

EMN BULLETIN

February 2020

The EMN Bulletin provides policymakers and other practitioners with updates on recent migration and international protection policy developments at EU and national level. The 29th Edition provides information from **October 2019 to December 2019**, 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. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMON EUROPEAN ASYLUM SYSTEM;**
- 3. UNACCOMPANIED MINORS AND VULNERABLE GROUPS**
- 4. LEGAL MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION**
- 5. MANAGEMENT OF THE EU EXTERNAL BORDERS**
- 6. IRREGULAR MIGRATION AND RETURN**
- 7. ACTIONS ADDRESSING TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS**
- 8. EXTERNAL DIMENSION**

SPECIAL NOTE



On 17-18 October 2019 the 49th meeting of the Glossary and Thesaurus Working Group (GTWG) took place in Sliema, Malta. The meeting, jointly organised by EASO, which has been contributing to the development of the glossary for several years, was hosted by the Maltese EMN National Contact Point (NCP) and went far beyond the regular GTWG meetings. The aim of this meeting was two-fold: to further promote the EMN Glossary on Asylum and Migration as one of the key products of the European Migration Network

(EMN), and to explore opportunities to enhance cooperation with other EU institutions and agencies working on terminology in the field of asylum and migration. In this regard, the EMN Glossary could serve as the key reference point of access. The event brought together representatives of the EMN GTWG, DG Home and DIGIT, EASO, Frontex as well as the Translations Office of the EU, the Court of Justice and the Council of the EU. Follow-up meetings are planned to deepen cooperation on content and on technology.

The EMN published two studies in October - December 2019. The study on 'Beneficiaries of international protection travelling to and contacting authorities of their country of origin: challenges, policies and practices in the EU Member States, Norway and Switzerland' was [published](#) on 5 November. It offers a comparative overview of the experiences and existing practices in 24 EU Member States, Norway and Switzerland regarding beneficiaries of international protection who travel back to their country of origin, or who have contact with authorities from these countries. The study also examines the motivations of the individuals in question, and how such cases would be assessed by the national authorities in the countries that granted them refugee status.

The latest EMN study on “Migratory Pathways for Start-ups and Innovative Entrepreneurs in the EU”, published on 18 December 2019, provides an overview of the migratory pathways available to start-ups and innovative entrepreneurs in the EU by exploring the policies and practices in 25 Member States to attract and retain start-ups and innovative entrepreneurs. To what extent is the attraction and retention of entrepreneurs and start-up founders a policy priority for EU Member States? What are the requirements for obtaining a start-up visa/residence permit or other type of residence permit/visa for innovative entrepreneurs? What challenges and good practices are in place? Find out more by having a look at the study package, available [here](#).

1. GENERAL POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

No new developments.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- ★ **Cyprus:** On 3 December 2019, the new Minister of Interior, Mr Nicos Nouris, took office. Migration and the management of the migration flows remains a priority of the Ministry of Interior.
- ★ **Estonia:** As of 1 January 2020, following a [decision by the Minister of the Interior](#), EMN Estonia has been moved from Tallinn University to the Institute of internal security in the Estonian Academy of Security Sciences.
- ★ **Ireland:** In November 2019, the Department of Justice and Equality [launched](#) the Refugee Community Sponsorship Ireland, an alternative resettlement stream to the traditional state-centred model of resettlement. This programme gives the opportunity to private citizens and community-based to directly support a refugee family.

On 30 December 2019, Ireland [welcomed](#) 50 Syrian refugees resettled to Ireland under the Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP). In December, the Department of Justice and Equality [committed](#) to a new Refugee Protection Programme: Ireland will welcome up to 2 900 refugees between 2020 and 2 023 through a combination of resettlement and community sponsorship.

- ★ **France:** Following the parliamentary debate in the French National Assembly and the Senate which was held at the beginning of October 2019, the Prime Minister [announced](#) 20 ambitious measures to improve the immigration, asylum and integration policy. As part of these measures, the government announced that it will implement a professional immigration policy by sector of activity, new tools to fight against irregular migration, and it will make an effort to accelerate the processing of asylum applications.
- ★ **Luxembourg:** [The law of 4 December 2019](#) amending the law of 29 August 2008 on free movement of persons and immigration came into force on 27 December 2019. The main changes include the creation of a long-term visa (up to one year), evaluation of the best interest of unaccompanied minors in the decision-making process to return, systematic verification of the conditions for prolonged administrative detention of third-country nationals, as well as financial

Judgment of the European Court of Justice – [Case C-381/18](#)

On 12 December 2019, the Court of Justice clarified the possibility for Member States to confer a right of family reunification on certain members of a refugee’s family, and also the conditions to which such a right is or may be made subject. The ECJ held that a Member State may, in order to authorise the family reunification of a refugee’s sister, require her to be unable to provide for her own needs on account of her state of health. However, that inability must be assessed having regard to the special situation of refugees and at the end of a case-by-case examination. In addition, such family reunification may be authorised only if it is ascertained, in the same way, that the material support of the person concerned is actually provided by the refugee, or that the refugee appears as the most able to provide that support. Regarding the compatibility of national legislation with Directive 2003/86, the Court found that Member States may choose to confer that right on members of a refugee’s family, such as siblings, who are not expressly listed in Directive. In addition, ECJ underlined that Member States have significant latitude both to decide to give effect to that extension of the personal scope of the directive and to determine the family members concerned but it should be ensured that the family member concerned is ‘dependent’ on the refugee.

Judgment of the European Court of Justice

[Case C-233/18](#)

On 12 November, the Court of Justice ruled that an applicant for international protection guilty of serious breaches of the rules of the accommodation centre in which he or she is hosted or of seriously violent behaviour cannot be sanctioned by a withdrawal of material reception conditions relating to housing, food or clothing. According to the Court, the withdrawal, even temporary, of the full set of material reception conditions or of material reception conditions relating to housing, food or clothing would be irreconcilable with the requirement to ensure a dignified standard of living for the applicant.

penalties imposed on carriers transporting non-EU nationals lacking the necessary admission documents into the EU territories (in relation to article 4 of the directive (EU) 2001/51/CE (art. 141, 147 and 148).

- ★ **Portugal:** Since October 2019, Portugal has a new government, including a Migration Secretary of State. The government's main guidelines concerning this subject are to attract regulated and integrated immigration, to promote the regularisation of migratory routes, to implement immigration promotion programs, to ensure refugee reception and integration, and to change the way Public Administration relates to immigrants.



2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMON EUROPEAN ASYLUM SYSTEM

EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

No new developments.

