

## **Assessment of Inter-State Consultation Mechanisms on Migration**

### ***Summary of Assessment Survey Findings for the Budapest Process***

As part of an assessment of inter-state consultation mechanisms on migration (ISCMs), a survey was conducted in 2019. Carried out by IOM among ISCMs, their Member States and relevant inter-governmental organizations, the survey aimed to assess ISCMs' continued relevance and contribution to migration governance at all levels (national, regional and international) and the synergies among ISCMs and with other actors. The findings of this survey were presented at the global gathering of ISCMs in 2019 and were used to develop recommendations to enhance ISCMs' engagement in migration governance.

46 States and 22 ISCMs and 3 inter-governmental organizations provided answers to the questionnaires. The results are to be found in the 2019 assessment report: Advancing a common understanding of migration governance among regions, which provides an overview on ISCMs' organization, engagements, their continued relevance and synergies with relevant actors in the area of migration management. In addition to the report, the information below is meant to outline each individual ISCM's thematic priorities, structure, impact and relevance.

Name of the Inter-state consultation mechanism (ISCM): ***Budapest Process***

#### **1. Evolution of programing and thematic focus**

Established in 1993, the Budapest Process initially focused on irregular migration from and through Central and Eastern Europe with a focus on East West Migration. In 2003, the Budapest Process' areas of work focused on new issues, namely, to concentrate on irregular migration affecting the neighboring countries and regions of the European Union. In 2010, the Budapest Process further expanded its geographical orientation to include the Silk Routes (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Iran, Iraq and Pakistan) countries. Consequently, the process broadened its thematic focus to include migration realities that came with the geographical expansion. In the 2013 Ministerial Conference, the Budapest Process shifted its emphasis from irregular migration to equally address legal migration, integration, migration and development and international protection. The six priority areas which were established in 2013 were reaffirmed at the 2019 Ministerial Conference and include 1) irregular migration including return and readmission of irregular migrants, migrant smuggling, 2) legal migration and mobility, 3) migrant integration, fighting discrimination, racism and xenophobia, 4) migration and development, 5) trafficking in persons, 6) international protection and refugee rights.

The Budapest Process' work is implemented and monitored according to its 2019 declaration "The Istanbul Commitments on the Silk Routes Partnership For Migration and its Call for Action". These commitments were adopted at the 2019 Ministerial Conference and build on the 2013 Ministerial Declaration. The Call for Action corresponding to the Istanbul Commitments provides an action plan for five years (2019 – 2024). The Budapest Process

Chair, Turkey, oversees the work plan supported by the Secretariat. The Senior Officials Meetings decide on its direction and monitor developments.

## **2. Contribution to migration governance at national, (inter)regional and global levels (with examples)**

**National level:** The Budapest Process through its flanking EU-funded project (“the Silk Routes Project”) has supported various Silk Routes countries in developing practices and policies on migration. Examples of such engagements are the Comprehensive Migration Policy of Afghanistan (2017-2019), the National Emigration and Welfare Policy for Overseas Pakistanis in Pakistan (2017–2019) and a draft National Policy for Engagement with Iraqis Abroad in Iraq (2017–2019). Furthermore, the Federal Investigation Agency of Pakistan was able to make use of capacity measures on trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants, which were promoted by the Budapest Process. In addition, the Silk Routes Project supported the development of guidelines and procedures in Bangladesh to ensure protection of migrants in crisis situations in their host countries (2017-2019).

**Regional level:** By providing a platform for exchange and cooperation, the Budapest Process has contributed to regional policy development, especially in the Silk Routes Region. An example of regional policy coordination facilitated by the EU-funded Silk Routes Project, which flanks the Budapest Process, is the Regional Law Enforcement Cooperation on irregular migration, migrant smuggling and human trafficking (RELEC project). It is an initiative among the Silk Routes countries, Turkey and the European Union with an objective to enhance regional cooperation on preventing irregular migration, migrant smuggling and human trafficking, initiated in 2015.

In addition, Migrant Resource Centres established in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Iraq and Pakistan through the EU-funded Silk Routes Project promote and ensure regional cooperation in terms of pre-departure and post-arrival orientation of migrants and as regards communication on migration.

**Global Level:** Global level policies have been impacted by the Budapest Process, for instance, when the Budapest Process Chair provided recommendations during the consultation phase of the Global Compact on Migration. The Budapest Process engagement in global migration governance has been recognized by its member States, the UN and UN organizations. Antonio Guterres as Secretary-General acknowledged the contribution of the Budapest Process in a video message in the 2019 Ministerial Conference.

## **3. Salient ISCM structures**

The Budapest Process 2013 Ministerial Declaration and 2019 Istanbul Commitments on a Silk Routes Partnership for Migration are the main governing documents of the process. The structures set out in these documents include a Chair and Co-Chair, a Secretariat (carried out by ICMPD; strategic support to the Chair, logistical support; meeting organisation) and working groups (has three regional working groups: one for the South-East European Region, the Black Sea Region and the Silk Routes Region). It is funded by annual fees paid by selected participating states, contributions by the Chair-in-Office and funds for specific

projects (including the EU-funded Silk Routes Project). The Budapest Process budget includes staff, meeting and travel arrangements for delegates who cannot support their own travel. While there have been no attempts to influence the Budapest Process agenda by specific donors in general, some countries have funded meetings on specific topics or hosted meetings and provided in-kind support..

#### **4. Partnership models by the ISCM**

The Budapest Process has established partnerships with other **ISCMs**. It maintains close cooperation with the Rabat Process, Khartoum Process and Prague Process. The Bali Process and Budapest Process collaborate on issues of mutual interest and participate in each other's meetings on an ad hoc basis. When Turkey, the Budapest Process Chair assumed chairmanship of GFMD, the Budapest Process became also involved in this forum. It also works together with **IGOs**, such as ILO, IOM, UNDP, UNHCR and UNODC. The European Commission is a key partner and supporting donor to the process, as well as EU stakeholders such as the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), the European External Action Service (EEAS), the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency Frontex. Furthermore, the Council of Europe, the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), the Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative (MARRI), the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) and the OSCE participate in the Budapest Process. It collaborates with **NGOs** and civil society organizations on its priority areas and engages **migrants and diaspora**, especially in the context of the Silk Routes Project. Increased cooperation with the private sector is planned.

#### **5. Added value of Membership in the given ISCM for States and Organizations (with examples)**

Participating states value the Budapest Process for providing an informal dialogue on migration issues along the Silk Routes. The informal nature of the process allows to find a common language on complex issues and invites for cooperation.

Five of the participating states surveyed stressed that they benefit from participating in the Budapest Process. These states highlighted the positive impact of being involved in Working Groups, which allows for an open and informal dialogue and facilitated cooperation and synergies with other States. In addition, the BP is valued for exchange of experiences between partners from the wider EU-region and enabling countries with limited resources to collaborate. Another state appreciates the Budapest Process for being tailored to its needs and addressing relevant themes for their national interest and broadening the meeting to other states. In addition, a state brought forward the fact that the Budapest Process was a crucial platform used into bringing forward several bilateral migration dialogues and bilateral negotiations of readmission agreements .Finally, the Budapest Process is seen as the only forum where it can have regular dialogue with the representatives of the five most important sending countries namely the Silk Routes countries.