

EMN BULLETIN

August 2020

The EMN Bulletin provides policymakers and other practitioners with updates on recent migration and international protection policy developments at EU and national level. The 31st Edition provides information from **April to June 2020**, including the (latest) relevant published statistics.

The Bulletin is organised by policy theme. You can directly access your area of interest by clicking on one of the following themes:

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SPECIAL SECTION: COVID-19 (The full version can be found [here](#))

EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENTS

- The European Commission played an active role during the current crisis. First, a [Communication](#) on assessment of state of play of the Communication on non-essential travel was released on 8 April 2020. On 16 April, the Commission presented a [guidance document](#) on implementing relevant EU rules on asylum and return procedures and on resettlement in order to ensure the continuity of procedures and the respect of basic rights. Also, on 8 May the Commission invited Member States to extend the [restriction](#) on non-essential travel to the EU until 15 June. A few days after, a phased and [coordinated approach](#) for restoring freedom of movement and lifting internal border controls to engage Member States in a process of reopening unrestricted cross-border movement within the Union was presented. In the same line, on 29 May the Commission [encouraged](#) Member States not to consider the periods of stay of third-country nationals caused by COVID-19--related measures as illegal stay in the EU.
- As the COVID-19 pandemic situation improved, the Commission [recommended](#) partial and gradual lifting of travel restrictions to the EU and adopted as guidance on resuming visa operations. Through this recommendation the Commission encouraged Schengen Member States and Schengen Associated States to lift internal border controls by 15 June and to prolong the temporary restriction on non-essential travel into the EU until the end of June.

SPECIAL UPDATE: COVID-19 (The full version can be found [here](#))

- The area of **legal migration** experienced additional changes during the reporting period due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Seventeen Member States (AT, BG, CZ, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HR, IE, IT, LU, LV, PL, PT, SI, SK) extended deadlines to apply for permits or speed up the procedures. The channels for applying were modified in eleven Member States (AT, CZ, EE, FI, FR, IE, IT, LT, MT, PT, SE) so applications can be submitted online or through pre-booked appointments. Seven Member States (CY, FR, IT, LT, MT, SK) have resumed procedures for granting international protection/asylum and three Member States (CY, IT, LV) reported to have established protective measures affecting applications procedures. Lastly, Austria eased the requirements needed during immigration procedures for safety reasons while Finland reduced the fees required to apply for permits. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic consequences, the Finnish Immigration Service granted a permit for approximately 8 700 seasonal workers from outside the European Union.
- In the area of **unaccompanied minors (UAMs) and vulnerable groups**, two Member States (AT, FR) transferred minors to alternative facilities in which protective measures are observed. Italy suspended solidarity programs of temporary protection of minors, but specific forms of national solidarity were organised by institutions, associations, families and parishes, offering hospitality, for a maximum of 120 days, to minors who come from specific countries and who find themselves in specific situations.
- Regarding **international protection** (including asylum and resettlement), thirteen Member States (BE, BG, CY, DE, IT, LU, NL, PT, SI, SK) reported having adopted protective measures aimed at preventing the spread of COVID-19 during the procedures. FR organized sheltering measures for all persons without accommodation and implemented the extension of the validity for allowances for asylum seekers. In the same line, seven Member States (BE, EE, IE, IT, FI, MT, PT) suspended partially or completely the procedures and interviews (PL – the procedures were ongoing, however, interviews were suspended for a while). Belgium and Malta encouraged the use of telematic means to apply or do paperwork. Six Member States extended relevant permits or certificates due to COVID-19 (AT, FR, IE, IT, LU, PT) while residence permit operations were resumed completely or partially by eight Member States (BG, CY, DE, FR, LU, MT, NL, SI).
- Deadlines and requirements for certain courses and modules due to be completed for **integration** purposes have been eased in Austria and France, suspended in Spain and Luxembourg, and transformed into online courses (LU) or other alternatives in France, Luxembourg and Malta. Three Member States (AU, IE and PT) have started information campaigns about COVID-19 in different languages to be able to reach migrants in their native languages. Economic support for struggling businesses and individuals has been provided in Estonia, Italy and the Czech Republic. Lastly, local administrations and NGOs have put in place integration projects in Poland.
- The management of the **Schengen borders** and the **EU external borders** has been strongly influenced by the pandemic. Eleven Member States (AT, CZ, CY, EE, FR, HR, LT, PL, PT, SI, SK) reported to have eased travel restrictions that were put in place during the lockdown and seven Member States (AT, CZ, CY, EE, LT, LV, SK) implemented different security measures depending on the country of origin of incoming travellers.
- The way in which authorities tackle **irregular migration and return** has been greatly influenced by the limitations on air traffic imposed by the measures implemented to stop COVID-19 from spreading. Nine Member States (DE, EE, ES, FR, HR, IE, MT, PT, SK) reported to have suspended or limited return operations due to the current situation while Luxembourg and Latvia pushed deadlines to apply for permits to avoid putting third country nationals in an irregular situation. Luxembourg extended the deadlines for the renewals of permits that expired or the legalisation of stay if the short-stay visa exceeded 90 days.
- Belgium resumed return operations after deconfinement started. Italy put in place measures aimed at increasing surveillance while Portugal implemented protective measures at detention centres.
- Finally, the **external dimension** of the migration policies of some Member States has also been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Czech Republic and Hungary redirected international funds to help third countries struggling to cope with COVID-19 and Estonia called for the creation of a digital platform that could help to match innovative solutions to the needs of partner countries in terms of dealing with the COVID-19 crisis.