LATEST RELEVANT STATISTICS

- ★ On 11 December 2019, Eurostat [published](#) statistics on asylum seekers for the third quarter of 2019. The number of first-time asylum applicants in the EU-28 increased by 12 % compared with the same quarter of 2018 and compared with the second quarter of 2019. The top 3 nationalities were Syrians, Afghans and Venezuelans, lodging 20 900, 14 400 and 9 600 applications respectively. Venezuelans (an increase of 5 100 in applicants when compared with the third quarter of 2018) contributed most to the overall increase in first-time asylum applicants in absolute terms.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- ★ **Belgium:** Due to an increase in the number of asylum applications and lengthy asylum procedures, additional reception facilities such as new temporary reception centres have been planned and created. On 10 November 2019, one of these temporary centers, located in the municipality of Bilzen, was deliberately set on fire. The arson occurred about a month before the opening of the center. The arsonist(s) still remain unknown. The opening of the future reception with a capacity to host 140 asylum seekers is thus delayed. The police has stepped up the surveillance of other temporary centers.
- ★ **Cyprus:** Compared with the population of each Member State, the highest rate of registered first-time applicants during the third quarter of 2019 in Europe was recorded in Cyprus (3 305 first-time applicants per million population)

In December 2019 the new Operational and Technical Assistance Plan agreed by EASO and Cyprus was signed by the EASO Executive Director, the Minister of Interior of Cyprus and the Chief Registrar of the Supreme Court.

- ★ **France:** On 5 November 2019, the Board of Directors of the OFPRA (the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons) discussed the list of safe countries, previously adopted on 9 October 2015. It decided not to amend the list. However, it decided to re-evaluate the situation for Benin in six months. The Board also called for particular attention to the situation of persons facing risks due to their sexual orientation. <https://ofpra.gouv.fr/fr/l-ofpra/actualites/communiqu%C3%A9-du-pr%C3%A9sident-du-conseil>

France has renewed its commitment made with the UNHCR to welcome 10 000 new refugees that will be resettled in 2020 and 2021. This commitment concerns refugees from Chad (1 500), Niger (1 100), Lebanon (3 000), Jordan, (300), Turkey (300), Egypt (500) and other countries (600). A circular of 12 November 2019 specifies the details on the organisational arrangements regarding the arrival on national territory as of 1 January 2020. <http://circulaire.legifrance.gouv.fr/index.php?action=afficherCirculaire&hit=1&r=44879>

- ★ **Hungary:** In the final judgment of the case of Ilias and Ahmed v. Hungary the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) held, among others, that Article 5 of ECHR was not applicable to the applicants' case as there had been no de facto deprivation of liberty in the transit zone where they were placed as asylum-seekers.

- ★ **Italy:** 392 asylum seekers were redistributed in Europe from September to December as part of relocation procedures initiated by the European Commission at Italy's request. This is a concrete result linked to the more effective European solidarity consolidated also as a result of the Valletta Pre-Agreement signed in September by Germany, France, Italy and Malta.

On 28 October 2019, the Italian Minister of the Interior Luciana Lamorgese received a delegation from the Home and Territorial Affairs Commission of the German Bundestag. They exchanged on migration flows within Europe and possible initiatives to manage them at the EU level. They also exchanged their views on the definition of a common asylum policy.

- ★ **Ireland:** On 28 December, the Department of Justice and Equality [announced](#) the establishment of an Expert Group on the Provision of Support, including Accommodation, to Persons in the International Protection Process (Asylum Seekers), chaired by Dr Catherine Day, former Secretary General of the European Commission.

In December, the Oireachtas (Parliamentary) Committee on Justice and Equality [launched](#) a report on direct provision and the international protection application process, concluding that that the system needs reform or, preferably, replacement.

- ★ **Lithuania:** On 7 November 2019, three migrants (Sudanese and two South Sudanese citizens) were relocated from Malta to Lithuania. By the end of 2019, Lithuania had relocated and resettled 493 persons in total.

On 3 December 2019, the Parliament approved changes to the Law on the Legal Status of Aliens which will allow asylum seekers to work in Lithuania legally when the Migration Department has not taken a decision on their application within 6 months.

- ★ **Luxembourg:** From 7 to 20 October 2019, a delegation of officials from the Grand Ducal Police, the Immigration Directorate and the Luxembourg Office for Reception and Integration (OLAI) [went](#) to Niamey, Niger to conduct interviews with refugees recognized and selected beforehand by the United Nations Refugee Agency, UNHCR. 48 people were selected for resettlement in Luxembourg, including 19 Somalis, 18 Eritreans, 8 Sudanese and 3 Ethiopians. A first group of 35 people arrived in Luxembourg on December 4, 2019.

[The law of 4 December 2019 establishing the National Reception Office \(ONA\) came into force on 1 January 2020.](#) The ONA replaces the Luxembourg Office for Reception and Integration (OLAI). Because of these changes, applicants for international protection will have a single point of contact during the entire application process for all issues related to reception, housing and material reception conditions. For the questions related to integration, a new Department of Integration was created under the Ministry of Family Affairs, Integration and the Greater Region.

- ★ **Netherlands:** In November 2019, a relatively high influx of Moldovan citizens arrived with busses to the central application centre in the Netherlands. The vast majority of them have previously applied unsuccessfully for asylum in other EU Member States. In December 2019, the Dutch government reported additional measures against the high influx of Moldovan asylum applicants. Measures include handling these applications by a special team within the Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND) with the aim to reduce the application procedure to a maximum period of three to four weeks. Moreover, Moldovan applicants will be housed in more austere reception facilities, there is a focus on return as well as a targeted approach on detaining applicants when necessary and possible. More attention is also given to tackling smugglers who bring Moldovan migrants to the Netherlands, and there have been constructive talks with the Moldovan authorities on the facilitation of return.¹

Afghan interpreters who have worked for Dutch missions in Afghanistan will be classified as a 'systematically prosecuted group'. This means that they all are in principle eligible for asylum and that applications will only be rejected if, for example, the interpreter has committed war crimes or if he or she has already requested

¹ <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2019/12/16/tk-maatregelen-hoge-instroom-van-moldaviërs> (in Dutch)

asylum in another country. The Dutch Minister for Migration announced this in a letter to Dutch parliament on 18 December 2019 in response to the parliament's request to do so.²

The Minister for Migration has sent a letter to Parliament on 18 December 2019, in which she announced new measures for those asylum applicants who through disruptive and transgressive behavior are regularly causing nuisance within and outside reception centres in the Netherlands.³ The most important measures are:

- Applicants from safe countries of origin generally have a low chance of being granted asylum in the Netherlands. Furthermore, they are involved more than average in behaviour causing nuisance and/or in criminal behaviour. They will be housed separately from other applicants and will receive more austere reception facilities in order to deter them from coming to the Netherlands.
- For the same reason, asylum applicants within the Dublin procedure will also receive more austere reception facilities.
- The Minister for Migration will release a budget of 1 million euros to municipalities to finance (small-scale) measures against public nuisance caused by asylum applicants in their municipalities in 2020;
- From February 2020 onwards, asylum applicants who have been involved in serious disruptive and transgressive behaviour in reception centres can be relocated to a so-called Enforcement and Supervision Location (Handhaving en Toezichtslocatie - HTL).

