

№21, October-December 2019

# **EDITORIAL**

In December 2019, an assessment of the global media coverage over the past decade listed migration among the topics gaining the most media attention. Migration is expected to continue affecting all states and nations for manifold reasons, ranging from technological to political, ecological, socioeconomic and demographic developments. The past ten years saw extraordinary migratory movements into and across the Prague Process region, along with the ageing of populations in most participating states. Both trends signify the need for establishing new legal pathways and a paradigm shift concerning migration as a whole.

In the coming years, policymakers may need to redefine who is allowed to enter their national territories and under what conditions. In doing so, they should safeguard the basic rights of migrants, promote their inclusion and integration and support the affected local communities. The different fora established for assessing and discussing migration trends and policies at national, regional and international level all aim at improving migration management in the future. The Prague Process will continue to contribute to this joint effort.

This Quarterly review will first provide you with a snapshot on the most recent activities implemented within (or with the support of) the Prague Process. These activities covered a wide range of topics, reaching from trainings on migration data management and media reporting on migration to the innovative concept of Comprehensive Border Governance; from discussions on the New EU Strategy on Central Asia to the potential synergies between the Prague Process and the so-called Abu Dhabi Dialogue. This issue shall also briefly summarise the 2019 edition of the Vienna Migration Conference, which represents ICMPD's annual flagship event, and shed light on the challenging situation of migrants in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as on the latest policy developments concerning labour migration in the region. As usual, we would also like to share with you some interesting new publications, including the ones issued within the Prague Process Migration Observatory.

We wish you an interesting read and successful year ahead!

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## Looking ahead: upcoming Prague Process activities 2020





### Prague Process Training on Migration Data Management

The request of several Prague Process states to receive in-depth training on managing migration data resulted in the organisation of such training in October 2019. Hosted by Lithuania, the 2,5-day activity gathered representatives of 16 Prague Process states and Frontex. The training addressed the entire cycle of migration data management, ranging from its collection and analysis to its dissemination, visualisation and data protection issues. The five excellent trainers involved represented a variety of institutions: the Joint Research Centre (European Commission), the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Romania, the National Institute of Statistics of Italy, IOM's GMDAC and ICMPD.

After introducing the relevant concepts and definitions, the trainers proposed practical solutions to bridge the gaps between policy, research and data. The session on innovative data collection methods exemplified how Facebook, LinkedIn or Twitter can complement official statistics and improve the timeliness and granulation of the 'usual' data. Within two group exercises, participants produced a migration report based on Eurostat samples and tested practical tools for effective data visualisation. The training also revealed that the collection of emigration statistics represented a common challenge. Many participants highlighted the need for further capacity-building on migration data management.

The final day of training focused on the possible cooperation between the

Prague Process and the European Migration Network (EMN). All participants agreed that such cooperation could be beneficial but first required discussions at senior level. Mutual information sharing and attendance in EMN events could represent potential first steps in this regard, along with the translation of the EMN Glossary into Russian.



### From Integrated Border Management to Comprehensive Border Governance

On 23-24 October 2019, ICMPD organised the 2nd International Conference on Comprehensive Border Governance in Yerevan. Following the success of its first edition held in Lebanon in 2018, this year the invitation was extended to all Prague Process states. The event thus gathered 80 state representatives and experts, including policy-makers, academic experts, various public institutions and agencies, as well as private sector representatives working in the border governance sphere.

The main aim of the event was to explore how a step-change from border management to its *comprehensive governance* may provide the tools needed

to support the work of border management agencies. The evolving challenges at national, regional and global level reguire the introduction of this new concept in order to acknowledge the wide variety of tasks and actors present at the borders, as well as the far-reaching responsibilities that border professionals assume over the development, security and stability of their countries. The concept of 'Comprehensive Border Governance' therefore encompasses all present and future cross-border tasks and responsibilities. Based on strong strategic planning and cooperation, it positions the key stakeholders and practitioners as the main owners and leaders of the process. Only an approach that was developed jointly can ensure that all relevant institutions are working towards a common set of objectives.

