

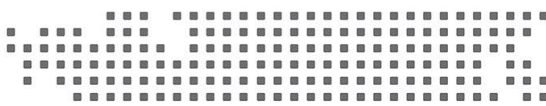
## Budapest Process

### Joint Meeting of the three Regional Working Groups

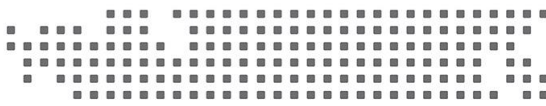
Skopje, 9-10 October 2019

#### Summary

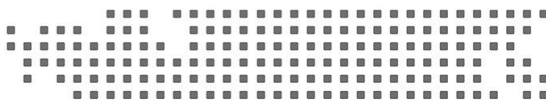
1. The Joint Meeting of the three Regional Working Groups gathered **88 participants from 37 countries** – Afghanistan, Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iraq, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Luxembourg, Moldova, Montenegro, the Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom – as well as the European Commission, the Council of the European Union, the European External Action Service (EEAS), the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Regional Initiative for issues of migration, asylum and refugees (MARRI).
2. **Deputy Minister of Interior of North Macedonia**, Agim Nuhiu, officially **opened the meeting and welcomed all participants**, followed by **State Secretary Magdalena Nestorovska**. Following opening remarks were given by **Turkey** as Chair of the dialogue, **Hungary** as the Co-Chair as well as **Afghanistan** and **Bulgaria** as Chairs of Regional Working Groups. The **European Commission** also gave opening remarks as well as **ICMPD** as the Budapest Process Secretariat.
3. ICMPD, as the Budapest Process Secretariat, gave a **presentation on the draft implementation plan proposal and the inputs collected from countries** over the summer. The four-strand approach to implementing the Call for Action, through policy dialogue, operational cooperation, research and knowledge base as well as impact assessment was presented. The Secretariat shared what inputs were already received from countries over the summer and agreed that more inputs were needed in order to draft a fully-fledged implementation plan.
4. The **first two sessions divided participants into three break-out groups to discuss concrete proposals for cooperation from a thematic perspective**. The three break-out groups focused on priority goals of the Call for Action in the morning and afternoon session. Delegates were invited to reflect on what action points they want to focus on in the next two years, what type of inputs they can provide or what activities/initiatives they can suggest as well as what can be capitalised upon. Delegates then reconvened in a plenary session where moderators summarised the discussions and concrete recommendations to be taken.
5. **Break-out group on Priority Goal 1 moderated by Hungary:** *Prevent and counteract irregular migration, facilitate return and readmission of irregular migrants, and combat criminal networks involved in smuggling of migrants.* In plenary, the following suggestions were brought forward:
  - a. To organise a thematic expert meeting(s) on dismantling of smuggling networks with law enforcement: investigation techniques, online decoding of smugglers
  - b. Regional information exchange and early warning system



- c. To support development of Integrated Border Management projects and capacity building activities on document security
  - d. To continue awareness-raising activities on irregular migration such as through MRCs in countries of origin
  - e. To organise a thematic meeting(s) at expert level on return and reintegration: best practices and lessons learned
  - f. To organise an expert group meeting(s) on identification and documentation challenges and good practices
  - g. To develop projects on development of national strategies on countering irregular migration
6. **Break-out group on Priority Goal 2 moderated by Pakistan:** *Better organise and improve conditions for legal migration and mobility.* In plenary, the following suggestions were brought forward:
- a. To organise an expert meeting(s) looking into skills development and matching and accreditation needs and sharing experiences between countries
  - b. To organise a meeting(s) where migration partnerships are further discussed with presentations of good practices and challenges from countries of the Budapest Process
  - c. To hold a technical workshop with private sector participants for a multi-stakeholder approach to understanding labour market needs, needs for skills as well as a focus on recruitment practices
  - d. To continue comprehensive awareness raising on safe, orderly and regular migration such as through MRCs to reach out to migrants and use ICT technologies to promote information sharing
  - e. To explore the nexus between regular migration pathways/visa facilitation and irregular migration/return in a working group setting
7. **Break-out group on Priority Goal 3 moderated by Switzerland:** *Support the integration of migrants and counteract discrimination, racism and xenophobia.* In plenary, the following suggestions were brought forward:
- a. To organise a thematic meeting(s) on the topic of integration and actions listed under the priority goal which would lead to specific recommendations and overview of national perspectives
  - b. To foster city to city cooperation by sharing knowledge through a focus group and potential subsequent study visit between local municipalities
  - c. To organise a technical workshop to review innovative technologies (social media etc.) and to share experiences reaching out to migrants in destination and hosting countries for integration purposes
8. **Break-out group on Priority Goal 4 moderated by Georgia:** *Strengthen the positive impact of migration on development, both in countries of origin and of destination.* In plenary, the following suggestions were brought forward:
- a. To prepare a baseline assessment of needs of countries of origin in furthering livelihood opportunities for returnees in the Silk Routes countries



