

Annual Report

2025

ICMPD is an international organisation based in Vienna and has 21 Member States: Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Malta, the Netherlands, Republic of North Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and Türkiye.

We build evidence-driven migration policy options and governance systems that engage and equip our partners with effective, forward-leaning responses to opportunities and pragmatic solutions to complex regional migration and mobility challenges.



2025
ANNUAL
REPORT

Table of Contents for the ICMPD Annual Report 2025

6 Interview with Director General
Susanne Raab

10 Presidency

15 Migration in Numbers

20 Project Overview

Policy and Research

30 Policy

Advancing dialogue and
analysis on top migration issues

32 Research

Return governance: legitimacy,
cooperation and human rights

Thematic Expertise

36 Anti-Trafficking

Addressing vulnerabilities
in mixed migration flows

38 Border Management and Security

International cooperation
as a decisive factor

40 Labour Migration

Enhancing Europe's
talent attraction and retention

42 Return and Reintegration

Advancing national reintegration
systems led by countries of origin

Dialogues and Regional Cooperation

45 Pan-Africa

Multilevel responses to
African migration dynamics

52 Eastern Europe and Central Asia
Laying the groundwork for
resilience, recovery and development

58 Mediterranean
From dawn to day: gearing
capacity partnerships into action

62 Silk Routes
Enhancing legal mobility,
border governance and
reintegration services

68 Türkiye
Integrated migration solutions
for a lasting impact

72 Western Balkans
Advancing return management
and labour migration governance
in the Western Balkans

76 Global Initiatives
Global Initiatives Unit

Institutional

82 External Relations

86 Member States Programme

90 Vienna Migration Conference

Human Resources

96 Who We Are

Organisation

98 Financial Information

102 ICMPD in a Nutshell

104 Executive Management

Sustainable systems as a durable foundation

Susanne Raab, the new Director General of ICMPD, on Europe's "Realpolitik Turn" in migration policy, the growing race for global talent, why sustainable returns depend on partnerships, and why ICMPD is more like a speedboat than a tanker.

Ms Raab, you assumed office on 1 January, but your journey began months earlier, for example when you joined the Vienna Migration Conference 2025 and the Border Management Conference in The Hague. Reflecting on those first few months in late 2025 and early 2026, what were your most striking impressions?

Indeed, I am very fortunate to have had a very smooth transition across all levels of the organisation, and I want to thank all the colleagues who worked both in front of and behind the scenes to make this possible. And then, what still strikes me is the agility of our organisation and the remarkable motivation with which our staff members approach their daily duties. Whether it is at Headquarters here in Vienna or the duty stations I have so far visited, ICMPD is full of people who are convinced of what they are doing and very willing to go the extra mile. With that as a foundation I very much look forward to my tenure as Director General.

You have experienced migration from the perspectives of a researcher, a Director General in the administration, and a federal minister in Austria. How will this threefold experience influence the way you approach the daily challenges of your new office?

Working in academia, public administration and politics is helpful for a varied perspective on migration issues – translating theory directly into practical solutions. And that is also what ICMPD stands for, and what I want for the organisation: combining first-rate research with eye-level dialogue and swift, tailor-made, practical implementation on the ground. I believe that only through such a holistic approach will we maintain our relevance and remain successful.

We are currently witnessing a global shift in perceptions of migration. Given your many years of experience in politics, including five years as a minister, what do you believe are the most important trends that our organisation will need to respond to over the next five years?

Well, first, the field of migration is highly dynamic, and we are therefore monitoring geopolitical developments very closely because they can shape future migration trends. Second, the debates in many European capitals have shifted fundamentally in the past couple of years. Governments in Europe must address the declining public acceptance of irregular migration and consider the political responses offered so far. There has been, so to speak, a “Realpolitik Turn”, which includes, for example, a more robust return system for those not granted asylum. We must monitor these trends and propose solutions in cooperation with partner countries beyond the EU. And the countries must develop holistic responses to address demographic ageing and shrinking working-age populations, which, of course, opens the door to targeted labour migration of qualified persons through legal pathways.

Our work in these areas, along with the many other topics the organisation is engaged in, should highlight ICMPD’s key role: to serve as a bridge-builder and enabler of deeper cooperation among countries of origin, transit, and destination; a role that is grounded in the firm conviction that better solutions can only be found by sustaining dialogue, developing joint agendas, and pursuing common goals.

You mentioned the external dimension, cooperation with countries outside. What does ICMPD bring to the table?

Our ability to connect States at eye level, our strong field presence in the regions and our understanding of European migration policies and needs. I firmly believe that the best and most sustainable solutions are found when the States connected along migration routes work closely together and make full use of the entire range of migration policy tools. At the same time, we must always consider the specific domestic needs and priorities of each partner. At ICMPD, we pay very close attention to such local requirements and contexts. We stress the involvement of all countries along a migration route on an equal footing.

And what we also bring to the table is being a swift, agile organisation with a lot of creative power. Not a tanker, but a speedboat.

Since taking office, you have already engaged with many Member States of ICMPD as well as with key countries and partners. What has been the focus of this dialogue?

Simply, how can we support them in managing migration effectively? I always try to be very concrete, as it is our task to come up with real, on-time solutions. ICMPD has vast experience in almost every field of migration: from border management and the prevention of migrant smuggling to return and labour migration. States have different priorities depending on their migration landscapes. There is no one-size-fits-all solution, but we know what is working and what may not – and we share this knowledge.

In addition to that, our assessment of current or potential migration flows is always appreciated. As we are in constant contact with our many field offices, we can deliver these assessments.

While irregular arrivals are down, the “talent war” is heating up. Across our Member States, industries from healthcare to tech are facing growing labour shortages. How can our organisation help reframe migration not as a “threat to be managed” but as an “economic necessity to be facilitated”?

Today, economic cooperation is not just about trading goods and services any more. These days, it’s really being shaped by how we move knowledge, skills and talent across borders. That is why talent mobility has become such a vital part of the partnership between the EU and India.

I was recently in India to launch our new initiative, The Legal Gateway Office. I am very proud that ICMPD has been chosen by both the European Commission and the Indian Government to help lead this effort. This is a flagship initiative designed to make migration and mobility between India and the EU Member States safe, legal and well informed. We’re starting specifically with the ICT sector. In practice, this means we’re supporting Indian students, researchers and professionals by providing clear, reliable information on how to navigate the varying requirements across all 27 EU countries. At the same time, we’re helping European employers and universities connect with Indian talent through transparent channels that match skills with the right opportunities. Ultimately, the role of this office is to connect talent with the market. We’re building the systems and practices that will serve both regions for decades to come. Think of the Legal Gateway as a practical bridge – one that turns talent into opportunity in a way that benefits everyone involved.

The new European Pact on Asylum and Migration places strong emphasis on effective returns for those not eligible for protection. Given your experience as a minister responsible for migration and integration issues, what is the “missing ingredient” in making return and reintegration policies sustainable?

Having a solid European legal framework in place will make a difference, not only in theory but also in practice. In my experience, relationships and partnerships with transit countries and countries of origin are essential to the operationalisation of returns. That differs, of course, from State to State. If we want to have a sustainable impact, we also have to talk about relevant reintegration measures along with return. And we should never forget that in many cases, return follows the reconstruction of a country. So, investment in reconstruction will be the basis for return measures.

In an organisation with many field offices and more than 600 staff, how will you stay connected with the “pulse” of the people working for ICMPD?

Bridging the gap between Headquarters and the field is undoubtedly a significant challenge for an organisation like ours. It is not something the Director General can address alone; it requires strong cooperation across teams, directorates and regions, lived and practised by all of us daily.

For my part, I will work to further strengthen our internal communication and make a concerted effort to connect with colleagues across the organisation. This will include visits to our field offices, opportunities to engage directly with teams on the ground, and listening closely to their perspectives and experiences. Insights from these interactions will be crucial to ensure that our decision-making at Headquarters reflects the realities and expertise of the field. By incorporating these experiences into our strategies and policies, we can make more informed, practical and effective decisions that truly support our mission.

What is one thing you want your partners, Member States and the broader public to know about the direction this organisation is taking under your leadership?

ICMPD is a robust, agile and resilient institution, ready to play its role in responding to the current and future challenges in the migration landscape of Europe and its neighbours.

We do not lecture or moralise to our partners. We come up with realistic on-time solutions. We are not there merely to maintain our structures.

