

PRAGUE PROCESS QUARTERLY REVIEW

#40

JANUARY-MARCH 2025

EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

We are delighted to share with you the January–March 2025 edition of the Quarterly Review, featuring the latest updates from the Prague Process.

In January, the traditional beginning-of-the-year Policy Talk assessed what migration policy developments to expect in 2025. Furthermore, ICMPD's Regional Migration Outlook for Eastern Europe and Central Asia pinpoints six issues to look out for in 2025, helping to guide our actions and migration policies. February and March saw the rollout of two foundational modules of the European Asylum Curriculum for asylum and reception officials from the Eastern Partnership and Central Asian states – a result of the long-lasting cooperation with the EU Agency for Asylum (EUAA). Our remote activities further entailed a webinar on forced displacement in Ukraine three years into the war.

Ukraine's Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Unity paid a visit to ICMPD Director General to discuss the ongoing and future collaboration. More recently, the Head of Prague Process Secretariat and ICMPD Eastern Europe and Central Asia region visited Kyiv to follow up on the next steps agreed.

This issue also presents insights from the World Border Security Congress 2025. The Ministry of Interior of Montenegro took part in this event and shared insights on the current state of play in border management and the benefits drawn from the Prague Process.

The newest publications of the Migration Observatory assess in how far Russia's attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure have brought further displacement, as well as the regional repercussions of Russia's migration policy. Finally, this issue also highlights the opportunities offered by the Training Academy and its e-Learning Platform.

We trust you will find this edition both enriching and informative.

With best regards,

Prague Process Secretariat

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LOOKING AHEAD: UPCOMING PRAGUE PROCESS ACTIVITIES

- **29-30 April | Copenhagen, Denmark**
 Thematic Component 2: Study Visit to Denmark on Readmission, Return and Reintegration
- **End of May (tbc) | online**
 Information session on the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum
- **8-14 June | Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan**
 Simulation Exercise on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for Central Asian countries and Türkiye, co-organised with the OSCE
- **17-19 June | Amsterdam, the Netherlands**
 Identity Week Europe and Document Security Training provided by the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) under the Ministry of Asylum and Migration of the Netherlands
- **29 June - 5 July | Armenia**
 ICMPD International Summer School on Migration
- **9-11 September | Vienna, Austria**
 Thematic Component 1: Advanced Training on Countering Trafficking in Human Beings
- **End of September (tbc) | Warsaw, Poland**
 Senior Officials' Meeting

INSIGHTS FROM THE WORLD BORDER SECURITY CONGRESS 2025

On 25-27 March, representatives of nine Prague Process states attended the 14th World Border Security Congress in Madrid, an international forum bringing together border management experts, policymakers, and practitioners from 60 countries. In alignment with the thematic area of the Prague Process Action Plan on preventing irregular migration and migrant smuggling, the Congress strongly resonated with the objectives of the Process's Digital Lab and Resilience Hub by addressing preparedness, digitalisation, as well as use and integration of modern border technologies. The exhibition held alongside the Congress allowed participating states to exchange knowledge with experts and explore cutting-edge technological solutions – tools and products – showcased by the private sector, offering a first-hand look at the newest innovations in border management. Through its focus on innovation and resilience, the Congress provided an ideal setting for learning, exchange, strengthening strategic foresight, and reinforcing collaboration. By linking emerging technologies with policy and operational needs, the Prague Process continues to bolster states' preparedness and enhance digitalisation capacities for adaptive and future-proof border governance.

Discover more insights [here](#) and explore the Congress's [website](#).

POLICY TALK 'LOOKING INTO 2025: WHAT MIGRATION-RELATED DEVELOPMENTS TO EXPECT'



On 28 January, the Prague Process held its annual Policy Talk with Jean-Louis De Brouwer (Egmont Institute) and Ralph Genetzke (ICMPD Brussels Mission) to discuss key migration policy developments of 2024 and expectations for 2025. The discussion addressed challenges in implementing the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum amid rising support for anti-immigration parties and regional conflicts. Speakers examined the EU's intensified migration diplomacy, efforts to counter irregular migration, evolving return policies, cooperation with third countries, and the political priorities of the new Commission. They also discussed the legal status of displaced Ukrainians, plans to expand legal migration pathways, and upcoming policy developments in 2025.

Watch the video recording in English or Russian [here](#).



INTERVIEW WITH MR. IGOR KALEZIC, SENIOR POLICE INSPECTOR, BORDER POLICE, MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS, MONTENEGRO



1. In what ways has Montenegro's active participation in the Prague Process strengthened border management capacities at the national and regional levels? Can you share specific examples of its impact?