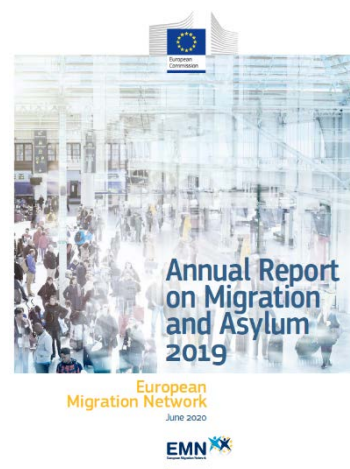
SPECIAL NOTE: EMN publications and events

The first EMN webinar took place on 17 June. With around 340 participants, the webinar served as a launch of the **EMN Annual Report on Migration and Asylum 2019** which was [published](#) on the same day.

On 24 June, the Croatian Presidency – EMN annual [e-conference](#) was held. The focus of the event was migration management on the Eastern Mediterranean – Western Balkan Route while ensuring the protection of migrants' fundamental rights.

A new EMN Inform and a study were published during the period April – June 2020. The Inform on **Missing unaccompanied minors in the EU, Norway and the UK** was [published](#) in April. This inform is the result of the cooperation between the EMN and two NGOs working in the area of unaccompanied minors (Missing Children Europe and Save the Children).

The study on "**Comparative overview of national protection statuses in the EU and Norway**" was [published](#) in May. It provides updated information on the different protection statuses in the EU and Norway.



1. GENERAL POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATE

No new developments.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- **France:** The Court of Auditors published a report on the [entry, residence and initial reception of foreign nationals](#) on 5 May 2020. The report formulates 14 recommendations that could contribute to improve the efficiency of the procedures and measures implemented, particularly through a simplification of the residence regime, the organization of asylum seekers' accommodation and the reorganization of the economic migration with quotas.

Judgment of the European Court of Justice

[Joined cases C-924/19 PPU et C-925/19 PPU](#)

On 14 May, the CJEU published a judgement concerning the joined cases C-924/19 and 925/19 concerning, inter alia, the accommodation of asylum seekers in the Röske transit zone at the Hungarian-Serbian border and the grounds of inadmissibility for asylum applications. According to this judgement, the placing of asylum seekers or third-country nationals who are the subject of a return decision in the Röske transit zone at the Serbian-Hungarian border must be classified as detention.

- **Ireland:** The Irish Supreme Court recalled European Court of Human Rights jurisprudence on the rights of refugees to family unity, [holding](#) on 19th June that by acquiring Irish citizenship, a refugee did not extinguish their right to apply for family reunification in Ireland under the Refugee Act 1996.

- **Lithuania:** the Migration Department [published](#) the 16th Migration Yearbook with the main data and events of the year 2019, including reform of the migration processes management system and the creation of MIGRIS – Electronic migration services system. The data shows that the number of foreigners living in Lithuania increased by 27.9 % in 2019, and they make up 2.08 % of the total population (58 000 of the total 2.8 million).

- **Netherlands:** The Council of State has determined that the Dutch government must investigate the consequences of someone losing their EU citizenship as a result of the loss of Dutch citizenship. If the national government decides that the consequences of the loss of EU citizenship are disproportionate, the applicant will regain Dutch citizenship with retroactive effect.

- **Italy:** On 19 May 2020, the Italian Government adopted Decree-Law n. 34, titled "*Urgent measures in the area of health, support to work and the economy, as well as social policies related to the epidemiological emergency from COVID-19*". It contains several novelties with respect to regularisation of residence and employment relationships.

From June 1 to August 15, 2020 it will be possible to file a request for a residence permit so as to promote the transformation of undeclared work into regular employment in the following sectors of the labour market:

- agriculture, husbandry, fishing and related activities;
- personal assistance services;

- domestic work.



2. INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION INCLUDING ASYLUM

EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

No new developments.

LATEST RELEVANT STATISTICS

- On 15 June 2020, Eurostat [published](#) statistics on asylum seekers for the first quarter of 2020. The number of first-time asylum applicants in the EU-27 increased by 2 % in the first quarter of 2020 compared with the same quarter of 2019 and decreased by 12 % compared with the fourth quarter of 2019. The top 3 nationalities were Syrian, Afghan and Venezuelan, lodging 19 290, 14 875 and 13 035 applications, respectively. Colombians (7 200 more applicants compared with the first quarter of 2019) contributed most to the overall increase in first-time asylum applicants in absolute terms, followed by Afghans (+4 700), Syrians (+2 500), Venezuelans (+2 200) and Peruvians (+1 800).

