

# EMN BULLETIN

February 2021

The EMN Bulletin provides policymakers and other practitioners with updates on recent migration and international protection policy developments at EU and national level. The 33<sup>rd</sup> edition provides information from **October to December 2020**, including the (latest) relevant published statistics.

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

1. **GENERAL POLICY DEVELOPMENTS**
2. **INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION INCLUDING ASYLUM**
3. **UNACCOMPANIED MINORS AND VULNERABLE GROUPS**
4. **LEGAL MIGRATION**
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6. **MANAGEMENT OF THE EU EXTERNAL BORDERS**
7. **IRREGULAR MIGRATION**
8. **RETURN**
9. **ACTIONS ADDRESSING TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS**
10. **EXTERNAL DIMENSION**
11. **ANNEX: EU & COMPLEMENTARY STATISTICS, ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, OTHER EMN OUTPUTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS**

## SPECIAL NOTE: EMN publication and events

On 29 October 2020, EMN Germany (BAMF) hosted a virtual [Annual Conference in the framework of the German Council presidency](#). About 300 experts from Germany and abroad took part in the conference and discussed the challenges of European migration policy. Andrea Schumacher, BAMF Vice-President, opened the conference and emphasised in her speech the importance of innovation and digital data exchange in migration and international affairs. Stephan Mayer, Parliamentary State Secretary at the Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community, acknowledged the work of the EMN and its contribution towards high-quality data analysis on migration. He also addressed the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, which had created a greater need for more flexible processes in migration management. EU Commissioner for Home Affairs, Ylva Johansson, gave a keynote speech on the EU's New Pact on Migration and Asylum.

During the last quarter of 2020, the EMN produced two Informs, part of a series of five Informs focussing on the effects of COVID-19 in the migration area, in cooperation with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).<sup>1</sup> The first Inform **“Maintaining labour migration in essential sectors in times of pandemic”** was published and presented at a [webinar](#) organised on 21 October jointly with the EMN and OECD.

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<sup>1</sup> The first two informs in this series were published in the third quarter of 2020: Inform #1: EU and OECD Member States responses to managing residence permits and migrant unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic; Inform #2: Impact of COVID-19 on international students in EU and OECD Member States. The fifth and final inform will be published on 20 January 2021 on the impact of COVID-19 on voluntary and forced returns.

The second Inform "**The impact of COVID-19 on remittances in EU and OECD countries**" was published and presented at a further [webinar](#) on 1 December 2020, also organised by the EMN and OECD.

Moreover, the EMN published a [new study on attracting and protecting the rights of seasonal workers in the EU](#) and the United Kingdom. The EMN study focused on seasonal work carried out by third-country nationals and also briefly outlined the immediate consequences of the COVID-19 outbreak for seasonal workers, and measures taken by Member States to mitigate its effects.

## 1. GENERAL POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

### EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATE

The Commission adopted new [Guidance on travellers exempted from the temporary restriction on non-essential travel to the EU](#) on 28 October 2020. The guidance provides indications on the interpretation of the term "family member" and the scope of the categories of travellers with an essential function.

The first meeting of the [Commission expert group on the views of migrants](#) took place on 12 November 2020. This group was created in order for migrants to get involved in the development of EU migration, asylum and integration policies and inclusion of migrants as well as make policies more effective and better tailored to the needs on the grounds.

### NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- **Cyprus:** On 13 October 2020, the Council of Ministers approved the proposal by the Ministers of Finance and Interior for the abolition of the current Investment Programme (Cyprus' investor citizenship scheme), as of 1 November 2020. The proposal highlighted the long-term weaknesses, as well as the abusive exploitation of the provisions of the Cyprus Investment Programme.
- **Estonia:** On 18 November 2020, Estonia's new Minister of Interior Mr. Alar Laneman took office after the previous minister stepped down earlier in the same month. In December, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications [announced](#) that starting from the beginning of 2021 the travel ban for direct flights to countries with high numbers of COVID-19 cases will be lifted. The restriction was initially introduced in May with the aim to slow down the spread of the virus.
- **Germany:** The [Migration Report 2019](#) prepared by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees was presented on 2 December 2020 by the Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community and adopted by the Federal Cabinet. With immigration of about 1.6 million people and emigration of about 1.2 million people, the migration balance of +327 000 people is even lower than in 2018. The Migration Report also shows that migration to Germany continues to change. Humanitarian immigration has declined over the past four years, but instead more people are coming to Germany to study and/or work.
- **Ireland:** The Oireachtas Special Committee on COVID-19 published in October 2020 its [final report](#). Among recommendations most relevant to migrant groups, the Committee stated that provision should be made for a statutory sick pay scheme to cater for low paid workers, that support for facilities where residents do not have adequate self-isolation facilities should be phased out, and that an inquiry should be undertaken into the meat processing industry, in particular in terms of protecting workers.
- **Italy:** On 21 October 2020, a new decree law was published containing *urgent provisions in the field of immigration, international and complementary protection* (decree law n.130/2020 converted with amendments into the law n. 173/2020 which entered into force on December, 20<sup>th</sup>). Among others:

  - the permit for special protection was extended to cases in which the refoulement would involve a violation of the right to private and family life, pursuant to art. 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR);
  - permits for natural disasters and medical treatment are now convertible into work permits after expiry, and the type of national residence permits for which it is possible to request the conversion into a work permit was increased, if there are legal requirements;
  - asylum seekers can now register in the registration office;
  - the reception system for applicants for international protection has been reformed and is now divided into first-level services to which applicants for international protection have access, an

second level services - aimed at integration - to which additional categories of beneficiaries have access;

- the maximum detention times in the centres was reduced from 180 to 90 days, extendable for a further 30 days.

■ **The Netherlands:** A law proposal to extend the legal competence of immigration authorities to register and process biometric data of third-country nationals for identification purposes for five more years from 1 March 2021 onwards [was forwarded for approval](#) to the Dutch House of Representatives.

■ **Poland:** The Act on Foreigners was [amended](#). From 1 December 2020, foreigners who remain in Poland based on, among others, the so-called humanitarian visas or with “Poland. Business Harbour” annotation will be permitted to work without work permit. Moreover, all foreigners applying for a national visa and entering Poland are covered by the obligation to have travel medical insurance for the entire period of stay (in the absence of health insurance). The amendment of the Act on Foreigners also assumes, among others, adjustments of the Polish legal system to the EU visa policy following the modification of the Community Code on Visas (e.g. issuing, withdrawal and annulment of national visas), and provisions related to Poland’s accession to the Visa Waiver Program implemented by the USA.

■ **Portugal:** Enactment of nationality law – [Organic Law no. 2/2020](#), 10 November 2020.

■ **Slovenia:** In December 2020, the Government adopted the Act amending the International Protection Act and passed it to the National Assembly for consideration. The Act is addressing drawbacks which were revealed in practical implementation of individual international protection provisions. Within this context the primary goals of the Act are to produce more efficient and faster international protection procedures and to improve integration of people with international protection.

■ **Spain:** Due to delays in the issuance of Foreigners’ Identity Card (TIE), a reminder has been introduced in the resolutions issued by the Foreigners’ Offices, underlining that the mere possession of such a resolution produces full effects. This will allow migrants to prove their legal residence for the various administrative procedures until they obtain the TIE. During the last quarter of the year, progress was made in the digitalisation of the procedures for applying for residence and work permits.

### Judgment of the European Court of Justice

Joined cases [C-225/19 and C-226/19](#)

The EUCJ ruled that when a Member State adopts a decision refusing a ‘Schengen’ visa because of an objection raised by another Member State, such State must indicate, in that decision, the identity of the Member State concerned and the specific ground for refusal based on that objection, accompanied, where appropriate, by the reasons for that objection.



