

Director's welcome message



Dear friends of the Prague Process,

I am happy to present you the spring issue of the Quarterly Prague Process Review!

We prepared this issue with an intention to bring to your attention some of the subjects related to the current implementation of the Prague Process.

With this idea in mind we decided to firstly focus on student mobility, the subject of the Pilot Project 6. To keep you in the loop as regards the last legal developments in the region, we prepared for you an article on the recently reformed Education Code in Moldova. We also interviewed Mr Dmitry Poletaev, Director of the Migration Research Centre of the Russian Federation, who told us about the foreign students coming to Russia, their life perspectives and challenges, as well as measures taken by the RF Government in the sphere of student mobility.

Acknowledging the importance of our work on the development of the Knowledge base, we devoted a section of the Review to the conclusions, reached during the workshop

in Lisbon. In addition, we are glad to present you an article of Ms Joanna Sosnowska, Polish EMN National Contact Point, introducing the European Migration Network as a platform for collection of migration data for the European Union states.

Last but not least, this issue will update you on recent activities held in the Prague Process region and implemented under the Prague Process umbrella or closely connected to its implementation, such as the EU – Central Asia High Level Security Dialogue, the Final Conference of the SIPPAP Project, the last meeting of the EaP Panel on Migration and Asylum, and the work visit to Portugal which took place in the framework of the ERIS Project.

I wish you an enjoyable reading and hope you will find this spring issue of the Review interesting!

I am looking forward to your ideas on the next issue and your contributions with articles on the recent migration developments in your countries!

Sincerely yours,

Piotr Mierecki
PP TI Director

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Planned activities within the Prague Process for the upcoming months

- **22 April:** 4th Core Group meeting, Warsaw, Poland
- **28-29 May:** NCP meeting on Migration and Development, Chisinau, Moldova
- **9-10 June:** 2nd PP5 Workshop on Illegal Migration, Tbilisi, Georgia
- **23-24 June (tbc):** 2nd PP6 Workshop on Legal Migration, Moscow, Russia
- **6-7 July:** Senior Officials' Meeting, Budapest, Hungary
- **July/August:** Expert missions to Kazakhstan and/or Uzbekistan and/or Turkmenistan

Past activities for the period January–March 2015

- **22-23 January:** PP6 Kick-off Workshop on Legal Migration, Budapest, Hungary
- **26-27 January:** PP5 Kick-off Workshop on Illegal Migration, Warsaw, Poland
- **2-4 February:** PP7 Kick-off Meeting of the Project Team, Brussels, Belgium
- **12-13 February:** Workshop on the Knowledge base and migration profiles, Lisbon, Portugal
- **17-19 February:** PP7 Preparatory meeting with Experts, Vienna, Austria

Moldova: Reforming the Education Code

Moldova has recently reformed its outdated code on education from 1995, introducing compulsory education until the age of 18 years. Another reform introduced the issuance of certificates for teaching staff on an annual basis. Focusing on the concept of “life-long learning”, Moldova seeks to ensure its accessibility, relevance and quality.

While higher education is now considered by Moldovan citizens to be the most desirable pathway, obtained degrees (mostly in law or economics) do not always correspond to the national labour market needs, pushing the interested graduates abroad. This phenomenon is amplified by the high level of youth unemployment in Moldova, where only 22 per cent of young people are successful in finding a job upon graduation. In Moldova 14 out of 32 higher education institutions are private.

As countries in the region regularly offer places for Moldavian students, the number of those studying abroad is constantly growing. Romania remains the preferred destination country, accepting 5.500 Moldovan students in 2013. Other important destinations include Russia, Bulgaria, Turkey and until recently also Ukraine. However, these official figures only reflect students traveling through exchange programs, without covering studies organised individually, Erasmus Plus students or other international fellowships, nor students from Transnistria. Moldova faces the problem that very few graduates return to the country. Therefore, a pilot programme aiming at attracting this target group (aged 18-35) was launched in cooperation with IOM Moldova.



Meanwhile, in terms of incoming foreign students, citizens of Israel are the largest group, counting some 500 students in 2014, mainly studying medicine. One possible explanation for this phenomenon could be the relatively cheap education fees offered.