★ **Poland:** In November 2019, a list of study units approved for the admission of foreigners has been [announced](#). The amendment to the Act on Foreigners of 22 February 2019 introduced the possibility of entry and stay of foreigners for the purpose of scientific research, studies, traineeships and volunteering as part of the European Voluntary Service program. The condition for issuing a national visa or granting a temporary residence permit for these purposes is the approval of the host entity/university.

★ **Sweden:** On 27 November 2019, a legislation modification regarding asylum seekers living on their own was prepared in view of restricting daily allowance for asylum seekers who choose to live in areas with socioeconomic challenges. The aim of this amendment, which entered into force on 1 January 2020, is to encourage asylum seekers to live where there are conditions for a socially sustainable reception and less risk of negative social consequences. The areas that are included will be listed by the Swedish Migration Agency starting 1 July 2020. The change originates from the "January agreement" – a political agreement between the Social Democrats, the Centre Party, the Liberal Party and the Swedish Green Party.



3. UNACCOMPANIED MINORS AND VULNERABLE GROUPS

EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

No new developments.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

★ **Croatia:** In November and December 2019, UNHCR organised four workshops in Croatia on the practical implementation of the 2018 Protocol on procedures for unaccompanied and separated children (UASC). The workshops were attended by 154 persons, including 71 police officers for irregular migration and 83 social workers and childcare professionals from centres for social welfare and children's facilities. The following topics were presented at the workshops: identification of UASC among groups of irregular migrants, initial health assessment, initial best interest assessment, access to international protection and accommodation to children's facilities, followed by casework and real-life story of an UASC. The topics of the workshops were designed by a Working Group comprising of representatives of respective ministries, international organisations and civil society organisations.

★ **France:** The decree⁴ of 20 November 2019 specifies the conditions of reception and evaluation of persons who claim to be minors and temporarily or permanently deprived of the protection of their family. The evaluators shall, at each stage of the social assessment, verify if the physical appearance, the behaviour, the

² <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2019/12/18/tk-reactie-op-motie-inzake-beschermingsbeleid-tolken-uit-afghanistan> (in Dutch)

³ <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2019/12/18/kamerbrief-over-evaluatie-ebtl-locaties-en-overlastgevende-vreemdelingen> (in Dutch)

⁴ <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000039417594&categorieLien=id>

capacity to be independent and autonomous, and the ability to reason and understand the questions asked correspond with the indicated age of the person. Evaluators must keep a close watch on any signs of exploitation or control the evaluated person may suffer from.

- ★ **Italy:** On 23 October 2019, Italian Minister of the Interior Lucia Lamorgese met with her Libyan counterpart Fathi Ali Basha Agha in Rome. They discussed cooperation between the two countries, migration and the state of affairs in Libya. They notably examined the possibility of carrying out new humanitarian evacuations together with international organisations. Thus far, Italy is the only country to have implemented such operations: from 7 December 2017 to October 2019, a total of 859 asylum seekers were safely transferred from Libya to Italy.

On 19 November 2019, the Ministry of the Interior launched an information campaign on assisted voluntary return. The campaign focuses on the key message “dream is REality, REturning and RE-starting at home is possible” spread through television and radio, billboards, newspapers and periodicals, websites, and also through itinerant information campaigns throughout the national territory. In order to provide migrants with more information, a toll-free number – 800 2000 71 – was activated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and co-financed by the Migration and Integration Asylum Fund (AMIF).

On 5 December 2019, the Ministry of the Interior signed a convention with the international organisation Save the Children whereby the latter commits to provide a free service of assistance, protection and information to accompanied and unaccompanied minors until the end of 2020. Save the Children will provide services of information, legal orientation, cultural mediation, and psychological and social support for minors from their arrival in Italy. Additionally, a helpline for foreign minors and training for the workers involved will be set up to improve responses to minors’ needs.

On 18 December 2019, the Ministry of the Interior adopted a decree financing the projects of the national protection system for beneficiaries of international protection and unaccompanied foreign minors (*SIPROIMI - Sistema di protezione per i titolari di protezione internazionale e per i minori stranieri non accompagnati*), expiring on 31 December. The funding will allow local authorities to carry on with their reception activities and to continue operating, pending the approval of applications for the continuation of the projects for the three-year period 2020-2022. The resources, stemming from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), amount to € 8 million. They will be allocated to local authorities to support measures relating to socio-economic integration, lodging policies and administrative support. The ultimate goal is to increase the autonomy of the beneficiaries of international protection present in reception facilities to prepare their exit of the latter.

- ★ **Malta:** The number of unaccompanied children and vulnerable people arriving in Malta by boat has been on the rise. They were also younger than usual (mainly 14-16 years old). During the reporting period, the number of migrants claiming that they are unaccompanied minors was 113. The number of vulnerable people had also increased. Vulnerable people were continuously supported by social workers and the new Therapeutic Team with the Agency for the Welfare Officers.
- ★ **United Kingdom:** Vulnerable migrant children who have been separated from their parents will get quicker and simpler access to legal aid, after new government legislation [came into force](#) in October 2019. The Legal Aid for Separated Children Order 2019 will bring non-asylum immigration and citizenship matters into the scope of legal aid for under 18-year olds who are not in the care of a parent, guardian or legal authority. Previously, vulnerable children making such applications to remain in the UK could only apply for legal aid through the Exceptional Case Funding (ECF) scheme.



4. LEGAL MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION

EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

- ★ On 3 December 2019, the Commissioner for Home Affairs, Ylva Johansson, [announced](#) emergency funding for Italy and Spain to foster integration and specifically improve social cohesion in local communities that have recently received a significant number of people. € 10.3 million of funding will support the project LGNet - a Local Government Network for Rapid Response and Fast Track Inclusion Services in Disadvantaged

Urban Areas – in Italy while over € 3 million of funding will support AMIGO 2019 - Activities in Response to the Immigration Situation in the South of Spain.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- ★ **Austria:** Austria has amended the existing agreement with Germany on the representation of the Republic of Austria in the process of issuing Schengen visas. As of 1 October 2019, the German representation of the Republic of Austria at the duty station Kampala is hence limited to owners of service or diplomatic passports of Uganda.⁵

In October 2019, the Citizenship Act 1985 was amended,⁶ expanding the facilitated acquisition of citizenship through notification to include the descendants of individuals who were persecuted or threatened by persecution by the Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (NSDAP) or by authorities of the Third Reich or because of defending the democratic Republic of Austria. Foreign nationals can acquire Austrian citizenship by presenting official documents or proof showing direct descent from an individual who acquired citizenship through notification or could have done so. The new option for notification enters into force as of 1 September 2020.

On 1 October 2019, the Regulation on the Implementation of the Integration Act was adopted.⁷ It establishes organisational matters such as how providers for literacy courses and language courses are certified and what are the quality standards for those courses. The regulation also specifies the amount of cost sharing and the provisions on the exams in such courses.