The competent authorities need to identify bottlenecks and determine the divergences between the headquarters' perception of border procedures and the actual practice at BCPs. To enable proper follow-up, the necessary measures need to be clearly defined and assigned to a responsible individual with a clear deadline. In fact, the processes introduced by policymakers are more important than the technologies used, since technologies tend to cement the process – no matter whether it is good or bad.

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Over the past decade, the trends and challenges in border management in Europe mainly originated from the increasing numbers of passengers and goods crossing borders as well as the severe security issues confronted. The large-scale collection of information and increased use of new technologies represent key innovations. New border management information systems such as the EU interoperability package, European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS), Entry-Exit System (EES) may contribute to solving many modern challenges. Their ability to collect new data and interlink existing data should contribute to improved security, the enhanced processing of legitimate travellers and better identification of potential threats.

Border management is undergoing a phase of technical modernisation and digitalisation, making all relevant processes quicker, safer and more transparent. Seamless and automatic border controls are already a reality at a number of border crossing points, be it at land, air or sea. These innovations have a tremendous impact on how border controls, including trade facilitation, are performed and on the methodology used at present and in the years to come. Progress in making border control more effective and efficient is exceeding forecasts, thereby turning it into one of the fastest developing policy areas. This growth is matched by the constant and rapid increase in worldwide travellers and globalised trade.

The conference also served the introduction of new products and technologies, such as mobile device readers, which can identify the journey, activities and contacts of suspicious travellers while properly safeguarding personal data. Further elements introduced featured biometrics, intelligence and profiling, e-gate systems, mobile surveillance systems, drones or even artificial intelligence, which can provide for faster identification, better planning and coverage of larger areas in a cost-effective manner. The future of border surveillance may consist of fully automated systems operated by humans. At the same time, the threat of cyberattacks plays an ever-growing role.

ICMPD's interventions in the area of border management focus on policy

and planning, training, international cooperation and infrastructure. Effective training should be innovative, using both conventional and non-conventional tools. The goal is to empower and complement human actors in border agencies. Regardless of how advanced border control and surveillance technology may become, the focus shall always be on the people involved.

Overall, the event provided a platform for discussing the challenges ahead, lessons learned from the past and some practical solutions for the future, facilitated by technological progress. Participants presented their daily practices and key achievements and reflected upon workable solutions to facilitate the cooperation and coordination between the border and migration agencies. Whenever possible, coordination efforts should extend to the relevant stakeholders at the regional and global level. The Prague Process will continue to enhance such cross-border cooperation among its 50 participating states in the years to come.





## **Translating the objectives of the 2019 EU Central Asia Strategy into concrete actions**

The adoption of the New EU Strategy on Central Asia in June 2019 put forward the need to translate its strategic objectives related to migration and border management into concrete actions. To launch the work in this direction, the Ministry of the Interior and Administration of Poland and the Prague Process Secretariat at ICMPD jointly organised the conference "Areas of cooperation on migration with Central Asia" in Warsaw on 4 December 2019.

The one-day conference brought together representatives of the five Central Asian States, the Leading states of the Prague Process – Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania and Poland – as well as Austria, Italy, the European External Action Service (EEAS) and ICMPD in order to exchange views and identify possible means of cooperation on migration and border-related issues.

Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan had an opportunity to introduce their national migration situation and the main challenges ahead. The EU member states presented the numbers of Central Asian nationals residing on their territory, their experience of cooperating with the Central Asian countries and legislative issues related to labour and educational migration. While the well-known BOMCA programme remains the key EU instrument for cooperation with the countries of the region, there is a lot more room for closer cooperation on labour migration, reintegration and continuous migration dialogue, in particular, within the Prague Process.

The Conference was followed by a Study visit to various Polish institutions focusing on the overall migration situation in Poland, the work with the Polish diaspora and related repatriation mechanisms, as well as on labour migration and international protection in Poland.

The novelties of the new EU Central Asia Strategy 2019 and the particular place for migration in it are addressed in the recent Policy brief "The EU Central Asia Strategy and Its Impact on Migration" released by the Prague Process Migration Observatory.