We want to support States in building their own sustainable systems. As an international organisation we are working worldwide, bringing in the European perspective of our Member States. This combination is an absolute added value and makes us unique.

We will continue supporting our Member States in close cooperation with our partners on an equal footing. And we will strengthen our approach by bringing together knowledge, project delivery, dialogue and perspectives in a way that makes us unique as an organisation.



Susanne Raab became ICMPD’s first woman to lead the organisation as Director General on 1 January 2026. She holds a doctorate in law and a master’s degree in psychology and brings extensive experience across academia and public administration, where she held the position of Director General. She served as Austrian Federal Minister from 2020 to 2025.



PRESIDENCY

The role of the Chairmanship within ICMPD

The Steering Group, as ICMPD's highest governing and decision-making body, plays a central role in providing political direction, strategic guidance and oversight of the organisation's institutional development.

The annual Chairmanship – held by one Member State at a time – is instrumental in shaping the Steering Group's agenda, facilitating dialogue among Member States and ensuring that key strategic and operational priorities are addressed in a structured and inclusive manner.

Beyond its formal governance function, the Chairmanship initiates and frames joint processes among the Member States and also focuses on certain strategic and thematic issues throughout the year. The Chair's leadership provides a framework for constructive engagement on both institutional issues and pressing migration policy challenges and serves to support continuity across Chairmanship mandates. Through formats such as the Steering Group meetings, the Friends of the Chair and the Committee on Programming Coordination, the Chair plays an active role in shaping ICMPD's strategic development.

Against this background, the Chairmanships of 2025 and 2026 are both of exceptional strategic importance, coinciding in particular with an institutional transition for ICMPD and

the launch of a new strategic phase under Strategy 2030.

Sweden's Chairmanship in 2025: leadership in a year of transition

2025 marked a pivotal year for ICMPD. It coincided with the election of a new Director General, the adoption of Strategy 2030 and discussions on the organisation's governance framework. At the same time, ICMPD continued to expand in terms of budget, staffing and operational footprint, reflecting the priorities of Member States and partners in an increasingly complex migration environment.

In this context, Sweden's Chairmanship played a stabilising and guiding role, supporting informed decision-making by Member States and ensuring transparency throughout these key institutional processes.

Priorities

At the institutional level, Sweden accompanied ICMPD through a period

of transition and consolidation. As mentioned, key themes included the facilitation of discussions related to the election of the new Director General and the adoption of Strategy 2030, setting the framework for ICMPD's institutional and operational development in the coming decade.

The Swedish Chairmanship also supported considerations related to potential membership enlargement. Furthermore, it focused on strengthening oversight mechanisms and core institutional functions in order to support ICMPD's rapid growth and expanding portfolio of activities.

Close cooperation between the current, former and incoming Chairs, together with Austria as the host country of the ICMPD Headquarters, was maintained through the Friends of the Chair format. This mechanism is instrumental in ensuring institutional continuity throughout the Chairmanship.

At the policy level, Sweden's Chairmanship ensured that the Steering Group remained a forum for substantive and forward-looking dialogue on key migration challenges. Discussions were anchored in ongoing European debates, including the implementation of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, while also moving beyond existing frameworks to explore innovative and complementary approaches to migration management.

A central ambition of the Chairmanship was to promote a whole-of-government and whole-of-route perspective, recognising the need for integrated responses that link countries of origin, transit and destination. In this context, Sweden placed particular emphasis on the role of Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs) as practical instruments supporting Member States' migration policy objectives. This priority will also be carried forward by the Polish Chair. The Chairmanship also explored the strategic use of ICMPD-supported Migration Dialogues as platforms for structured exchange and cooperation along migration routes. Key thematic areas of discussion included measures to increase return and reintegration, the prevention of irregular migration, and the strengthening of synergies between migration policy and development cooperation. Space was also created for exchanges on successful practices in attracting high-skilled workers, reflecting the growing relevance of legal migration pathways in national and European policy agendas.

These discussions were carried out through Steering Group meetings, Friends of the Chair sessions and major events such as the Vienna Migration Conference, which celebrated its 10th edition in 2025, further reinforcing ICMPD's role as a convening platform for high-level policy dialogue.

Transition to Poland: incoming Chairmanship in 2026

In parallel with Sweden's leadership in 2025, preparations were undertaken for the transition to the Polish Chairmanship in 2026. This handover coincides with the first year of implementation of Strategy 2030 and the beginning of the new Director General's mandate, making continuity of governance and strategic direction a central priority.

Poland's forthcoming Chairmanship builds on Sweden's tenure and aims to consolidate institutional reforms while fostering dialogue among Member States on emerging policy challenges and innovative solutions to migration challenges.

At the institutional level, Poland will continuously support the development of governance structures as well as the implementation of Strategy 2030. A key objective is to ensure transparency, shared ownership and that governance structures remain fit for purpose in a growing organisation.

At the policy level, Poland's thematic focus is anchored in ongoing European debates on innovative migration management approaches and discussions of concepts such as

safe country frameworks and external processing models. Particular emphasis will also be placed on Ukraine, notably on exit strategies from the Temporary Protection Directive, returns and reintegration in post-conflict settings, and discussions of concepts such as safe country frameworks and external processing models. By broadening participation beyond groups of like-minded States, the Chairmanship seeks to encourage inclusive peer-to-peer learning among both EU and non-EU ICMPD Member States.

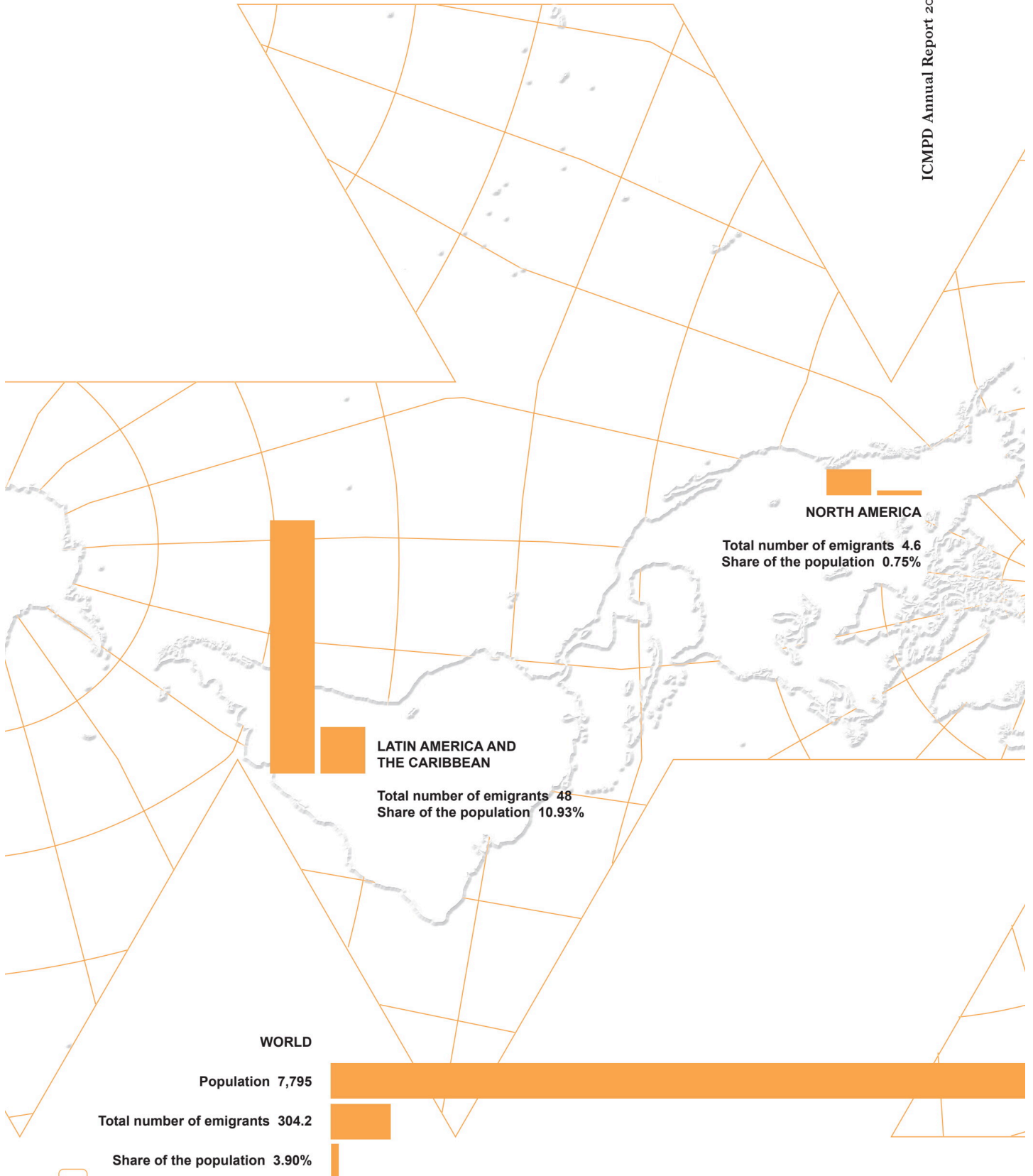
Operationally, Poland intends to continue highlighting ICMPD's added value as a provider of concrete tools and expertise. Building on priorities advanced under Sweden's Chairmanship, special attention will be given to flagship initiatives such as Migrant Resource Centres, voluntary return and reintegration mechanisms, and cooperation with partner countries in regions including the Silk Routes and the Southern Neighbourhood. Thematic events, study visits and operational exchanges are envisaged as key instruments for connecting strategic discussions with field-level practice. ●