The Austrian Regulation for Skilled Workers for 2020 was enacted on 19 December 2019 with an entry into force date on 1 January 2020. The regulation stipulates the annual list of shortage occupations for which foreigners may be accepted as skilled workers throughout Austria according to the Act Governing the Employment of Foreigners. The 2020 shortage occupations include for example roofers, carpenters and motor mechanics. Altogether, 56 occupations are defined as shortage occupations in 2020 - 11 more than in 2019. The newly listed shortage occupations include for example brick layers, train drivers and qualified nurses. Furthermore, the regulation lists shortage occupations in the respective province in which foreigners might be accepted as skilled workers. These include, for example, hairdressers in Carinthia, Salzburg, Styria, Tyrol, Upper Austria, and Vorarlberg, as well as accountants in Upper Austria, Salzburg, and Styria.⁸

On 19 December 2019, a regulation by the Austrian Federal Minister of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection defined nine professions that allow for the issuing of resident permits for very highly qualified workers in the year 2020. These professions include inter alia medical doctors, graduate engineers for power engineering, and economists.⁹

- ★ **Belgium:** On 26 November 2019, the Home Affairs Committee of the Belgian Parliament held hearings on a [legislative proposal](#) strengthening family reunification rules. EMN Belgium provided a comparative overview of the policy on family reunification, focusing mainly on the neighbouring countries.
- ★ **Croatia:** The Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the Decision on determining the annual quota for employment of foreigners for the calendar year 2020 (OG, No 113/19). The quota was set at 78 470 permits for new employment, seasonal workers, ICT permits and for the implementation of strategic investment projects and 25 000 permits for the extension of already issued work permits.

⁵ FLG III No. 168/2019, https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/Dokumente/BqblAuth/BGBLA_2019_III_168/BGBLA_2019_III_168.html (accessed 13 December 2019).

⁶ FLG I No. 96/2019, https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/Dokumente/BqblAuth/BGBLA_2019_I_96/BGBLA_2019_I_96.html (accessed 13 December 2019).

⁷ FLG II No. 286/2019, https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/Dokumente/BqblAuth/BGBLA_2019_II_286/BGBLA_2019_II_286.html (accessed 13 December 2019).

⁸ FLG II No. 421/2019, https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/Dokumente/BqblAuth/BGBLA_2019_II_421/BGBLA_2019_II_421.html (accessed 20 December 2019).

⁹ FLG II 420/2019, https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/Dokumente/BqblAuth/BGBLA_2019_II_420/BGBLA_2019_II_420.html (accessed 20 December 2019).

★ **Cyprus:** On 6 December 2019, a new amendment of the Aliens and Immigration Law concerning the abolition of the obligation of the employer to pay a bank guarantee for the purpose of granting temporary residence and employment to a third-country national was adopted. Under the new legislation, a bank guarantee for any return costs will no longer be required for the purposes of granting a single work permit or seasonal work permit to a third-country national. Instead of that, a letter has to be submitted stating that the employer undertakes to bear any expenses for the return of the third-country national should it be necessary.

★ **Czech Republic:** The Ministry of the Interior in the cooperation with the NGO Slovo 21 have started to [organise](#) integration seminars for beneficiaries of international protection, in the framework of a project co-financed by the AMIF and the state budget of the Czech Republic. The first seminar 'Your New Home in the Czech Republic', intended to refugees, was organised in December, after one year of preparation. The seminar provided basic information on the rights and obligations as well as advice on how to cope with everyday situations. The project also includes a book called 'The Czech Republic – Your New Home'. The book, translated into seven languages, includes areas such as housing, employment, business, social welfare system and social security, healthcare, education system, free time, shopping, finance, transport and basic facts about the country.

In October 2019, a conference was held to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the opening of the first Integration Centres for Immigrants in the Czech Republic. Their practical benefits were clearly appreciated – for example 4 907 language courses in 208 cities and 2 442 orientation courses have been realized since 2009. The network of 18 Integration Centers for Immigrants in all 14 regions of the Czech Republic was fully completed this year.

★ **Estonia:** In November the Minister of Interior [established](#) a division of the immigration quota for 2020. Differently from previous years the quota is partly divided depending on the ground of the residence permit: 28 residence permits for employment in a performing arts institution as person engaged in creative activities; 18 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; 10 residence permits on the basis of a treaty; 1 258 residence permits on general grounds for employment and entrepreneurship.

In December a new study was [published](#) on the current situation of how newly-arrived immigrants are adapting in Estonia – which factors inhibit the adaptation of newly-arrived immigrants and which factors support it. The research was carried out by the Institute of Baltic Studies by the request of the Ministry of the Interior.

★ **France:** The decree¹⁰ of 15 October 2019 sets the time limit for the examination of visa applications by volunteers of the European Voluntary Service. It also determines the procedures for informing Member States in the event of rejection of mobility or withdrawal of the residence permit from a researcher or a student during mobility within the framework of the Students and Researchers Directive ((EU) 2016/801).

The circular¹¹ of 17 December 2019 relating to measures promoting the attractiveness of France aims to specify the procedures for “*passport talent*” residence permit applications in the prefectures and presents ideas for organisational improvements to enable immediate access to the counters and rapid processing of applications.

★ **Ireland:** From October through to 13 December 2019, the Department of Justice and Equality [held](#) a public consultation on how the existing legislation on hate speech can be improved. The outcome of the consultation will help shape the amendment of Ireland’s existing law on incitement to hatred (hate speech).

In November, the Irish Court of Appeal [overturned](#) a High Court ruling from July 2019 that applicants for Irish citizenship must have “unbroken” residence in Ireland in the year before they apply. The Court of Appeal found that the High Court erred in how it interpreted a requirement for “continuous residence” in the State in the year prior to an application for naturalisation.

¹⁰ <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000039229616&categorieLien=id>

¹¹ <https://www.immigration.interieur.gouv.fr/Conteneur-contextuel/Les-derniers-textes/Information-NOR-INTV1936324J-du-17-decembre-2019-relative-aux-mesures-en-faveur-de-l-attractivite-de-la-France-Dispositions-applicables-a-la-prise-en-charge-des-demandeurs-de-passeport-talent-par-les-services-de-prefectures>

In November, amendments to the Atypical Working Scheme applicable to Locum Doctors were [announced](#). These amendments are **designed to support the recruitment and retention of non-EEA locum doctors to work within the Primary Care Services across the country**, particularly within the General Practitioner Out of Hours Services.

In December, the Minister of State with responsibility for Equality, Immigration and Integration, David Stanton TD, [delivered](#) Ireland's National Statement to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). The Minister also announced that Professor Caroline Fennell of University College Cork, and current Commissioner at the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, will chair a newly-established Anti-Racism Committee. This Committee forms part of the Government's commitment to strengthening its approach to combating racism.

On 18 December, the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation [announced](#) changes to the employment permits system for workers from outside the European Economic Area. Changes address immediate labour shortages in key sectors such as hospitality, construction, health and road haulage. All chef grades are now eligible for an employment permit and all nurses can qualify for a Critical Skills Employment Permit.

