

EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

This issue of the Quarterly Review is released mere days ahead of the Fourth Prague Process Ministerial Conference taking place in Prague on 24-25 October 2022. The Conference represents a culmination of the joint work launched by the Czech Republic in December 2020. It shall result in the endorsement of the Ministerial Declaration and the Action Plan 2023-2027, which will allow sustaining and expanding the Prague Process cooperation in the coming years.

Throughout the thirteen years of the Prague Process existence, its Parties continuously discuss the most pressing challenges and needs, facilitate timely exchanges and build their national and regional capacities in the area of migration and asylum. The dynamic migration realities and the multiple crises that bring about new risks and uncover system vulnerabilities require continuous commitment and enduring work. The last quarter has been no exception with the Prague Process implementing several activities and releasing new publications, which all feature in this Quarterly Review.

Apart from a snapshot of recent Prague Process activities and some of the takeaways from the ICMPD's Vienna Migration Conference 2022, this issue presents the overview of the Mid-year asylum trends in the EU, highlighting an increase of applications from many of the non-EU Prague Process states. It further touches upon the continuing conflict-driven displacement in parts of Central Asia and the South Caucasus. The observed migration from Russia amid the recently announced mobilisation is another topic reflected upon.

As usual, this issue proposes reading recommendations, including research produced by the Prague Process Migration Observatory.

We wish you an interesting read.

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Looking ahead: upcoming Prague Process activities 2022

24 Oct	●	Senior Officials' Meeting, Prague, Czech Republic
24-25 Oct	●	4 th Prague Process Ministerial Conference, Prague, Czech Republic

Simulation Exercise on Combating Human Trafficking held in the Kyrgyz Republic

In late August, the Cabinet of Ministers of the Kyrgyz Republic together with the OSCE Office in Bishkek organised the Second National Simulation Exercise on Combating Human Trafficking. This activity was supported by the Prague Process and other partner organisations.

The simulation training **aimed to improve inter-agency cooperation under the referral mechanism, focusing on the needs of trafficked persons.** The involved agencies had to perform their respective roles and duties in identifying and assisting several

victims of labour and sexual exploitation, as well as in identifying and prosecuting the traffickers.

The simulation has clearly demonstrated that **national authorities require more practice concerning day-to-day cooperation on trafficking cases with state and non-state actors.**

The training thereby provided a unique space for trial and error that shall facilitate real life cooperation in the anti-trafficking work. In 2023, a regional simulation shall bring together all five countries of Central Asia.

Read more [here](#)



International Summer School on Migration held in Azerbaijan

On 4-10 September 2022, the Prague Process and the MOBILAZE 2 project co-organised the **International Summer School on Migration** in Guba, Azerbaijan. Gathering students and young professionals from Azerbaijan and Ukraine, the one-week activity featured interactive lectures and creative workshops by professors from the Universities of Oxford, Sussex, Maastricht and Leiden. The issues discussed ranged from economics, human rights, development, and media to citizenship and integration.

Violeta Wagner, ICMPD's Regional Portfolio Manager for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, **underlined the importance of the summer school for the future management of migration and integration in the region,**

given that the attending students may be the ones shaping it in the future.

The Summer School has been organised for the eighth time and has become

a unique trademark of the ICMPD's work in the region. The joint organisation of the Summer School by two projects allowed for broadening its scope for 2022.



MOBILAZE 2 Study visits to Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Spain

The MOBILAZE 2 project continues to support Azerbaijani stakeholders in the efforts related to, among others, enhancing migration and border governance and management skills. Over the third quarter of 2022, the project organised two insightful Study visits to four EU member states.

The Study **visit to Spain targeted the area of labour migration with a focus on domestic workers** and entailed meetings with the Spanish Congress Committees on Labour and Migration, the Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration, Spanish Ombudsperson's Office, Catalanian

Regional Government as well as NGOs and academics. Discussions addressed legal aspects of employing foreigners as domestic workers and carers in Spain, available tools to tackle irregularity in this field, as well as the socio-economic profile of this category of migrants.

The second **Study visit brought a group of Azerbaijani Border Control Officials to Austria, the Czech Republic and Slovakia**, where they visited relevant partners and saw the two border crossing points and two police training institutions. The visit covered good practices in terms of trainings for border service agencies

on document security, border management/integrated border management and risk analysis. A particular point of interest represented the joint activities of Czech and Austrian border police officers at the Joint Police Coordination Centre.

