



PRAGUE PROCESS QUARTERLY REVIEW

#39

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EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

As the year comes to an end, we are pleased to present the new edition of the Quarterly Review for the last quarter of 2024. This issue presents the latest activities and outputs, while reflecting on a milestone year for the Prague Process.

2024 marked the 15th anniversary of the Prague Process, celebrated during the Senior Officials' Meeting in Moldova. This occasion provided an opportunity to reaffirm the collective commitment of the Prague Process participating states to advancing migration governance and showcased the progress made since 2009, as well as under the current [Action Plan 2023-2027](#). The numerous state interventions reconfirmed that the Prague Process is well equipped to support the Parties in addressing the shifting migration dynamics and emerging policy challenges, ensuring that the joint efforts remain impactful and responsive to participating states' needs.

This year saw a wealth of activities and collaboration aimed at strengthening migration management across the region. Highlights from the last quarter include the Study Visit to Kyrgyzstan, the Prague Process & EMN Luxembourg Joint Workshop on forecasting and new technologies, and the Training Workshop on reintegration in Prague. Additionally, the Prague Process states participated in the 7th International Border Management Conference in Tunisia, while the Secretariat engaged in the GDISC Annual Conference in Poland. Enhanced partnerships with key actors like the EUAA and EMN enabled concrete actions addressing operational needs and facilitated greater knowledge-sharing across the region, among others, on the issues of digitalisation and preparedness.

The Prague Process [Migration Observatory](#) has continued to serve as a cornerstone for evidence-based policymaking, delivering in-depth research and analysis. In 2024 alone, the Observatory produced a dozen of new publications and updated ten country factsheets. These publications tackled pressing topics such as forced migration from Ukraine, emigration from Russia, and the effects of war and displacement in Central Asia.

The Prague Process [Training Academy](#) also expanded its offerings, releasing the new e-course on Combatting trafficking in human beings, tailoring capacity development to meet the diverse needs of participating states. Participants also gained facilitated access to the e-course on Integration and the two EUAA automated foundation modules, reinforcing the Prague Process' focus on fostering practical skills and effective migration governance.

In 2025, the Prague Process will continue building on the past accomplishments while exploring new opportunities for cooperation and innovation.

We wish you an enjoyable reading, a peaceful holiday season, and a successful start to 2025!

IN THIS ISSUE

[Looking ahead: Upcoming Prague Process activities](#) | 02

[State Perspectives: Reflections on 15 years of Prague Process cooperation and way ahead](#) | 02

[Study Visit to the Kyrgyz Republic: A collaborative exchange on migration management](#) | 03

[Highlights from the Joint Prague Process & EMN Luxembourg Workshop on forecasting and new technologies in migration and asylum governance](#) | 03

[Insights from the 7th International Border Management Conference](#) | 04

[Advancing Reintegration: Highlights from the Prague Process Training Workshop](#) | 04

[Strengthening cooperation in Tajikistan on International Migrants Day](#) | 05

[GDISC Annual Conference](#) | 05

[Webinar 'From virtual walls to digital bridges? Technology in migrant pathways and integration'](#) | 05

[Migration Observatory: Publications in 2024 and country factsheets](#) | 06

[Training Academy: Available e-courses](#) | 07

[Reading Recommendations](#) | 07



LOOKING AHEAD: UPCOMING PRAGUE PROCESS ACTIVITIES

28 January | Online

Policy Talk 'Looking into 2025: What migration-related developments to expect?' with Ralph Genetzke and Jean-Louis de Brouwer

February (tbc) | Online

Rollout of the EUAA automated foundation module 'Introduction to communication for asylum and reception practitioners' (for countries of the Eastern Partnership and Central Asia)

March (tbc) | Online

Rollout of the EUAA automated foundation module 'Introduction to the legal framework on fundamental rights and international protection in the EU' (for countries of the Eastern Partnership and Central Asia)

March/ April | Bucharest, Romania

Thematic Component 3: Workshop on Labour Migration (tbc)