- ★ **Latvia:** On 19 November 2019, the Law on Termination of Granting the Non-Citizen Status to Children¹² entered into force. It provides for the automatic granting of Latvian citizenship to children who will be born after 1 January 2020, unless the parents of the child have agreed to grant citizenship of another country to the child.¹³

On 28 December 2019, several Amendments to Cabinet Regulations came into force¹⁴, aiming to ease bureaucratic barriers to third-country nationals employment. The minimum time limit for applying for vacancy is reduced, if the employer wishes to invite a third-country national in relation to employment, while the entrepreneur is obliged to pay a salary of not less than the national average of €1 004 per month. The requirement to publish a vacancy is waived in the following cases: the third-country national intended to be employed has been employed in the Republic of Latvia for two years; he/she has been employed with the specific employer and the employer wishes to employ him or her in another speciality, or; the person has been employed during studies and wishes to continue employment with the same employer after obtaining education. The amendments also stipulate that third-country nationals may file documents for registration of a residence permit electronically with a secure electronic signature.

- ★ **Lithuania:** On 14 October 2019, the Migration Information System (MIGRIS) was [launched](#). The Migration Information System enables users to apply electronically for residence permits, book a visit to the Units of the Migration Department and find other important information on migration services online.

On 4 November 2019, the Call Centre of the Migration Department was [opened](#). Previously, information on migration services was provided by the Migration Department and the Police Department separately. From now on all consultations in Lithuanian, Russian and English languages will be provided using a single Call Centre number.

- ★ **Malta:** Malta acceded to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons on 11th December 2019. Malta's accession to the convention follows the Government's announcement made at the recent High-Level Segment on Statelessness, in which a total of 358 pledges were delivered by governments, civil society and international and regional organizations, among them 252 by States.

¹² [Law on Termination of Granting the Non-Citizen Status to Children](#). *Latvijas Vēstnesis*, No. 224, 05.11.2019. - [came into force on 19.11.2019.]

¹³ Before for a new-born to become a citizen, parents had to make a note about it, and only then citizenship was granted.

¹⁴ 10 December 2019 Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers of No. 637 "[Amendments to 28 January 2014 Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers of No. 55 "Regulations Regarding Employment of Foreigners"](#)", 10 December 2019 Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers of No. 639 "[Amendments to 21 June 2010 Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers of No. 564 "Regulations Regarding Residence Permits"](#)", 10 December 2019 Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers of No. 638 "[Amendments to 21 June 2010 Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers of No. 552 "Procedures for Approval of Invitations and Drawing up of Written Requests"](#)".

- ★ **Netherlands:** During the Brexit extension period, UK nationals and their family members keep their rights as EU citizens to live, work and study in the Netherlands in any event until the date of Brexit. They do not need the temporary residence permit they received from the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) in March 2019 or October 2019 during the extension period.

It is still important that UK nationals keep the temporary residence permit they have received, because after the extension, a no-deal Brexit is still possible. UK nationals and their family members can use the temporary residence permit to show that they are entitled to live, work and study in the Netherlands after a no-deal Brexit in the national transition period up to and including 31 January 2021.

Many UK nationals and their family members who are registered in the Personal Records Database (Basisregistratie Personen) already received a temporary residence permit before 29 March. These permits are valid up to and including 30 June 2020. If it is certain that there will be a no-deal Brexit, the IND will again send these UK nationals and their family members a temporary residence permit valid during the 15-month transition period after a no-deal Brexit.¹⁵

Third-country nationals holding a Working Holiday Program (WHP) or Working Holiday Scheme (WHS) permit are as of 1 October 2019 again allowed to work without a work permit for a period longer than 12 weeks for the same employer. The previous restriction limiting their working weeks was waived. The Dutch Minister of Migration does note that it is still not allowed under the Working Holiday Program or Working Holiday Scheme to work fulltime with an employment contract for one year.¹⁶

On 1 October 2019, a new structural regulation was implemented with regard to the work and residence permit of specialised chefs in the Asian catering industry, limited to the following cuisines: India, China, Japan, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Thailand, Tibet or Vietnam. Until 1 October 2019, a quota arrangement was in place for the provision of work and residence permits to Asian chefs. The quota is now removed. An added condition is that the Dutch Employee Insurance Agency (UWV) must be notified of a vacancy three weeks in advance. Only then may an application be filed for a combined work and residence permit. Chefs working in a specialised restaurant in the Asian catering industry can be granted a combined permit. The UWV assesses the labour market aspects.

- ★ **Poland:** The Foundation “Okno na Wschód” [started](#) to run a Centre for Supporting Foreigners in Białystok. The goal is to help in the integration and adaptation of foreigners by creating space for education, giving them support, knowledge and possibilities, helping to find their place in the Polish environment faster. The Centre’s offer is addressed to citizens of Belarus, Ukraine, Russia and Kazakhstan living in Białystok and includes consultations (related to legalisation of stay, work, education and everyday matters), Polish language courses, volunteering in Białystok non-governmental organizations and cultural institutions.

The Office for Foreigners [prepared](#) an update of the handbook explaining how to ensure the legal stay of a foreigner wanting to study in Poland. The material takes into account recent changes in law and will serve university employees dealing with the recruitment and service of foreign students. It can also be useful to foreigners starting or continuing their studies. The publication is devoted to legal and practical aspects of legalising the stay of foreigners from third countries as well as European Union citizens and their family members. It applies to persons undertaking or continuing first and second cycle studies or studies at masters’ and doctoral level, including extramural studies.

- ★ **Slovak Republic:** In September 2019, the Amendment to the Anti-bureaucracy Act was published, reducing the administrative burden related to labour mobility and conditions for the stay of third-country nationals by using public administration information systems. These legislative changes enter into force on the 1st of January 2020.
- ★ **United Kingdom:** In October 2019, four pilots to encourage refugees to establish businesses were [launched](#) across the UK. The pilots are part of a one-year programme jointly funded by the Home Office and The National Lottery Community Fund, which will be overseen by the Centre for Entrepreneurs (CFE). The 4 programmes will be based in Bristol, Belfast, the East of England and Staffordshire. Working directly with refugees and established local businesses, the pilots will deliver tailored start-up programmes that will take refugees from the idea stage to the launch of their business.

¹⁵ <https://ind.nl/en/news/pages/brexit-extension-no-consequences-for-uk-nationals-living-in-the-netherlands.aspx>

¹⁶ Government Gazette, 2019, no. 297. (in Dutch)

STUDENTS AND RESEARCHERS

- ★ **United Kingdom:** In December, it was [announced](#) more top scientists and researchers are to be given fast tracked entry to the UK. This builds on the announcement made by the Prime Minister in August 2019, which outlined how a wider pool of world leading scientists and researchers will be able to benefit from a fast-track process to obtain entry into the UK.

The number of eligible fellowships which can offer accelerated endorsement for visas for scientists will double from 62 to over 120. In line with the current process, individuals who receive these fellowships will only need to provide a letter from the relevant funding organisation, which will see them fast-tracked to the Home Office / UKVI visa application stage where immigration checks will be carried out.