## 2. INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION INCLUDING ASYLUM

### EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

A [new reception centre has been created in Lesbos](#) as a result of a joint plan between the Commission and Greece. On 3 December 2020, the European Commission agreed a detailed plan with the Greek authorities and EU agencies to establish a new, up-to-standard reception centre on the island of Lesbos. This constitutes a key step towards resolving the situation after the fires that destroyed the Moria camp in September 2020.

### LATEST RELEVANT STATISTICS

- On 11 December 2020, Eurostat [published](#) statistics on asylum seekers for the third quarter of 2020. The number of first-time asylum applicants in the EU-27 decreased by 30 % compared with the same quarter of 2019 and increased by 132 % compared with the second quarter of 2020. The top 3 nationalities were Syrians, Afghans and Venezuelans, lodging 18 100, 11 200 and 9 600 applications respectively. Increases in the number of asylum applicants among the thirty main citizenships compared with the third quarter of 2019 were only recorded for Colombians (1 510 more), Hondurans (50 more) and Venezuelans (30 more).

## NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- **Belgium:** On 1 October 2020 a new instruction on the reception of applicants for international protection who are in a Dublin procedure [came into force](#). The instruction includes faster information exchange with the reception centres. The possibility of house arrest will be introduced, and the right to reception can be limited if residents who are in a Dublin procedure do not cooperate. The instruction is part of a set of measures to increase the effectiveness of the Dublin procedure.

After a court ruling in October 2020 on asylum seekers' right to reception, the Immigration Office returned to its standard practice of registering applications for international protection directly at the arrival centre without prior online appointment. The appointment system had been introduced in April 2020 in order to respect the sanitary measures in the context of the COVID-19.
- **Bulgaria:** In October 2020, amendments to the Law on Asylum and Refugees came into force and some of the provisions were clarified and supplemented in order to be in accordance with the European legislation and the recommendations of the European Commission. The amendments included, among others:

  - Provision of additional legal guarantees when applying the concept of "safe third country";
  - New provisions were introduced in the representation of unaccompanied minors seeking protection;
  - Procedural guarantees were supplemented in accordance with the Reception Conditions Directive in order to ensure the principle of "best interests of the child";
  - Procedural guarantees were regulated for vulnerable groups.
- **Croatia:** In November, an Agreement on direct allocation of funds for the implementation of the project "RECORD - development, implementation and maintenance of applications for international protection" was concluded within the Asylum, Migration and integration fund (AMIF).
- **Cyprus:** Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the flow of migrants in need of international protection in Cyprus during the past year remained high, putting a significant burden on both the asylum procedure and the reception capacity. More than 7 000 persons applied for asylum in 2020, compared to 12 523 applications in 2019 and 6 617 applications in 2018.

Following the recent Constitution and law amendments, the Cyprus Asylum Service started to simultaneously issue a return decision with a negative decision on asylum applications. This development, together with the new shorter period for submitting an appeal on negative asylum decisions (from 75 days to 30 days and 15 days for manifestly unfounded cases) resulted in a significantly shorter joint asylum and return process.
- **Finland:** The Finnish Immigration Service has [developed](#) a quality assurance system for the interpretation services used in asylum interviews. The system enables comparisons based on similar criteria regardless of the language of interpretation. The interpreter reviewing an interview tape can use a reporting template, developed as part of the project, to observe on any deficiencies in the interpretation and assess the interpreter's performance. The system was developed under a project entitled Tulppaani, carried out during 2019–2020 with funding from AMIF.

The Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment have [commissioned](#) a study on how a community sponsorship model could complement the authorities' efforts in the reception of quota refugees. The purpose is to assess the legal and practical feasibility of the model. In the community sponsorship model, a group of around five sponsors will participate in promoting a refugee's integration for one or two years.
- **France:** The [Decision of 29 September 2020](#) of the Board of Directors of the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons (OFPRA) suspends for a period of 12 months the Republic of Benin from the list of safe countries of origin.

On 18 December 2020, the 2021–2023 national reception [plan](#) for asylum seekers and the integration of refugees was presented. This plan makes it possible to adapt the reception policy to the migration context and to the specific characteristics of the regions. It is based on two pillars: better accommodation and support.

- **Hungary:** The application of Act LVIII of 2020 on the Transitional Rules and Epidemiological Preparedness related to the Cessation of the State of Danger was extended until 30 June 2021. According to these temporary provisions, third country nationals first have to declare their intention to apply for asylum in a diplomatic mission in a third country, as a general rule.
- **Ireland:** In September 2020, the Report of the Advisory Group on the Provision of Support including Accommodation to Persons in the International Protection Process, was [published](#). Among its recommendations the Group found that a new, permanent, system for reception should be developed. In October 2020, revised arrangements for international protection applicants to access work were [approved](#) by Government, including the [reduction](#) in the waiting period from 9 months to 6 months from the date of first application.
- **Italy:** On 16 October 2020, a flight to Germany departed from Italy with 60 applicants for international protection on board who had been rescued at sea by non-governmental organisations. With this voluntary relocation procedure, based on the Malta Declaration of September 2019, 1 139 asylum seekers have already been transferred from Italy to other EU Member States, despite the difficulties linked to the spread of COVID-19.
- **Luxembourg:** On 16 October 2020 a group of 14 refugees - 12 adults and two children - [arrived](#) in Luxembourg as part of resettlement from Niger. They had been detained in extremely difficult conditions in detention centres in Libya and subsequently evacuated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to Niger. This was part of a resettlement call launched by the European Commission in 2017. On 16 October 2020, [Bill n°7682](#) was introduced into Parliament. It foresees to extend the time limit (from three to six months) available to beneficiaries of international protection to apply for family reunification after the granting of their status. Moreover, [Bill n°7681](#) was introduced into Parliament to amend the Asylum Law. It aims to introduce changes regarding available remedies with regard to transfer decisions, within the framework of application of the Dublin III regulation, to increase their effectiveness while guaranteeing maximum legal certainty for the applicant of international protection, even against the final decision on the application or a decision to withdraw international protection. On 22 December 2020, a new reception structure was inaugurated where applicants for international protection stay for the first weeks after their arrival in Luxembourg. The structure has a maximum capacity of 251 persons. The centre will welcome its first occupants in January 2021.
- **Malta:** The national policy vis-à-vis Syria was updated during the reporting period. The International Protection Agency officially started implementing the Country Guidance (Syria) published by the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) as its new official policy pertaining to applications for international protection lodged by Syrian nationals.
- **The Netherlands:** On 10 October 2020, the Minister for Migration [presented a toolbox](#) equipped with measures for dealing with nuisance caused by some asylum seekers. It sets out the tools available to municipalities, retailers, staff working in the immigration process, public transport operators and others. Among the measures is a financial scheme that will support [ten municipalities](#) to launch projects tackling nuisance caused by asylum seekers. On 18 November 2020, it was decided that the [special task force](#) created to deal with a backlog of 15 350 asylum applications to the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) will continue its work after the end of this year. More time is needed following several setbacks, including the anti-COVID-19 measures and start-up problems. The resettlement of all selected refugees from [Lebanon](#) and Egypt has been [accomplished](#). The refugees, mostly Syrians, had already been selected for resettlement in December 2019 and January 2020 but were unable to travel to the Netherlands earlier due to the COVID-19 pandemic. After a quarantine period upon arrival, the refugees were received in small groups by the municipalities where they will live.