25-27 March | Madrid, Spain

World Border Security Congress

April | Hungary, Serbia

Thematic Component 1: Study Visit on Border Management to Hungary and Workshop on Identification of irregular migrants in Serbia (tbc)

29-30 April | Copenhagen, Denmark

Thematic Component 2: Workshop/ Study Visit on readmission, return and reintegration to Denmark (tbc)

April/ May | Vienna, Austria

Thematic Component 1: Advanced Training on Trafficking in Human Beings (tbc)

May/June | Online

Information session on the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum

STATE PERSPECTIVES: REFLECTIONS ON 15 YEARS OF PRAGUE PROCESS COOPERATION AND WAY AHEAD



This year marked the 15th anniversary of the Prague Process, a momentous occasion that allowed to take stock of the key achievements, the challenges confronted along the way and main lessons learned over 15 years of intergovernmental cooperation. During the anniversary meeting in Moldova, the senior officials underlined the Process's enduring benefits for fostering cooperation and shaping migration policies across the region.

Over the past 15 years, the Prague Process has emerged as a cornerstone of regional cooperation on migration, facilitating partnerships even amid crises. The *Czech Republic*, as a founding member and current Chair of the Strategic Group, pointed to how trust-building through informal connections has enabled states to align their migration policies with EU standards, including advancements in visa facilitation and broader legislative harmonization. *Lithuania*, highlighted its role in adapting to the challenges of hosting over

80,000 Ukrainian refugees, emphasizing the benefits of digitized refugee registration systems and capacity-building initiatives supported by the Process. Similarly, *Armenia* praised the Prague Process for enhancing its migration policy framework, particularly through the Migration Observatory's policy briefs and expert analyses, which have informed the country's asylum policies and international cooperation efforts. *Hungary* acknowledged the operational value of the Guidelines for Integrated Border Management, developed through a collaborative project under the Prague Process, as well as the Handbook on Circular Migration, created with the involvement of 20 participating states and recognized as a vital tool for understanding and managing migration dynamics.

The evolving policy landscape across the region manifests greater alignment of national policies and legislation. Many countries have adopted more comprehensive migration strategies, building upon good practices elsewhere. However, challenges persist, and various states pointed out the difficulties in aligning political priorities and resources across EU member states, particularly during crises like the war in Ukraine. *Moldova* emphasized the strain on its reception systems, requiring strengthened coordination and international support to manage the ongoing influx of displaced populations. High staff turnover within migration authorities has also been identified as a barrier to sustaining institutional knowledge and operational continuity. The Prague Process has sought to address this challenge through its Training Academy, offering e-learning materials and regular updates tailored to the needs of newly employed staff.

Looking ahead, states like *Poland* and *Serbia* have stressed the need for a comprehensive regional approach to counter irregular migration, human trafficking, and the instrumentalization of migration. This requires enhancing return mechanisms and creating legal pathways for migration. Additionally, the integration of modern technologies, such as AI and advanced data systems, is seen as crucial for streamlining

migration management processes. Whereas the EU Member States referred to the implementation of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum as their top priority, several partner countries expressed the need to better understand its various implications. EU accession candidates emphasised the path towards EU integration as their top policy priority, calling for stronger cooperation in this area, where the Prague Process could provide an important platform and network.

Acknowledging the evolving policy priorities, the participating states decided to extend the duration of the four ongoing Thematic Components to continue tackling emerging challenges under the Action Plan 2023–2027. Building on its 15-year legacy, the Prague Process continues to serve as a dynamic platform for innovation, knowledge exchange, and cooperative migration governance.

STUDY VISIT TO THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC: A COLLABORATIVE EXCHANGE ON MIGRATION MANAGEMENT

On 15–17 October 2024, the Prague Process organised a study visit to Kyrgyzstan that showcased the country’s innovative approaches to migration management, human trafficking prevention, and border control. Experts from 12 participating states, both EU and non-EU, engaged in comprehensive discussions and site visits, learned about Kyrgyzstan’s legal frameworks, administrative practices, and digital advancements in managing challenges in migration and enhancing border security. The visit was organised in Bishkek under the *Thematic Component 1: Preventing and fighting irregular migration and migrant smuggling*, led by Hungary and co-led by Kyrgyzstan, highlighting collaborative efforts, regional partnerships, and capacity building, as well as demonstrating the value of shared learning in addressing migration challenges.