## Lithuania represents the Prague Process at the 5th Ministerial Consultation of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue

The 5th Ministerial Consultation of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue took place in Dubai on 16-17 October 2019. Lithuania as the current Chair of the Prague Process accepted the invitation to present the Prague Process and ensure its adequate positioning among other Regional Consultative Processes (RCPs). Mr. Tautvydas Tamulevicius, Vice Minister of the Interior of Lithuania, took an active part in the Special Meeting and the High-Level Panel Discussion on Interregional Cooperation, where he was one of three panellists.

In his statement, he briefly introduced the Process, its Migration Observatory and Training Academy before referring to the interplay with other migration dialogues and the benefit of having the Secretariats of several dialogues within a single organisation such as ICMPD. The Vice Minister agreed that the cooperation among RCPs could allow them to learn from each other, replicate good practices and avoid the mistakes or challenges experienced by others. The realities, interests and legal frameworks on migration of course tend to differ among the various RCPs or even their individual member states. While there is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach to follow, the decade-long experience of international organisations in facilitating RCPs could play a useful role in the further sharing of good practices,

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effective policy approaches and possible joint benefits. Mr. Tamulevicius outlined some possible ways to enhance the interaction among RCPs whereby their Chairs could:

- establish a contact network for regular communication;
- update each other on the state of play of their respective RCPs;
- share good practices for the operationalisation of their work;
- extend mutual invitations to their meetings (both policy- and expert-level);
- use online solutions and modern technologies for information sharing and capacity building.

In principle, RCPs could be more vocal, better heard and more effective if they provided their contributions to global dialogues such as the GFMD, IDM or GCM collectively. However, such collective approach may require strong commitments and coordination mechanisms among RCPs. It could also mean that some elements of particular importance to one RCP remain unarticulated, thereby raising practical or even political implications.

#### **Dubai Declaration endorsed**

On 17 October, the ADD participating states endorsed the Dubai Declaration, which outlines concrete objectives for further cooperation in the area of labour migration:

- To "promote compliant and transparent labour recruitment and placement practices" by using modern technologies
- To "address mismatches between workers' skills and employer requirements (...), raise productivity and positively impact wage structures for expatriate workers."

■ To "develop a research agenda to further investigate the possible impact of the challenges and opportunities associated with the Future of Work."

■ To "encourage the skilling and certification of domestic workers in line with relevant standards."

The Declaration further refers to the joint support of the ADD participating states to the promotion of interregional cooperation among RCPs and the commitment of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue to work with likeminded processes towards a coordinated input into global processes on labour migration.



### **Vienna Migration Conference 2019**

On 21-22 November, ICMPD hosted the Vienna Migration Conference (VMC) for the fourth time. Entitled "Breaking the gridlock and moving forward: recommendations for the next five years of EU migration policy" the conference aimed to progress the dialogue on migration policy. The conference hosted several ministers and a record-number of participants.

During his opening remarks the ICMPD Director General, Michael Spindelegger, spoke of the importance of bringing together voices from Europe and its neighbourhood to discuss the most pressing issues in migration. He then introduced ICMPD's 70 migration policy recommendations for the new European Commission. The following high-level political level discussion featured Mr Péter Szijjártó, Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Hungary; Mr Carmelo Abela, Minister, Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion, Malta; Mr İsmail Çataklı, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Interior, Turkey; Mr Giorgos Koumoutsakos, Alternate Minister for Migration Policy, Ministry of Citizen Protection, Greece; Ms Cláudia Pereira, State Secretary for Integration and Migration, Ministry of State and Presidency, Portugal; and Ms Nina Gregori, Executive Director, European Asylum Support Office.

The second day saw interventions of Mr Wolfgang Peschorn, Federal Minster, Federal Ministry of Interior, Austria and Mr Ilkka Salma, Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Interior of Finland. The following panels featured senior



officials of various EU Member States and the European Commission, as well as the President of the Federation of Austrian Industries. The final panel of the conference focused on Europe, its neighbourhood and migration routes and discussed ways in which sustainable migration partnerships can be formed.

#### Side-events

The VMC 2019 also saw the introduction of five roundtables, which focused on different areas of migration. Moreover, conference participants had the opportunity to explore a number of information stands and be acquainted with the diversity of ICMPD's migration expertise The Vienna Migration Conference has become a significant platform for continuous informal and open dialogue between different actors in the migration sphere, which confirms, among others, record number of visitors, high-level participants.