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- **Belgium:** On 5 May 2020, the ECtHR handed down its decision in MN and Others v. Belgium, a case testing whether a Syrian family's humanitarian visa application at the Belgian embassy in Beirut entailed the state's obligation to allow entry to individuals who might be at risk of ill-treatment. The Syrian family wanted to apply for asylum once in Belgium. The Court ruled that the process of applying for a visa in person did not bring the applicants under Belgian jurisdiction, declaring the case inadmissible.
- **Estonia:** A new surveillance measure – appearing for counselling – was [adopted](#) into legislation. The measure is applied to both applicants for international protection and irregular migrants by the Police and Border Guard Board.
- **Finland:** The Finnish Immigration Service will receive EUR 12 million in [EU financial support](#) for reception of 175 asylum seekers from the Mediterranean. The Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) will grant the financial support for the reception of asylum seekers from the Mediterranean region. The first asylum seekers from the Mediterranean to be [relocated](#) consist of approximately 25 minors from Greek refugee camps. In addition to Greece, Finland will be receiving relocated asylum seekers from Cyprus and Malta.
- **France:** On 5 May, an [order amending the initial period of validity of the asylum claim certification and its renewal period](#) was issued. Henceforth, under the regular procedure, the asylum claim certification is valid for an initial period of ten months and six months under the accelerated procedure (before it was one month for both procedures) and is renewable per six month period
- **Croatia:** In June 2020, training was held as part of the EASO program for the module Gender, gender identity and sexual orientation. Two online trainings for the Dublin III and Inclusion Advance are in progress.
- **Hungary:** Having regard to the decision of the ECJ, the Hungarian transit zones of Röszke and Tompa were closed on 20 May. Persons placed in the transit zones were transferred to other reception facilities.
- **Ireland:** On 23 April, the Ombudsman published the annual [commentary](#) on the direct provision system (system of asylum seeker accommodation used in Ireland) covering the calendar year of 2019. The Department of Justice and Equality released on 9 June the details of a [briefing note](#) on the progress of an Expert Group on direct provision which identified measures to improve conditions for asylum seekers in the system.
- **Italy:** According to data published by the Italian National Asylum Commission, almost 10 972 asylum applications were submitted from 1 January to 12 June 2020. The main geographical areas of origin of the applicants are Asia (40 %) and Africa (37%), then America (17 %) and Europe (6 %).
- **Lithuania:** The State Border Guard Service and Lithuanian Red Cross Society (LRCS) signed a cooperation [agreement](#) which authorizes LRCS to provide psychological, social, legal and other support for vulnerable foreigners, regardless of their legal status.
According to a new [report](#) from the Migration department, in 2019 there was a record in the the number of lodged asylum applications in Lithuania. In the last 5 years the average number of asylum seekers in Lithuania was 476,8. In 2019, 646 foreigners have applied for asylum in the country.
- **Luxembourg:** On 7 April 2020, the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs declared that Luxembourg would receive twelve UAMs staying in the Greek islands. On 15 April 2020, twelve UAMs of Afghan and Syrian origin, aged 11 to 15 years old [arrived](#) in Luxembourg.

The National Reception Office (ONA) and the Integration Department of the Ministry of Families, Integration and the Greater Region have launched [a call for projects within the framework of the AMIF](#) for the projects in following fields:

- promotion of maternal and child health;
- promoting health and healthy living in the community in accommodation facilities; for applicants for international protection.

■ **Malta:** In May 2020, the [Refugees Act](#) was amended to include Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt and Bangladesh as safe countries of origin.

■ **Netherlands:** In 2019 three [designated officials](#) of organisations cooperating in the immigration process were appointed to prevent nuisance caused by asylum seekers. To further tackle the nuisance, a fourth designated official will be appointed, € 1 million will be made available for local initiatives and an additional toolkit for municipalities with measures is being prepared.

■ **Greece:** Legislative developments took place regarding asylum procedures in Greece. In 12 May 2020 the [Law 4686 Gov. Gazette A 96/12-05-20](#) was passed, introducing various amendments to the existing legislation. The new law aims at ameliorating the asylum procedures to accelerate the status determination procedure. Furthermore, various administrative issues are regulated. The amendments relate, among others, to the time limits and the special requirements defining the asylum procedures, the introduction of the registry of rapporteurs and Greek asylum working groups in the asylum procedure, the harmonisation of the procedures between first reception authorities and Greek Asylum Service as well as the further harmonisation between national and European legislation in compliance with international standards of asylum procedures. Information technology means are also introduced through the entire asylum process by the new law.

Furthermore, an important legislative amendment was introduced regarding the issuance of travel documents to applicants and beneficiaries of international protection. Through this decision, some administrative issues observed in practice are regulated. Notably the decision stipulates that the Greek Asylum Service (GAS) regional authorities receive travel documents in cases that the decision is issued from Appeals Committees and that there's a control of the criminal record during ESTIA the submission of the application.