From the Moldovan point of view, there are both advantages and disadvantages arising from the cross-border mobility of students. The former include access to better education standards and hopefully better incomes upon graduation, better language skills as well as social and cultural exchange. Meanwhile, the said disadvantages feature potentially negative economic and demographic consequences for Moldova, including the increased age of getting married or giving birth. ■

Educational migration in Russia, interview with Dmitry Poletaev

In the light of the recently launched Pilot Project 6 “Enhancing the Cross-Border Mobility of Students”, whose Kick-off Workshop took place in January 2015, we approached Dmitry Poletaev asking him to tell us about the student mobility trends in the Russian Federation.

Mr Poletaev, could you please tell us which countries the majority of students, who study in the Russian Federation (RF), come from?

According to 2012-2013 data, the main countries sending their citizens to study in Russia are the CIS countries, with almost 70 thousand students, which corresponds to 50% of all the foreigners studying in Russia. Among the CIS countries, Kazakhstan has the lead in the number of students in the RF. Apart from the CIS countries, we can also name China as an important source country.

What are the motivations and reasons for studying in the RF, rather than in their own countries?

In 2012, we carried out a research project on educational migration with the support of the Tomsk Polytechnic Institute, focusing on the universities in Tomsk, Krasnoyarsk and Moscow. According to the data yielded by the research, foreign students are driven by two main motivations in choosing Russian universities: the high quality of education in the selected profession and the prestige of the university diploma (which facilitates landing a job). Most respondents named their wish to study abroad as the main reason for not studying in their home country. It should be noted that over 30% of the students polled in Krasnoyarsk selected Russian universities because their home countries do not offer training on the profession they are interested in. Meanwhile, the experts we polled are naming historical ties and social networks of dias-

poras and alumni of Russian universities as the main motivation for studying in the RF.

The survey demonstrated that over half of the Russian universities' foreign graduates believe that finding a job upon their return home will be easy.

Which are the challenges faced by foreign students studying in Russia?

Of course, for many foreign students the lack of knowledge or insufficient knowledge of Russian language remains the main challenge faced after arrival for studies. For most of the foreign students in Tomsk, the climate was the second biggest challenge after the language, as indicated by over 60% of respondents. The students studying in Moscow and Krasnoyarsk also pointed to everyday household problems. Apart from this, our survey looked into aspects of racism and nationalism towards foreign students. The results obtained exemplify that over half of the students surveyed across the three cities had never encountered racism or nationalism, while some 20% of the respondents remarked that they experienced some forms of racism or nationalism and malignity towards them on the part of Russians both in Moscow and in Tomsk and Krasnoyarsk.

What are the chances and prospects of employment at home with a Russian university diploma?

The survey demonstrated that over half of the Russian universities' foreign graduates believe that finding a job upon their return home will be easy. Only 6% of the respondents answered that Russian higher education diplomas are not recognized in their home countries. Almost 10% of the respondents noted that Russian university diplomas are not recognized in the countries where they would like to work. The experts polled during the survey remarked that Russian universities are most competitive in the technical and science majors.

It would be logical to ask how willing the foreign students are to remain in Russia after the studies?

Among the three cities, the largest number of respondents who stated their unwillingness to stay in Russia after graduation was in Tomsk. On the whole, only 19% of the respondents are willing to permanently reside in Russia, whereas most others (almost 40%) stated they would like to stay in Russia



*Dmitry Poletaev,
PhD in Economics,
Director of the
regional public
organisation
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only for some time, and the remaining 37% would like to leave upon graduation.

Does the RF Government take any specific measures to improve the situation of foreign students in Russia?

The best answer to this question is provided by the "Migration Policy Concept of the Russian Federation until 2025" which sets forth provisions on educational migration, and states that the potential of the Russian education system is underused, whereas for Russia the educational migration is a potential source of qualified and integrated foreign citizens. In concrete terms, the legislative restrictions for employment during education and upon its completion, which reduce the appeal of studying in Russia, are being abolished.

The messages contained in the "Concept" are already used to follow up on the "lessons learnt", and the gaps are being gradually filled. For example, in order to facilitate educational migration in the Russian universities, secondary specialized educational institutions, and under continuing professional education programs, 15,000 budget-funded (free) admissions of foreign students are provided in 2014-2015 and subsequent academic years. In July 2013 the Federal Law "On the Legal Status of Foreigners in the Russian Federation" was amended to the effect that foreigners pursuing full-time studies in the RF have a right to employment based on the work permit. In other words, foreign students received the right to legally work in Russia after classes.