For more details about the study visit, check the Prague Process website [here](#).



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE JOINT PRAGUE PROCESS & EMN LUXEMBOURG WORKSHOP ON FORECASTING AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN MIGRATION AND ASYLUM GOVERNANCE



On 5–6 November 2024, the Prague Process and [European Migration Network \(EMN\) Luxembourg](#) jointly organised the workshop “*Forecasting and New Technologies in Migration and Asylum Governance: State of Play and New Developments*” in Luxembourg. Bringing together over 80 experts from 28 states, European institutions, international organisations, and academia, the workshop represented the third joint activity under the Prague Process & EMN cooperation launched in late 2023.

Over two days, the Workshop provided space for knowledge exchange and collaboration, focusing on digitalisation, resilience, and forecasting – core horizontal priorities outlined in the [Prague Process Action Plan 2023–2027](#). Topics spanned institutional, governmental, and academic approaches to forecasting and

leveraging technology in migration management, including AI-driven solutions and predictive analyses for migration trends, digital transformations within the national systems, and the application of strategic foresight and data visualization to anticipate migration flows and enhance preparedness.

Read [here](#) to explore key takeaways from the workshop.



INSIGHTS FROM THE 7TH INTERNATIONAL BORDER MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

The 7th International Border Management Conference, held on 27-28 November 2024 in Tunis, brought together over 260 participants from 47 countries to address pressing challenges and advancements in border governance. Organized and supported by a number of projects and actions implemented by ICMPD, including the Prague Process, the conference emphasized the principles of professionalization, modernization, robust governance frameworks, and communication as key pillars for effective border governance. Highlights included discussions on AI and biometric technologies, Moldova's cross-border collaboration practices, strategies for shaping effective migration narratives and many more. This conference underscored the importance of cooperation and innovation in tackling migration challenges.



Read more about the conference [here](#) and [here](#).

ADVANCING REINTEGRATION: HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PRAGUE PROCESS TRAINING WORKSHOP

The Prague Process Training Workshop on Reintegration, held in Prague on 3-5 December 2024, gathered 31 experts from 16 participating states, to address key aspects of sustainable reintegration. Through interactive sessions, practical exercises, and theoretical frameworks, the workshop focused on the individual and community-level reintegration as well as the design of sustainable reintegration programs. Participants analysed economic, social, and psychosocial dimensions of reintegration and explored how reintegration programs could empower individuals while fostering social cohesion and contributing to long-term development.

Discussions featured various innovations, for instance, Armenia's digital case management system, Ukraine's "country in a smartphone" approach and Moldova's five-year reintegration plan. Organised within the *Thematic Component 2 on Return, Readmission, and Reintegration (RRR)*, led by the Czech Republic and co-led by the Republic of Moldova, and as part of the capacity-development efforts of the Prague Process Training Academy, the event marked an important step in enhancing knowledge on reintegration.

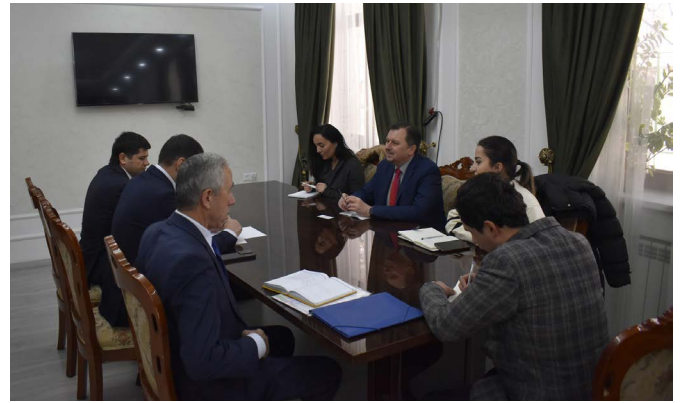
For more details about the training workshop, read [here](#).