Legislative framework was established for the "ESTIA II: Rental accommodation scheme for asylum seekers". The program aims to continue to provide safe and decent living conditions for applicants for international protection and refugees residing in the country, through the provision of housing in apartments and buildings, in conjunction with the provision of accompanying services.



3. UNACCOMPANIED MINORS (UAMs) AND VULNERABLE GROUPS

EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

No new developments.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- **Cyprus:** 30 vulnerable asylum seekers are going to be relocated from Cyprus to Finland, in cooperation with EASO. A grant agreement has been signed between the European Funds Unit of Ministry of Interior and Cyprus' Asylum Service. The total budget of the project is € 21 020 and is co-funded by the Asylum, Migration, Integration Fund.
- **Germany:** On 18 April 2020, 47 unaccompanied children and young people from Greek island camps arrived in Germany. As part of a European effort, the Federal Government decided to make a humanitarian contribution to help Greece cope with the difficult humanitarian situation on the Greek islands, and above all to improve the situation of children in migrant hotspots.
- **Estonia:** A new information sharing system was [introduced](#) by the national authorities to exchange information faster on children and adults in need of assistance.
- **France:** On 28 May 2020 a [law proposal](#) introducing the **possibility to simplify the administrative procedures for foreign minors over 15 years deprived of the protection of their family** was adopted in first reading by the Senate. A [decree](#) regarding the State's lump-sum contribution to the protection and situation assessment of unaccompanied minors was adopted on 23 June 2020. It establishes in particular the possibility for the State to differentiate the reimbursement amount related to the evaluation of minority and of the degree of isolation (lump sum of € 500 since the decree of 28 June 2019) especially if the Regional Council requests to consult the supporting files for the minority evaluation.

- **Croatia:** In June 2020, a meeting was held between representatives of the Asylum Department of the Ministry of Interior and representatives of the Ministry for Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy to improve cooperation in the implementation of family reunification within the Dublin procedure. Following that, a standard operative procedure (SOP) is being drafted to contribute to the coordination in process of family reunification of UAM.
- **Ireland:** On 19 June, the Department for Children and Youth Affairs [welcomed](#) the arrival in Dublin of eight unaccompanied minors from a refugee camp in Greece under the Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP).
- **Italy:** On 22 June, the Directorate General for Immigration and Integration Policies published the [data](#) updated to 31 May 2020 of Unaccompanied Foreign Minors.
- **Malta:** The authorities worked with EASO on the operational procedure to improve the vulnerable assessment and strengthen the team conducting them. During this period interviews were conducted by the new personnel and the first orientation meeting was held. In mid-June the age assessment team started performing the assessment and 120 minors were moved from closed to open centres.
- **Netherlands:** The Netherlands and Greece are forging a [partnership](#) for the purpose of improving the reception and protection of unaccompanied foreign minors arriving in Greece. This partnership will focus on setting up and consolidating a guardianship scheme in Greece, receiving unaccompanied minor asylum seekers in Greece, and supervising unaccompanied minors after the completion of their asylum procedure.
- **Greece:** Law 4686 Gov. Gazette A 96/12-05-20 introduced the definition of the responsible authority for the protection of UAMs and separated children in art.4 as the Secretary Special for the protection of UAMs aiming at the protection of the best interest of the child and family unity.



4. LEGAL MIGRATION

EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

- EU development on 20 May 2020, the Commission issued a [guidance note on](#) citizens' rights relating to the Agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community. It is purely informative and should not be interpreted as stating the official position of the European Commission. The note includes definitions and guidance on rights and obligations relating to residence, residence documents, workers and self-employed persons and on professional qualifications.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- **Estonia:** The parliament [approved](#) digital nomad visa related amendments (which will come into force from 1 July), making Estonia is one of the first countries in the world to [create](#) a digital nomad visa.
- **Finland:** Due to the coronavirus pandemic, berry and vegetable farms and fields in Finland may now receive 9 000 seasonal workers from outside the European Union. The Finnish Immigration Service has [granted](#) a permit for approximately 8 700 seasonal workers.
- **Ireland:** The Department of Justice and Equality [announced](#) on 22 June a new online registration renewal system for non-EEA students based in Dublin who are eligible for renewal of their permission to reside.
- **Portugal:** [Order no. 5793-A/2020](#) implemented a simplified procedure for examining applications for the granting of residence permits. This order determines the implementation of a simplified procedure for applications for the granting and renewal of residence permits, making it possible to substantially reduce service times at the branches of the Immigration and Borders Service (SEF) for around 250 thousand foreign citizens.

5. INTEGRATION

EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

- *No new developments.*

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- **Belgium:** In the coming months, the Home Affairs Committee of the Belgian Parliament will discuss a legislative proposal to introduce a preparatory phase in the country of origin on (civic) integration for foreigners applying for family reunification. EMN Belgium provided the Parliament with a comparative overview of this policy, focusing mainly on the neighbouring countries.