Mr Poletaev, thank you very much for your time! ■

Objective 2: Usefulness of Migration Profiles – reflecting the findings from Lisbon

Two years after the Kick-off Workshop in Florence in 2013, Objective 2 Workshop on “Applied Knowledge in a Migration Policy Dialog: data collection, exchange and application” took place in Lisbon on February 12-13, 2015. The 1,5-day Workshop gathered representatives of 13 participating states, Frontex, EUROMED Migration III, IOM and ICMPD in its capacity of the PP Secretariat.

The gathering, analysis and sharing of information related to migration have constituted the main tasks of the Prague Process from its inception. The dissemination of the data by means of an IT-based information exchange tool, the i-Map www.imap-migration.org, serves to achieve the key goal of the Prague Process political initiative, namely the promotion of close migration partnerships between states of the European Union/Schengen area, the Western Balkans, the Eastern Partnership, Central Asia, Russia, and Turkey. The content of the Knowledge base includes:

- Migration profiles offering a ‘snapshot’ of the migration situation in a given country;
- Synoptic infographics providing for an overview of country-specific or regional findings;
- News section presenting an overview of media coverage of migration issues in the region.

During the workshop, the participating states shared their experience in data collection and dissemination and provided their feedback on the Discussion paper, which raised important questions regarding the practical use of the Knowledge base and its further development.

Conclusions on the Knowledge base revision

The experience of each country in dealing with migration issues is unique. Both Extended and Light versions of migration profiles offer a wealth of information about the migration situation in a given country, which can otherwise be problematic and time-consuming to obtain. Accordingly:

- All participants confirmed their interest in obtaining information about migration in the participating states as well as the broader region.
- Non-EU states expressed specific interest in learning about the migration situation in both EU and non-EU states.
- EU states highlighted their interest in obtaining data about non-EU states, which is generally hard to obtain in English.
- Both EU and non-EU participating states agreed that in their capacity of information tools, migration profiles con-

stitute an important source of inspiration on how certain problems can be addressed.

- In the framework of the Prague Process, the availability of key knowledge on migration in the form of individual Extended Migration Profiles (EMP) and the Migration Profile Light (MPL) is beneficial because:
 - EMP provides deep insights into the migration situation in a given country;
 - MPL constitutes a practical tool for obtaining concise, up-to-date comparable information on migration across countries.

From the user’s point of view, MPLs contain comparable data on the countries. Hence, it would be practical to have the Light version of the migration profile available for all PP participating states in order to access comparable data across countries.

From the participating countries’ point of view, the benefits of preparing migration profiles is that the process of drafting offers an opportunity to enhance inter-agency cooperation between the various state authorities.

With regards to the Knowledge base as a dissemination tool, there are three main criteria that make its content particularly valuable, namely:

- Easy updatability
- Comprehensiveness
- Comparability of data

In order to enjoy the benefits that the Knowledge base has to offer, both dedication on behalf of the state authorities to the timely update of the data and the Prague Process Secretariat’s support are essential.

The key questions remaining to be addressed relate to the ownership of the profiles, the necessity of national endorsement, and the updatability of the data. While awaiting the decision on these issues from the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) on July 6-7, 2015 in Budapest, the PP team will continue supporting the states in the process of preparation of the MPL and updating the i-Map News section on migration in the region as well as the individual states.

The European Migration Network as a good example of a knowledge platform



*Joanna Sosnowska,
Polish EMN National
Contact Point*

Nowadays, the competent and efficient management of migration and asylum policy requires from both national and European analysts and policy makers up-to-date, unbiased knowledge and reliable data. The constant changes in migration and asylum trends, the appearance of new migration risks and the differing approaches towards foreigners across the European countries and societies are inevitable facts. The latter resulted in the need for a common platform where experts and stakeholders could discuss and possibly rectify current problems and induce best practices in the field of migration and asylum. Against this background, the European Commission in 2003 set up a three-year preparatory action for the establishment of a European Migration Network (EMN), with a view to providing the Community and its Member States with objective, reliable and up-to-date migration data in a format, aiming to meet policymakers' immediate needs. Under consideration of the comments made by European and national stakeholders, the Council Decision 2008/381/EC of 14th May 2008 established the legal basis for the European Migration Network.

