State after the commencement of the visa-free regime? Where there any significant differences compared to the time before the visa-free regime started?

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

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

Q3.4.1 How did the activities of irregular migration facilitators impact your (Member) State?⁸³ Please provide a short description with specific examples about your (Member) State situation.

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

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

⁷⁹ For example: did your (Member) State identify any increased terrorism risks arising from the entry or residence of respective TCNs.

⁸⁰ Please use this pre-defined list of categories: cybercrime; drugs offences; economic and financial offences; illicit immigration; illicit trafficking (not drug related); offences against property; offences against public order and safety; offences against public trust (e.g. fraud, forgery, counterfeiting); offences against the person; sexual exploitation of children (including child pornography); sexual offences against adults; terrorism-related activity; trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants.

⁸¹ This applies to third-country nationals who do not live your country, but visited (short stay of up to 90 days).

⁸² See above.

⁸³ Did their activities lead to increases in irregular border-crossings, enhanced border controls or document fraud?

SECTION 3.2 : STATISTICAL INFORMATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 3.2.1: Total number of nationals from the visa-free countries refused entry at the external borders⁸⁴

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) <i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>	
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017		
Total number of nationals from the visa-free countries refused entry at the external borders													
FYROM	250	60	25	215	160	100	80	80	100	105	0	ITALIA Rapporto annuale sulle statistiche in materia di asilo e immigrazione Anno di riferimento: 2007 https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network_en	
Montenegro	797	0	0	20	15	15	25	10	10	0	0		
Serbia		330	75	205	185	125	50	65	65	120	0		
Albania	499	355	435	575	4930	2920	3105	3375	3760	5280	0		
Bosnia and Herzegovina		55	5	15	70	35	30	20	10	20	0		
Moldova		130	45	40	40	40	30	225	510	790	0		
Georgia		30	10	15	20	35	60	70	30	30	0		
Ukraine		125	60	55	75	60	125	150	95	135	0		

⁸⁴ See Eurostat: Third-country nationals refused entry at the external borders - annual data (rounded) [migr_eirfs]

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Total												
Total number third-country nationals refused entry at the external borders⁸⁵	9,394	6,405	3,700	4,215	8,635	7,350	7,370	7,005	7,425	9,715	11,260	

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

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

--

⁸⁵ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number third-country nationals refused entry at the external borders.

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destinationTable 3.2.2: Total number of return decisions issued to nationals from the visa-free countries⁸⁶

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) (insert all available data or <u>at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date</u>)										
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017
Total number of return decisions issued to nationals from the visa-free countries											
FYROM		275	210	245	120	130	115	100	90	95	90
Montenegro	366	0	0	10	5	0	5	5	5	5	5
Serbia		1465	835	870	390	305	320	285	255	230	200
Albania	1940	3635	2875	2820	1715	2230	2265	2390	2555	2270	2330
Bosnia and Herzegovina		1496	1.580	918	545	139	44	22	41	1496	1.580
Moldova	349	2230	1485	1110	645	670	500	370	365	295	315
Georgia		265	245	370	335	445	395	420	360	295	350
Ukraine	451	2090	1480	1460	690	720	570	490	550	530	595
Total		10315	7435	7255	4070	4745	4405	4295	4365	3890	4040
Total number of return decisions issued to third-country nationals⁸⁷											

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

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

--

⁸⁶ See Eurostat: Third-country nationals ordered to leave - annual data (rounded) [migr_eiord]

⁸⁷ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of nationals ordered to leave.