The EU-funded "Support to the

Implementation of the Mobility Partnership with Azerbaijan" (MOBILAZE 2) project is implemented by ICMPD in Azerbaijan (1 June 2021 – 31 May 2024). The project's overall objective is to contribute to better management of migration flows and to achieve respect for the rights of migrants.

Read more [here](#) and [here](#)



Online Conference 'Ensuring the wellbeing of children displaced from Ukraine residing in the EU'

On 29 September 2022, the Prague Process together with the State Migration Service of Ukraine held the **online conference titled 'Ensuring the wellbeing of children displaced from Ukraine residing in the EU'**. As highlighted by Ms Natalia Naumenko, Chairwoman of the State Migration Service of Ukraine, the topic is of utmost importance to Ukraine and the country's future.

The protracted nature of the war resulted in Ukraine losing contact with some of its citizens, which requires coordination concerning the understanding of legal regulations regarding the stay of children in the EU, registration and access to data, primary aid, custodians for unaccompanied children, as well as ways for rapid online consultations on key issues.

By the end of September 2022, **some 7.5 million persons fled Ukraine**, including 4.4 million who received temporary protection in the EU. Yet, **there is no reliable estimate as to the number of unaccompanied and separated children**. The legal understanding of the two terms differs across

countries as do the data gathering and registration practices. In some countries, i.e. the Czech Republic, where the number of separated children is much higher than the number of unaccompanied children, the former group requires no registration of the social protection authorities. Neither does the German legal system foresee the registration of separated children while providing access to the social security system to 25.000 unaccompanied minors throughout the country. One common challenge at EU level is the lack of registration in the context of free movement within the Schengen area.

ICMPD has been supporting Ukraine and facilitating its continued dialogue with EU Member states on urgent matters concerning Ukrainian citizens. The recently launched project *'Resilience, Reinforcement and Recovery of Ukrainian Migration and Consular Services'*, funded by Germany and the Czech Republic, is implemented together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the State Migration Service of Ukraine. It shall ensure the safe international mobility of Ukrainian citizens, including preparation for sustainable return.

Read more [here](#)



Vienna Migration Conference 2022

Every autumn, the **Vienna Migration Conference** provides space for a wide range of perspectives. This year's seventh edition, held on 11-12 October, addressed the return of inter-state war to Europe amid Russia's military aggression in Ukraine, the old and new forces shaping international migration, and how governments, international organisations and civil society should respond. Prominent speakers and decision-makers discussed the impact of ongoing conflicts and regional instability, the instrumentalisation of migration, climate change and the post-COVID-19 pandemic labour shortages on the cross-border movement of people.

The first session was devoted to **climate change and migration**. It is predicted that 1 billion persons might be displaced by 2050, while inhabitable places of the globe are already shifting and quickly expanding. This necessitates the urgent build-up of the necessary infrastructures along with a robust plan to manage the huge population movements of the future. Countries such as Bangladesh have already started setting up secondary cities and re-educating their agricultural populations. Others need to follow their lead.

The second session brought together senior European politicians who reflected upon the need for **secure borders in times of peace and turbulence** and other needs associated with **large population movements**. Discussions addressed the instrumentalisation of migrants and the corresponding measures, including the legitimisation of physical border infrastructure, longer and different procedures to prevent abuses, as well as better return rates. The war in Ukraine is changing the migration landscape. Moldova has quickly turned into a transit country to the EU and recorded a population increase of 4% while facing enormous institutional, societal and infrastructural pressure. Calling for stronger engagement to tackle the root causes of migration, discussants highlighted the need for cooperation beyond the security level. The provision of legal pathways prevents irregular flows, as does the unified approach to return, visa and asylum policies. The latter was echoed on the second day of the Conference, where Türkiye highlighted the importance of migration management and partnership in policy development in source countries.

The following sessions provided perspectives from across the globe, including from **Africa, Australia, and the USA**, exploring how responsive migration policies can help to mitigate the current challenges related to asylum, resettlement and labour migration. The second day of the Conference looked at the multilayer efforts of the European Commission to support global regions, including the Global Gateway Strategy and Team Europe approach, and the reform process of the **European migration and asylum policy**.

In his closing remarks, **ICMPD Director General Spindelegger** reiterated his three main takeaways from this year's VMC:

1. The need to be better prepared for future crises by improving emergency mechanisms to obtain quick results.
2. Nothing can be achieved without partnerships and regional cooperation.
3. Times are changing in terms of labour migration, with the fight for talent becoming fiercer.