**MIGRATION
IN NUMBERS**

Global emigrants (in millions)

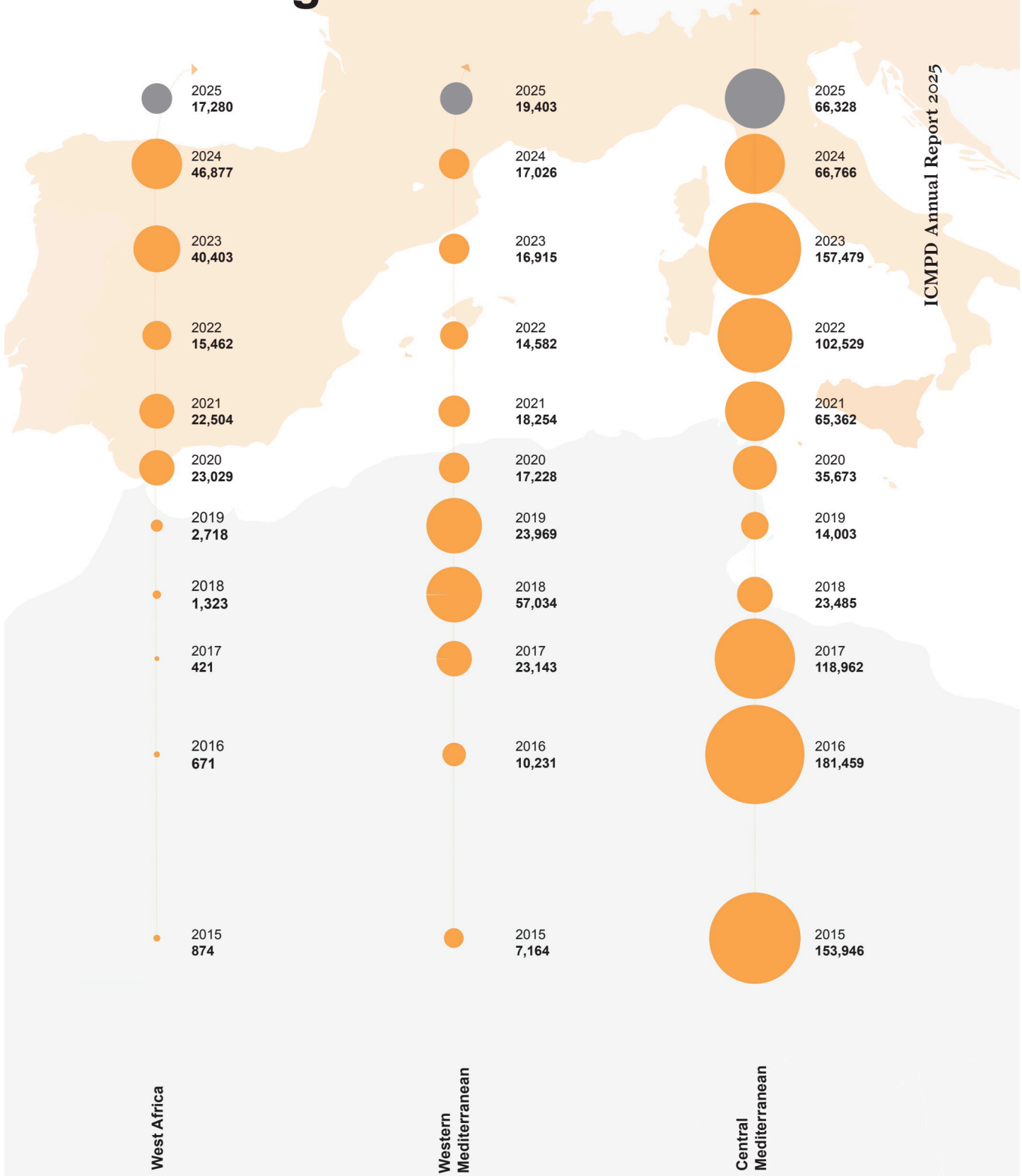
ICMPD Annual Report 2025



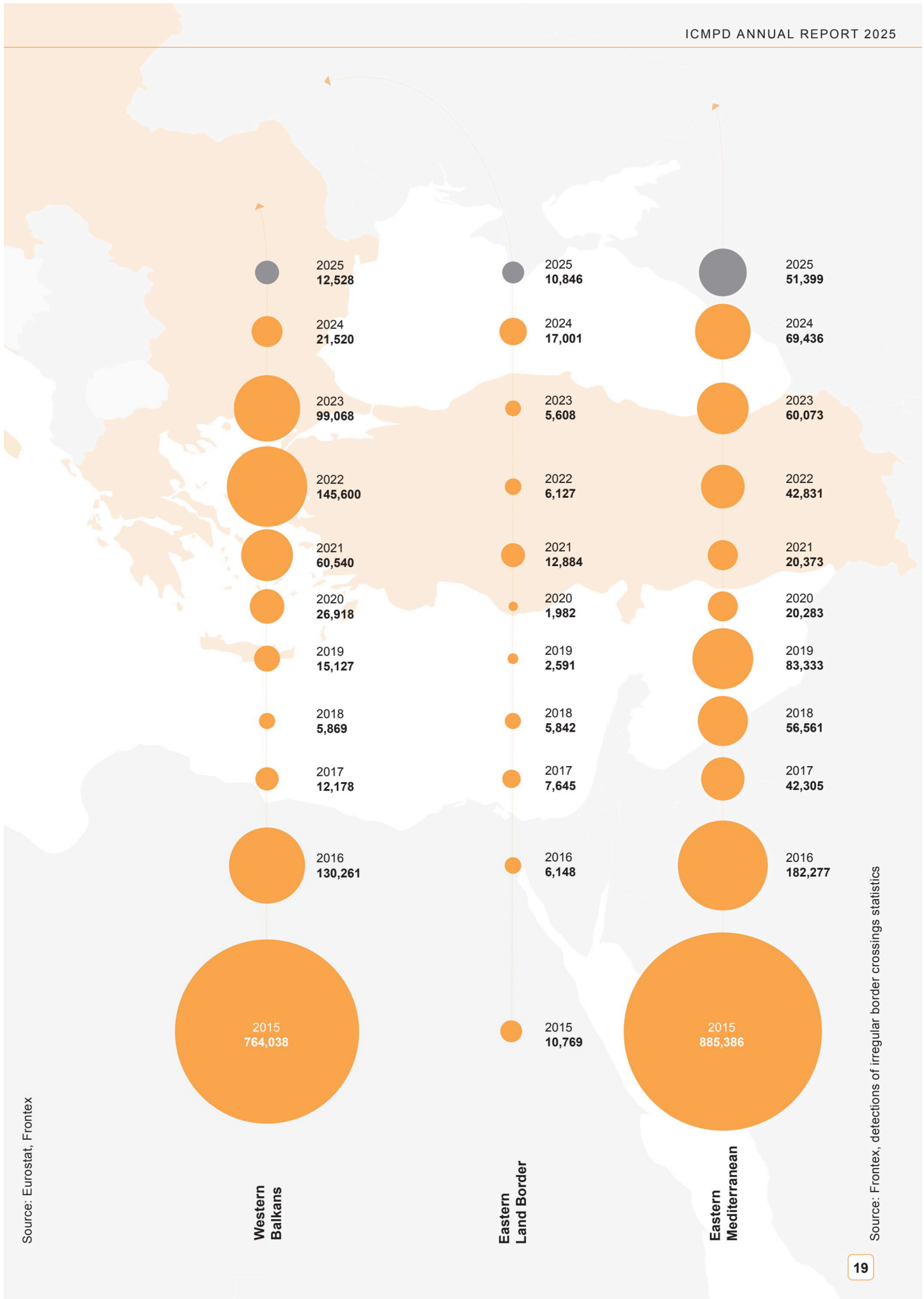


*Source: United Nations (2024). International Migrant Stock 2024: Key facts and figures. UN DESA/POP/2024/DC/NO. 13.