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 3.2.3: Total number of voluntary returns (all types) by nationals of visa-free countries⁸⁸

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) <i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
Total number of voluntary returns (all types) by nationals of visa-free countries												
FYROM					0	0	0	0	5	5	5	
Montenegro					0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Serbia					0	0	0	15	10	20	30	
Albania					0	0	0	325	385	295	415	
Bosnia and Herzegovina					0	0	0	5	5	5	5	
Moldova					0	0	0	30	40	45	65	
Georgia					0	0	0	15	15	15	45	
Ukraine					0	0	0	25	30	40	75	
Total					0	0	0	415	490	425	640	
Total number of voluntary returns (all types) – all third-country nationals⁸⁹												

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

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

--

⁸⁸ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities. Also see Eurostat: Number of voluntary and forced returns [migr_eirt_vol];

⁸⁹ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of voluntary returns.

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 3.2.4: Total number of forced returns by visa-free country⁹⁰

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) <i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
Total number of forced returns by visa-free country												
FYROM			0	0	0	15	15	20	10	0	0	
Montenegro			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Serbia			0	0	0	40	50	35	40	0	0	
Albania			0	0	0	745	775	740	765	0	0	
Bosnia and Herzegovina			0	0	0	15	25	15	25	0	0	
Moldova			0	0	0	100	85	80	75	0	0	
Georgia			0	0	0	70	65	40	75	0	0	
Ukraine			0	0	0	40	35	60	90	0	0	
Total			0	0	0	1025	1050	990	1080	0	0	
Total number of forced returns - all third-country nationals⁹¹												

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

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

⁹⁰ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities. Also see Eurostat: Number of voluntary and forced returns [migr_eirt_vol];

⁹¹ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of forced returns.

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 3.2.5: Total number of nationals from the visa - free countries found in illegal employment⁹²

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) <i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
Total number of nationals from the visa-free countries found in illegal employment												
FYROM		190	105	145	65	60	65	40	35	35	40	<i>Please name the top 5 labour sectors where TCNs were illegally employed (see footnote list for pre-defined sectors).⁹³</i>
Montenegro		0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	<i>Please see above.</i>
Serbia		1.115	565	530	225	135	150	135	120	100	95	<i>Please see above.</i>
Albania		3.070	2.445	2.320	1.395	1.725	1.740	1.795	1.930	1.655	1.655	<i>Please see above.</i>
Bosnia and Herzegovina		225	195	190	95	130	130	135	80	105	75	<i>Please see above.</i>
Moldova		1765	1145	845	505	500	345	250	260	105	215	<i>Please see above.</i>
Georgia		195	175	265	230	275	250	260	205	170	190	<i>Please see above.</i>
Ukraine		1285	830	820	395	405	270	255	285	250	270	<i>Please see above.</i>
Total		7845	5464	5120	2910	3230	2950	2870	2915	2420	2545	
Total number third-country nationals found in illegal employment⁹⁴												

⁹² Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities. Also see Eurostat: Third-country nationals found to be illegally present - annual data (rounded) [migr_eipre]

⁹³ Agriculture, forestry and fishing; Mining and quarrying; Manufacturing; Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply; Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities; Construction; Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles; Transportation and storage; Accommodation and food service activities; Information and communication; Financial and insurance activities; Real estate activities; Professional, scientific and technical activities; Administrative and support service activities; Public administration and defence; compulsory social security; Education; Human health and social work activities; Arts, entertainment and recreation; Other service activities; Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of households for own use; Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies.

⁹⁴ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number third-country nationals found in illegal employment.

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

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

--

Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destinationTable 3.2.6: Total number of smuggled persons from the visa-free countries (final court rulings)⁹⁵

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) <i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>	
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017		
Total number of <u>smuggled</u> persons from the visa-free countries (final court rulings)													
FYROM													
Montenegro													
Serbia													
Albania													
Bosnia and Herzegovina													
Moldova													
Georgia													
Ukraine													
Total													
Total number of <u>smuggled</u> persons from third countries (final court rulings)⁹⁶													

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

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

⁹⁵ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities.

⁹⁶ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of smuggled persons from third countries.