Further information: Website of the Vienna Migration Conference, Photo gallery, Download 70 Recommendations

## **Migration Media Training Academy**



Media plays an important role not only in the formation of public opinion and public discourse, but also in shaping state approaches to migration by reporting on migration issues. By underlining the most pressing migration challenges or the numerous benefits of migration, by capitalising on certain migration topics and by omitting others, the media has a vast influence on the formation of a broad image and perception of migration itself. Therefore, it is important to know how information related to migration is collected, analysed and distributed amongst various actors, which significantly affects the formation of both public perceptions and migration policy.

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# Voices from the journalists about the training:

«Migration is a big issue in itself. It is important now to study migration and migration issues in greater depth and provide adequate coverage in the media. For me personally, these trainings are very important because I have not covered this topic yet so broadly and accurately. The topics of the training, the discussions, what I learned will help me to take a more serious approach to migration issues and to highlight it in the media».

As a first step towards such a review, it is crucial to study how migration-related issues are represented in the media and whether there is room for improvement in terms of using the right terminology, providing fair, balanced and evidencebased reporting and using data appropriately and clearly. This is exactly where the German-funded "Migration Media Training Academy" (MOMENTA) project tried to step in by fostering objective coverage and in-depth reporting on migration, in particular on legal migration channels and their benefits, on labour migration and on the disadvantages, dangers and pitfalls of irregular migration, smuggling and trafficking in human beings. Journalists from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Russia had the opportunity to take part in a three-week training cycle over the course of three months in fall 2019. The main purposes of the project were:

• to facilitate high-quality and balanced reporting of the media on legal migration issues and other related migration topics; • to foster and support migration understanding, expertise and education of journalists for further improvement of their skills of investigative journalism and

• to create and maintain a qualified communicators' networks to increase enhanced institutional and public awareness on legal migration from the EaP region and Russia to the EU Member States and related topics.

During the training, journalists received strategies and information to understand and report on complex migration issues. As a result, they published articles on relevant migration topics in the local and regional media and were equipped with tools for better reporting and research on migration.

## Stuck in Bosnia and Herzegovina: A deadlock situation

The arrival of migrants to Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) whilst *en route* to Western Europe and the challenges concerning their accommodation received significant media attention towards the end of 2019. Since Croatia, Hungary and Slovenia sealed their borders against undocumented immigration, BiH has been struggling with a considerable rise in migrant arrivals.

By November 2019, over 28,000 people on the move had entered the country. International actors estimate that an additional 20% crossed the border without being registered at all. Most incoming migrants and asylum seekers are from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan. Entering from Serbia or Montenegro, they aim for the Croatian border and usually end up in the border town of Bihac. Whereas 90% declare their intention to seek asylum in BiH, only 5-7% of them effectively do so. For the great majority, BiH continues to represent merely a transit country on their way to the EU.





The Bihac municipality has set up four migrant reception centres whose capacities have been widely overstretched. The once welcoming local population has demonstrated an increasing resentment towards the newcomers whose accommodation has become a great challenge for the local community. The opening of the temporary tent camp in Vucjak in June 2019 was criticised due to its inadequate conditions. With the approaching of the winter, the EU called for its closing and the opening of new adequate facilities elsewhere in BiH. In response, the state authorities identified locations for two new migrant reception centres in the districts of Sarajevo and Tuzla. On 10 December, the Vucjak camp was dismantled and its residents transferred to the new facility near Sarajevo, as well as to the existing reception centres in Salakovac and Bira, both run by the IOM.

In view of BiH becoming a buffer zone at the EU border, such relocations in no

way represent a sustainable solution. The national reception capacities remain starkly insufficient for the ever-growing number of foreign nationals present in the country. The BiH Border Police lacks approximately 1.000 officers to operate the border crossing points along the 600 km long eastern border. Meanwhile, law enforcement agencies remain fragmented and unable to coordinate their efforts. The consistent reports of violent pushbacks of migrants by Croatian law enforcement officials into BiH, in violation of international norms on non-refoulement, further aggravate the situation, as repeatedly highlighted by various human rights organisations as well as the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights. Moreover, there are serious obstacles to effective access to asylum in BiH, as the competent institutions remain under-resourced. As BiH continues to be perceived almost exclusively a transit country, there is little opportunity for long-term engagement and adequate support.