Vienna Migration Conference 2022

11-12 OCTOBER

#ViennaMigConf

Migration from Russia amid mobilisation

Over 300.000 Russian nationals left Russia in two weeks since the country announced 'partial mobilisation' on 21 September 2022. Other reports allude to **700.000.***

Kazakhstan

visa-free up to 90 days



Featuring a 7.600 km long land border with Russia, Kazakhstan faces considerable flows of Russians fleeing mobilisation. RU companies and corporate businesses are relocating operations and people to Central Asia. The capacities of smaller Kazakh towns have been overstretched. President Tokayev urged the population to welcome newcomers and ensure their safety, while also announcing the plan to hold talks with RU about the influx. KZ region of Pavlodar plans to open centres to coordinate the inflow of Russians.

Georgia

visa-free up to 1 year



Georgia has become the second most popular destination for Russians crossing on land. Despite high inflows, some 60-70% of RU nationals leave GE soon after arrival. On 28 Sep, the RU North Ossetia Republic restricted the entry of passenger vehicles, except for cars registered in North Ossetia, South Ossetia and Georgia. Tbilisi saw high demand for accommodation and rising housing prices. The increased flows aroused anti-Russian sentiment and criticism towards the government.

European Union

visa required



Some 66.000 Russian citizens entered the EU during 19-25 Sep, a 30% increase compared to the preceding week. The flow started to decline thereafter, especially since Finland, the key entry point for Russians to the EU, introduced restrictions on 29 Sep. The majority of Russians hold valid residence permits, visas or dual citizenship. Frontex anticipates an increase in irregular border crossings at the EU external borders with RU, and a rise in irregular stays by RU citizens already present in the EU.

Mongolia

visa-free up to 30 days



Mongolia has not been a destination for Russians in the past. Since 21 Sep, anywhere between 6.000 to 12.000 RU nationals, mostly from the neighbouring RU Buryatia Republic, crossed into Mongolia. The country reported an increasing number of RU citizens applying for temporary residency status or, in some cases, an extension of stay. With few economic opportunities to offer, Mongolia is likely to be only a temporary destination and a transit point en route to other Asian countries.

- entry on internal passports allowed
- registration required for stays above 30 days

- easy to prolong stay beyond the first visa-free year
- no direct flights from/to RU

- EE, FI, LT, LV, PL introduced restrictions to entry on land. CZ will join the effort on 25.10
- no direct flights from/to RU

- visa extension in Mongolia allowed
- temporary permit easy to obtain



The Azerbaijan State Border Service puts the number of visitors from Russia between Dec 2021 and Aug 2022 at 263.000, 70% higher than the same period last year. The AZ-RU land border remains closed since the start of the pandemic.

Since 24 Feb 2022, 50.000 Russians have applied for residency in TR. RU citizens were the number one investors in real estate in Aug 2022. Istanbul has turned into one of the key travel hubs given the scarcity of flights from Russia.



Over 132.000 RU citizens arrived in Armenia in Sep, while 128.000 left. Overall, from Jan to Aug 2022, 654.648 Russians entered Armenia, while 615,808 left. Since then about 39,000 people remain in the country.

Jan-Jun 2022 OUTFLOW



Jan-Jun 2022 NET MIGRATION



Over 192.000 RU nationals entered KG between Jan and Sep 2022. According to various sources, some 30.000 to 40.000 RU citizens remain in the Republic. Few of them are ethnic Kyrgyz who naturalised in Russia.



According to media sources, 40.000 to 60.000 RU nationals arrived in Uzbekistan this year. Among others, the flow included some 6.000 IT specialists and Russian companies that relocated operations to UZ.

Russia may lose 15% (over 15.000) of its millionaires this year. UAE and Israel are likely to become the prime destination among rich Russians. Around 35.000 RU nationals reside in Israel and the country expects another 36.000 to arrive after Sep 2022.



Economic burden. Pressure on the real estate market of receiving countries. High rental prices, the lack of accommodation, profit race among landlords increasing rents and evicting tenants amid high demand.

Boost to **economic development** due to the inflow of capital, creation of businesses and workplaces.

Political and security risks. Public concerns over hosting a considerable number of Russians, which may become a pretext for actions on behalf of the Russian state in the long term.

Brain gain. Taking in high-skilled Russian professionals, especially Russia's much-vaunted tech elite, but also health, finance and education professionals, could boost the economies of receiving states. KZ, UZ have already opened special hubs for IT specialists, KG launched a nomad visa.

Limited institutional and infrastructure capacities to receive considerable flows.

Demographic gains for countries featuring declining populations.