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 3.2.7: Total number of trafficked persons from the visa-free countries (final court rulings)⁹⁷

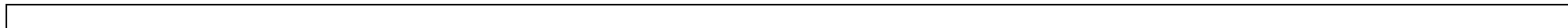
Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) <i>(insert all available data or <u>at least</u> 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>	
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017		
Total number of <u>trafficked</u> persons from the visa-free countries (final court rulings)													
FYROM													
Montenegro													
Serbia													
Albania													
Bosnia and Herzegovina													
Moldova													
Georgia													
Ukraine													
Total													
Total number of <u>trafficked</u> persons from third countries (final court rulings) ⁹⁸													

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

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

⁹⁷ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities.

⁹⁸ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of trafficked persons from third countries.



*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 3.2.8: Total number of identified facilitators⁹⁹ of unauthorised entry, transit and residence¹⁰⁰ from the visa-free countries (final court rulings)¹⁰¹

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) <i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>	
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017		
Total number of identified facilitators of unauthorised entry, transit and residence from the visa-free countries (final court rulings)													
FYROM													
Montenegro													
Serbia													
Albania													
Bosnia and Herzegovina													
Moldova													
Georgia													
Ukraine													
Total													
Total number of identified facilitators of unauthorised entry, transit and residence (final court rulings)¹⁰²													
EU nationality 1													<i>Please add the number of identified facilitators of unauthorised entry, transit and residence from EU MS (top 5 EU)</i>

⁹⁹ This refer to the nationality of the facilitators. EU nationalities can be provided in the second part of the table.

¹⁰⁰ Facilitators of the unauthorised entry, transit and residence - intentionally assisting a person who is not a national of an EU Member State either to enter or transit across the territory of a Member State in breach of laws on the entry or transit of aliens, or, for financial gain, intentionally assisting them to reside within the territory of a Member State in breach of the laws of the State concerned on the residence of aliens (see Article 1(1)(a) and (b) of Council Directive 2002/90/EC).

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

¹⁰² All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of identified facilitators of unauthorised entry, transit and residence.

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														<i>nationalities).</i>
EU nationality 2														<i>Please see above.</i>
EU nationality 3														<i>Please see above.</i>
EU nationality 4														<i>Please see above.</i>
EU nationality 5														<i>Please see above.</i>

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

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

--

*Impact of visa liberalisation on countries of destination*Table 3.2.9: Total number of nationals found to be illegally present from the visa-free countries¹⁰³

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) <i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>	
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017		
Total number of nationals found to be illegally present from the visa-free countries													
FYROM		275	210	245	120	130	115	100	90	95	90		
Montenegro		0	0	10	5	0	5	5	5	5	5		
Serbia		1.465	835	870	390	305	320	285	255	230	200		
Albania	3832	3.635	2875	2820	1715	2230	2265	2390	2555	2270	2330	2007 data: EMN ITALIA Rapporto annuale sulle statistiche in materia di asilo e immigrazione Anno di riferimento: 2007 https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network_en	
Bosnia and Herzegovina		355	305	370	170	245	235	235	185	170	155		
Moldova	2065	2230	1485	1110	645	670	500	370	365	295	315	2007 data: EMN ITALIA Rapporto annuale sulle statistiche in materia di asilo e immigrazione Anno di riferimento: 2007 https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network_en	
Georgia		265	245	370	335	445	395	420	360	295	350		
Ukraine		2090	1480	1460	690	720	570	490	550	530	595		
Total													

¹⁰³ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities. Also see Eurostat: Third-country nationals found to be illegally present - annual data (rounded) [migr_eipre]

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Total number of third-country nationals found to be illegally present¹⁰⁴	54140	68,175	53,440	46,995	29,505	29,345	23,945	25,300	27,305	32,365	36,230	
--	-------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--

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

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

¹⁰⁴ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of third-country national found to be illegally present.