Last year, the Prague Process celebrated its 15th anniversary. This platform has produced numerous benefits and contributed to the development of Border police of Montenegro. I am convinced that you also have positive experiences from our partnership.

As a candidate for membership in the European Union, Montenegro is constantly harmonizing its border and migration policy with European standards by implementing legal solutions and best practices in its system. Throughout all the years of harmonization, the Prague Process has supported our efforts and been a source of new knowledge, connecting experts and providing information on integrated border management, illegal and legal migration, preventing and combating migrant smuggling and other important topics for border security.

By attending conferences, congresses and thematic meetings, this unique international platform has given us the opportunity to expand our network of professional contacts, build friendships in the region, Europe and the world. It has enabled us to hear new ideas – successful stories and use them to make the system in our country better.

High-quality seminars, thematic workshops and study visits, especially in the areas of illegal migration, readmission, return, asylum and integrated border management, provide education for our officers and enable them to apply modern working methods, lessons learned and good practices in their daily work. The diversity of participants at the events enabled a concrete picture to be created of migration movements and new trends – from countries of origin, through transit, to countries of final destination. Also, the Training Academy developed by the Prague Process, has offered us a growing online library of materials for training our officers.

Year after year, the Prague Process is becoming more ambitious, better and more mature. It promotes new ideas and creates a positive, pleasant atmosphere for work. Its existence has a strong impact on the international context of cooperation and the development of a network of contacts between border police officers of the Western Balkans and European countries.

2. Montenegro has implemented an Integrated Border Management (IBM) Strategy, which involves strong inter-institutional and international cooperation. What are the main achievements of this strategy so far, and what challenges still need to be addressed?

In 2006, the Government of Montenegro adopted the first Integrated Border Management Strategy, which was based on the European Commission's guidelines for the Western Balkan countries. The Strategy created conditions for improving overall security in Montenegro and the Western Balkan region, as well as for the process of harmonization with the European legal framework.

This process was accompanied by a series of activities undertaken in the previous period, in cooperation with the European Union, and in particular in relation to priorities such as: harmonization of legislation, conclusion of bilateral agreements on the state border, border crossing points and border traffic, signing of bilateral agreements on police cooperation and protocols on joint patrols, harmonization of the organizational and personnel concept, modernization and improvement of the education and training system, raising the level of professionalism of border service members, improvement of the information system and border infrastructure, procurement of technical equipment, establishment and improvement of risk analysis and information exchange. Then, strengthening capacities for inter-institutional cooperation, capacities for the fight against corruption and strengthening the legal framework for bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

The European Union, through the concept of Integrated Border Management, has developed an efficient system of border control and management, which we also strive for. It enables the free flow of people and goods on the one hand and the prevention of cross-border crime and illegal migration on the other, while respecting high standards of protection of human rights and freedom. Efficient integrated border management implies close cooperation between the services operating at the border.

By adopting the Integrated Border Management Strategy 2025–2028, in March 2025, Montenegro continues to develop and align its own concept with the new European concept of integrated border management with the aim of efficient border surveillance and strengthening inter-governmental and international cooperation.

The new Strategy defines the focus of our further development. It is necessary to improve the quality of border control in order to facilitate legal border crossings, improve the integrated control system of the Adriatic Sea, develop risk analysis, strengthen inter-institutional cooperation, international and regional cooperation, cooperation with EU institutions, especially FRONTEX, modernize equipment and electronic systems, improve migration policy, the readmission and return system, carry out preparations for taking measures in the Schengen area, support innovation and research. Then, ensure respect, protection and promotion of fundamental human rights and professional conduct of officials, as well as continuous education. Also, one of the important guidelines is to continue strengthening our capacities for autonomously conducting investigations in the field of migrant smuggling, cross-border crime and corruption.

3. In recent years, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Montenegro has actively participated in the annual International Border Management Conference and World Border Security Congress (WBSC). How have these experiences advanced national efforts in integrated border management? What knowledge has been applied in your daily work?

That's right, thanks to the support of the Prague Process, my colleagues and I attended these important events. They offered us the opportunity to hear expertise, experiences, strategic approaches, innovative solutions, practitioners, policymakers and representatives of the private sector in the field of border management from all over the world in challenging times.

Relevant speakers provided us with insight into the latest trends in the field of migration policy, drug trafficking, terrorism, human rights, digital technologies and tools that are changing border security day by day thanks to artificial intelligence, as well as advanced training and education to strengthen human resources.

A particularly interesting part related to border management adapted to tourism, as an important economic driver for many countries. Positive models of system optimization through the introduction of new technologies and digitalization were presented in order to facilitate tourism while ensuring security, i.e. balancing between ease of access and necessary security measures. This is especially important for Montenegro, which is a tourist country.