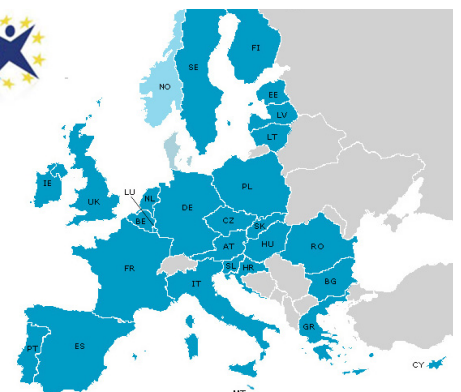
The EMN plays a key role in providing up-to-date, objective, reliable and comparable information on migration and asylum topics to policy makers (at EU and national level) and the general public by, inter alia, extending the scope of information sources, both through the EMN national networks and through links with other relevant EU/international bodies, and by developing complementary activities. The EMN has established a multi-level network to facilitate its activities. On the European level, EMN National Contact Points meet regularly, networking and collaborating with other European level institutions and organisations, particularly in relation to specific studies and policy themes. These have included: the European Parliament, the Commission's Eurostat, EU Agency Fundamental Rights (FRA), the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (Frontex), the EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator and other relevant entities. On the national level, each of the existing 29 EMN National Contact Points (EMN NCPs) has established a National Network comprising a wide range of relevant stakeholders in the area of migration and asylum. Members of the national networks actively support NCPs by providing information and contributing to policy and research

activities, thus enhancing the objectivity of EMN studies. They also help to ensure that the activities of the EMN reflect the actual priorities of the stakeholders at national level.

The EMN produces Informs (policy briefs), bulletins and policy factsheets as well as reports and studies on topics relevant to policymakers at national and EU levels. Recent examples include reports on detention and alternatives to detention, on good practices in the return and reintegration of irregular migrants, on policies, practices and data on unaccompanied minors, as well as on admitting third-country nationals for business purposes. The EMN glossary and the EMN Annual Policy Reports represent further important milestones. Moreover, the EMN Ad-Hoc Query tool allows for the quick collection of relevant information on a specific topic from all Member States. The EMN normally does not engage in primary research. The EMN is easily accessible through its main website (www.ec.europa.eu/emn) or the national web sites (e.g. www.emn.gov.pl). Outputs of the studies are also presented during the EMN annual conferences.

The EMN Return Expert Group (EMN REG) encompasses return and re-integration issues. The EMN Ad-Hoc Query tool and EMN Informs are used to collect information on how Member States deal with specific aspects of return. Under the guidance of the European Commission, support is also provided to ongoing initiatives related to forced and voluntary return. One of the latest publications produced by the expert group is the EMN REG Directory: A compilation of Member States' Country Factsheets on Return and Reintegration Programmes and EMN Informs on incentives to return to a third-country and the support provided to migrants for their reintegration.

From the practical point of view the EMN consist of the European Commission representative, the EMN Service Provider and 29 EMN National Contact Points (EMN NCPs) which were established in each Member State plus Norway and they are responsible for the coordination of the EMN at national level. The EMN is financially supported by the European Commission. ■



EMN Member States

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Work visit to Portugal – ERIS Project

On 10th – 13th March 2015, the ERIS project organised a work visit to Portugal and the cities of Lisbon, Torres Vedras and Porto. The participants from the Czech Republic, the Russian Federation and ICMPD had the unique opportunity to get acquainted with Portuguese integration policies and concrete measures that are widely recognised as Good Practices in the field.

The visit focused on the practical exchange on integration policies and measures with a broad variety of involved actors. It started with a visit to the Headquarters of the Portuguese national immigration authority, the Office for Foreigners and Borders (SEF). Integration is one of the main areas of SEF's work. It was emphasised that a legal residence status is considered a precondition for successful immigrant integration.

In Portugal, as in other immigration countries, the implementation of concrete integration measures is partly delegated to NGOs. The approach of the two organisations visited during the mission is to address immigrants' needs in the framework of general social programmes which also assist other categories of beneficiaries. Such an approach represents an alternative to integration measures specifically and solely targeting immigrants.