Table 3.2.10: Total number of overstayers from the visa-free countries¹⁰⁵

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) (insert all available data or <u>at least</u> 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)	
	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017		
Total number of overstayers from the visa-free countries													
FYROM													
Montenegro													
Serbia													
Albania													
Bosnia and Herzegovina													
Moldova													
Georgia													
Ukraine													
Total													
Total number of third-country nationals overstayers ¹⁰⁶													

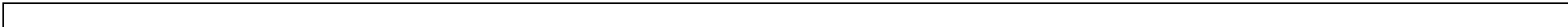
*Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).

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

--

¹⁰⁵ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities. Also see Eurostat: Third-country nationals found to be illegally present - annual data (rounded) [migr_eipre]

¹⁰⁶ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of third-country national overstayers.



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

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

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

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

SECTION 4.1 : DESCRIPTION OF NATIONAL SITUATION

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

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

NO INFO

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

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

Not APPLICABLE

Eastern Partnership - Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine:

NOT APPLICABLE.

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

The Ministry of the Interior supports assisted voluntary repatriation projects. In 2017, projects were completed with the support of the European Return Fund, established by Decision 575/2007/EC of 23 May 2007 of the European Parliament and Council as part of the "Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows" (SOLID) European Programme, during the 2007-2013 funding cycle of the European Committee for managing migrant flows. In 2016, new assisted voluntary repatriation projects were awarded funding as part of AMIF (the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund). The goal of these projects is to arrange **assisted voluntary repatriation and reintegration initiatives** for the benefit of around **3,000 third-country nationals**.

Please see below the essential information on the projects. **PROJECT: PROG 6 – ERMES 2 (Citizens from: Albania, Morocco, Senegal, Tunisia); PROJECT: PROG 205 – Integrazione di ritorno (Re-integration back home) 3 (Colombia, Ecuador, Ghana, Morocco, Peru, Nigeria, Senegal) PROJECT: PROG 576 – Back home - Third countries, PROJECT: PROG 237 – Back to the future Third countries PROJECT: PROG 312 – RISTART (RESTART) - Third countries.**

The assisted repatriation projects generally comprise the following elements: individual counselling with specialist staff prior to departure; information and cultural mediation services; assistance in issuing travel documents at the consulates of the relevant countries of origin; organising the journey and airport assistance; pre-departure training on setting up and managing microbusinesses and independent activities in the country of origin; provision to all beneficiaries of a resettlement allowance in cash before departure equal to 400 euro; and, finally, support in reintegrating into the country of origin through the provision of a variable sum ranging from 1,500 to 2,000 euro per single person or family head, convertible into practical goods and services for making an individual reintegration plan with an *in loco* follow-up support and monitoring service for six months. Repatriated dependent family members are granted a reintegration subsidy of at

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least 50% of the reintegration subsidy per dependent adult, and 30% of the reintegration subsidy per dependent minor. There is no specific assessment data on these latest projects.

However, we can observe that the overall figure for assisted voluntary repatriation in May 2017 remained at significantly low levels compared to the results seen in other European states. The overall number of migrants who have used the VAR system in Italy, however, is not very high and is made up mostly of men and vulnerable groups.

See below a table showing the results of the first funding cycle, which closed in 2015.

RIMPATRI VOLONTARI ASSISTITI REALIZZATI NELL'AMBITO DEL FONDO RIMPATRI 2008-2015	
SUDDIVISI PER ANNO SOLARE	
Anno solare	Rimpatri effettuati
2009	162
2010	160
2011	480
2012	773
2013	1.036
2014	951
2015	411

Disaggregated data per nationality is not available.

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

N/A

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

Law no. 199 of 29 October 2016 (**Provision on addressing unreported employment, using labour in agriculture and wage realignment in the agricultural sector**) is designed to ensure more efficiency in addressing so called *caporalato* (illegal recruitment), introducing meaningful legislative changes to the criminal law framework and planning specific measures to support seasonal agricultural workers.

By the expression "*caporalato*" we mean illicit brokering and labour exploitation, primarily in agriculture.