The activities at these events are designed to create an interactive environment for participants, with an emphasis on practical experience and lessons learned, which we can apply in our daily work. I would like to note that the Montenegrin border security system is a small system, so the development of a network of contacts, the support of our partners, international organizations and European countries, is an important driving force for our development.

4. What concrete opportunities do you see for further collaboration with regional and EU partners, also in the context of EU accession and the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum?

The signing of the Convention on Police Cooperation in South-Eastern Europe laid the foundation for the development of operational police cooperation between the countries of our region. As you know, agreements and protocols on the organization of joint patrols, joint meetings, protocols on the work of joint police cooperation centres, as well as the exchange of data and information between the countries of the Western Balkans have their basis in this Convention.

Progress has been made in the last two decades, but there is a lot of room for improving our joint work and cooperation. I believe that strengthening trust is very important in terms of achieving better results in the fight against illegal migration and cross-border crime. Professional cooperation, trust and timely information exchange with regional and international partners must be a priority for all of us.

Specific activities that should be addressed include promoting the exchange of information and best practices with a focus on addressing the root causes of illegal migration, strengthening the joint fight against migrant smuggling networks and human trafficking, identifying and providing adequate protection and assistance to vulnerable groups, strengthening capacities for establishing the identity of illegal migrants, return and readmission, as well as developing a European model of integrated border management using modern electronic systems. For border police, a particularly sensitive aspect is the identification of terrorist threats related to migration.

In addition to strengthening trust, harmonizing the legislation of the Western Balkan countries with the legal framework of the European Union should be our priority. The accession process is extremely demanding, and each candidate country has a certain degree of compliance and success stories that it can share with the neighbours. This is a segment in which the Prague Process can contribute, by understanding our needs, active action, networking and expert support.

The new Pact on Migration and Asylum is demanding for the European Union members themselves, as it prescribes stricter procedures, rules and requires significant logistical support. Montenegro and other Western Balkan countries will need the support of EU countries on this path.

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS WITH UKRAINE: VISIT TO KYIV AND MEETING WITH VICE PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF UNITY IN VIENNA

On 30 January 2025, ICMPD Director General Michael Spindelegger met with Oleksiy Chernyshov, Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Unity of Ukraine. Mr. Chernyshov outlined the Ministry's key activities, while ICMPD provided updates on its Ukrainian Consultation Centres in Germany, Czechia, and Poland, as well as its work on border management in Ukraine. Discussions also covered ICMPD's role in the planned Unity Hubs in countries with large Ukrainian communities, supporting externally displaced Ukrainians. During the meeting, the Prague Process Secretariat invited the Ministry to present its objectives to the Prague Process states and strengthen regional cooperation.



More recently, the Head of the Prague Process Secretariat and ICMPD EECA Region, Radim Zak, and Regional Portfolio Manager, Violeta Wagner, concluded a three-day visit to Kyiv, to follow up on the actions agreed with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Unity, Oleksiy Chernyshov. The delegation held consultations with key Ukrainian institutions and international partners, including the State Migration Service, State Border Guard Service, State Customs Service, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Justice as well as EUAM, IOM and UNHCR to discuss cooperation in migration and border management. ICMPD presented updates on ongoing projects and outlined future plans. The key Ukrainian institutions reconfirmed their continuous engagement in the Prague Process, especially as an important platform for ongoing cooperation with the EUAA and EMN, and for learning about the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, which continues to be of high interest. Furthermore, they appreciated the ongoing cooperation within the EU-funded EU4IBM-Resilience project, and other Czech- and German-funded projects providing assistance to migration and consular services, and to Ukrainians displaced in Germany, Czechia, and Poland. Particular attention was given to these Ukrainian Consultation Centres as well as the call centre operated at the Embassy of Ukraine in Warsaw, whose work is welcomed and supported by host countries. Building on this, a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed with the Ministry of National Unity. The Parties also agreed to explore further cooperation on establishment of Unity Hubs in countries with large Ukrainian diaspora, including Spain, Italy, and Romania, enhancing outreach and support to displaced Ukrainians.



Read more [here](#).

WEBINAR 'UKRAINE'S DISPLACED: THREE YEARS ON – CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS'

On 6 March, the Prague Process hosted a webinar featuring expert discussions on forced displacement from Ukraine. Speakers examined key migration trends, reassessed displacement scenarios, and analysed the impact of attacks on energy infrastructure. The discussion also addressed the situation of internally displaced persons in Ukraine, outlining key challenges and shifting dynamics. After the Czech Republic presented its perspective and approach to Ukrainian displacement, the legal status of Ukrainians in the EU under temporary protection was explored, along with potential future residency options.