### Judgement of the European Court of Justice

16 December 2020 in [Case C-808/18 Commission v Hungary](#)

The EUCJ [ruled](#) that Hungary failed to fulfil its obligations under EU law in the area of procedures for granting international protection and returning illegally staying third-country nationals. In particular, restricting access to the international protection procedure, unlawfully detaining applicants for that protection in transit zones and moving illegally staying third-country nationals to a border area, without observing the guarantees surrounding a return procedure, constitute

Around 50 Syrian refugees, half of which are minors, have been selected for relocation from Greece. The families [arrived in the Netherlands](#) between 14 and 22 December 2020 after undergoing COVID-19 testing and quarantine in Greece. In total, the Netherlands aims to relocate 100 vulnerable refugees from Greece, in [response to the devastation](#) of Greek reception camp Moria in September 2020.

- **Portugal:** The [Resolution of the Council of Ministers no. 103/2020](#) of 23 November established a unique system for welcoming and integrating applicants and beneficiaries of international protection. The reception and integration of refugees has been a priority of the Portuguese Government, in a continuous effort that involves the central State and local authorities, as well as public and private entities. During the reporting period, Portugal saw a gradual increase in the number of requests for international protection compared to the previous quarter.



### 3. UNACCOMPANIED MINORS AND VULNERABLE GROUPS

#### EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

*No new developments.*

#### NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- **Bulgaria:** The Republic of Bulgaria participates in the solidarity mechanism for relocation of unaccompanied minors from Greece. On 23 November, the first group of 17 minors arrived in Bulgaria. They were accommodated in the territorial divisions of the State Agency for Refugees with the Council of Ministers (SAR). Within the SAR, safe areas for unaccompanied minors were established, which provide 24-hour care and specialised services for children in an environment that meets their needs.
- **Croatia:** At the end of September 2020, the Agreement for the project "New Home" was signed within the AMIF with an estimated project duration of 24 months. The project finances the process of relocation of unaccompanied children, foreign nationals from Greece to Croatia and their integration.
- **France:** On 7 December 2020, France and Morocco signed a Declaration of Intent in the field of justice concerning the care of unaccompanied minors in order to put in place "concrete tools". The aim is to "provide youth magistrates with the necessary elements to take the most appropriate measures in the interest of these children, including return measures to Morocco".
- **Ireland:** On 1 October 2020, Ireland [announced](#) that it will resettle up to 50 persons from refugee families following displacement from the Moria camp in Greece under the Irish Refugee Protection Program (IRPP).
- **Italy:** On 11 November 2020 was [published](#) by the General Directorate for Immigration and Integration Policies (Ministry of Labour) a new Report on the phenomenon of the temporary reception of minors in Italy, that is a form of solidarity spread throughout the national territory. In December, an annual project for the reception of 875 unaccompanied children was initiated by the Department of Civil Liberties and Immigration and financed by the AMIF to enhance the reception system, their integration paths and their transition to adulthood. Furthermore, the convention between the Ministry and Save the Children has been renewed for 2021.
- **Luxembourg:** On 24 November 2020, the Grand Ducal Regulation relating to the composition and operation of the Consultative Commission on the Evaluation of the Best Interest of Unaccompanied Minors came into force. The main task of this Commission is to evaluate best interests of the child in the context of a return decision. The ad-hoc administrator, appointed to represent the unaccompanied minors, is invited to bring their point of view to the Commission. The unaccompanied minor has the right to be heard by the Commission. Any person who can contribute to a better understanding of the case may be invited by the Commission in an advisory capacity.
- **Slovenia:** Reception authorities have been successfully tackling the pandemic in the reception-accommodation centres through active awareness-raising and preventive measures, thus also protecting unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable groups. In addition, a proposal to extend the existing

accommodation project for unaccompanied minors in 2021 was under preparation.

- **Slovak Republic:** As a result of an increased number of unaccompanied minors, another temporary quarantine group for unaccompanied minors in the Centre for Children and Families in Kolárovo was established on 1 December 2020 for unaccompanied minors found in the western part of Slovak Republic. From 1 December to 18 December 2020, 13 unaccompanied minors were placed there into a temporarily quarantine.
- **Spain:** In October 2020, 400 residence and work permits were granted to young people who worked in the agricultural sector between April and September, in application of related [Instructions](#). The campaign 'My school, my shelter' was launched on 20 November in the framework of [IMMERSE EU project](#). The main objective was to highlight the essential role of schools in ensuring the respect of the Rights of the Child, including the right to integration, and how the closure of schools during the pandemic has impacted children, especially the most vulnerable ones such as migrant and refugee children.



## 4. LEGAL MIGRATION

### EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

*No new developments.*

### NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- **Austria:** In December 2020, the [Settlement Regulation](#) entered into force, establishing the maximum numbers of residence permits and work permits for temporary employed foreigners and foreign harvest workers for the year 2020. Due to COVID-19 measures, entry into Austria is still only possible under [certain conditions](#). These rules are not applicable, for example, to humanitarian workers or persons entering for business purposes. In December, the law was [amended](#) to no longer require proof of accommodation in Austria from highly qualified workers.
- **Bulgaria:** Several legislative provisions were adopted during the reporting period as a response to COVID-19. For example, long-term and permanent residence permits for third-country nationals and documents issued for EU citizens and their family members were extended; foreigners with a long-term residence permit in Bulgaria, for which the period of residence expires during a declared, emergency epidemic situation or within nine months after the lifting of the emergency epidemic situation, may apply for extension of residence up to nine months after the lifting of the emergency epidemic situation and this term shall not be considered as interruption when the foreigner applies for a long-term or permanent residence.
- **Croatia:** The New Aliens Act was passed in December and is applicable as from 1 January 2021. The new law introduces labour market tests instead of a quota system for employment of third country nationals. The New Aliens act also introduces temporary residence to digital nomads, effective as of 1 January 2021, adding a new option for non-EU nationals to live in Croatia. In order to fully implement the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement, the Act on Citizens of the Member States of the European Economic Area and Members of their Families was amended in December together with its accompanying bylaw, in order to ensure full implementation of residence rights and residence documents of the beneficiaries of the Withdrawal Agreement.
- **Czech Republic:** In order to open the existing migration channels to more migrant workers, the government increased annual quotas for applications for single permits that highly qualified workers may lodge at Czech embassies in third countries in 2021 by more than 30 %. In addition, the government redoubled annual quotas for applications for single permits lodged by medium and low qualified workers from Belarus and the Philippines. The main driver for the adoption of this measure was high demand for foreign workers in the Czech labour market in 2020 that continued despite the COVID-19 pandemic and the related economic downturn. As of 18 December 2020, the free movement of all persons in the territory of the Czech Republic is limited; therefore, it is possible to travel to the Czech Republic for essential reasons only. Passengers

arriving from countries that are not listed as low-risk, are obliged to [register](#) online prior to their arrival. These persons are subject to quarantine and a PCR test; [exceptions](#) may apply. With effect from 20 December, for all persons who stayed in the territory of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland during the last 14 days, the freedom of movement in the territory of the Czech Republic is [restricted](#).