- **Estonia:** The Ministry of Social Affairs [announced](#) that short-term foreign workers, who are currently unemployed, but have the right to continue working in Estonia in case they find a job, have the possibility to receive job mediation.
The Tallinn City Centre government and the Ministry of the Interior [entered](#) into a partnership agreement to develop an action plan to support the integration of new immigrants.
- **Croatia:** In March 2020 the Ministry of Interior and the NGO “Centre for the Culture of Dialogue” concluded an agreement on the allocation of financial resources for the implementation of the project “New Neighbours - inclusion of persons who have been granted international protection in Croatian society”, aiming at improving their living conditions (through AMIF). The implementation of the project began in April 2020.
- **Ireland:** On 19 June, the membership of a new and independent Anti-Racism Committee, tasked with drafting a new Action Plan Against Racism was [announced](#). The Minister of State with responsibility for Equality, Immigration and Integration [announced](#) a call for applications under the 2020 Communities Integration Fund.
- **Luxembourg:** The National Reception Office and the Integration Department of the Ministry of Families, Integration and the Greater Region have launched [a call for projects within the framework of the AMIF](#) for the projects carrying out studies:
 - on the integration needs of third-country nationals residing in Luxembourg;
 - on the participation of third country nationals in association life in Luxembourg and on the role and characteristics of associations for the successful integration of third country nationals in Luxembourg.

The Ministry of Education, Children and Youth published a brochure [“Les classes à régime linguistique spécifique / The classes with a specific linguistic system”](#) meant for parents of children for whom either the German or French language constitutes a challenge.

- **Netherlands:** As of 1 May, compulsory [integration courses](#) for Turkish nationals with an asylum status are required in order to obtain a permanent residence permit. From 1 July 2021, integration courses are compulsory for all Turkish nationals moving to the Netherlands. Municipalities will receive an extra 35.2 million euros per year for their directing role in the [new civic integration system](#). In addition, they receive a one-off 36.5 million euros for the implementation costs. The new law will take effect on 1 July 2021.
- **Poland:** The city of Poznan, together with the Center for Migration Research Foundation and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) have joined forces to provide services for migrants in one place - by re-styling the project called “AKTYWATOR WLKP - supporting integration of migrants in the Wielkopolska region. On 30 April, a free series of meetings “We help foreigners to live in Poland” began. The action is directed at foreigners living in the Western Subregion. The purpose of the meetings is to integrate foreigners, exchange information on job offers, conditions of stay in Poland, discuss needs and provide legal advice. In Bielsko-Biała, the Center for the Integration of Foreigners “myBB” was created, with the main aim to support foreigners with information and to organize projects for integration with the local community. The services include help with formalities and challenges of everyday life as well as support in contacts with offices, employers and health care and education institutions.



6. MANAGEMENT OF THE EU EXTERNAL BORDERS

EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

- [Figures](#) published by the European Commission show that the consulates of the Schengen States received almost 17 million applications for short-stay visas in 2019, a considerable increase of 5.9% since 2018. The three largest source countries all experienced solid growth, with applications in Russia topping 4 million (+11.8%) for the first time in five years, demand in China reaching almost 3 million (+5.2%), and applications in India exceeding 1 million (+5.6%) for the first time ever.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- **Cyprus:** The national authorities in Cyprus have prepared the draft of the national Integrated Border Management strategy which is undergoing national interagency consultations.
- **Estonia:** The Estonian parliament [passed](#) the act facilitating the involvement of assistant police officers, members of the Defence League and military servicemen in police work during the emergency situation. With the [decision](#) of the Minister of the Interior a division of border guard was created within the Police and Border Guard Board.
- **Croatia:** In June 2020, a total of 3 trainings (total of 75 participants) were held for leaders of groups for the protection of the state border in Tactics of apprehension of migrant groups. Croatia also sent support to

Greece in the context of a Frontex Rapid Border Intervention EVROS, by sending police officers and technical equipment for the surveillance of the Greek-Turkish border.

- **Poland:** Polish border guards are continuing their support for Macedonian and Greek border officers directly protecting this border. On 10 May, the fourth group of twenty officers of the Polish Border Guard began their service on the Macedonian-Greek border. After previous briefings and familiarising themselves with the conditions of service, began patrolling the Macedonian-Greek border. They returned to Poland on 8 June.