Irregular border crossings 2015–2025



ICMPD Annual Report 2025



Source: Eurostat, Frontex

Source: Frontex, detections of irregular border crossings statistics



PROJECTS
2025

Western Balkans (WB)

Support to the Western Balkans on the Establishment of an RRR Mechanism for Targeted Operationalization of RRRs of third-country nationals (WBMR)

Establishment of the National Assisted Voluntary and Non Voluntary RRR System of Bosnia and Herzegovina

European Union Support to Border Management of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Preventing Secondary Irregular Migration Movements to the EU

Strengthening Law Enforcement Capacities to Fight Organised Crime in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Strengthening RRR Management Systems in the Western Balkans (The Western Balkan RRR Mechanism - Phase 2 (WBRM 2))

Technical Assistance and Support (TAS) to the project "Strengthening the regional cooperation on migration management between Western Balkans and neighbouring EU Member States in accordance with EU Acquis and international standards - MIRCO"

Technical Assistance to Further Strengthen Border and Migration Management in Albania - EU4SAFEALB (Phase II)

Victim-centred Migration Management in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Türkiye (TK)

European Union Scholarships (BEURs)

4P-ACTIONS AGAINST THB

Boosting Turkish National Police (TNP)'s Capacity in Detection of Forged Travel Documents at the Border Gates Project

Drafting of a National IBM Strategy and Updating of the "National Action Plan to Implement Turkey's IBM Strategy"

Empowering the Border Management Capacity of the Presidency of Migration Management

Enforcement of Migration Governance and Partnership through a Holistic Methodology

Enforcing Capacities for Application of Alternative Measures to Detention in Türkiye

Enhancement of Entrepreneurship Capacities for Further Sustainable Socio-Economic Integration Project

Enhancement of Entrepreneurship Capacities for Sustainable Socio-Economic Integration Project

Enhancing the Border Management Capacity of the Presidency of Migration Management

Enhancing Turkish National Police (TNP)'s Response Against the Forgery of Travel Documents and Migrant Smuggling Criminal Networks Through Capacity Building and International Collaboration Project

Expert Mobilization for Strengthening Türkiye's International Protection Status Determination System

Fostering Integrated Migration Management Capacity of the Presidency of Migration Management (PMM) through Operational and Technical Support (INTERLINK- Phase II)

Solidarity Bridge

Strengthening Pre-RRR Support Capacities for Effective Migration Management in Türkiye

Strengthening capacities to prevent irregular migration through introduction of new measures and reinforcement of human rights sensitive approach

Strengthening National Coordination and Cooperation Mechanisms in the Field of Border Management

Supporting The Development of RRR Counselling Capacities in Türkiye – PHASE II

Supporting the implementation and further strengthening of Turkey's National Assisted Voluntary RRR and Reintegration mechanism (N-AVRR) – PILLAR 2

Supporting the Institutional Capacity of the National Coordination and Joint Risk Analysis Centre

Supporting Türkiye's Efforts to Strengthen Border Management at the Eastern and South Eastern Land Borders

Silk Routes (SR)

Capacity building for long-term reintegration of RRRees to Iraq II

'Support to Federal Investigation Agency's capacities for enhanced risk management– Pilot project'

"Awareness raising and information campaigns on the risks of irregular migration in Pakistan II"

Budapest Process 2024

Budapest Process 2025

Budapest Process 2026

Capacity Partnerships and Access to Information for Sustainable Reintegration of RRRees in Iraq, Phase III (CAIR III)

Children on the Move - Improving Child Protection at Pakistan's land border crossing points

Danish support to Rights-Based Border Management in the Silk Routes Countries

EU-India Cooperation & Dialogue on Migration and Mobility - Phase 2

EU-India Legal Gateway Pilot

Extension of the network of migrant resource centres (MRCs) to the Basra and Middle Euphrates governorates, Iraq

Improving Migration Management & Migrant Protection in Selected Silk Route Countries

Integrated Border Management in the Silk Routes (SR) Countries

Migrant Information Centre (MIC) in Sri Lanka

Migration Awareness, Access to Reintegration and Strengthening Capacities in Iraq (MAARC)

Migration Awareness, Access to Reintegration, and Strengthening Capacities in Iraq

Migration Capacity Partnerships – Phase II (MCP–Phase II)

Migration Capacity Partnerships – Phase II (MCP–Phase II)

Migration information and awareness raising on the risks of irregular migration in Iraq

MRAPP

Operationalising a Migrant Resource Centre in Sri Lanka

Operationalising a Migrant Resource Centre in Sri Lanka

Preventing Fraudulent Job Advertisements and Cyber Activity As A Facilitator Of Irregular Migration And THB

Risk Analysis Pakistan – Phase II

Strategic Communications Campaign to Prevent Irregular Immigration and Promote Safe and Legal Routes to The UK from The State of Punjab

Support to implementation of the National Integrated Border Management Strategy in Iraq

Sustainable Reintegration and Improving Migration Management for Pakistan

Sweden-Iraq Cooperation on Migration Governance

Sweden-Iraq Cooperation on Migration Governance

Sweden-Iraq Cooperation on Migration Governance 2025

Research Unit (RU)

Career prospects for qualified migrants
- Improving the recognition of non-academic qualifications

Dialogue on Migration, Mobility and Security

Finding Agreement in RRR

Innovating to Enhance Dialogues on Migration Policies and Practices

Labour market integration of Ukrainian Refugees

Link4Skills

Measuring Irregular Migration and related Policies

Preventing and Combating Online and Offline Hate Speech and Disinformation Through Multidisciplinary Innovation, Education, and Awareness In Europe

Policy Unit (PU)

Medical Country of Origin Information V: Satisfaction Surveys and overall MEDCOI services' quality review

Medical Country of Origin Information V: Policy research/state practices and case law analysis

Medical Country of Origin Information V: Provision of MedCOI quality assurance services and comparative legal research

IBMC8 - 8th International Border Management Conference

Network of Anti-Trafficking Coordinators in South East Europe (Regional Frameworks: Learning and Collaboration for Victims of THB)

Strengthening Institutional Capacities (in Serbia) to Counter Irregular Migration

Pan-Africa (PA)

Africa-EU Migration and Mobility Dialogue Support Programme

Border Management Project in Côte d'Ivoire Phase 2

Building an environment free of Human Trafficking and Violence Against Persons in Nigeria

CAPACITY – The Danish Migration Management Programme (2024-2029) Nigeria

Combatting Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants in the EDO State Transportation Industry (TIPSOM-NG)

Document Security Project in Senegal

Enabling European private sector-driven labour mobility schemes for Nigerian technical professionals

Enhancing Border Control Capacities for the Nigerian Immigration Service

Enhancing Protection and Humanitarian Support for People on the Move in Rosso, Mauritania

Enhancing Safe, Regular, and Integrated Migration in Cabo Verde

Improve National and Regional Referral Mechanisms (NRMs/RRM) in cross-border cases of THB (THB) in the ECOWAS region

Modernising Nigeria Immigration Service Workforce

School anti-Trafficking Education and Advocacy Project

Simulation exercise of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) on disembarkation of migrants

Strengthen the National Observatory Capacity to Tackle Trafficking in Persons in Cabo Verde

Strengthening and harmonising integrated border management frameworks and technical capacities in West Africa

Strengthening Border Security in Ghana

Strengthening capacities on border management and prevention of THB in Côte d'Ivoire

Strengthening Mobility in West Africa

Support to Free Movement of Persons and Migration in West Africa II

TAS Mauritania - Visa Camp.