- **Estonia:** In December, the Minister of Interior [established](#) a division of the immigration quota for 2021. The quota is partly divided depending on the ground of the residence permit: 25 residence permits for employment in a performing arts institution as person engaged in creative activities; 24 residence permits for employment in the professional activities in the capacity of a sportsman, coach, referee or sports official by summons of a respective sports federation; 5 residence permits on the basis of a treaty; and 1 261 residence permits on general grounds for employment and entrepreneurship. In December, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs [published](#) detailed information regarding living, working or travelling to the UK after 1 January 2021. The information also regards British citizens living in Estonia.
- **Finland:** Due to COVID-19, the Government made legislative [amendments](#) in the spring to allow third-country nationals residing in Finland with a residence permit or a permit based on the Seasonal Workers Act to change employer and field of employment without applying for an extended permit. The amendments enabled such foreigners to work in duties central to the security of supply and to the functioning of the labour market. The temporary provisions expired 31 October 2020. The Finnish Immigration Service has [managed](#) to speed up the processing of residence permits for specialists. In July-November 2020, the Finnish Immigration Service processed the first residence permit for a specialist in 17 days on average. Specialists include IT experts and specialists with a higher education degree who come to work in a job requiring particular professional skills. On 17 December 2020, the Government submitted a [proposal](#), which would make it easier for seasonal workers from third countries to change employers while they are in Finland. As a result of the reform, employers would no longer be required to notify authorities separately of each seasonal worker arriving in Finland at the same time for the same kind of work. Instead, the employer could notify authorities of all seasonal workers at one time. The Government has [proposed](#) on 17 December 2020 that the Aliens Act be amended to more effectively prevent the exploitation of foreign labour. The legal position of victims of exploitation will also improve. The amendment aims to improve the detection of work-related exploitation. Under the EU-UK withdrawal agreement, all UK citizens, including those who have a document certifying a permanent right of EU residence in Finland, must exchange that document for a residence permit card. The period of application for the right of residence under the withdrawal agreement [began](#) on 1 October 2020 and will continue until 30 September 2021. The COVID-19 pandemic had a major [impact](#) on residence permit applications by international students. In 2020, the number of applications submitted by students was significantly lower than last year. In the peak season (June-September), 1 692 students applied for a first residence permit (3 909 in 2019). The Finnish missions have been able to receive only a very limited number of customers applying for a residence permit. The COVID-19 pandemic had a major [impact](#) on residence permit applications by international students. In 2020, the number of applications submitted by students was significantly lower than last year. In the peak season (June-September), 1 692 students applied for a first residence permit (3 909 in 2019). The Finnish missions have been able to receive only a very limited number of customers applying for a residence permit.
- **France:** [Decree No 2020-1417 of 19 November 2020](#) introduced into national law the provisions of the agreement on the withdrawal of the UK from the European Union as regards the right of residence, access to work and social rights of UK nationals and other foreign nationals who are members of their family, residing in France. The provisions of that decree are supplemented by the [Order NOR INTV2029220A of 20 November 2020](#), which sets out the list of documents to be provided for the issue of the residence permit or the movement document marked 'Agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the EU'. An online residence permit application service for United Kingdom nationals and their family members, United Kingdom or third-country nationals, residing in France or settling in France before 31 December 2020 has been [made available](#).

An online residence permit application service for international students for first applications and the renewal of residence permits was [created](#) in November. This service contributes to the attractiveness of the French territory for foreign students and to the simplification of their procedures, as part of the 'Welcome to France' policy set up by the government in autumn 2018.

- **Ireland:** It was [announced](#) in October that citizenship ceremonies would be temporarily replaced during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a requirement for citizenship applicants to instead sign an affidavit of loyalty to the State. New application processes for preclearance applicants under four specific schemes were [introduced](#). The Immigration Registration Office in Burgh Quay in Dublin [re-opened](#) on 2 December 2020 for appointment holders only, six weeks after closing due to increased COVID-19 restrictions and [closed](#) again on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2020 due to renewed COVID-19 restrictions. A Private Members Bill on the naturalisation of minors born in Ireland was [debated](#) in parliament on 2 December 2020.
- **Italy:** On 12 October 2020, the new annual decree flows for 2020 was published. The maximum share of non EU-national employees, seasonal and non-seasonal, and self-employed people able to enter Italy is 30 850 (12 850 entrances for non-seasonal, self-employed and conversions and 18 000 quotas for seasonal employment in agriculture and hotel and tourism)  
The new "Agreement between Italy and Canada on Youth Mobility", with the Minister for Immigration, Refugees and Canadian Citizenship was signed on 11 December 2020 in a bilateral meeting held by videoconference with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada.
- **Lithuania:** On 10 November 2020, the Lithuanian Parliament [approved](#) the draft amendment to the Law on the Legal Status of Aliens which aims to align the provisions of the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement. The amendment provides clarity to the UK citizens and their family members as to their legal status and what action they will need to take after the end of the Brexit transition period.  
On 20 November, Lithuanian Government has [agreed](#) on quotas for workers from third countries carrying out a profession in demand in the national labour market in Lithuania. [Quotas](#) set for 2021 will allow to employ up to 32 200 such workers in Lithuania. However, if the quotas were reached, third-country nationals would still be able to be employed after the labour market test.  
On 4 December 2020, the [decision](#) of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania has entered into force foreseeing the possibility to issue Lithuanian national visas free of charge to regime-persecuted Belarusians.
- **Luxembourg:** On 14 October 2020, the Minister of Finance tabled in the Chamber of Deputies [the bill concerning the budget of state revenue and expenditure for the financial year 2021](#). To attract and retain the talents essential to Luxembourg's economic development, two innovative tax instruments are planned: a participation bonus, which employers will be able to grant to their deserving employees, and an updated system of "impatriates", including in particular the possibility for the employer to grant an impatriation bonus which will benefit from a tax exemption of 50%.  
In the context of the COVID-19 crisis, the law of 19 December 2020 amending the law of 20 June 2020 introducing certain temporary measures relating to the application of the amended Immigration Law [entered into force](#) on 21 December 2020. This modification extends the ban on entry into Luxembourg territory for third-country nationals until December 31, 2021.  
The modified Grand Ducal Regulation of 20 June 2020 introducing certain temporary measures relating to the application of the amended Immigration Law was [amended on 4 November 2020](#). The amendments concern the list of third countries whose nationals can enter Luxembourg. It was amended once again by [Grand Ducal Regulation of 19 December 2020](#). This amendment aims to continue to maintain the temporary restriction and exemptions on entry of third-country nationals into the territory of the Grand Duchy, scheduled until 31 December 2020, until March 31, 2021 inclusive.
- **The Netherlands:** As of October 2020, [a new model](#) for residence documents is used, following changes in EU rules. All residence documents now have the same layout.  
UK nationals and their family members [no longer require an invitation](#) to submit an application for residency after Brexit. Earlier in 2020, the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) sent out invitation letters to UK nationals and their family members living in the Netherlands to apply for a residence document online. Around 35 000 persons received an invitation by mail.

On 27 October 2020, the [entry ban](#) for travellers who reside in Canada, Georgia or Tunisia was reinstated in the context of COVID-19. The entry ban for travellers residing in Singapore was repealed.

- **Poland:** In December 2020, the Institute of Migrant Rights was [established](#) in Wrocław . It was founded by the Ukraine Foundation with the Honorary Consulate of Ukraine in Wrocław. The tasks of the Institute will include help to migrants in the legalisation of their stay and work, adaptation to the new environment and social engagement. Another goal of the Institute is to become an educational centre having an influence on public opinion. The Institute provides also free information concerning the legalisation of stay, employment, registration, rental and purchase of apartments, education, marriage, civil rights, taxes, independent business activity, etc.

The [Foreigners Support Centre](#), which is financed by the Ministry of the Interior and Administration from the AMIF, became operational in the beginning of November in Katowice. Free of charge help is provided to foreigners residing in the Śląskie Voivodeship. The aim of the Centre is free support for foreigners in adapting to Poland. It provides free consultancy and assistance in the matters of legalisation of stay, legal and employment rights. Migrants living in the Silesian Voivodeship may receive help from an integration adviser, lawyer, psychologist, translator or advisor. Foreigners will be able to improve their competences in the field of labour law, the basics of entrepreneurship and cultural differences during adaptation tests, trainings and workshops. All activities and services of the Foreigners Support Centre are free of charge. Additionally, an infoline was launched in the Polish, Russian and English.
- **Portugal:** [Order no. 10944/2020](#) of 8 November 2020 expanded the scope of Order no. 3863-B/2020, and determines that the management of appointments is done in a way to guarantee unequivocally the rights of all foreign citizens with lawsuits pending at the Migration and Borders Service (SEF), within the scope of COVID-19.