- b. To organise a thematic workshop alongside the banking sector and diaspora to explore ways for more efficient remittance transfers
  - c. To continue awareness-raising capacity building activities, in partnership with the MRCs, in facilitating financial literacy
  - d. To put the Diaspora Engagement Policy for Iraq into action in partnership with the private sector and diaspora communities
9. **Break-out group on Priority Goal 5 moderated by Pakistan:** *Prevent and combat trafficking in persons, address its root causes and provide adequate protection and support to trafficked persons.* In plenary, the following suggestions were brought forward:
  - a. To organise a thematic meeting(s) to exchange best practices on models concerning identification and protection of victims of trafficking
  - b. To hold a training session for officials on national and transnational referral of trafficked persons
  - c. To hold an expert group meeting(s) on disrupting trafficking networks
  - d. To establish Standard Operating Procedures on identification and assistance to trafficking in human being victims including on cultural and gender aspects
  - e. Continue to expand the established network of the National THB Coordinators to other countries or regions
10. **Break-out group on Priority Goal 6 moderated by Sweden:** *Promote international protection and the respect of the rights of refugees, in line with international standards.* In plenary, the following suggestions were brought forward:
  - a. To hold a thematic meeting on promoting a rights-based approach for vulnerable groups on the move, including unaccompanied minors
  - b. To hold a workshop on improving asylum procedures in line with international and/or EU legislation and practice and to provide staff capacity building in the field of asylum, including on gender
  - c. To organise study visits to the EU on asylum system including reception centres: good practices for a rights-based approach
11. On the second day, the morning session divided participants into three break-out groups to **discuss concrete proposals for cooperation from a regional perspective.** Break-out groups held discussions on what could be capitalised upon in the region as well as what more can be done related to the different priority goals from a regional perspective in the next two years. Overall, all three Regional Working Groups agreed that they wished to promote **horizontal actions** between the three regions and cooperate on initiatives when relevant.
12. **Break-out group on the Silk Routes Region moderated by Afghanistan:**
  - a. To hold a meeting on the topic of remittances and financial inclusion
  - b. To look further into the topic of skills development and use this research as a basis for a thematic meeting
  - c. Furthering enhancing border management for registration of undocumented migrants
  - d. To hold a thematic meeting on the protection of migrants' human rights
  - e. To hold an expert-level meeting on the migration situation in the region
13. **Break-out group on the Black Sea Region moderated by Bulgaria:**
  - a. To host a thematic meeting in Bulgaria on counteracting migrant smuggling



- b. To host a working group meeting in Latvia on legal pathways for migration
  - c. To host a joint meeting at Senior Official level on a topic to be discussed in 2020 in Azerbaijan
  - d. To bring forward a concrete proposal on exchange between border guards along the route as proposed by Ukraine
14. **Break-out group on the South East European Region moderated by North Macedonia:**
- a. Setting up regular meetings of border police chiefs in the region
  - b. Setting a regional migration agenda to come up with joint priorities for the next five years
  - c. The SEE countries to become part of the ERRIN network in order to benefit from EU expertise on return and reintegration
  - d. To assess the implementation of the standard operating procedures for identification of irregular migrants within the region by international actors and analyse if there is a need for harmonisation
  - e. To hold joint meetings of the asylum authorities in the region to improve the cooperation of international protection of people on the move
  - f. To set up a permanent conference between SEE countries and EU in order to initiate a permanent dialogue
  - g. To strengthen the MARRI platform and possibly include Bulgarian and Greek officials to participate at the MARRI activities
  - h. To organise study visits of SEE countries in Turkey (to learn about the asylum system and procedures) and to the other Silk Route countries (to establish cooperation).
15. The Chair announced that the **annual Senior Officials Meeting would take place on 4-5 December 2019 in Istanbul**. This meeting will serve as the opportunity to take stock of 2019 as well as endorse the implementation plan.
16. The Chair committed to **share a revised version of the implementation plan** to the Budapest Process network for final comments ahead of the Senior Officials meeting including a calendar of meetings and activities in 2020.
17. The **Turkish Chair thanked the Ministry of Interior of North Macedonia for hosting the meeting**, all participants for their engaged discussions and valuable comments as well as the Co-Chair and Chairs of Regional Working Groups for their support and the Secretariat for the preparations and organisation.