STRENGTHENING COOPERATION IN TAJIKISTAN ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS DAY

On 18 December, marking International Migrants Day, Mr Radim Zak, Head of the Prague Process Secretariat and Region Eastern Europe and Central Asia at ICMPD, visited Tajikistan to advance dialogue on migration management. The mission featured a high-level training session for the Migration Service, meetings with the Tajik Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Labour as well as the Migration Media Award ceremony planned by the project PROTECT implemented by the ICMPD. These engagements aimed to strengthen the ongoing cooperation and promote collaborative approaches to effective migration governance.

In his meeting with Mr. Nodirzoda Imatsho, Head of the Migration Service of Tajikistan, Mr. Zak addressed several issues related to labour migration, including the operation of the Migrant Resource Centre, vocational training programmes for migrants, language learning initiatives, and the reintegration of returning citizens into the labour market. Discussions also focused on expanding cooperation with European countries to improve migration management and support systems. Mr. Zak highlighted that the main objective of his visit was to strengthen existing partnerships while exploring new opportunities for cooperation. The meeting concluded with a strong shared commitment to deepen cooperation, reflecting a constructive and forward-looking partnership to advance migration policies.



GDISC ANNUAL CONFERENCE

On 17–18 October 2024, the General Directors of Immigration Services Conference (GDISC) held its Annual Conference in Gdańsk, Poland, celebrating 20 years of fostering cooperation among immigration services while addressing current migration challenges. During the event, Poland handed over the chairmanship to the Czech Republic. The Prague Process Secretariat also had an opportunity to attend and engage in the discussions.

Over two days, the conference featured a series of sessions including discussions on the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, which highlighted its holistic approach, emphasizing the improvements in areas such as integrated border management, uniform screening processes, and the critical balance between solidarity and responsibility among EU member states. Participants noted the need for enhanced internal coordination to ensure the Pact's successful implementation, with significant work planned for the upcoming year.

GDISC member states emphasized the need for improved coordination on asylum and return procedures, highlighted challenges in integrating judicial and administrative systems under the EU Pact, and shared concerns about capacity, backlogs, and the role of NGOs in migration governance. Furthermore, Frontex shared insights on leveraging technology and improving return mechanisms, while partners like OECD and ICMPD underscored the value of networking in tackling shared migration concerns. Overall, the conference reinforced the GDISC's role in promoting collaboration and innovation in migration governance.

For more information, visit the [website](#) of GDISC.

WEBINAR 'FROM VIRTUAL WALLS TO DIGITAL BRIDGES? TECHNOLOGY IN MIGRANT PATHWAYS AND INTEGRATION'



As digitalisation in migration management advances, new opportunities and pitfalls emerge for migrants navigating both physical and digital borders. While digital tools offer potential benefits, they can inadvertently create barriers, leading to exclusion and exploitation.

In this webinar, Amanda Alencar and Andrew Fallone presented findings from two Prague Process publications that explore these complexities. Dr Alencar shared insights on how digital tools aid migrant integration and challenges to achieving true inclusion. Mr Fallone presented a critical analysis of digital migration management, revealing how opaque processes and delays create “digital borders,” that fuel opportunistic economies. The two speakers jointly examined managing expectations of technology in migration and explored balancing national interests with migrant needs.

Watch the webinar in [English](#) or in [Russian](#).



MIGRATION OBSERVATORY: PUBLICATIONS IN 2024 AND COUNTRIES' FACTSHEETS

Since 2018, the [Prague Process Migration Observatory](#) has been dedicated to supporting informed policy-making by providing impartial, evidence-based analysis across the six thematic areas of the [Prague Process Action Plan](#). In 2024, the MO produced nine new publications, the fourth edition of the book *Migration Observatory Selected Publications 2023-24*, as well as updated ten country factsheets for Eastern Partnership and Central Asian states ([Armenia](#), [Azerbaijan](#), [Georgia](#), [Kazakhstan](#), [Kyrgyzstan](#), [Moldova](#), [Tajikistan](#), [Turkmenistan](#), [Ukraine](#), [Uzbekistan](#)). All MO publications are stored in the repository on the Prague Process website.