In the last quarter of 2020, 25 inspection visits were carried out by Authority for Working Conditions (ACT) covering 24 employers that involved foreign workers with greater predominance in Brazilian, Ukrainian and Cape Verdean nationalities.
- **Spain:** On 31 December 2020 an instruction was [published](#), determining the issue of the document certifying that a United Kingdom national is a frontier worker in Spain on the basis of the Agreement on Withdrawal. In parallel, a number of provisions have been included in [Royal Decree-Law 38/2020](#) of 29 December adopting measures to adapt the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the situation of a third country after the end of the transitional period, so that workers posted to Spain remain in Spain and continue to provide their services.

On 31 December [Order ISM/1289/2020 of 28 December 2020](#) was published, regulating the collective management of contracts in the country of origin for 2021 for seasonal workers. It introduces improvements in the management of the seasonal recruitment procedure and provides for a wide range of measures for the protection of health in the context of COVID-19.

## 5. INTEGRATION

### EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

- On 24 November 2020 the European Commission presented a [new action plan on Integration and Inclusion](#) for the period 2021-2027. It is built on the principle of inclusive integration, that includes efforts both on the part of migrants and the host communities. As it is emphasised in the new action plan, “a successful integration and inclusion policy is an essential part of a well-managed and effective migration and asylum policy. It is also essential for social cohesion and for a dynamic economy that works for all.” The main actions on the part of the EU and national governments are inclusive education and training, improving employment opportunities and skills recognition and facilitating access to adequate and affordable housing.

### NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- **Austria:** The new information brochure “[Gegen Gewalt an Frauen](#)” (“Against Violence to Women”) supports multipliers from the health and social sectors by providing prevention measures and concrete recommendations for action in dealing with victims.

- **Croatia:** In October, the Office for Human Rights and the Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia held its first meeting of integration coordinators at the local level (within the project “INCLuDE”) where the draft Action Plan for the integration of persons granted international protection 2021-2023 was presented, emphasizing the importance of including as many local and regional self-government units as possible.
- **Cyprus:** On 15 October 2020, the first edition of the new National Plan on the Integration of Migrants for the years 2020-2022 was [published](#), followed by a public consultation on the new Plan. It is expected to be finalised and adopted by the Council of Ministers during January 2021. The new Plan will define Cyprus’ policy on integration of migrants for the following years.
- **Estonia:** In December 2020, the Ministry of Cultural Affairs published [guidelines](#) for local governments on how the adaption and integration services are organised in Estonia. The publication will be followed by meetings in 2021 between the ministry and the local governments to introduce the guidelines and discuss cooperation opportunities.

In December 2020, [amendments to the Citizenship Act](#) came to force. According to the changes, a person may be deprived of Estonian citizenship by an order of the Government if the person has been convicted for the following crimes in the [Penal Code](#): treason; intelligence activities against the Republic of Estonia and support thereof; acts of terrorism; membership of a terrorist organisation; preparation of and incitement to acts of terrorism; financing and support of acts of terrorism and activities directed at it; travel for terrorist purposes. The amendment applies only for people who have acquired Estonian citizenship by naturalization.
- **Finland:** The Integration SIB (Social Impact Bond) project, carried out in 2016–2019 has shown promising preliminary [results](#). The project’s aim was to employ immigrants quickly making use of the Social Impact Bond model of impact investing. According to the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, the experiment was significant because it tested new ways of funding and tailoring integration training to the needs of companies.
- **Lithuania:** On 7 October 2020, Lithuanian Government has agreed on the [new adjustments](#) designed to encourage foreigners who were granted asylum in Lithuania to seek better integration, and reward those who had already demonstrated such efforts. The adjustments [include](#) creation of foreigner’s individual integration plan and introduction of differentiated financial support according to the progress and efforts of the foreigner.
- **Luxembourg:** On 9 November 2020, the Ministry of Family Affairs, Integration and the Greater Region launched a [call for projects](#) as part of the implementation strategy of the National Integration Action Plan. This call for projects is structured around two areas of intervention: 1) language learning and practice 2) diversity and the fight against discrimination.

In the context of the health crisis but also with an aim to make the Welcome and Integration Contract (CAI) more accessible to a greater number of people, for the first time on 24 October 2020 the [orientation day took place](#) in virtual form.

During consultation launched in autumn 2020, with an aim to revise the Integration Law, many actors submitted their opinion to the Minister of Family Affairs and Integration. With the agreement of the stakeholders, [these opinions are made public on the website](#) of the Ministry of Family Affairs, Integration and the Greater Region.
- **Malta:** During the fourth quarter of 2020, the Parliamentary Secretariat for Equality and Reforms within the Ministry for Justice, Equality and Governance held a public consultation entitled [Towards a National Action Plan against Racism and Xenophobia](#). Submissions received are currently being analysed in view of the redaction of the final document.

During this quarter, in order to satisfy demand for “[I Belong](#)” integration programme services, the Human Rights Directorate enlisted the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) as another service provider for Stage 2 courses.
- **The Netherlands:** A few changes were made to [civic integration rules](#). As of 1 October 2020, students who have successfully completed an [MBO-1 programme](#) and self-employed entrepreneurs that meet certain requirements [are now exempt](#) from the part of the civic integration exam concerning orientation

on the Dutch labour market. In addition, the grounds to exempt illiterate newcomers from civic integration requirements have been eased.

- **Slovenia:** Since mid-October 2020, some integration programmes were temporarily discontinued due to the COVID-19 pandemic but will be resumed as online courses.



## 6. MANAGEMENT OF THE EU EXTERNAL BORDERS

### EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

*No new developments.*

### NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- **Bulgaria:** In order to counteract irregular migration, the Directorate General “Border Police” has taken the following measures:
  - Action Plan in case of emergency on the Bulgarian-Turkish border;
  - Interaction with the military formation of the Bulgarian Army;
  - Constructed fence along the Bulgarian-Turkish border;
  - Specialized police operations;
  - Delivery of additional patrol cars;
  - Cooperation with neighbouring and third countries;
  - Cooperation with Frontex;
  - Use of Integrated system for surveillance of land and sea border.
- **Finland:** In early October 2020, new travel-related health security measures were [introduced](#). As of 12 October, the recommended 14-day period of self-isolation was shortened. A 10-day period of self-isolation is recommended for travellers arriving in Finland from a higher incidence country. Travellers can shorten their self-isolation period at their discretion if they take two voluntary COVID-19 tests. Restrictions on external border traffic due to COVID-19 have remained tight during October-December. On 10 December, the Government [decided](#) to extend the restrictions on entry into the country until 12 January 2021. Although the number of new cases in Finland started to rise in the autumn after a calmer period in the summer, differences between the epidemiological situations in Finland and many other countries have recently grown sharply.
- **Latvia:** As of 12 October 2020, all entering Latvia must complete an [electronic confirmation form](#). In accordance with Cabinet Order No. 655 “[Regarding Declaration of the Emergency Situation](#)” adopted on 6 November 2020, the emergency situation was declared from 9 November 2020 until 11 January 2021. On 1 December 2020, the new [Law on the State Border Guard](#) entered into force. The new law:
  - Sets out the objective of ensuring the legal and effective functioning of the State Border Guard;
  - Lifts the ban on trade unions between border guards;
  - Contains legally correct terminology consistent with the Schengen Borders Code and the Law on the State Border of the Republic of Latvia.
- **Slovenia:** Additional surveillance capabilities have been installed, with the main aim to complement the human capacity with the technical means of border surveillance. Border checks have been supported with enhanced IT support.
- **Spain:** By Resolution of 11 November 2020 of the Directorate-General for Public Health, passengers arriving in Spain from countries or risk zones are required to have the negative result of a diagnostic test of active COVID-19 infection, carried out in the seventy-two hours prior to arrival in Spain. By Resolution of 9 December 2020, other molecular viral RNA detection techniques such as Transcription Median Amplification (TMA) tests should also be considered valid control options.