Most of the observed movements are transit and temporary. Some Russian emigrants, especially those who will not find new sources of income abroad, will most likely return to Russia when they feel it is safe. How many will eventually reside in new destinations remains to be seen.

EU Mid-Year Asylum Trends

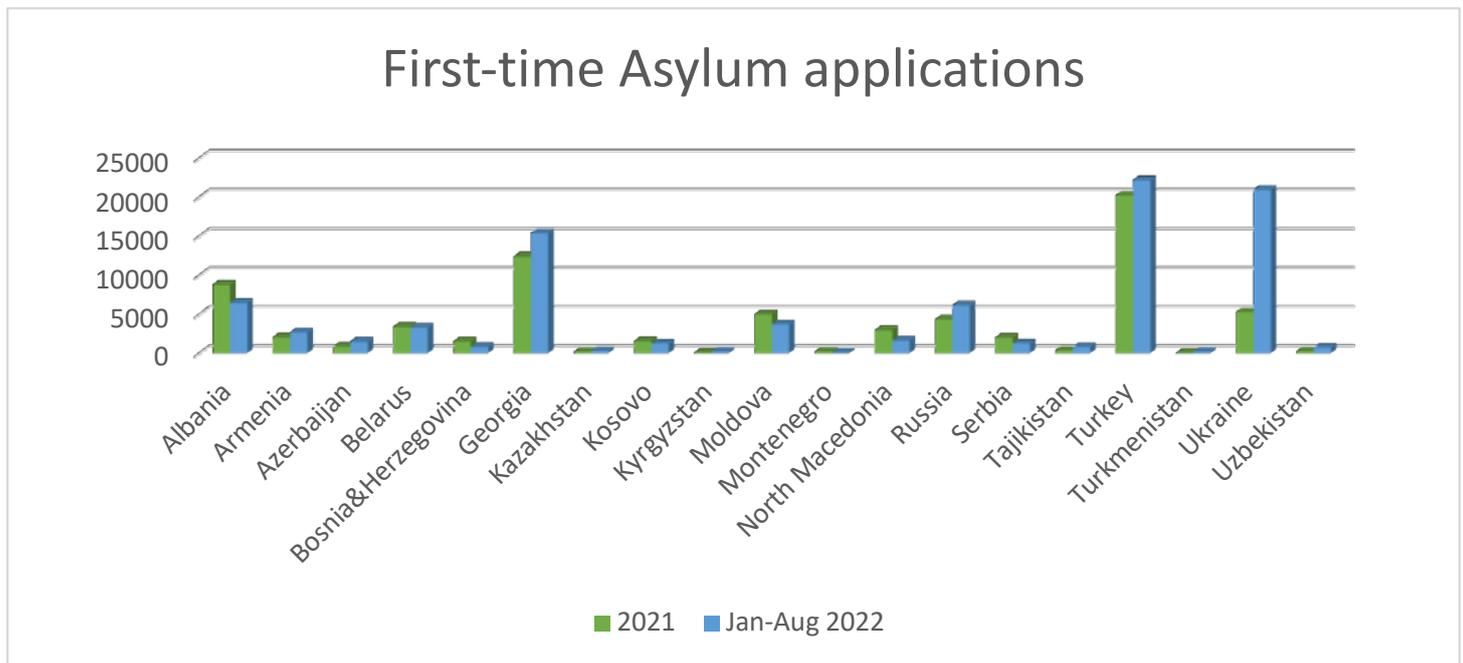
The EU has been facing a general upward trend in terms of asylum applications since mid-2021 and has already seen more applications in the first eight months of 2022 than throughout 2020. **July 2022 was the third successive month with over 70,000 applications, something unseen since the crisis of 2015/2016.** This number includes applications filed by Ukrainian nationals, most of which were lodged before the EU enacted temporary protection (TP) for this group.

By early October 2022, over **4.4 million persons who fled Ukraine registered for temporary protection**, primarily in Poland, Germany and the Czech Republic. The evolution of the war and the upcoming winter months may force more people to flee Ukraine for the EU.

In absolute terms, **nationals of Afghanistan and Syria submitted the majority of asylum applications in the EU from January through August 2022.** The recognition rate for Syrian nationals is consistently high. In

July 2022, Syrians received 96% positive decisions, of which one-third granted refugee status and the remainder granted subsidiary protection.

Compared to the whole of 2021, the first eight months of 2022 saw a higher number of first-time asylum applications lodged by nationals of many non-EU Prague Process states, other than Ukraine. This particularly applies to nationals of **Georgia, Turkey and Russia**, who submitted over 3,000, 1,900 and 1,700 first-time applications respectively.