Watch the video recording in English or Russian [here](#).

**PRAGUE PROCESS**
ПРАЖСКИЙ ПРОЦЕСС

WEBINAR

UKRAINE'S DISPLACED: THREE YEARS ON – CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

- Jan Werner, Head of Unit, Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic
- Franck Düvell, Senior Researcher, Institute for Migration Research and Intercultural Studies, Osnabrück University
- Kateryna Sehida, Doctor of Geographical Sciences and Professor, V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University
- Nataliia Husieva, PhD in Geography, Associate Professor, V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University
- Martin Wagner, Senior Policy Advisor Asylum, ICMPD

Moderated by
Radim Žák
Head of Region
EECA and Head
of the Prague
Process Secretariat,
ICMPD

 **VIDEO RECORDING**

www.pragueprocess.eu

MIGRATION OBSERVATORY: NEW PUBLICATIONS

The [Prague Process Migration Observatory](#) continues to support informed policy-making by providing impartial, evidence-based analysis across the Prague Process region and in line with the six thematic areas of the [Prague Process Action Plan](#). Here are the recently released publications:

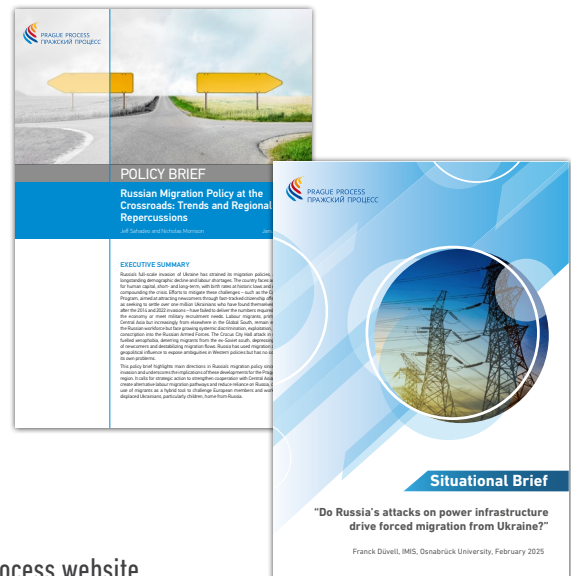
Policy Brief 'Russian Migration Policy at the Crossroads: Trends and Regional Repercussions'

Read in [English](#) or [Russian](#).

Situational Brief 'Do Russia's attacks on power infrastructure drive forced migration from Ukraine?'

Read in [English](#) or [Russian](#).

All publications in both languages are stored in the [repository](#) on the Prague Process website.



TRAINING ACADEMY: AVAILABLE E-COURSES AND ACCESS TO THE EUAA MODULES

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. The Platform currently contains six e-courses: [Integrated Border Management](#), [Combating Trafficking in Human Beings](#), [Labour Migration](#), [Identification and Profiling at the Border](#), [Return and Reintegration](#) as well as [Holistic Approach to the Integration of Migrants and Refugees](#). The newly prepared e-course on Migration Studies shall be released later this year.

[State representatives and partners](#) 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 to eligible representatives upon [registration](#) on the platform.

From February to May, the Prague Process Training Academy, in partnership with the EUAA, rolled out two foundational modules of the European Asylum Curriculum for asylum and reception officials from Eastern Partnership and Central Asian states. The automated modules – Introduction to Communication for Asylum and Reception Practitioners and Introduction to the Legal Framework on Fundamental Rights and International Protection in the EU – align with the training needs identified through the 2023 learning assessment survey and provide a unique opportunity for self-paced learning. This step has reaffirmed the strengthened and constructive partnership between the EUAA and the Prague Process in capacity building.

READING RECOMMENDATIONS

ICMPD Migration Outlook 2025

ICMPD Migration Outlook 2025 Eastern Europe and Central Asia

ICMPD Information Needs Assessment Study of Intending and Returning Migrants in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan

ICMPD Working Paper 'Advances in Border Management: Digitalisation trends and emerging technologies'

ICMPD Blog 'Phasing out temporary protection? Shaping EU policies through national experiences' by Martin Wagner and Marina Grama

EUAA Annual Analysis of Asylum Trends in 2024

EUAA Practical Guide on nationality in the context of international protection

Frontex 'Irregular Border Crossings into EU in 2024'

European Parliament Research Service (EPRS) briefing on Implementation of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum

IOM Report 'Climate Migration Projections for Armenia'

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