## 7. IRREGULAR MIGRATION

### EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

*No new developments*

### NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- **Austria:** In November 2020, a [regulation](#) re-introduced temporary border controls between 12 November 2020 and 11 May 2021 on the internal borders to Slovenia and Hungary to maintain law, order and public safety. During that period, internal borders may only be crossed at points of entry.
- **France:** A joint declaration between France and the United Kingdom of 29 November 2020 was [published](#) regarding the next steps of the bilateral cooperation on combating irregular migration. In particular they agreed to implement several measures aimed at preventing the small boats phenomenon and the creation of illegal camps in the Calais area. [Decree No 2020-1325 of 30 October 2020](#) on State Medical Assistance and the conditions for entitlement to reimbursement of health costs for insured persons who cease to have a legal residence in France: the decree lays down the arrangements for covering certain health costs of the adult recipients of State Medical Assistance. This decree also provides the possibility to close the right for reimbursement of health costs in case of a definite removal order provided this closure occurs at least two months after the expiry of the residence permit.
- **Italy:** On 10 December 2020, an experimental phase of the operational mechanism that will ensure cross-border collaboration between Italy and France was initiated, for surveillance and support the services of the French and Italian police to tackle irregular immigration.
- **Slovenia:** Development in terms of GIS (Geographic Information System) support to border surveillance is taking place. The aim is to display the situation regarding irregular migration on the map to support situational awareness and reaction capabilities.
- **Spain:** The arrivals on the coast of the Canary Islands saw an increase of 950 % compared to 2019 with 23 322 people arriving in 2020. These arrivals led to the necessity for an increase in the assistance capability. To deal with this extraordinary situation, works for the deployment of 7 000 semi-permanent places in up to five camps in the Canary Islands started.

### Judgment of the European Court of Justice

[Case C-616/19](#)

On the 10 December 2020, the EUCJ ruled a judgement concerning the interpretation of Article 25 of Council Directive 2005/85/EC of 1 December 2005 on minimum standards on procedures in Member States for granting and withdrawing refugee status.

According to the ruling, Article 25(2) of the Procedures Directive must be interpreted as not precluding legislation of a Member State subject to the Dublin III Regulation but not bound by the corresponding recast Procedures Directive from considering an application for international protection inadmissible where the applicant already benefits from subsidiary protection status in another

## 8. RETURN

### EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

*No new developments*

### NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- **Croatia:** As part of the IOM project "Assisted voluntary return to the country of origin - AVRR", one person was returned to country of origin. There are three projects in process in the Detention Centre for Foreigners "Ježevó", from AMIF.
- **Cyprus:** During the reporting period, a grant agreement was signed to renew Cyprus' Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration programme until 30 June 2022. International Organization for Migration, Cyprus Office will implement this project co-funded by AMIF and Cyprus. The project has a total budget of € 1.2 million and includes assistance to both voluntary returns and reintegration of the returnee to his/her country of origin.

Cyprus' Police continued their cooperation with Frontex in the field of voluntary returns during the reporting period. 114 Georgian and 106 Indian nationals returned safely to their home country, by two separate flights, that were organised by Cyprus Police and Frontex.

- Czech Republic:** During autumn 2020, regional offices of the Return Unit in Brno and detention centres in Bělá – Jezová, Balková and Vyšní Lhoty were established within the project “Strengthening of the Ministry of the Interior’s capacities in return” financed by AMIF. During the period of October - December 2020, 172 voluntary returns were implemented together, either by the Return Unit of the Ministry of the Interior, IOM or the Refugee Facilities Administration of the Ministry of the Interior.
- Poland:** As a result of the decision of the Ministry of Interior and Administration, Polish migration services have started implementing a project aimed at supporting their Moldovan counterparts in the field of forced returns' organisation according to the international standards. The project foresees improvement of the national procedures through a series of training sessions and workshops for representatives of Moldovan administration and other entities involved in organisation and monitoring of returns of foreigners from the territory of the Republic of Moldova. The initiative is part of Poland's solidarity-driven activities targeting the partner states of the Eastern neighbourhood of the EU. In parallel, the Polish services continued to implement projects with other countries. In Georgia, the Polish party transfers its experiences in managing contacts with the diaspora and temporary labour migration, while a project with Azerbaijan encompasses support to the creation of an efficient system of readmission and reintegration of Azerbaijani returnees from the EU Member States.
- Slovenia:** Accommodation facilities within the Detention Centre have been upgraded. With the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Detention Centre began to cooperate with third country representatives. The aim is to provide identification of foreigners and issue documents for return procedure. There are several challenges in implementing return, which have arisen as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g. finding air transport in view of strict security measures).

## 9. ACTIONS ADDRESSING TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

### EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

*No new developments.*

### NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- Belgium:** On 15 December 2020, Myria, the Federal Migration Centre and national independent rapporteur on human trafficking, published the [French](#) and [Dutch](#) version of its 2020 annual report on trafficking and smuggling of human beings. The report focuses this year on the exploitation of domestic servants.
- Croatia:** One adult victim of trafficking was identified during this period. In November, 19 border police officers completed an online training on “Combating trafficking in human beings”. On 7 December 2020, the Government adopted the Decision on Establishment of the National Committee for the Suppression of Trafficking in Human beings.
- Finland:** In a press release on 5 November 2020, the Ministry of the Interior announced that efforts to combat human trafficking will be reinforced by closer cooperation between authorities, organisations and municipalities. A team investigating human trafficking offences will be [established](#) at the Helsinki Police Department, and an action plan to be completed at the beginning of 2021 will coordinate anti-trafficking work more extensively.
- Hungary:** In 2019 the subject of human trafficking was integrated into the curriculum and examination of the newly appointed Hungarian consuls. In the course of 2020, the Ministry of Interior held eight



lectures (partly through online education), reaching an aggregate of 92 diplomats. In autumn a separate section focusing on third-country nationals was added, due to the high number of visa advisors among the participants.