The Portuguese concept of the "One Stop Shop Centre" is widely recognised as a "Best Practice" in providing assistance to immigrants. The customer-friendly integration centre gathers all relevant services under one roof, allowing immigrants to settle all their issues within the same building. The ERIS participants took note of the smooth coordination among all the state and non-state agencies involved in the Centre which is crucial for the efficient work in such a multi-task setting.

The specific issue of integration of asylum seekers and refugees was also part of the work visit agenda. The ERIS delegation visited a reception centre and discussed the scope of integration services available to its clients.



The practical implementation of integration programmes at the local level was presented in the city of Torres Vedras. Participants were informed about ways in which the municipality, in cooperation with the state and NGOs, provides integration services and organises inter-cultural events. Moreover, participants visited a local high school where issues of integration of immigrant children and language courses for adult immigrants were discussed.

In the city of Porto, participants of the ERIS work visit met with representatives of the SEF Northern Directorate and discussed topics of integration, trafficking in human beings and labour exploitation. Participants had the opportunity to visit a detention centre for immigrants who are under the obligation to leave the country. It was shown that the Portuguese immigration system provides for sufficient flexibility to regularise the status of immigrants who were detected to be in an irregular situation. Meanwhile, detention and forced return are considered very last options when all other possibilities have been exhausted. ■

The EU – Central Asia High Level Security Dialogue

On March 11th the 2nd High Level Security Dialogue between the European Union and the countries of Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) took place in Dushanbe. Afghanistan was invited as a special guest to the Dialogue. The meeting was held at the level of deputy foreign ministers and chaired by Ms Helga Schmidt, the Deputy Secretary General of the European External Action Service.

The meeting in Dushanbe aimed at addressing a number of security issues relevant to the EU, Central Asia and Afghanistan, including the emerging security challenges in Central Asia, such as radicalisation and the phenomenon of foreign fighters, as well as migration policy and future challenges. Acknowledging the importance of regional stability, a separate session was devoted to Afghanistan, covering topics such as promoting stability in Afghanistan through external develop-

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ment cooperation, and issues of fighting drug trafficking and smuggling. The participants agreed to intensify common efforts between the EU and Central Asian states in all above-mentioned areas, while also extending them to regional cooperation between Afghanistan and Central Asia.

The High Level Security Dialogue reflects a shared interest by the EU and Central Asian countries in strengthening dialogue and cooperation on security issues. It builds on the intensified levels of cooperation developed through the EU–Central Asia Strategy for Partnership adopted by the European Council in 2007 and the substantial EU cooperation programs in the region. The High Level Security Dialogue is held regularly; the first Dialogue was held in 2013 in Brussels. This Dialogue coincides with an ongoing review of the EU's Central Asia Strategy and will contribute to its outcome.

The discussion of migration related issues and related challenges covered a big variety of ongoing and future projects, namely – BOMCA, MIEUX, Heroine Route II, EU support to UN regional CT strategy, CADAP and others. Notably, among the important cooperation areas which participants agreed to reinforce and deepen, the cooperation in the framework of Prague Process was also mentioned.

In the course of the Prague Process, the five Central Asian Republics (CAR) were involved to a varying extent in activities on high, senior and expert level, with some of these activities taking place in Central Asia (high-level introductory missions in 2009, expert-level missions in 2010, workshops in 2010-2014).

The CAR have all been invited to take active part in the framework of the EU funded targeted initiative supporting the implementation of the Prague Process (2012-2016; 3.6m€), and in the seven Pilot Projects implemented in 2012-2015. While Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan do actively participate in the development of the Prague Process standards in the areas of illegal migration, legal migration, migration and development and asylum and international protection, Uzbekistan continues to participate on senior-level, while Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan have been less active in the Process over the past few years. The joint work also includes the update of existing or development of new Migration Profiles.

With the aim to re-involve Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in the Process on both senior and expert level, a set of expert missions is foreseen for summer 2015.

