

PRAGUE PROCESS

Key Data:

Leading State: Poland

Number of Participating States: 50

Secretariat: International Centre for Migration Policy Development, ICMPD

Established: 2009

The Prague Process is a political initiative that developed out of the “Building Migration Partnerships” (BMP) Ministerial Conference, which took place in Prague on 28 April 2009. At this conference, the participating states adopted the *Joint Declaration* on principles and initiatives for promoting close migration partnerships. Moreover, the participating states agreed to do so through a comprehensive, balanced and pragmatic approach that respects the human rights of migrants and their family members, as well as of refugees. The text of the BMP *Joint Declaration* was prepared by participating states with the active participation of several EU bodies and international organisations. Specifically, the *Joint Declaration* established the following five areas as a basis for cooperation:

- preventing and fighting illegal migration;
- integration of legally residing migrants;
- readmission, voluntary return and sustainable reintegration;
- migration, mobility and development;
- legal migration with a special emphasis on labour migration.

The main aim of the Prague Process has been to promote migration partnerships between states of the European Union/Schengen area, Western Balkans, Eastern Partnership, Central Asia, Russia and Turkey, in line with the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM), which constitutes

the overarching framework for the external dimension of EU migration policy. The Process is led by Poland, while the Core Group, comprised of 19 states, the European Commission and ICMPD, supports the Senior Officials Meetings. The Senior Officials constitutes the decisive body of the Prague Process.

The Prague Process Action Plan 2012–2016 adopted during the “Building Migration Partnerships in Action” Ministerial Conference in Poznan on 4 November 2011 outlines 22 concrete activities in 6 thematic areas to be implemented during that period. The preparatory meetings for the Action Plan resulted in extending the thematic scope of the Process’s agenda to the area of asylum and vulnerable groups, which evolved into an independent area of further cooperation. From 2012–2015, Poland and six other leading states are implementing the EU-funded initiative “Support for the Implementation of the Prague Process and its Action Plan”, also known as the “Prague Process Targeted Initiative” (PP TI). This initiative is led by Poland together with the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Sweden, who also take the lead in the pilot projects of PP TI. In addition to the PP TI project, Poland also supports the Prague Process financially on an ad-hoc basis and organises/hosts Core Group meetings. ICMPD serves as the Prague Process Secretariat and the Support Team of the Prague Process Targeted Initiative.

Participants

As of 2013, the following states are participants of the Prague Process: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kosovo*, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia,

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Malta, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and Uzbekistan.

In addition, various EU bodies, such as the European Commission (DG Home Affairs and DG Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid), Europol, Frontex, European Asylum Support Office and European External Action Service actively participate in the Prague Process. The international organisations such as ICMPD, IOM, MARRI and UNHCR also take part.

Projects

The BMP project (2009–2011) carried out activities to strengthen relations between the participating states. These activities included missions at senior and expert levels, as well as the elaboration of migration profiles that have provided an overview of the migration situation in the states concerned and further developed migration partnerships. All extended migration profiles were transferred to the online interactive map – the PP i-Map – at www.imap-migration.org.

“The Prague Process: Continuation of the Building Migration Partnerships Dialogue (BMP Transitional)” project (July 2011–July 2012) updated the BMP knowledge base, finalised the text of the Prague Process Action Plan for the implementation of the BMP Joint Declaration from 2012–2016 and prepared the document for its endorsement at the Ministerial Conference in Poznan, Poland on 4 November 2011.

The current project, the “Prague Process Targeted Initiative”, aims to enhance cooperation in the area of migration and asylum between the

participating states through the implementation of the Process and its Action Plan. The website www.pragueprocess.eu serves as the main source of information on the Prague Process and its Targeted Initiative. In addition to the PP TI, there are several other projects, such as ERIS and SIPPAP, implemented under the umbrella of the Prague Process. These projects are based on the Action Plan but implemented outside of the PP TI and follow the Prague Process’s principles of equality and mutual interests, as well as its voluntary nature.

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