Policy Brief 'Forced Migration from Ukraine: migration scenarios 2.0' | Read in [English](#) or [Russian](#).

Policy Brief 'Russian "Relokanty" in the Caucasus and Central Asia' | Read in [English](#) or [Russian](#)

Report 'Exploring the Potential of Digitalisation in Migration Management in the Prague Process Region' | Read in [English](#) or [Russian](#)

Policy Brief 'Displaced Afghans in Central Asia: Barriers, Risks and Future Prospects' | Read in [English](#) or [Russian](#)

Policy Brief 'Scenarios of War and Forced Migration from Ukraine: How many more Ukrainians could flee if Russia wins?'
Read in [English](#) or [Russian](#)



Policy Brief 'Impacts of Russia's War in Ukraine on Migration in Central Asia' | Read in [English](#) or [Russian](#)

Policy Brief 'The place for modern technologies in the integration of migrants' | Read in [English](#) or [Russian](#)

Analytical Report 'Migration in the context of climate and environmental changes in non-EU Prague Process states: Exploring vulnerabilities, policy gaps and available protection frameworks' | Read in [English](#) or [Russian](#)

Policy Analysis Report 'Time As Violence: A User-Centric Approach to Digital Migration Management' | Read in [English](#) or [Russian](#)

Migration Observatory Selected Publications 2023-24 | Preview and download the book in [English](#) or [Russian](#)





TRAINING ACADEMY: AVAILABLE E-COURSES

The **Training Academy** continues to provide tailor-made and high-quality trainings addressing the priorities of the **Prague Process Action Plan**. Since 2021, the **e-Learning Platform** has served the participating states and partners with educational material for self-paced independent remote learning. As of now, the Platform contains five e-courses:



- 1) The course **Integrated Border Management** (intermediate level) covers a broad spectrum of IBM elements, from basic concepts to crafting a national IBM Strategy and Action Plan.
- 2) The course **Combating Trafficking in Human Beings** (intermediate level), covers key THB concepts, global trends and legal frameworks. It examines vulnerabilities in mixed migration flows, state responsibilities, and victim issues such as identification, assistance, risk assessment, and repatriation.
- 3) The course **Labour Migration** (intermediate level) covers essential definitions and categories, theories of labour migration and mobility, national and international frameworks, policies and administrative practices, interests of migrants, sending and receiving countries.
- 4) The course **Identification and Profiling at the Border** (basic level) equips front line border officers and other interested participants with knowledge and skills in profiling, identification, and combating human trafficking and smuggling, focusing on secure border management and the detection of impostors, fake documents, and trafficking victims.
- 5) The course **A Holistic Approach to the Integration of Migrants and Refugees** assesses various integration strategies, including through case studies from various countries, designed to equip policymakers with effective integration tools. The course is available in English.

State representatives are invited to seize this opportunity for capacity building through remote learning. All courses (but for integration) are available in English and Russian. Access to all courses is granted upon registration on the platform.

READING RECOMMENDATIONS

Infographic from the European Parliament ‘Child migrants: irregular entry and asylum’ | Access [here](#)

Council of the EU: Tackling labour and skills shortages in the EU: Council approves conclusions | Read the press release [here](#)

Frontex: Number of irregular EU border-crossings for January – October 2024 | Read [here](#)

EUAA: Temporary protection in October 2024 | See the infographic [here](#)

EUAA: National judiciaries important in defining eligibility for temporary protection | Read the analysis [here](#)

Migration Partnership Facility: Mapping Legal Pathways to EU Member States | See details [here](#)

ICMPD Study ‘Storytelling as strategic communication on migration’ | See [here](#)

World Bank Group: The Journey Ahead: Supporting Successful Migration in Europe and Central Asia | Preview the report [here](#) and press release [here](#)

UNESCO: Online course ‘Region – Central Asia: journalism education on migration issues’ | Read the news [here](#)