The main courses of legal intervention are: the reformulation of the crime of *caporalato*, which means the employer, too, is punishable by the law; application of a reduced penalty for those who collaborate with the authorities; obligatory arrest if a crime is being committed; reinforcement of practice of confiscation; the adoption of supervision measures for agricultural companies in which the crime was committed; the extension to legal persons of responsibility for the crime of *caporalato*; provision of the victims of *caporalato* with benefits from the Anti-Trafficking Fund; the enhancement of the quality agricultural labour network, functioning as a tool for the monitoring and prevention of unreported employment in agriculture"

One year after it was implemented, the former Minister of Agriculture gave a positive evaluation,

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being of the view that more suitable instruments have enabled tighter controls. The new Government has, however, indicated their intention to review it, in the belief that it is not fit for purpose to address the issue, which remains a major concern, particularly in the agricultural sector.

Q4.1.5. If applicable, did your (Member) State implement measures to fight the smuggling and/or trafficking of persons from the visa-free countries? If yes, please explain their impact and add specific examples.

Q4.1.6. If applicable, did your (Member) State implement measures to fight the activities of facilitators of unauthorised entry, transit and residence? If yes, please explain their impact and add specific examples.

Law 94/2009 on the so-called security package has modified the previous guidelines in terms of the encouragement of illegal immigration, strengthening the suppressive framework all round.

Unless the act constitutes a more serious offence, anyone in violation of the provisions laid down by the consolidated text on immigration, who promotes, directs, organises, finances or transports foreign nationals within the territory of the state, or a state of which the person is not a citizen or does not have permanent residence will be sentenced with between 1 and 5 years' imprisonment, as well as a fine of 15,000 euro per person.

The duration of imprisonment goes up from 5 to 15 years with the fine of 15,000 euro in the following cases:

- a) the case involves the entry or illegal residence in the country of 5 or more people;
- b) the trafficked person has been exposed to life-threatening danger or had their safety threatened in order to gain entry or illegal residence;
- c) the trafficked person has been subject to inhumane or degrading treatment to gain access to illegal residence;
- d) the act was committed by three or more people working together or using international transportation services or using documents which are counterfeit, altered or otherwise illegally obtained;
- e) the perpetrators had weapons and explosive devices available

The penalty is increased in the instance of two or more of the abovementioned circumstances if the crimes

- a) have been committed to recruit people into prostitution or any form of sexual or labour abuse, or if it involves the entry or minors to use them in illicit activities in order to encourage their exploitation;
- b) are committed for profit, even if it is indirect

The penalty is reduced by half for defendants who act to prevent the criminal activity from having further consequences, significantly assisting the police or legal authorities in gathering decisive proof for reconstructing events, in identifying or apprehending one or more of the perpetrators or in diverting resources pertinent to the consummation of the crimes.

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Q4.1.7. If applicable, did your (Member) State implement measures to reduce the incidence of nationals found to be illegally present in your country? If yes, please explain their impact and add specific examples. Please also see **Q4.4** (on overstayers) before answering to avoid overlap.

See Q.4.4.

Q4.1.8. If applicable, what was the effectiveness of the measures listed above and which of them were most successful in reaching their intended goals? Please provide any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

Q4.2. Did your (Member) State implement measures to deal with administrative burdens since the introduction of the visa-free regime?¹⁰⁷ If yes, please list and explain these measures, their impact / effectiveness and add any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

Q4.3. Did your (Member) State implement measures to deal with the possible misuse of visa liberalisation?¹⁰⁸ If yes, please list and explain these measures, their impact / effectiveness and add any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

Q4.4. How did your (Member) State deal with cases when third-country nationals entered the country legally, but did not legalize their stay after 90 days (overstayers)? Please provide a short description of such instances while highlighting any measures implemented by your country to deal with this. If applicable, what was the impact / effectiveness of these measures and are there any good practices / lessons learned you have identified?