7. IRREGULAR MIGRATION & RETURN

EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

No new developments

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- **Austria:** In April, a [regulation](#) re-introduced temporary border controls between 15 May 2020 and 11 November 2020 at the internal borders with Slovenia and Hungary to maintain law, order and public safety. During this period, internal borders may only be crossed at points of entry.
- **Cyprus:** The Cyprus Authorities in cooperation with Frontex launched a return operation from Larnaca airport to Tbilisi of Georgia. The operation took place on 26 May 2020 and 107 Georgian national were returned safely to their home country. According to Frontex, this operation is considered to be the largest voluntary return operation coordinated by Frontex so far.
- **Czech Republic:** In April, the Czech Republic launched a project supported from AMIF focused on improving return infrastructure. The implementation of the project will enhance both personal and technical capacities of the Ministry of Interior in the area of return with the aim to increase the number of returns and streamline return procedures.
- **Estonia:** The parliament [approved](#) amendments to the Aliens Act, the Income Tax Act and the Taxation Act, the aim of which is to prevent disregard for the rules of employment in Estonia. Additionally, a new surveillance measure – appearing for counselling – was [adopted](#) to legislation.
- **Croatia:** On 2 June, the training of trainers for fingerprinting for EURODAC (European Asylum Dactyloscopy Database) was carried out as part of the EMAS project called "Strengthening of border control activities at the Croatian part of the external border due to increased migration pressure".
- **Italy:** A [proposal](#) for the recognition of specific maritime borders, relocation and repatriation has been presented on 5 June. The document was shared by Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain in view of the forthcoming negotiations on a new EU migration strategy.

On 26 May 2020 patrolling activities at the Italian-Slovenian border were initiated. As a result of that, 60 soldiers were deployed as part of the "Safe Streets" operation.

On 10 June 2020, Montassar Yaakoubi, a partner of the Tunisian national Anis Amri responsible for the deadly 2016 attack on a Berlin Christmas market, was repatriated to Tunisia on a special flight, pursuant to the expulsion order.

- **Poland:** According to Polish Board Guard data, during the period April - May 2020, 919 foreigners fulfilled the decision to return (voluntarily or forcibly), mainly by land. Due to the announcement of the pandemic in the period April-June 2020, the implementation of all transfers under the Dublin III Regulation was suspended.

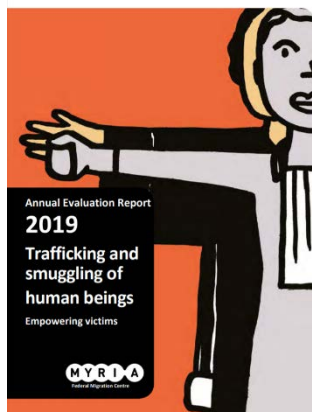
8. ACTIONS ADDRESSING TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

No new developments.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- **Belgium:** Myria, the Federal Migration Centre and national independent rapporteur on human trafficking, recently [published](#) the English version of its 2019 annual report on trafficking and smuggling of human beings. This report focuses this year on providing victims with legal aid and information about their rights. Myria also published an English version of its 2019 report on transit migration to the UK.



Bulgaria: Officers of the “Combating Organised Crime” General Directorate participated in several events related to trafficking of human beings including a webinar on “Gender-specific measures in investigating trafficking in human beings” organised by the EU Agency for Law Enforcement Training CEPOL. The webinar aimed to achieve a better understanding of gender specifics within the investigations of all forms of trafficking in human beings, as well as to increase the qualification of law enforcement authorities in reference to the measures applied from the moment of identification to the moment of protection of women and girls victims of crime.

- **Croatia:** On 8 June 2020 a virtual meeting of the EU Network of National Rapporteurs and/or Equivalent Mechanisms (NREMs) was held under the auspices of the HR Presidency. The main topic was the New EU Strategy towards the Eradication of THB. On 9 June 2020 the Croatian Government Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities held the first meeting of the *Working Group for the development of Protocol on Data Exchange for Identification of Human Trafficking Victims*.

- **Finland:** The National Assistance System for Victims of Human Trafficking seeks to develop the working life skills and competence of victims of human trafficking. The new IKUT [project](#) is one of the first European projects to focus on the working life skills of victims of human trafficking.

- **Hungary:** Following the successful implementation of various projects in the field of fight against human trafficking in the past years, new large-scale projects are about to start financed by the Internal Security Fund of the EU (with the co-financing of the Hungarian government).

The IOM office in Budapest will launch an awareness-raising campaign in the framework of the project entitled “Don’t let it happen, don’t make it happen!” aiming to reach at least 1 million people. The campaign will also put emphasis on the reduction of the deliberate use of services provided by victims of trafficking.

Another project entitled “Complex assistance to victims of human trafficking” will be implemented by the Ministry of Justice in partnership with the Hungarian Baptist Aid. It aims to provide assistance to 50 victims, including some new forms of victim support services, such as rescue and safe transport; to this end a rescue car will be procured for the NGO.

- **Lithuania:** The Lithuanian Ministry of the Interior has released a [report](#) on the situation concerning counter-trafficking in Lithuania in 2019. The report states that 39 persons were recognized as victims of trafficking in human beings during the pre-trial investigations (4 of these people were third country nationals).
- **Latvia:** The [“Navigating through your supply chain – Toolkit for prevention of labour exploitation and trafficking”](#) is developed in the EU-funded FLOW-project by the European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control (HEUNI) and partners. It will assist companies in this by demonstrating the associated risks and how involvement in such scenarios can be effectively avoided.¹
- **Poland:** On 10 April 2020, The Council of Ministers of the Republic of Poland has adopted the National Action Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for 2020-2021. The aim of the document is to intensify

Judgment of the European Court of Justice

[Case C-36/20 PPU](#)

According to this judgement, judicial authorities adjudicating on the detention of a third-country national without a legal right of residence can receive an application for international protection and must inform the person concerned of the specific procedures for lodging such an application. In the same line, a person who has expressed an intention to apply for international protection before authorities which are competent to receive that application cannot be held in detention on the ground that there is not sufficient accommodation available in humanitarian reception centres.