5. MANAGEMENT OF THE EU EXTERNAL BORDERS

EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

- ★ On 7 October and on 19 November 2019, the European Union signed an agreement with [Montenegro](#) and [Serbia](#), respectively, on border management cooperation between these countries and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency. These agreements allowed the European Border and Coast Guard Agency to assist Montenegro and Serbia in border management, carry out joint operations and deploy teams in the regions of Montenegro and Serbia that border the EU. In addition, the agreement contributed to tackling irregular migration and cross-border crime as well as to further enhancing security at the EU's external borders.
- ★ On 8 November 2019, the Council officially [adopted](#) the Commission's proposal to reinforce the European Border and Coast Guard. Its reinforced mandate came into force on 4 December 2019 and under the new regulation the agency will be equipped with its own standing corps of border guards (10 000) ready to be deployed wherever and whenever needed. Moreover, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency has a stronger mandate on returns and will be able to cooperate more closely with non-EU countries, including those beyond the EU's immediate neighbourhood, subject to the conclusion of an agreement with the countries concerned.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- ★ **Croatia:** In October, the European Commission submitted a Communication to the European Parliament and the Council on the verification of the full implementation of the Schengen acquis in Croatia, stating that the Republic of Croatia fulfilled the technical criteria.

To reinforce the protection of the EU's external border, portable systems for recognising and reading vehicle license plates and thermal imaging cameras as well as border crossing equipment (devices for measuring the density of materials, computers, travel documents readers, cameras...) were purchased. A technical protection system was established at 4 border crossings and 2 new border crossing points were finished.

50 officers were referred to two border police courses, and three seminars for trainers/multipliers for the protection of the national border were held for about 60 police officers at the EU internal and external borders. Two advanced seminars were carried out with the Slovenian police, focusing on the detection of stolen vehicles and on the suppression of counterfeit documents, and two trainings on misuse of documents and smuggling of vehicles were organised with Germany. Through the projects funded by ISF, English courses for 200 police officers and safe field driving training for 101 police officers performing border control activities were carried out. As part of the EXBS program, advanced training for document identification and verification was held in Subotica. Joint training of customs and police officers was held as part of the CELBET 2 (Customs Eastern and South-Eastern Land Border Expert Team) project on inspection and search of persons and vehicles. A training was also organised for the development of a risk matrix at the police station. From 21 to 25 October 2019, Frontex organised a training for the Schengen evaluators in Zagreb. In addition, 43 police officers have completed Frontex's training on forged documents at Franjo Tudjman Airport.

- ★ **Poland:** Travelers at the Poznan airport can check-in themselves at the ABC gates. Poznan The Lawica Airport introduces this solution as the third in Poland, after Chopin Airport and Warsaw-Modlin Airport. Almost 1.2 million travellers have already checked in at ABC gates. Automatic check-in at the Poznan airport is possible in the departures direction. Only adult citizens of the European Union and European Economic Community who have a biometric passport can check in at the ABC gates. This solution improves the border control

process and increases the capacity of the border crossing, and thus reduces the waiting time of travellers for crossing the state border.

Another group of 30 Border Guard officers began the 12th change of mission in the Republic of Northern Macedonia, supporting the local Border Police in counteracting the migration crisis. The mission is attended by officers from Regional Border Guard Departments as well as from the Central Border Guard Training Center and the Home Office of the Border Guard. Tasks performed by Polish officers outside the Republic of Poland will include prevention of illegal crossing of the border outside border crossing points, registration of applications for international protection and verification of the authenticity of documents.

On 24 October 2019, the 22nd Conference of Border Guard Plenipotentiaries of the Republic of Poland and the Republic of Lithuania was held in Bezledy. The situation on the jointly protected section of the state border and the cooperation of the border services of Poland and Lithuania were discussed and bilateral cooperation analysed.

Judgment of the European Court of Justice

[Case C-380/18](#)

On 19 November 2019, the Court of Justice (ECJ) found that in the Family Reunification Directive (Council Directive 2003/86/EC) must be interpreted as precluding national legislation under which, in the absence of a decision being adopted within six months of the date on which the application for family reunification was lodged, the competent national authorities must automatically issue a residence permit to the applicant, without necessarily having to establish in advance that the latter actually meets the requirements for residence in the host Member State in accordance with EU law.

★ **Portugal:** The development of the action programme for Integrated Border Management continued, as well as the preparation for the technical implementation of the smart borders package (EES, ETIAS).

★ **United Kingdom:** In October 2019, the UK and France [agreed](#) an enhanced action plan which will see patrols on French beaches doubled, as activity is stepped up to tackle migrants crossing the Channel in small boats. Under an enhanced action plan, the Home Secretary, Priti Patel, and the French Interior Minister, Christophe Castaner, have agreed to redouble efforts to address the issue.



6. IRREGULAR MIGRATION AND RETURN

EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

No new developments

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- ★ **Austria:** On 4 November 2019, the Austrian Interior Minister enacted a regulation, re-introducing temporary border controls between 14 November 2019 and 14 May 2020 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.¹⁷ Austria explained the measure, among others, with the situation at the external borders, risk related to terrorists and organized crimes and secondary movements.¹⁸

On 27 December 2019, the Aliens Police Act was amended regarding asylum seekers in an apprenticeship.¹⁹ According to Art. 55a Aliens Police Act, the period for voluntary departure in connection with a return decision only commences on the date of the termination of the apprenticeship or after the date of the final apprenticeship examination. Pursuant to Art. 125 para 31 Aliens Police Act, deportation regarding asylum seekers in an apprenticeship must be postponed, inter alia, if the apprenticeship began before the described amendment of the law.

¹⁷ FLG II No. 316/2019, https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/Dokumente/BgblAuth/BGBLA_2019_II_316/BGBLA_2019_II_316.html (accessed 13 December 2019).

¹⁸ https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/schengen/reintroduction-border-control_en (accessed 13 December 2019).

¹⁹ FLG I No. 110/2019, https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/Dokumente/BgblAuth/BGBLA_2019_I_110/BGBLA_2019_I_110.html (accessed 2 January 2020).

- ★ **Malta:** Malta experienced a growing influx of migrants and refugees (652 arrivals by boat during the reporting period), predominantly from the sub-Saharan countries, practically all of whom have departed from the Libyan coast towards Europe.

The Maltese Government continued implementing jointly with IOM an EU Emergency project aimed at relocating irregular migrants from Malta to other member states. The Maltese Government is financially contributing to this project (10% of total project cost). Under this project, IOM, in close cooperation with relevant Maltese and receiving states' authorities, and in collaboration with the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), is ensuring that beneficiaries receive the necessary pre-departure support and are assisted with their journey from point of arrival to final destination in the MSR in safety and dignity; on a voluntary basis and fully aware of the whole process, including concerning what to expect immediately after their arrival.