Law no. 94/2009, the so-called security package, has introduced article 10-bis (Entry and illegal residence on state territory) into the consolidated text on immigration. In accordance with this law, "unless the act constitutes a more serious offence, foreign nationals who (...) reside on state territory without a residence permit are punishable by a fine of between 5,000 and 10,000 euro. Article 162 of the penal code (according to which, misdemeanours punished purely with a fine are cancelled upon payment of a sum equivalent to a third of the maximum penalty decided) does not apply to the crime referred to in this paragraph.

The fine will not be demanded of foreign nationals presenting themselves at border crossings without the required entry documents.

At a hearing before the *Parliament Committee of Inquiry into the Accommodation, Identification and Expulsion, as well as the Conditions of Treatment, of Migrants, and into the Commitment of Public Resources Used* in June 2016, the then Minister of Justice raised the concern that many judges had pointed out "the incongruity of this provision which, on the one hand calls for sanctions with no form of effective deterrence and, on the other, makes it more complicated to investigate in certain areas, such as human trafficking, for example". A defendant cannot be a witness in the same trial, thereby reducing the possibility of ascertaining the truth through the testimonials of the migrants themselves.

¹⁰⁷ For example: significant increase of residence permit applications, increased demand for work permits, more time-consuming border control procedure due to the lack of visas. etc.

¹⁰⁸ For example, dealing with cases when persons enter the country legally but later become illegally employed, are staying in the country legally, but are working without a work permit or apply for asylum without reasonable grounds.

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Q4.4.1 In the case of overstayers from the visa-free countries, does your (Member) State apply a different return procedure compared to the usual procedure? If yes, please provide a short description of such instances while highlighting any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

N/A

Q4.4.2 Does your (Member) State apply any special procedures in cases where overstayers have **lost their identification documents or in instances where there are problems with their identification**? If yes, please provide a short description of such instances while highlighting any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

In general, when the foreign national is going to receive a refusal or expulsion notice for having overstayed on the territory in violation of immigration regulations, and it is not possible to proceed to immediate expulsion, Legislative Decree no. 286 of 1998 (TU Immigration) stipulates that the foreign national be kept in detention for a maximum of 90 days (an initial 30-day period, which may be extended several times for a maximum of 90 days – this maximum duration is reduced when the foreign national has already been in a prison facility for at least 90 days).

In accordance with article 14 of the *TU* (consolidated law) on immigration, paragraph 1, when it is not possible to immediately expel a defendant by accompanying them to the border or refusing entry, owing to temporary circumstances that obstruct preparation for repatriation or removal, the *quaestor* arranges for the foreign national to be detained for no longer than the maximum duration required in the detention centre for closer repatriations. Situations that justify detention may also include the need to undertake additional checks on the person's identity or nationality, the need to acquire travel documents, or the availability of suitable transportation.

Q4.4.3 If applicable, what was the effectiveness of these procedures (see **Q4.4.1** and **Q4.4.2**) and were they successful in reaching their intended goals? Please provide any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

In December 2017 there were 5 operational CPRs (the former name for identification and expulsion centres or CIE) on national territory, the situation being as follows:

PRESENZE PRESSO C.P.R. 1° DICEMBRE 2017						
	ENTE GESTORE	CAPIENZA TEORICA	CAPIENZA EFFETTIVA	PRESENZE	POSTI TEMPORANEAMENTE NON DISPONIBILI	POSTI DISPONIBILI
BARI (u.)	Costruiamo insieme	126	126	98		28
BRINDISI (u.)	Auxilium	48	48	44		4
CALTANISSETTA (u)	Auxilium	96	96	96		0
ROMA (u. d.)	Coop. Gepsa	250	125	71	L'Ente Gestore ha comunicato la chiusura dell'intero settore maschile per cui la capienza del centro e' dimezzata.	54
TORINO (u. d.)	RTI- Gepsa e Associazione Culturale Acuarinto	180	91	108	capienza ulteriormente ridotta per danneggiamento di n.9 moduli abitativi in data 13 novembre 2017	-17
TOTALE		700	486	417		69