¹ Different language versions (in the [FLOW project](#) members’ languages Bulgarian, Estonian, Finnish and [Latvian](#)) as well as physical copies will be published in 2020.

prevention activities, strengthen the role of the Voivodship Teams for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and introduce corrective actions in order that all parts of the anti-trafficking system are complementary. Therefore, the schedule for implementation of the National Action Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for 2020-2021 was developed, which was discussed at the monitoring group, as well as at the meeting of representatives of Voivodship Teams for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

- **Portugal:** Leaflets were produced and disseminated within the context of the campaign “*I’m an immigrant worker. How can I stay in Portugal?*” in the framework of the National Action Plan for the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration. The leaflets are translated in English, Arabic, Bangla, Bulgarian, Indi, Moldovan, Romanian, Russian, and Ukrainian.
- **Greece:** Law 4689/2020, which amended Law 3811/2009, establishes that the right to compensation for the victims of trafficking who were exploited in Greece concerns not only the victims residing in Greece or in an EU state, but also those residing in third countries. Moreover, Law 4689/2020 reduced the fee for claiming the above-mentioned right to € 50.

On 4 June a meeting of the parliamentary sub-Committee on Combating Trafficking and Human Exploitation on the protection of Unaccompanied Minors from the crime of Human Trafficking was held, with the participation of the National Rapporteur on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and the Special Secretary for the unaccompanied minors of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

9. EXTERNAL DIMENSION

EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

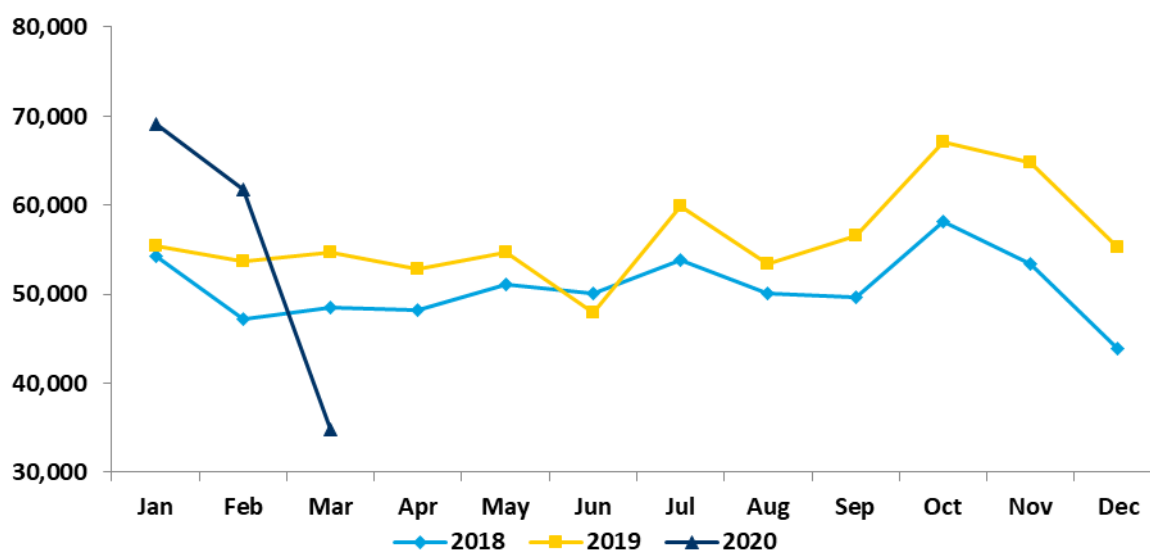
- In April, the Commission published updated information and factsheets on the [Regional Development and Protection Programmes](#) (RDPPs) in North Africa. RDPPs in North Africa and the Horn of Africa are an important part of the European Agenda on Migration. They were set up in 2015 and their aim is to assist third countries to address the protection and developmental needs of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, support the efforts of the migrant and refugee hosting communities, and build capacities of the authorities.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- **Luxembourg:** On 26 May 2020, the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs participated in [the international donors videoconference in solidarity with Venezuelan refugees and migrants](#). The Minister of Foreign and European Affairs took this occasion to announce Luxembourg’s new contribution to the cause of € 900 000 which has been made available to the Directorate for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs.
- **Latvia:** On 30 June, the Cabinet decided to extend the period of participation of one official of the State Border Guard to the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM Georgia).