7. ACTIONS ADDRESSING TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

No new developments.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- ★ **Belgium:** On 22 November, Myria, the national independent rapporteur on human trafficking, published its 2019 annual report on trafficking and smuggling of human beings. This report focuses this year on providing victims with legal aid and informing them about their rights. The report is available in [French](#) and [Dutch](#).
- ★ **France:** On 18 October 2019, the French government announced the second national [action plan](#) against trafficking in human beings (2019-2021). This plan reaffirms the government's commitment to strengthen the fight against trafficking in human beings. It comprises 45 measures based on following priorities: coordination of public action on local level, a strategy for the identification of victims of trafficking, effective protection for victims, and intensification of the dismantling of criminal networks and the prosecution of exploiters.
- ★ **Hungary:** Together with NGOs, the Ministry of Interior has developed a manual (SANSZ/CHANCE) that provides quick and comprehensible assistance to the members of the social signaling system in the process of the referral of victims of human trafficking. The use of the manual is expected to ultimately enhance victim identification among third country nationals residing in Hungary.
- ★ **Italy:** On 7 November 2019, Italian Minister of the Interior Luciana Lamorgese spoke before the Parliamentary Control Committee on the implementation of the Schengen Agreements as part of the fact-finding investigation into the management of migration in the Schengen area. Among the topics addressed were the relevance of the Schengen agreements and the control and prevention of transnational activities related to the trafficking of migrants and human beings.
- ★ **Latvia:** On 17 October 2019, the European Crime Prevention Network (EUCPN) and European countries launched a long-term prevention campaign on trafficking in human beings²⁰, the main aim of which is to address people who may have become victims of trafficking in human beings who need support, assistance and protection.²¹
- ★ **Luxembourg:** On 10 December 2019, a [conference](#) of the Benelux Presidency on "Trafficking in Human Beings" took place. During this conference, declaration of intent concerning new steps in the cross-border cooperation to combat trafficking in human beings was signed between the three countries (Luxembourg, Belgium and the Netherlands).

The Monitoring Committee for the Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings, chaired by the Ministry of Justice, is committed to the fight against human trafficking in all its forms (prostitution, forced labour etc.). It aims to strengthen the national and international efforts in this area. Part of this effort was the launch of a new human trafficking preventative [campaign](#) on 17 October 2019.

²⁰ European countries work together to prevent trafficking in human beings.- http://www.iem.gov.lv/lat/aktualitates/informacija_medijiem/?doc=42268

²¹ Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain have joined the EUCPN initiative.

- ★ **Malta:** In December 2019, the Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security signed an agreement with IOM to implement a project on human trafficking. The project which is titled 'Enhancing counter-trafficking efforts in Malta through synergistic interventions' shall be implemented over the first 6 months of 2020. By means of this project, IOM aims to assist Government in its efforts to enhance identification and referral of victims of trafficking; assist and support by strengthening the capacity of law enforcement authorities, social services, private associations sectors and migrants associations and Civil Society Organizations with a focus on children.
- ★ **Poland:** On 26-27 November 2019, a [conference](#) entitled 'Towards maximization of efficiency and consolidation in the fight against human trafficking' took place in Warsaw. The conference was organized by the Council of Baltic Sea States in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior and Administration. The aim of the conference was to present the results of the work of the task force for fighting against trafficking in human beings operating within the Council of the Baltic Sea States. This group implemented a [project](#) called "Paving the way for a harmonized operational framework for the Baltic Sea region". The effect of the team's work is, among others creation of an international reference mechanism for the Baltic Sea Region, a dictionary of terms related to the crime of trafficking in human beings and good practices in the field of partnership cooperation at the governmental level.

In December 2019, the La Strada Foundation against Human Trafficking and Slavery in Warsaw and the Po MOC Association for Women and Children won the open competition organised by the Ministry of the Interior and Administration for running the National Consulting and Intervention Center for Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings.

- ★ **Portugal:** In October: the first version of the application for smartphones named "Acting against Trafficking in Human Beings" (ACT) was launched. The application Provides information on this crime, clarifying the concept, types of exploitation, facts about the TSH and victims' rights; how to recognise and signal situations, how to support and protect victims; what to do and where to go. The App is available in Portuguese, English, Spanish, Russian, Romanian, and French.

In October, a campaign against trafficking on human beings, "Vítima de Tráfico de Seres Humanos?: Tu tens Direitos" (#YouHaveRights), was launched.

In November the Statistical Bulletin "Trafficking in Persons: 10 years of Justice Statistics" with the analysis of 10 years of trafficking on human beings was launched.

In December the Annual Statistical Report 2019 - Indicators of Immigrant Integration (Migration Observatory) and the [White Paper](#) on Immigrant and Refugee Rights - Practical Problems and Solutions (PT) (Serviço Jesuíta aos Refugiados) were launched.

- ★ **United Kingdom:** On 18 October, a series of events [took place](#) aimed at raising public awareness of how to spot the signs of modern slavery and highlighting what the government is doing to tackle this crime. The International Slavery Museum in Liverpool featured an interactive nail bar – a business which is often linked to modern slavery – as well as talks from law enforcement to inform the public about slavery in the UK. In addition to the event at the International Slavery Museum, Border Force raised awareness of modern slavery at railway stations, ports and airports throughout the UK by educating people on what they can do if they suspect someone is being exploited. The government also announced the appointment of Jennifer Townson as the first Migration and Modern Slavery Envoy. In this new role, Ms Townson will be an advocate for tackling modern slavery globally, helping the UK to co-ordinate its efforts with other nations.

In October the UK Government [published](#) the 2019 UK Annual Report on Modern Slavery which provides and overview of modern slavery in the UK and explains the UK's existing and future response to modern slavery.

8. EXTERNAL DIMENSION

EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

- ★ On 24 October 2019, the Council [endorsed](#) Commission to renegotiate a facilitation of the procedures under the existing agreement for the issuance of short-stay visas to citizens of Cabo Verde. The negotiations will be related to amendments to the existing visa facilitation agreement such as decreasing the visa fee, extending the possibility to obtain a multiple-entry visa with a long period of validity, and simplifying the list of supporting documents to be submitted along with the visa application. This initiative is part of a wider Mobility Partnership between the EU and Cabo Verde in place since 2008, and reflects the parties'