In an attempt to address the worsening situation, the government developed an Operational Plan in October 2019, defining the immediate challenges faced by the competent authorities and setting out concrete means to improve migration management. The Plan, amongst others, foresees a strengthening of the Border Police in order to prevent irregular border-crossings, combat migrant smuggling, as well as considerable support to the affected communities.

Current forecasts nevertheless foresee a further increase in new arrivals to BiH in 2020. As long as the border with Serbia remains insufficiently protected and the border to Croatia closed, the number of people on the move ending up in BiH is expected to increase.

*Read more on the situation in BiH here, here and here.* 

# Facts and Figures on Labour migration: facilitated access, quota systems and work permits

#### Bulgaria and Georgia

October 2019, the Bulgarian In government adopted the agreement on the regulation of labour migration with Georgia, which applies to citizens of Bulgaria and Georgia who have an employment contract and a residence permit in either of the two countries. Workers hired under the agreement will have the same rights and obligation as local ones and will require no work permit for a period of one year (with the possibility of extension to three years in total). The agreement also regulates seasonal recruitment up to nine months a year.

#### Read more

#### Azerbaijan

In November 2019, Azerbaijan's State Migration Service announced the changes to the Regulation on work permits for remunerated labour activities of foreigners and stateless persons. As per the amendment, a foreigner will have a possibility to obtain a work permit in Azerbaijan in 10 working days. Read more

#### France

As of summer 2020, France plans to introduce a quota for migrant workers resembling the qualification-based policies of Australia and Canada. The government will work together with employers on identification of labour shortage sectors, which can benefit from recruiting foreigners and filling up the labour market gaps. At present, France lacks workers in construction, hotel, catering and retail sectors. The country also needs qualified IT specialist and engineers. With the new system, employers will no longer need to justify the hiring of migrants over French nationals. Read more

#### Latvia

The Latvian government removed a number of bureaucratic obstacles to the employment of third country nationals with the aim to mitigate the negative impact of local labour shortages. The amendment lifted the requirement to certify qualifications or experience in case of unskilled jobs, as well as the need to publish a vacancy in case the prospective third country employee has been employed in Latvia for two years. Another novelty is the possibility to submit resident permit documents electronically, which shall ease the administrative burden for foreign employees and the competent authorities.

#### Read more

#### Lithuania

The Lithuanian Employment Service announced a considerable 70% increase in the number of work permits issued to

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foreigners in 2019, which amounted to a total of 8,400. The increase is attributed to the simplified work permit and visa issuance procedures and labour shortages in some sectors. Ukrainian nationals obtained over half (60%) of all issued permits, followed by Belarus nationals with 21%, Russian and Uzbek nationals with 3 %, and finally, Chinese and Georgian nationals with 2 % each. Most foreigners work as cooks, builders, carpenters, international passenger transport drivers, car mechanics and forklift drivers. Read more

### Russia and Tajikistan

Ahead of the year 2020, Russia ratified an agreement on the organized recruitment of Tajik seasonal migrants. Authorized bodies of Tajikistan will be responsible for informing their nationals about the possibility of employment in the Russian Federation, selecting candidates according to the required qualifications, as well as for training and retraining, including Russian language, and facilitating their return to Tajikistan. Employers must provide migrants with safe conditions of work and ensure regular payment of wages. Read more



## Newly released publications of the Prague Process Migration Observatory

#### Policy brief by Yan Matusevich

#### "The EU Central Asia Strategy and Its Impact on Migration"

The release of the EU Strategy on Central Asia in 2019 opens a new chapter in EU-Central Asian relations, marking a move away from a narrow focus on regional cooperation and security to a broader and more flexible approach, which emphasizes the links between three key areas: resilience, prosperity and connectivity. Migration serves as a link between all three areas and must become the object of a renewed focus of the European Union as part of its broader engagement in the Central Asia region. The EU can no longer afford looking at migration and mobility solely through the prism of security and stability. The time has come to adopt a more comprehensive and active approach centred on promoting migration opportunities rather than containing migration challenges.