Member States Programme (MSP)

DG Reform Technical Support Instrument 2025 - Czechia

DG Reform Technical Support Instrument 2025 - Estonia

DG Reform Technical Support Instrument 2025 - Ireland

DG Reform Technical Support Instrument 2025 - Lithuania

DG Reform Technical Support Instrument 2025 - Romania

Technical Support Instrument - Support to the preparation of National Implementation Plans under the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum

Mediterranean (MED)

7th International Border Management Conference

Advancing Libya's Border Security and Management

Border Management Programme for the Maghreb Region – Phase II

Border Management Programme for the Maghreb Region (BMP Maghreb)

Border Management Programme for the Maghreb Region (BMP Maghreb) Tunisia component phase III

Building Regional Institutional Development and Governance for Enhanced Border Management (Jordan and Syria)-MPP

Building Regional Institutional Development and Governance for Enhanced Border Management-AT

CAPACITY – The Danish Migration Management Programme (2024-2029) Algeria

CAPACITY – The Danish Migration Management Programme (2024-2029) Jordan

CAPACITY – The Danish Migration Management Programme (2024-2029) Lebanon

Coast Guard Academy Tunisia

Delivering on migration governance in the Mediterranean through Capacity Partnerships

Document Security Project in Jordan

EU Training Support to Libya's Border Security and Management Institutions

Integrated Border Management in Jordan

Netherlands Assistance to Lebanese Border Agencies IBM - phase V

Professionalisation Support to Libya's General Attorney's Office and CRTC

Programme Gouvernance et Stratégie Tunisie - Phase II : Composante 1 - Gouvernance de la Migration

Strengthening the evidence base for migration policies - Advancing the Central Migration Data Management Solution for Jordan

Support to Cross-Border Cooperation and Integrated Border Management in North Africa

The Netherlands' Assistance to Border Management in Jordan

Training Institute on Migration Capacity Partnership for the Mediterranean

MDC Cross-Regional

A&M Migration Partnership Programme - Programme Management

CAPACITY – The Danish Migration Management Programme (2024-2029)

J&V Migration Partnership Programme

Global Initiatives (GLO)

A&M Migration Partnership Programme
- Programme Management

Channeling National Contributions
- Bavaria

Channelling National Contributions
– Baden-Württemberg

EU Global Diaspora Facility II

European Platform on UASC RRR and Reintegration

Migration Partnership Facility III

Migration Partnership Facility IV

RRR and Reintegration Facility

Strengthening Mauritanian coordination and intervention capacity for migration-related emergencies

Technical Assistance Facility

Prague Process: Dialogue, Analysis and Training in Action

Preventing Irregular Migration from Uzbekistan via Reintegration and Information Support for local Empowerment - Phase 2

Preventing Irregular Migration from Uzbekistan via Reintegration and Information Support for local Empowerment – RISE project

Strengthening Development Impact of Migration in Georgia – Phase 2

Strengthening the Partnership between Belgium and Georgia through Temporary Mobility of Entrepreneurs

Support to the Complex Improvement of Migration and Border Management in Moldova (SCOP), Activity 3.1
- “Strengthening Border Police Operational Capacities for Border Security - Phase II”

Support to the reorganization of the Migration and Citizenship Service (MCS) of Armenia

Ukraine: Consultations and Assistance for Resilience and Empowerment

Ukrainian Consultation Centre
- Gdansk

Ukrainian Information Support Network
- Poland

Unity Hub: Stockholm

VisaWise Armenia: Applying Right for Schengen Travel

Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA)

Border Management in Central Asia, Phase 11

Border Management Programme in Central Asia

Comprehensive Resilience Support for Displaced Persons from Ukraine

Construction of temporary accommodation center for asylum seekers in Armenia

EU for Increasing Migrants' Potential to Act for development of Armenia

EU Support to Strengthening IBM in Ukraine – Resilience

MPF: Call Centre for Ukrainian Displaced People

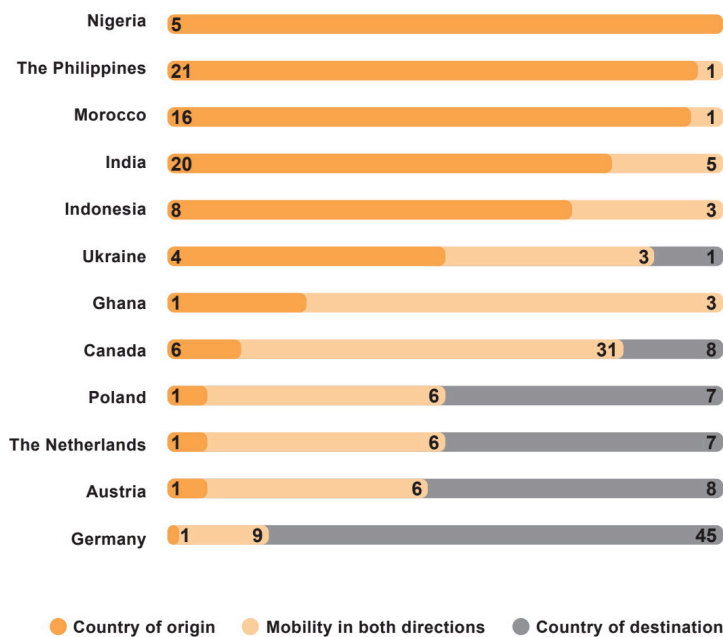


**POLICY AND
RESEARCH**

Advancing dialogue and analysis on top migration policy issues

The Policy Unit regularly convenes diverse stakeholders, promoting dialogue and shaping pragmatic and sustainable responses. In 2025, the focus was on labour migration and on the temporary protection of people displaced from Ukraine.

LINK4SKILLS PARTNERSHIP INVENTORY OF GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT SKILLS MOBILITY PARTNERSHIPS



Addressing Europe’s skills needs and finding sustainable solutions for people under temporary protection are two highly relevant issues across the region.

Fostering mutual benefits in labour mobility

In light of Europe’s severe and widespread labour shortages – likely to further increase in the future due to its ageing and shrinking population – finding sustainable solutions to current *and* future labour needs remains a key concern. Labour migration is one tool to address these current and future shortages and foster growth and innovation. Momentum is growing behind skills mobility partnerships (SMPs), and similar frameworks such as Global Skills Partnerships and Talent Partnerships, to address skills shortages in Europe while promoting skills development and benefiting origin countries, migrants and employers.

As part of the EU-funded Link4Skills Horizon research project,

ICMPD's Policy Unit, together with the Research Unit, mapped more than 150 SMPs involving 12 countries (Austria, Canada, Germany, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Morocco, the Netherlands, Nigeria, the Philippines, Poland, and Ukraine). The resulting Partnership inventory highlights the diversity of government approaches at the skills-mobility nexus, as well as considerable variation in terms of which parties benefit and to what extent, even if SMPs generally go further than traditional labour migration approaches in facilitating a fairer movement of skills.

The full dataset will be launched in mid-2026 as part of an online dashboard to support evidence-based decision-making on skills needs and mobility. Insights on enhancing mutual benefits will also be shared. Through this work, we are advancing analysis to inform and prompt dialogue on how to meet labour market objectives in a fair and sustainable way.

Imagining the future for temporary protection beneficiaries

The EU's temporary protection regime for persons displaced by the war in Ukraine will enter its fifth year in March 2026. As the war's evolution remains uncertain, the EU has in parallel sought to pave the way for a smooth and coordinated exit out of temporary protection. With transition to national residence statuses, EU legal statuses, or voluntary return to Ukraine all possible options, a patchwork of Member State responses is anticipated, which will require a careful consideration of the interests of Member States, Ukraine, and Ukrainians themselves.

In 2025, the Policy Unit convened experts to discuss critical considerations and good practices for transitioning out of temporary protection. Through a series of consultative exchanges and written analyses, we shared new and impactful insights into the trade-

offs and potential consequences of different policy options. This included highlighting the importance of addressing the needs of vulnerable groups, particularly those unable to transition to available national legal statuses, and emphasising the need for coordinated communication that keeps beneficiaries of temporary protection well-informed. We also supported the Polish EU Presidency in advancing these discussions at the EU level.