- **Ireland:** In early October, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Ireland, in collaboration with the Department of Justice [launched](#) an anti-human trafficking campaign. Later that month, the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) was [designated](#) Ireland's National Rapporteur on Human Trafficking.
- **Italy:** On 21 October 2020, the Minister of Interior confirmed the commitment of the Italian Government to develop relations between Italy and Libya, with the implementation of cooperation programmes already started. A comprehensive strategy was drawn up, including humanitarian evacuations from Libya to Italy and voluntary repatriations assisted by Libya to countries of origin.  
On 3 December 2020, the Minister of the Interior held a videoconference with the Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Turkey on bilateral cooperation to fight trafficking of migrants and drugs by criminal organisations and international terrorism.
- **Latvia:** On 19 October 2020, the Latvian aviation industry's leading companies - the airport "Riga" and the national airline "airBaltic" -, the Ministry of Interior and non-governmental organisations signed a memorandum of cooperation with a commitment to actively cooperate in preventing trafficking in human beings.
- **Lithuania:** On 16 December 2020, the Ministry of the Interior presented an [online training course](#) on actions addressing trafficking in human beings. The training is designed for officers and professionals who, in the performance of their duties, may encounter the crime of human trafficking.
- **Luxembourg:** [A leaflet for potential victims containing information in 15 languages](#) (including Arabic, Chinese, Albanian, Tigrinya etc.) and in the form of pictograms has been finalised. The contact information can be removed discreetly from the leaflet and is aimed at foreigners, especially foreign workers most at risk of being exploited. This initiative was announced on the occasion of the European Anti-Trafficking Day on 18 October 2020.  
As of 20 November 2020, a [new common space called "INFOTRAITE"](#) was put in place, aimed at assisting victims of human trafficking by the two approved assistance services for victims of human trafficking - SAVTEH of "*Femmes en détresse* ASBL" and COTEH of "*Fondation Maison de la Porte Ouverte*". This initiative was decided by the Monitoring Committee on the Fight Against the Trafficking in Human Beings and funded by the Ministry of Justice.
- **Poland:** On 18 December 2020, a meeting of the Team for Counteracting Trafficking in Human Beings took place. The exchange of information concerned a summary of actions taken against trafficking in human beings in the past year as well as planned initiatives for the next year, including the development of a new three-year National Action Plan against trafficking in human beings and information and education campaigns.  
A tender in an open procedure for the implementation of a public task entitled "Running the National Intervention and Consultation Centre for victims of trafficking in human beings" was announced. The task for 2021 was entrusted to the La Strada (Foundation against human trafficking and Slavery) and Mary Immaculate Association for Women and Children (PoMOC).  
The Ministry of the Interior and Administration has started an information campaign called "Human trafficking is a crime!". Algorithms on the conduct of law enforcement officers in the event of disclosure of a crime of human trafficking as well as on identification and treatment of a minor victims of trafficking in human beings for Police and Border Guard officers were updated, and information materials were prepared (leaflets, posters). The distribution of the materials and continuation of the campaign will be held in the first quarter of 2021.
- **Portugal:** Nine digital posters with the purpose to increase awareness and knowledge to prevent trafficking in human beings in potential vulnerable communities were produced in Moldovan, Romanian, Bulgarian, Hindi, Bangla and Nepalese, to celebrate the International Migrants Day on 18 October. They provided information on human trafficking, victims' rights, prevention, contacts of services for victims' support and indicators per form of exploitation. In addition, two bulletins, namely the ["Trafficking in Persons Justice Statistics – 2008-2019"](#) and the ["Update on the number of Confirmed Victims of](#)

[Trafficking in Human Beings](#)” were launched on 2 and 10 December 2020 respectively.

On 4 November 2020, the final webinar on the “Impacts of COVID-19 on Trafficking in Human Beings” took place. The [videos of the previous five webinars](#) on the same topic were also launched to celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the European Convention on Human Rights. In addition, the e-book [“Possible impacts of COVID-19 on Trafficking in Human Beings”](#) was made available on 10 December and is a collection of articles written by some of the speakers of the five webinars organised on the same topic. Training actions for professionals on migration based on the App: [“Acting against Trafficking in Human Beings”](#) took place between October and November to increase knowledge on the National Referral Mechanism and Indicators. Overall, 163 persons were trained from national and local support centres for migrants’ integration; translation service and ACM (High Commission for Migration) Hotline; and migrants associations, amongst others.

## 10. EXTERNAL DIMENSION

### EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

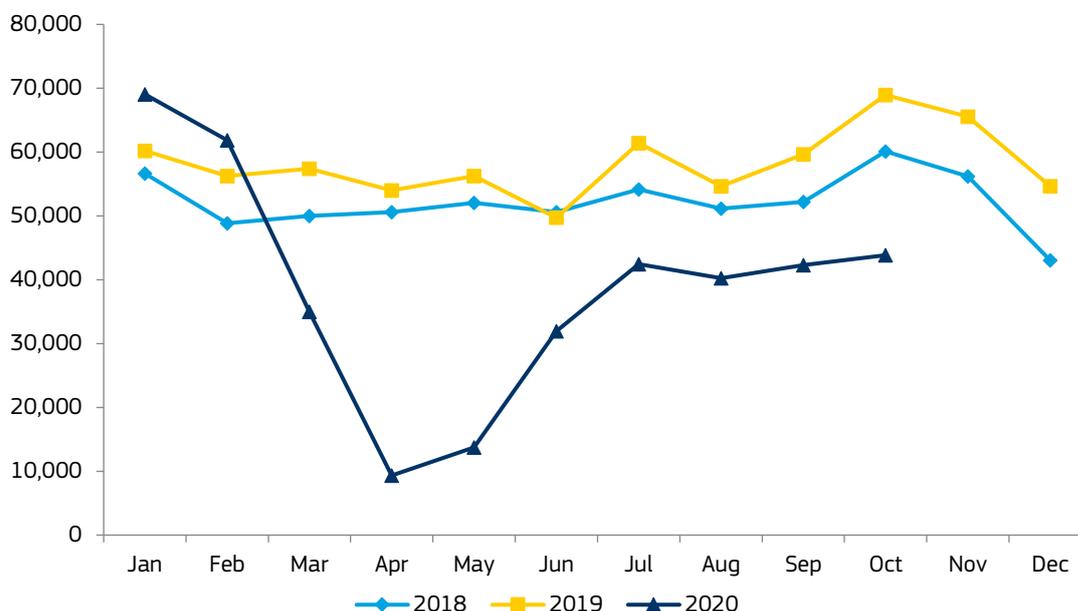
*No new developments.*

### NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- **Czech Republic:** At the end of October 2020, the Czech Government approved three donations from the Aid in Place programme focused on MENA region. The first donation was made to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to support the migration systems in Iraq and Jordan in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic. The second donation was made to the World Food Programme (WFP) and focused on support of livelihood opportunities for refugees and migrants in Libya. The third contribution was made to UNHCR to support higher education of refugees in Jordan through provision of scholarships. In the last quarter of the 2020, the MEDEVAC Czech Programme, which focuses on providing access to medical care, organised evacuation of 60 Belarusian patients and their family members, who were injured during the political demonstrations and protests in the country, for medical treatment to the Czech Republic. Despite some travel restrictions related to COVID-19, the programme managed to organise a medical humanitarian mission to Senegal, where 18 people from socially disadvantaged areas were operated on, mainly with fracture healing. Because COVID-19 remained the main topic of the last quarter of the year, MEDEVAC Czech continued its online trainings for foreign professionals focused on hospital epidemiology and effective ways of preventing the spread of the virus in the hospital. In December, two online trainings for 19 professionals from Iraq and Mauritania were held.
- **Finland:** The Salam-project by the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs aims at offering Afghan and Iraqi youth opportunities to network and learn about media advocacy and peacebuilding. The project was [continued](#) in 2020. As part of the peacebuilding project, two video-workshops were organised, one in Kabul (Afghanistan) and one in Erbil (Iraq) in October and November 2020 respectively. Despite the pandemic situation, the Ministry managed to organise both workshops on site with a video connection from Finland.
- **The Netherlands:** The House of Representatives has approved the EU Cooperation Agreement with Afghanistan. It is now [pending approval](#) by the Senate. [The Agreement](#) aims to formalise EU-Afghanistan cooperation to support Afghanistan in achieving its development goals. Among other areas, it aims to facilitate cooperation in migration (including irregular migration) and to establish a dialogue on migration issues.