In a similar context the Senate's Special Committee for the protection and promotion of human

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rights highlighted the following: *"The analysis of the data from the Ministry of the Interior confirms the difficulty inherent in carrying out repatriations in our country, and the lack of efficiency overall in the system for detaining and expelling irregular foreign migrants. Between 1 January and 31 December 2016, 2,984 people were taken to the CIEs (identification and expulsion centres - formerly known as CPRs). Among this group, 1,441 were repatriated, around 48%; 216 were released after the maximum detention time was reached; and 1,166 were released with removal orders. As for previous year, between 1 January and 20 December 2015, a total of 5,242 people were brought to the CIEs, of whom 2,746 were actually repatriated i.e. 52% of the total detainees were taken back to their own country. In 2014, 55% of people in the CIEs were forcibly sent home i.e. 2,771 out of the 4,986 detained foreign nationals. In 2013, 6,016 were transported to the centres, of which 2,749 were repatriated. In spite of the commitments laid down on a European level with adoption of the European Migration Agenda in May 2015, the data continues to demonstrate that the average proportion of repatriations made in relation to the number of people detained remains around 50%".*

Q4.5. How did your cooperation with the visa-free countries evolve over time in terms of assistance and information exchange, before and after the visa-free regime commencement?¹⁰⁹ Please provide a short description and specific examples of your national situation disaggregated by region and third countries of interest.

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

Eastern Partnership - Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine:

Q4.5.1. If applicable, how effective was the cooperation with third countries to reach your desired goals? Where there any particular differences in your interactions with different third countries and did you identify any good practices / lessons learned?

Q4.6. If applicable, how did your (Member) State respond to the influx of asylum seekers from the visa-free countries? Please provide a short description of the measures taken and any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.¹¹⁰

Generally, there was no significant increase in asylum requests from citizens of the visa-free countries, except in two cases (Albania and Ukraine). Ukraine shows the largest variation since 2014, presumably due more to the conflict affecting certain regions than the visa liberalisation process. The validity of these requests is also corroborated by the very low number of refusals (only a few dozen among thousands of requests).

The situation is different in the case of Albania, where there has actually been a significant increase in requests (with a higher rate of refusal) following the launch of the liberalisation process (from 35 requests in 2010, gradually building up to 470 in 2017).

Q4.6.1 If applicable, were the measures of your (Member) State effective to manage the influx of asylum seekers from the visa-free countries? Please provide a short description of your national situation highlighting any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

¹⁰⁹ For example, in terms of information campaigns in the third countries working on the elimination of 'push factors' - unemployment, poverty, poor conditions in the national health system, assistance to visa-free countries from Member States and reintegration assistance to returnees.

¹¹⁰ For example, using the concept of safe country of origin.

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N/A

Q4.6.2 If applicable, how did your (Member) State cooperate with other (Member) States found in a similar situation (i.e. influx of asylum seekers from the visa-free countries)? Please provide a short description of your national situation and any good practices / lessons learned

N/A

Q4.6.3 Did you receive assistance from the EU to deal with the influx of asylum seekers from the visa-free countries? If yes, how effective was the assistance in supporting your (Member) State? Please provide a short description of your national situation and any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

N/A

Q4.7. What other measure (or good practice / lesson learned) was adopted by your (Member) State in relation to visa liberalisation that was not already captured in the previous questions, if applicable?
At the same time, are there any planned measures that will be adopted in the nearby future?¹¹¹

¹¹¹ For example, in relation to Ukraine or Georgia for which the visa waiver agreement entered into force in 2017.

Section 5: Conclusions

National Contribution (max. 3 pages)

The aim of this Section is to outline the main findings of the Study and present conclusions relevant for policymakers at national and EU level.

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

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

Q5.1. With regard to the aims of this Study, what conclusions would you draw from the findings reached in elaborating your National Contribution?

Q5.2. What do you consider to be the relevance of your findings to (national and/or EU level) policymakers?