This work will continue in 2026, with a focus on safe and voluntary returns to Ukraine, including the conditions for sustainable reintegration and the reconstruction efforts needed to enable dignified return. Through continued exchange with our Member States and partners, alongside policy analysis, the Policy Unit strives to meaningfully contribute to evolving developments and highlight policies that are beneficial and sustainable for all stakeholders. ●

TEMPORARY PROTECTION EVENTS AND PUBLICATIONS IN 2025

- **Meeting - Virtual exchange on temporary protection and Ukraine**
- **Workshop - Exit strategies from temporary protection: Exploring challenges and solutions after temporary protection**
- **Panel discussion - Beyond temporary protection: Future scenarios for displaced Ukrainians in the EU**
- **Commentary - Phasing out temporary protection? Shaping EU policies through national experiences**
- **Policy paper and webinar - Four million people, one crossroads: Charting the future of temporary protection**

Return governance: legitimacy, cooperation and human rights

Return migration has become one of the most politically sensitive and contested fields in European migration governance. Against this background, new instruments and governance frameworks on return are currently being debated in the EU and beyond.

Across Europe, significant numbers of people live without residency rights, caught between shortcomings in return enforcement and limited prospects for legal status. Return migration has become a major political topic, yet it faces complex realities. As part of the EU-funded Finding Agreement in Return (FAiR) research project, ICMPD examines the ambivalent dynamics of return migration governance. FAiR's overall aim is to generate new insights into the factors and processes that foster or impede the legitimacy and effectiveness of Europe's return and alternatives to return policies and cooperation. To achieve this, it assesses legitimacy patterns in current

return and readmission frameworks, highlighting the gaps between political rhetoric, frontline implementation and lived realities.

Understanding origin-country perspectives

The research places the perspectives of non-European governments, practitioners and societies at the centre of analysis. Ignoring these viewpoints undermines the fairness, acceptability and long-term effectiveness of return cooperation. By considering these perspectives, the groundwork is laid for policies that are more balanced, realistic and mutually beneficial. Additionally, the consortium reviewed the negotiation dynamics that characterise high-level agreements on return. Return diplomacy is a complex and open-ended balancing exercise in which negotiations often fall short of achieving mutually beneficial outcomes. Strong interpersonal and institutional relationships, along with effective internal coordination, are more critical to advancing cooperation than formal agreements alone.

Further analysis also sheds light on administrative practices which shape intergovernmental cooperation on return. Using Nigeria, Georgia and Iraq as case studies, ICMPD's

UNLOCKING MIGRANTS' SKILLS: COMPETENCE-BASED RECOGNITION

The complexity of formal recognition procedures for post-secondary qualifications obtained abroad poses a significant barrier for qualified migrants seeking to apply their skills and access positions that better match their level of training. As a result, not only are individual skills underutilised, but labour markets also struggle to make full use of migrants' experience and qualifications.

A new study examines highly regulated professions, such as nursing and early childhood education, using case studies and international examples. It explores practical challenges and promising approaches to reform recognition procedures and support professional integration.

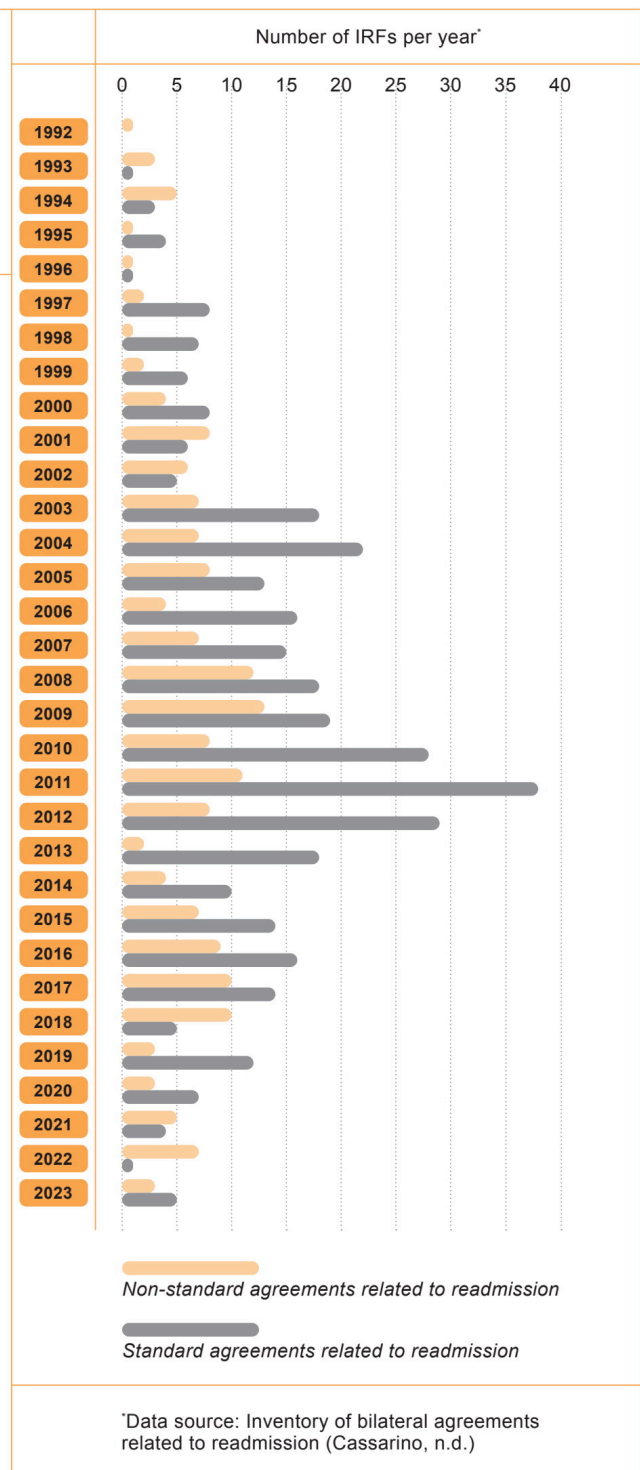
TEMPORAL EVOLUTION OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL RETURN FRAMEWORKS FOR ALL EU+ STATES WITH NON-EU/EFTA STATES (1992–2023)

research in these countries highlighted that failing to meet the expectations of potential partner countries undermines the perceived fairness and legitimacy of return processes. Strong bilateral relationships, trusted diplomatic engagement and a shared commitment to normative values are consistently associated with higher levels of return cooperation and are therefore more likely to bear fruit.

Advancing human rights monitoring in return

Another key focus of ICMPDs research work, in cooperation with consortium partners in the FAiR project, was improving human rights monitoring in forced and assisted voluntary return procedures. The research comparatively analysed monitoring mechanisms at national and international levels, identifying inconsistencies, resource gaps, procedural difficulties and a lack of systematic post-return follow-up. In response, updated monitoring guidelines were developed in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, supporting national institutions in effectively strengthening human rights monitoring.

The effectiveness of return policies cannot be assessed solely by the volume of enforced returns. It also requires consideration of the legitimacy of policies, respect for human rights, the perspectives of countries of origin and the long-term dynamics of cooperation. A series of key policy-relevant takeaways will be produced over the course of the project to translate empirical findings into actionable guidance for policymakers and practitioners. ●





**THEMATIC
EXPERTISE**

Addressing vulnerabilities in mixed migration flows

In South-East Europe, trafficking in human beings for labour exploitation is on the rise. Migrant workers are mistaken for irregular migrants rather than potential trafficking victims. ICMPD focused on addressing these vulnerabilities, while continuing to strengthen national and regional cooperation across West and North Africa and South-East Europe.

Trafficking for labour exploitation of third-country nationals and migrants in South-East Europe is increasingly linked to rising labour demand and intensified labour migration, especially in construction, agriculture, tourism and services. Foreign workers are frequently recruited through deceptive job offers, including fake contracts, often using online platforms, and are exploited once they are in the countries of destination - through unpaid wages, excessive working hours and poor living conditions. Increasingly, legal labour migration schemes are used to recruit people and push them into exploitative situations once they arrive.

Several countries in South-East Europe report that migrant workers are often treated as irregular migrants (for lacking valid residence or work permits, etc.) or labour law violators (for working without contracts or in undeclared employment), rather than being identified as potential trafficking victims. Digital recruitment and ICT-facilitated control have emerged as major risk factors, enabling traffickers and intermediaries to operate across borders with limited detection. Language and cultural barriers, low awareness of labour rights and dependence on intermediaries further increase migrants' vulnerability.