More information available online: http://eeas.europa.eu/statements-eeas/2015/150311_01_en.htm

EaP-SIPPAP Project's final stage

On 25 March 2015, representatives of all six Eastern Partnership countries, as well as the project implementing partners from the European Union, the Delegation of the European Union to Georgia, IOM, Frontex, GUAM and the Prague Process gathered in Tbilisi for the Final Conference of the project 'Eastern Partnership Cooperation in the Fight against Irregular Migration – Supporting the implementation of Prague Process Action Plan' (EaP-SIPPAP), funded by the EU and implemented under the umbrella of the Prague Process.

Speaking about the main achievements of the project, it has to be noted that the operational needs in the Eastern Partnership countries in terms of cooperation and education, as identified in the March 2014 report, are the basis of the operational module of the project. Through numerous bi- and multilateral activities, the module has been highly successful in addressing these needs. Through these activities, a number of draft Standard Operational Procedures (SOP) and Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) between border management agencies in the region were developed. The signing ceremony of one such Memorandum of Understanding, the MoU on cooperation



among training institutions, took place on 24th March 2015, bringing together the representatives of ten project partners: the implementing partners (Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia), as well as representatives of the national authorities in border management from the EaP countries.

In the course of 2014, partners from the EU MSs welcomed EaP representatives to their premises and shared a wide range

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of practices related to inter-agency, intra-agency and international cooperation during the organised study visits. In parallel to operational activities, the educational module of the project has been actively involving training experts in the region in the exchange of good practices in education. Two training modules were developed and piloted to address the topic of Integrated Border Management in the training curricula of the EaP countries. Developed by EU and ICMPD experts, the modules on risk analysis and inter-agency cooperation were successfully piloted in Georgia and Moldova in September 2014.

In order to ensure sustainability of the intervention, not only training plans on risk analysis and inter-agency cooperation

as part of the educational module, but the extraction of the IBM Guidelines as a reference material for the operational staff working at the border and the distance bi-lingual English-Russian learning tool (e-tool) with six thematic areas were developed.

All delegations, which attended the Final Conference in Tbilisi, very positively evaluated the achievements of the project, the innovative methodology to interlink operational and educational modules, as well as the sustainability of the project results. Both EaP and EU countries, with great enthusiasm, welcomed further activities in the project and confirmed their commitment to continue cooperation in future initiatives. ■

Eastern Partnership Panel on Migration and Asylum Panel Meeting on Migration Data Management and Migration Trends

The meeting of the Eastern Partnership Panel on Migration and Asylum, held in Budapest on 5-6 of March and co-hosted by Hungary and Moldova, provided an opportunity for policy-level dialogue among the Eastern Partnership countries and the EU Member States on migration data management, as well as on migration trends.

The Eastern Partnership Panel on Migration and Asylum (EaP PMA) serves to strengthen the asylum and migration systems of Eastern partners and advance the dialogue on migration and asylum issues amongst the Eastern partners and between them and the EU. In the context of the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility the EU, as regards the regional dialogue processes towards the East, acknowledges the importance of the Prague Process along with the Eastern Partnership Panel on Migration and Asylum. The secretariat of the Eastern Partnership Panel for Migration and Asylum is co-financed by the Prague Process Targeted Initiative.

The main starting point of the discussion among the participants of the meeting – experts and officials from the Eastern Partnership countries, the EU, academia, civil society and international organisations – was the importance of the reliable and comparable migration and asylum data available, which ensures the overall understanding of migration dynamics and allows for timely policy responses.

To uncover the topic of effective migration data management the participants touched upon several issues, such as cross-border cooperation, innovative approaches to migration data collection (i.e. utilisation of cell phone user data), countries' case studies on harmonization and unification of definitions in data collection, current challenges and attempts for improvement of data management systems. Moreover, during one of the working sessions the speakers raised the discussion-provoking topic regarding the right balance between migration data collection and protection of the fundamental human rights, which can be achieved by certain technical solutions.

In the session devoted to migration intelligence and the analysis of migration trends, Ms Anna Bara, ICMPD Project Officer, presented the work carried out in the framework of the Prague Process on migration profiles (extended and light migration profiles) and the I-map platform – the tools, designed to collect and disseminate comparable migration data.

The next meeting of the Eastern Partnership Panel on Migration and Asylum on labour migration will take place in Minsk, Belarus, on 6-7 of May. The Prague Process Secretariat will be represented by the ICMPD Project Officer, Mr Alexander Maleev.

More information: <http://eapmigrationpanel.org>

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