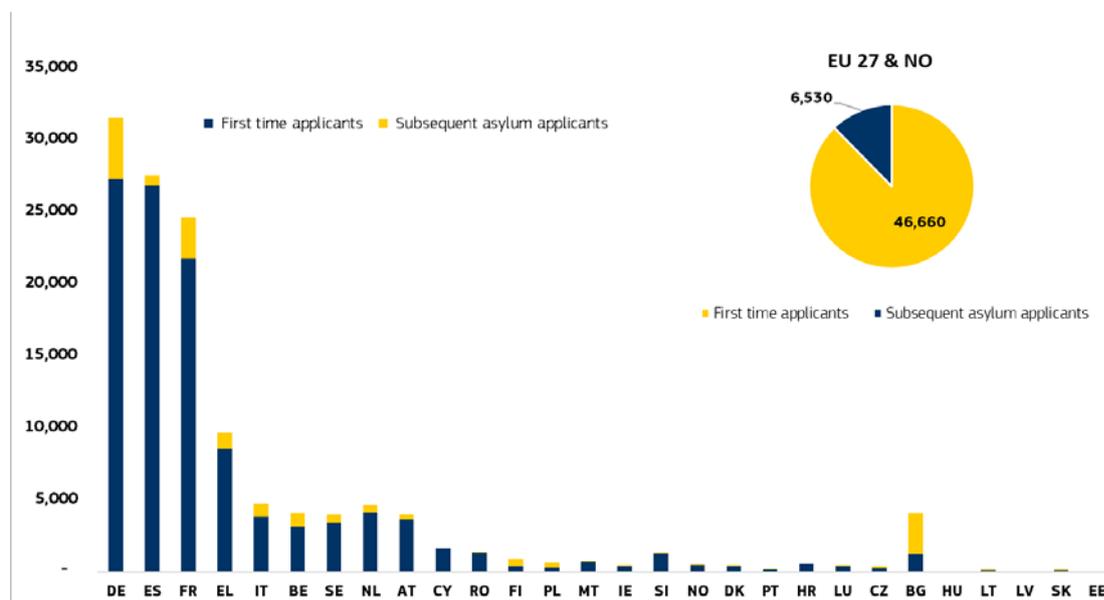
## ANNEX: EU & COMPLEMENTARY STATISTICS, ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, OTHER EMN OUTPUTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

**Figure 1a: Asylum applications in the EU-27, January 2018 – October 2020**

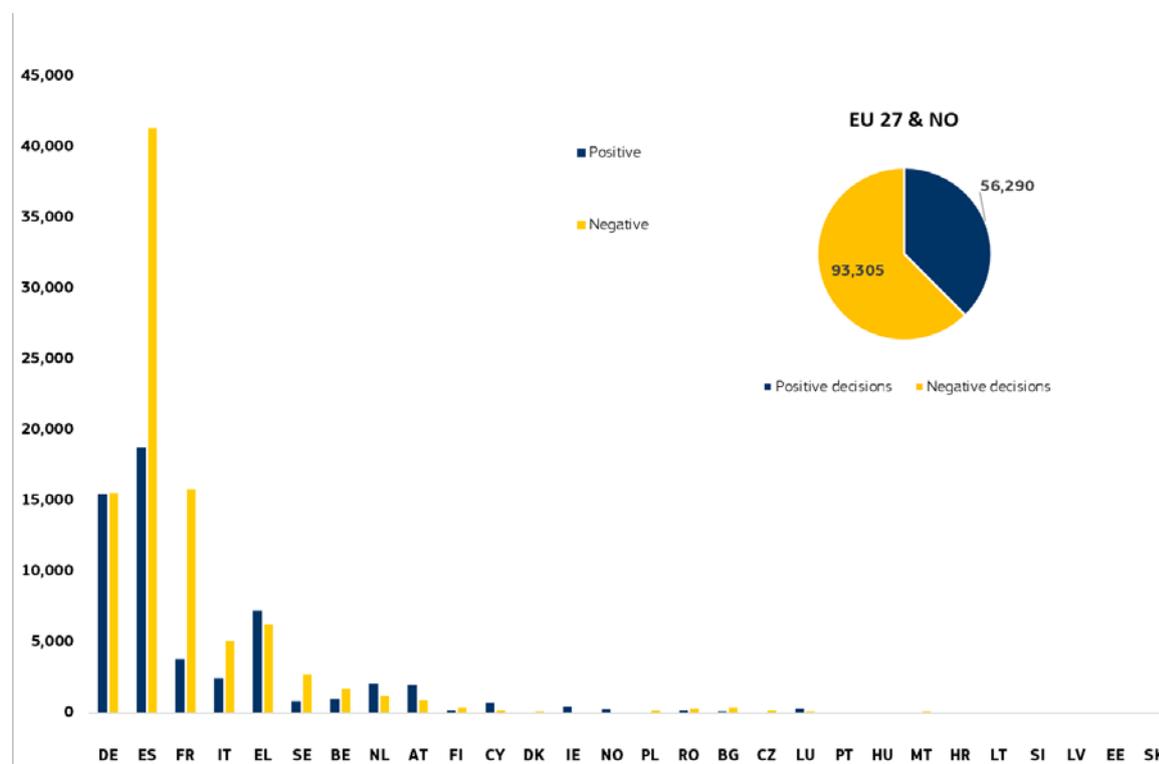


Source: Eurostat [[migr\\_asyappctzm](#)], total asylum applicants, extracted on 7 January 2021.

**Figure 2: First time asylum applicants and subsequent applicants (together, total asylum applicants) in the EU-27 and Norway, Q3 2020 (quarterly data)**



Source: Eurostat [[migr\\_asyappctzm](#)], accessed on 7 January 2021.

**Figure 3: First instance asylum decisions in EU-27 and Norway for non-EU citizens, Q3 2020**

Source: Eurostat [[migr\\_asydcfstq](#)], accessed on 5 January 2021.

## Updates on EU legislation transposition

- Slovenia:** The Draft Law on Amendments to the Foreigners Act provides, *inter alia*, the transposition of Students and Researchers Directive (EU) 2016/801 and the implementation of the Agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the EU and EURATOM regarding residence rights and residence documents for beneficiaries of the Agreement.

## Other EMN outputs and past/upcoming events (see also the [EMN website](#))

- Croatia:** In December 2020, EMN Croatia organised a [virtual roundtable](#) on the challenges of integration in the Republic of Croatia. The event included presentation of the strategic documents regarding integration on the EU and Croatian level and was an opportunity for representatives of Croatian public institutions, NGOs, local community and successfully integrated migrants to exchange their experiences of integration policies in Croatia.
- Estonia:** In October, EMN Estonia hosted a [conference](#) "Citizenship and Migration – Today and Tomorrow", which focused on EU Member States' choices regarding citizenship policies and recent migration trends in Estonia and the EU.
- Ireland:** The Economic Social Research Institute and EMN Ireland held an [online conference](#) entitled 'Supporting Integration: Access to Citizenship in Ireland and the EU' which included the launch of '[Pathways to citizenship through naturalisation in Ireland](#)'.
- Poland:** On 15 October, EMN Poland organised the national conference "Diagnosis of the situation - the basis of migration policy".

EMN Ad Hoc queries published during the reporting period:

[2020.62 Model cards issued to accredited members of diplomatic missions and consular representations and members of their families EMN](#)



[2020.60 Children of Beneficiaries of International Protection](#)



[2020.56 Integration of TCN by involving mass media](#)



[2020.48 Part 2: Procedures for language identification by reception authorities](#)



[2020.47 Part 1: Procedures for language identification by asylum authorities](#)



[2020.43 The principle of family unity in practice in asylum cases, especially in gender-based violence \(GBV\) and sexual orientation and gender identity \(SOGI\) based cases](#)



[2020.39 Update on 2020.19 Ad-hoc Query on customer services after COVID-19 emergency](#)



[2020.37 Conditions for granting a seasonal worker permit beyond the requirements in the seasonal worker's directive 2014/36/EU](#)



[2020.36 Reduction or loss of remittances due to COVID-19](#)