As the Secretariat of the Network of Anti-Trafficking Coordinators in South-East Europe (NATC SEE), ICMPD supported the chair (Slovenia) and the Network members in the development of the Network's Strategy Paper 2025-2029, building on the input of the Network members regarding the main challenges and priorities in their anti-trafficking responses. ICMPD's support with the discussion paper on the Network and the challenges of addressing trafficking in human beings within irregular migration flows paved the way for the delegates at the Brdo Process Ministerial Meeting in March 2025 to adopt the Joint Declaration of the Ministers of Interior of the Brdo Process, and endorse the new Strategy Paper of NATC SEE. This paper will guide the Network's efforts to advance the cooperation and the exchange of good practices in South-East Europe in combating human trafficking.

Responding to the demands of the changing environment, the increasing incidence of trafficking in third-country

"HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT"

To mark the EU Anti-Trafficking Day (18 October), ICMPD and the NATC SEE developed an awareness video to address the rising trend in trafficking for labour exploitation among migrants in the SEE region, which was adapted for each Network member. Its key message:

"Migrant workers help keep our societies running every day.

Some are trapped in human trafficking and exploitation.

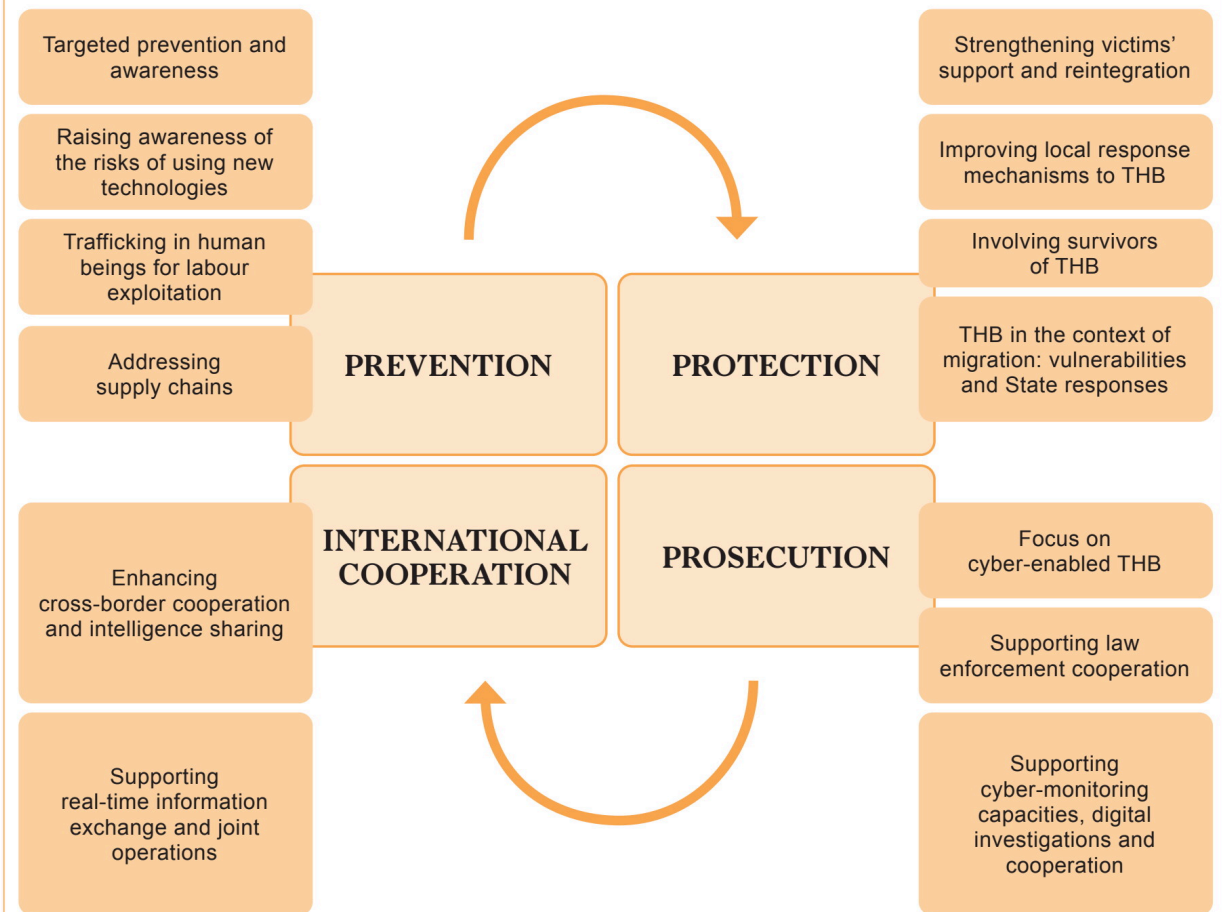
This can mean no pay, unsafe housing, punishment or having their documents taken away.

It happens everywhere – in construction, factories, farming and hospitality.

Reporting what you see can protect people.

Don't look away! Contact the local police!

STRATEGIC DOMAINS SET IN THE STRATEGY PAPER 2025–2029 OF NATC SEE



nationals for labour exploitation, as well as the exploitation of irregular migrants, has become one of the central priorities under the new strategy. Therefore, ICMPD is committed to supporting the Network's members, as well as other countries in the region, in their efforts to address the reported challenges. Against this backdrop, the 20th meeting of the Network, held in November 2025 in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, highlighted several strategic priorities in connection with the increased occurrence of trafficking for labour exploitation in South-East Europe:

→ **Addressing identification and prosecution** by strengthening labour inspection oversight, conducting joint inspections, utilising mobile

identification teams and implementing strong financial investigations.

→ **Addressing the broader legal and procedural framework of labour migration** and labour markets by further examining and addressing instances of exploitation within legal labour migration schemes, and establishing and effectively implementing corporate due diligence in supply chains and public procurement.

→ **Adapting prevention measures** in countries of origin to ICT-facilitated recruitment patterns and strengthening transnational cooperation with countries of origin and referral mechanisms to support foreign victims of trafficking. •

International cooperation as a decisive factor

International cooperation remains the cornerstone of effective, secure and rights-based border management. Platforms such as the International Border Management Conferences organised by the ICMPD, offer the opportunity to strengthen global collaboration by convening policymakers, practitioners and experts.

Border management is inherently reliant on cooperation between different parties, whether on a bilateral or multilateral basis. The successful regulation and security of borders necessitate ongoing collaboration between neighbouring States and relevant organisations. However, such cooperation is frequently hampered by a variety of factors. Political differences, religious considerations and geographical obstacles can all serve to limit the extent and effectiveness of joint efforts. Furthermore, fundamental security concerns may also restrict the willingness or ability of parties to collaborate fully.

In addition, disparities in resources and capabilities often lead to unequal participation, with some parties struggling to meet agreed standards or contribute effectively. Trust issues rooted in historical conflicts or past breaches of agreements can further complicate cooperation, making it challenging to establish the mutual confidence necessary for sustained partnership. Despite these obstacles, fostering open channels of communication and building trust through incremental steps remain essential strategies for overcoming barriers and enhancing border management initiatives.

Despite these significant challenges, border management cannot operate effectively in the absence of at least a basic level of cooperation. Whether at specific border crossings or on a broader scale, maintaining some degree of coordinated effort is essential for the proper functioning of border management activities. While the ICMPD International Border Management Conference is a flagship event, it is just one of several platforms available for border agencies worldwide to collaborate and discuss effective, secure and rights-based border management.

Bringing key stakeholders together

The International Border Management Conference (IBMC) debuted in 2018 in Beirut, Lebanon, gathering a select group of border management experts. Although small, the event laid the groundwork for the IBMC's growing recognition today. Over the course of eight years and eight consecutive events, IBMC has expanded its reach – not just in terms of participant numbers and the countries involved, but also in the variety of experts and subjects covered. Today, IBMC serves as a gathering point for border management professionals, policymakers, senior officials, academics and members of civil society. Together, these key stakeholders contribute significantly to the advancement of global border management.

The Eighth International Border Management Conference (IBMC), funded and co-hosted by the Ministry

FLAGSHIP EVENT

Effective border management relies on cooperation between States, agencies and organisations. The International Border Management Conference (IBMC), established in 2018, has become a central forum for dialogue on border security, migration, and fundamental rights.

of Asylum and Migration of the Netherlands and organised by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), convened in Amsterdam at the Beurs van Berlage on 18–19 November 2025.

The IBMC brought together a diverse international audience of border management specialists to examine emerging trends, innovations, best practices and policy developments under the overarching theme of Resilient Borders in a Changing World. This edition prioritised several critical areas relevant to the Netherlands, including Schengen cooperation, return processes, human rights and security within the broader context of migration.