Access the brief here



POLICY BRIEF The EU Central Asia Strategy and Its Impact on Migration

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMAR

The new EU Strategy on Central Asia emphasizes the links between resilience, prosperity and connectivity. The new EU Strategy of Central and Connectivity.

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#### Policy brief by Kristof Tamas

#### "Assessing the EU's External Migration Policy"

EU external cooperation on migration has revolved around the Global Approach to Migration (and Mobility) since 2005 (2011) and the Migration Partnership Framework under the European Agenda on Migration since 2016 (European Council, 2005; European Commission, 2011, 2015, 2016). Migration Dialogues have been used as a key channel in finding common ground with third countries. The EU has expected to establish effectiveness, shared responsibilities and mutual interests in the implementation of EU external cooperation. As these objectives have not been fully met, the EU should now explore how partner countries' interests can be better accommodated within this cooperation framework.

Access the brief here





#### Policy brief by Dmitry Poletaev

# "Russia's Migration Policies after the dissolution of the Federal Migration Service"

Following the dissolution of the Federal Migration Service (FMS) of Russia in 2016, the national migration policy has undergone a swift reo rientation towards a law-and-order approach to migration management. Given the exacerbation of the demographic challenges and the resulting economic ones for the country, this security-centred approach bares various risks. These range from the sphere of interethnic relations to the attractiveness of Russia for migration, the increased dissociation within the Russian society and reduced efficiency of migration management overall. This policy brief outlines the key effects of the recent institutional reform, identifies the main migration policy challenges and proposes practical steps to modernising Russia's migration management system.

Access the brief here

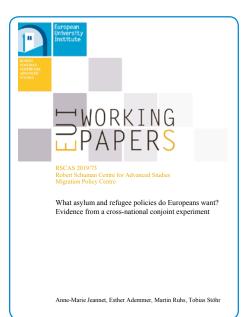
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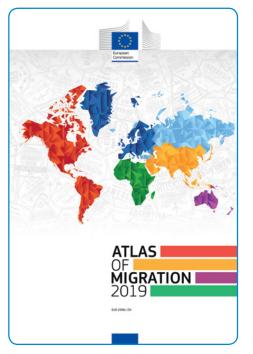
### **Interesting reads**

#### Working paper of the European University Institute: What asylum and refugee policies do Europeans want? Evidence from a crossnational conjoint experiment

This paper provides the first-ever analysis of the structure of public preferences for asylum and refugee policy, a highly politicized policy area that has attracted little scholarly attention to date. It first conceptualises the core dimensions of asylum and refugee policy and then conducts an original conjoint experiment with 12,000 respondents across eight European countries to examine how different policy designs impact on public support. The results demonstrate that Europeans are generally committed to policies that provide protection to asylum-seekers and refugees but this commitment tends to be contingent upon policy features which allow for a means of control, namely through the introduction of limits or conditions. This pattern of preferences is remarkably similar in both the old and more recent EU Member States. Some aspects of the current model of international protection are misaligned with the more control-based model that Europeans would prefer.

Access the publication in English here.





#### The Atlas of Migration 2019

The Atlas of Migration 2019 covers all EU Member States and 170 non-EU states. It offers an interactive online reference tool which runs on a continuously updated data repository to show the latest available data. Users can edit the parameters to produce their own country profiles. Population statistics and demographic change indicators are included on the basis of latest available projections. The Atlas of Migration was developed by the European Commission's Knowledge Centre on Migration and Demography (KCMD), with data made available by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre, Eurostat and the Migration and Home Affairs Directorate-General. It is an excellent means to be well informed of the facts shaping migration today and in the future.

Access the Atlas in English here.



#### Survey on migration and human trafficking in Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus and Georgia, 2019

The study conducted by IOM is based on nationwide representative surveys carried out in summer 2019. It reveals that a good knowledge on human trafficking does not necessarily translate into lower vulnerability. Roughly, 80% of respondents in each of the four countries are aware of the risks of human trafficking, yet some 11-24% would cross the border irregularly and work informally in exploitive conditions without freedom of movement or hand over their passport to an employer. Men feature as most vulnerable to trafficking in Belarus, Ukraine and Georgia, while in Moldova the risks of falling prey to traffickers are equal for both sexes.

Access the survey in English here.



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