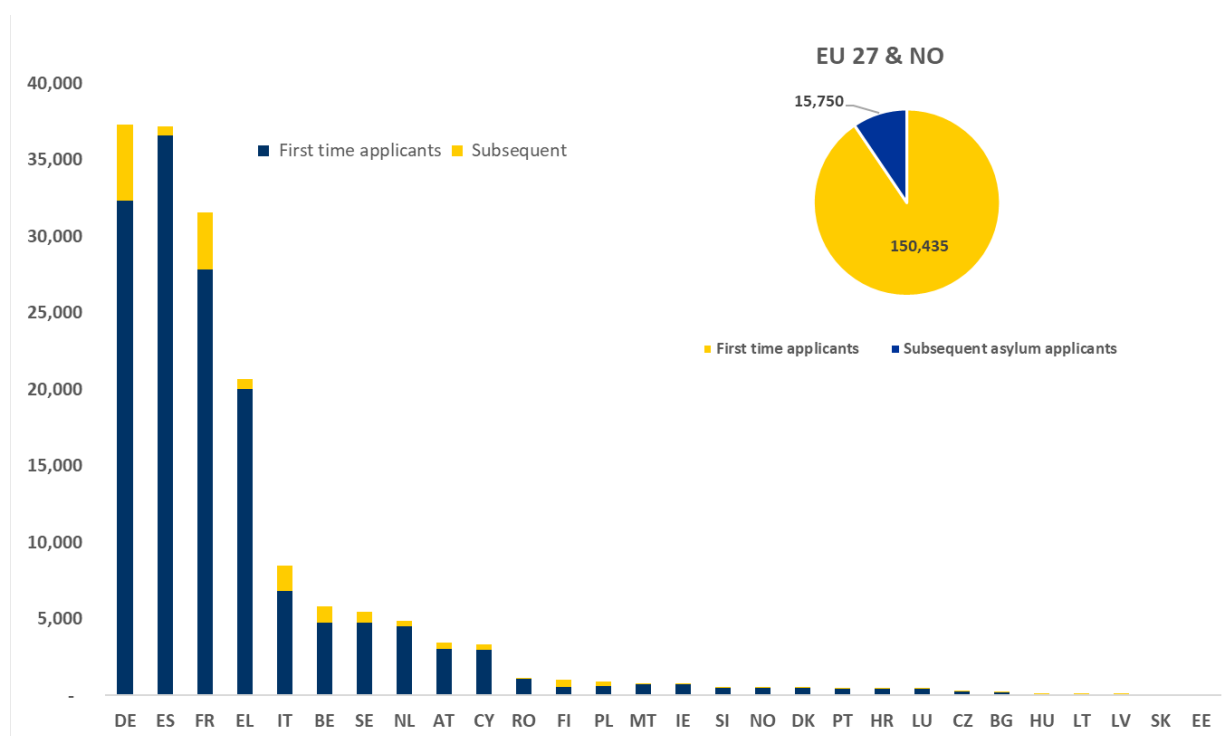
ANNEX: EU & COMPLEMENTARY STATISTICS, ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, OTHER EMN OUTPUTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

Figure 1: Asylum applications in the EU-27, January 2018 – March 2020



Source: Eurostat [[migr_asvappctzm](#)] total asylum applicants, extracted on 2 July 2020.

Figure 2: First time asylum applicants and subsequent applicants (together, total asylum applicants) in the EU-27 and Norway, Q1 2020 (quarterly data)



Source: Eurostat [[migr_asvappctzm](#)], accessed on 2 July 2020.

Updates on EU legislation transposition

- Estonia:** On 3 June Estonia transposed the EU return directive's Article 18, which allows the MS to change the conditions of detention of foreigners in case a large amount of irregular migrants should arrive to MS.

- **France:** The 2018/957 Directive concerning the posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services has been transposed into French law by an [ordinance](#) issued on 20 February 2019 (the ordinance must still be ratified by the Parliament). These measures will apply from 30 July 2020.
- **Luxembourg:** On 10 April 2020 [the 2019 annual report on Luxembourg's European policy](#) was adopted by the Government. The report also includes a section dedicated to migration and asylum under which it explains that the revisions of the Return Directive, proposed by the European Commission in 2018 continued in 2019 but were halted by political shortcomings and its strong links to discussions on reforming the Common European Asylum System.

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

- **Austria:** On 29 September EMN Austria is hosting its [National EMN Conference 2020](#) on the topic of migration forecasts.
- **Cyprus:** On 26 June 2020, EMN Cyprus held its Annual National Conference 2020 on "The role of local authorities in the integration of migrants and refugees", in the form of an online event.
- **Croatia:** Under the Croatian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the Croatian Contact Point of the European Migration Network held on 24 June 2020 an e-conference on Challenges of Irregular Migration on the Eastern Mediterranean – Western Balkan Route in the time of COVID-19.
- **Estonia:** The Ministry of the Interior and the EMN Estonia published a [booklet](#) on Estonian Migration statistics for 2015-2019. It will be published in Estonian, Russian, and English.
- **Finland:** EMN Finland published its statistical review [Key Figures on Immigration 2019](#).
- **Greece:** [Webinar](#) on remote-sensing model for tackling forced labour in agricultural sector (21.5.2020)
- **Ireland:** EMN Ireland held a [webinar](#) entitled 'National statuses for migrants in need of protection: Ireland and the EU' on 28 May 2020.