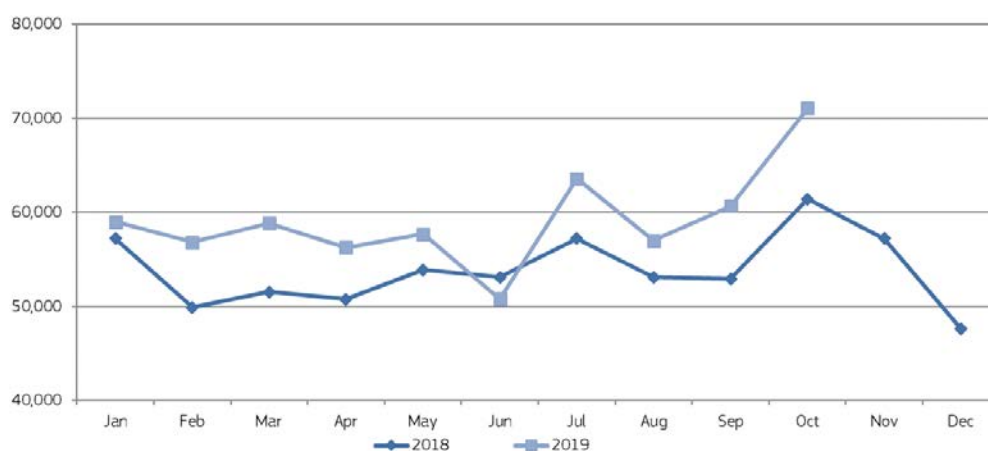
strengthened cooperation on border management and commitment to tackling irregular migration and trafficking in human beings.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- ★ **Czech Republic:** During the last quarter of the year, the MEDEVAC Programme continued to provide medical support to foreign countries, particularly in the Middle East and Africa. Two medical teams specialised in ophthalmology and traumatology, were deployed to Jordan, where they performed surgeries on refugees and underprivileged locals, and provided training in traumatology to local medical personnel. Moreover, a specialist in infectology visited Erbil, Iraq, to provide professional training to local medical staff, and deliver lectures on the proper use of antibiotics. Three medical missions took place in Senegal (specialised in traumatology, ENT and gynaecology) followed by the very first MEDEVAC mission in Ghana, where they performed very complex cancer surgeries to local patients who would not be able to obtain treatment otherwise. Furthermore, three Czech hospitals hosted 6 doctors from Morocco and Ethiopia, who visited Prague to deepen their knowledge in their respective fields of plastic surgery and paediatric heart surgery.
- ★ **France:** The first event of the French Presidency of the Rabat Process was organised in partnership with Côte d'Ivoire and was held in Abidjan on 24 October 2019. Three thematic orientations have been identified as priorities which will be implemented under the French Presidency. These are the fight against smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings, the development of voluntary return and reintegration programmes North/South and South/South, and the role of diasporas as a vector of development for the regions of origin.

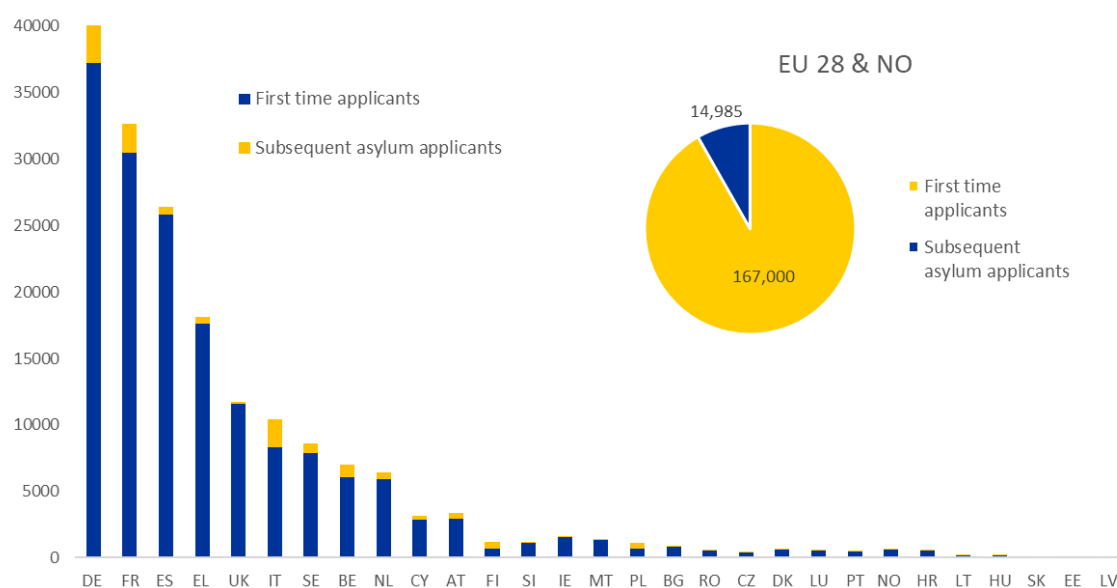
ANNEX: EU & COMPLEMENTARY STATISTICS, ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, OTHER EMN OUTPUTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

Figure 1a: Asylum applications in the EU-28, January 2018 – October 2019

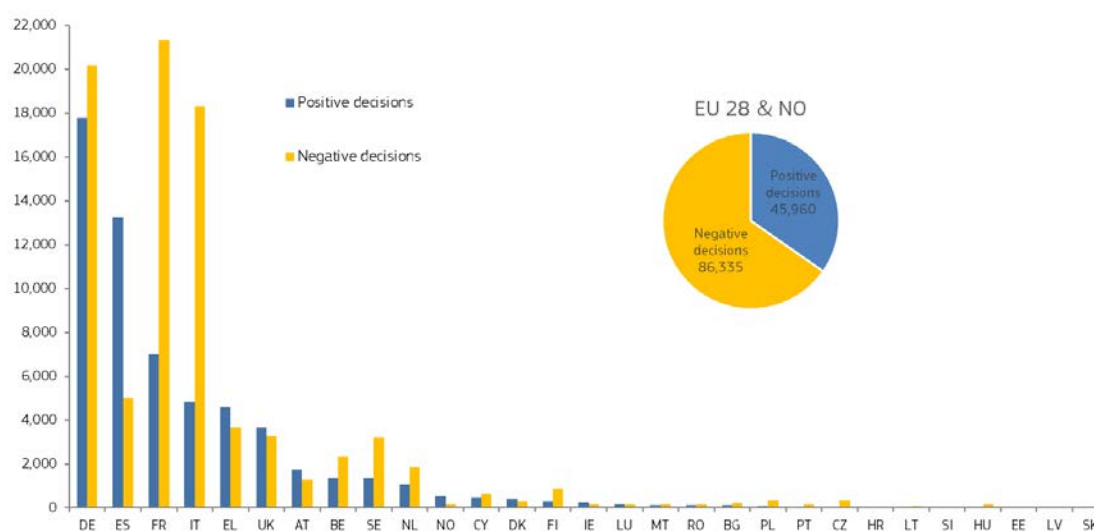


Source: Eurostat [[migr_asyappctzm](#)], total asylum applicants, extracted on 20 January 2020.

Figure 1b: First time asylum applicants and subsequent applicants (together, total asylum applicants) in the EU-28 and Norway, Q3 2019 (quarterly data)



Source: Eurostat [[migr_asyappctzm](#)], accessed on 20 January 2020.

Figure 2: First instance asylum decisions in EU-28 and Norway for non-EU citizens, Q3 2019

Source: Eurostat [[migr_asydcfstq](#)], accessed on 20 January 2020.

Updates on EU legislation transposition

No new developments.

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