Source: Eurostat 1 & 2

As noted by the EUAA, Turkish nationals submitted the most applications on record since 2014 in June 2022 (4,100), and the second most in July 2022. Over the first four months of 2022, EU+ countries saw a 183% year-over-year increase in terms of asylum applications by **Georgian nationals**, with the invasion of Ukraine and the socio-economic

situation in Georgia playing an ample role in this case. When it comes to **Russian applicants**, not only has their number over the first eight months of 2022 already outpaced the total 2021 figure, but the recent draft may motivate even more Russians to seek international protection in the EU.

Importantly, the war in Ukraine and other political, security and economic developments across the Prague Process region have led to the **rise of asylum applications in the EU from nearly all post-Soviet countries.**

Read more [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)

Conflict-driven displacement in Central Asia and the South Caucasus

Although conflict-driven displacement already represented a considerable concern for two to three million people living in the Prague Process region in 2021, it has greatly intensified in 2022. The war in Ukraine forced one quarter of its population to flee within the country and abroad, but Ukraine is not the only country in the post-Soviet space that suffers bloodshed and conflict-induced population movements.

In mid-September 2022, the violent **flare-up of conflict between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan** resulted in some 100 dead on both sides and over **140,000 Kyrgyz displaced** in the border area around its southern region of Batken. As winter approaches, affected populations in one of Kyrgyzstan's poorest regions are most **at risk** and require humanitarian assistance to address basic needs. Confrontations between residents in border areas of the Fergana Valley, where Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan intersect, are relatively common. The borders are often poorly demarcated, with several exclaves of differing ethnicities increasing the potential for social unrest and fighting over water and land resources along the disputed borders. Since 1991, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan have continuously **exchanged fire**, but the confrontation intensified in April 2021, when at least 41 people died



and hundreds were wounded on both sides. While most media sources continue to name the occurrence a 'border clash', its escalation represents a worrisome development that requires appropriate attention from the international community.

In parallel with the events at the Kyrgyz-Tajik border, **tensions escalated between Armenia and Azerbaijan** on 12 September with a ceasefire reached two days later. For the first time in the three-decade conflict, the heavy fighting took place on the territory of Armenia

itself, far from the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh. This escalation was also the deadliest since the six-week war between the two countries in 2020 and resulted in nearly 300 dead on both sides and **7,600 Armenians displaced, while Azerbaijan continues to host close to 650,000 IDPs** as a result of previous phases of conflict. The last six months saw recurrent outbreaks of hostilities and the EU stepping in with efforts to mediate the conflict. In early October, the two countries agreed to **an EU civilian mission** to be deployed at their common border.

Prague Process Migration Observatory: Newly released publications



Policy Brief

'What governments need to know about vulnerability to trafficking among the people fleeing the war in Ukraine'

by the Anti-trafficking Programme of ICMPD

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



Book *'Migration Observatory: Selected Publications 2021-22'*

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

Recently updated Prague Process Country Factsheets



Austria



Belgium



Croatia



Cyprus



Czech Republic



Denmark



Estonia



Finland



France



Germany



Greece



Italy



Kosovo



Latvia



Liechtenstein



Lithuania



Luxembourg



Malta



Montenegro



The Netherlands



North Macedonia



Norway



Poland



Portugal



Serbia



Slovakia



Slovenia



Spain



Sweden



Switzerland



Turkey

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Check out our latest [video interviews](#) with key Prague Process stakeholders

Reading recommendations

ICMPD Blog 'Temporary protection in Poland: What solutions for vulnerable groups?'

by Justyna Segeš Frelak and Anna Piłat
Read in [English](#) or [Russian](#)

ICMPD Commentary 'Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia have their European prospects confirmed. What does it mean for migration policies?'

by Violeta Wagner
Read in [English](#)

European Commission 'Report on Migration and Asylum 2022'

Read in [English](#)

MOBILAZE 2 Study 'Overview of Migration Policies in the Selected Countries and the Lessons Learned for the Republic of Azerbaijan'

Read in [English](#)

Editorial Team

Alexander Maleev, Project Manager, Prague Process Secretariat

Irina Lysak, Project Officer, Prague Process Secretariat

Dariia Skovliuk, Project Assistant, Prague Process Secretariat

Contacts:

Prague Process Secretariat ICMPD HQ

Gonzagagasse 1 | 1010 Vienna

pragueprocess@icmpd.org

Tel: +43 1 504 4677 0

Fax: +43 1 504 4677 - 2375



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