Space for exchange and debate

Once again, the IBMC demonstrated its value in advancing the implementation of integrated border management strategies among partner countries. The conference aimed to enhance participants' knowledge of integrated border management and strengthen their collaborative networks. It provided a comprehensive platform for sharing, presenting and debating contemporary policies and operational practices, with an emphasis on

applying knowledge and expanding networks across international borders. Participants benefited from exposure to current industry developments, peer-to-peer exchanges, and opportunities to deepen their expertise.

The programme featured six plenary sessions and five thematic parallel technical sessions, where attendees engaged in focused discussions on topics such as digitalisation, innovative approaches to border management, human rights-centred practices and the promotion of women's empowerment in the field.

Effective border management relies on cooperation between States, agencies and organisations. Established in 2018, the IBMC has become a central forum for dialogue on border security, migration and fundamental rights. At its eighth session in Amsterdam (November 2025), the IBMC reinforced the importance of international collaboration, focusing on Schengen cooperation, return processes and rights-based strategies. The conference highlighted ongoing challenges but emphasised that continued cooperation is crucial for resilient border management. ●

Enhancing Europe's talent attraction and retention

Demographic change in Europe is causing several industries to struggle to find people with the right qualifications. But there are key challenges hindering the attraction and retention of global talent in Europe, including skills mismatches, administrative barriers, limited employer capacity, and gaps in integration and inclusion. ICMPD is working to address these challenges. One of the main aims is to foster future-oriented, sustainable and mutually beneficial approaches.

KEY NUMBERS

- Job vacancy rates in the EU-27 have been increasing over the past 10 years, standing at 2.4% in the EU-27 in Q2 2024 (Eurostat, 2024a).
- The most widespread shortage occupations in at least 75% of European reporting countries are welders and flame cutters, nursing professionals, cooks, and building and related electricians (ELA, 2024).
- Skills shortages are a serious problem for the smaller to mid-sized companies in the EU, with 53% of micro companies, 65% of small companies and 68% of medium-sized companies identifying this challenge (Eurobarometer, 2023).
- Around a quarter of European companies have struggled to find employees with the right skills, while 77% report that newly recruited employees do not possess the necessary skills (European Commission, 2024b).

Amid growing labour shortages across key sectors in Europe, driven in large part by demographic decline and ageing, demand for international workers continues to increase. At the same time, global competition for skills is intensifying, making effective talent attraction increasingly challenging – and recruitment equally important for leveraging these skill sets in the longer term. Yet challenges related to qualification recognition and language acquisition, limited career progression, and insufficient settlement support, including support for accompanying family members, continue to affect workers' decisions to stay, with consequences for Europe's innovation and competitiveness. ICMPD is working with key stakeholders, across the migration cycle, to support improved attraction and retention, including a focus on addressing three areas where employers or international employees commonly face obstacles:

ADDRESSING KEY CHALLENGES TO SMOOTHLY FUNCTIONING LABOUR MOBILITY

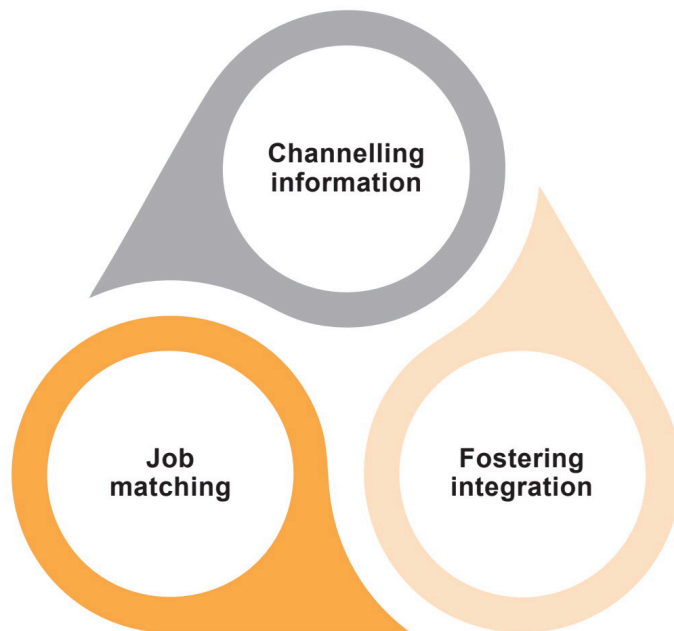
Channelling information

Access to clear, reliable information is a challenge faced by prospective employers and migrants alike. Many companies, especially small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), lack the time and resources to navigate the international recruitment process, and information is often scattered across multiple places and actors, compounding the challenge. Prospective migrants and newcomers face similar barriers, often struggling to identify trustworthy information on legal pathways, recognition procedures, and available support, exacerbated by language barriers and complex processes. ICMPD is examining the role of bridging actors, such as public employment and investment agencies, one-stop shops, universities and diaspora organisations, that can connect international talent and employers with tailored information and practical support across the entire talent journey.

Job matching

Another key challenge is matching aspiring migrant workers with employers' needs. If job matching is done well, not only can it address immediate skills needs in Europe, it can also set the stage for the integration and retention of skilled newcomers in European economies. With the new EU Talent Pool designed to facilitate this, ICMPD has provided recommendations to increase uptake and engagement, including developing a matching algorithm that also supports worker retention, leveraging the benefits of skills mobility partnerships, and addressing labour exploitation from the outset.

The SUSTAIN project, funded through the Migration Partnership Facility (MPF), uses automatic screening of Nigerian candidates to create a talent pool for European



employers based on age, occupation, and experience. To complement this, the project also embarked on a consultation with 74 European employers to assess needs, practices, and perceptions within STEM recruitment.

Fostering integration

The retention of international talent is essential, particularly when considering Europe's long-term needs and employers' desire for return on investment in international recruitment. A key entry point for fostering retention is integration support. To equip employers, ICMPD is developing a practical guide as part of the MPF-funded BRIDGE project, which includes checklists and outlines tools, services, and best practices to foster integration and inclusion in the workplace and the local community. •

Advancing national reintegration systems led by countries of origin

Sustainable reintegration is a shared priority for countries of origin, transit and destination, and a core pillar of comprehensive and balanced migration governance. Achieving lasting impact requires nationally owned, development-oriented reintegration systems that move beyond fragmented, short-term assistance and anchor support within national frameworks, coordination structures and public service delivery systems, in line with national policies and priorities.

Sustainable reintegration is a cornerstone of effective return governance. Reintegration is considered sustainable when returnees achieve economic self-sufficiency, social stability and psychosocial well-being that enable them to cope with (re) migration drivers and make migration a choice rather than a necessity.¹ Sustainability, however, is not just about individual trajectories. It also depends on whether national institutions, services and processes remain accessible and functional for returnees over time, including after externally funded projects have ended. Without such systemic anchoring, reintegration risks remaining short-term, fragmented and vulnerable to funding cycles.

Greater focus on national reintegration governance

National reintegration systems led and owned by countries of origin help move away from short-term, project-based assistance towards a development-oriented, systemic approach. By embedding reintegration into public services, sectoral policies

and local development frameworks, such systems can therefore improve returnees' access to employment, social protection, health, education and psychosocial support, reduce dependency on external programmes and strengthen accountability towards both returnees and host communities.

The EU policy framework increasingly reflects this shift. The [2021 EU strategy on voluntary return and reintegration](#) emphasises coherent approaches, partner country ownership, links with development and governance, strengthened coordination and referral mechanisms, and institutional capacity as essential for sustainable reintegration. EU support has progressively evolved beyond the sole provision of individual reintegration packages towards reinforcing institutional capacity and public service delivery. This reflects the understanding that the credibility and effectiveness of return policies depend on sustainable reintegration outcomes and on the capacity of countries of origin to lead coherent, nationally anchored responses.

¹While there is no globally agreed definition of reintegration sustainability, the most widely used reference is that of the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Overcoming fragmentation

Despite this progress, reintegration remains fragmented. Multiple donors, projects and stakeholders operate in parallel with different parameters, eligibility criteria and time frames, often tied to specific return modalities or countries of destination. This project logic limits continuity, excludes large portions of returnees and weakens alignment with national priorities. Fragmentation also complicates accountability and coordination. Addressing this requires placing countries of origin in the driving seat, as national reintegration systems allow governments to integrate reintegration into normal governance, adapt support to local realities, include all returnees and ensure sustainability beyond external funding cycles.

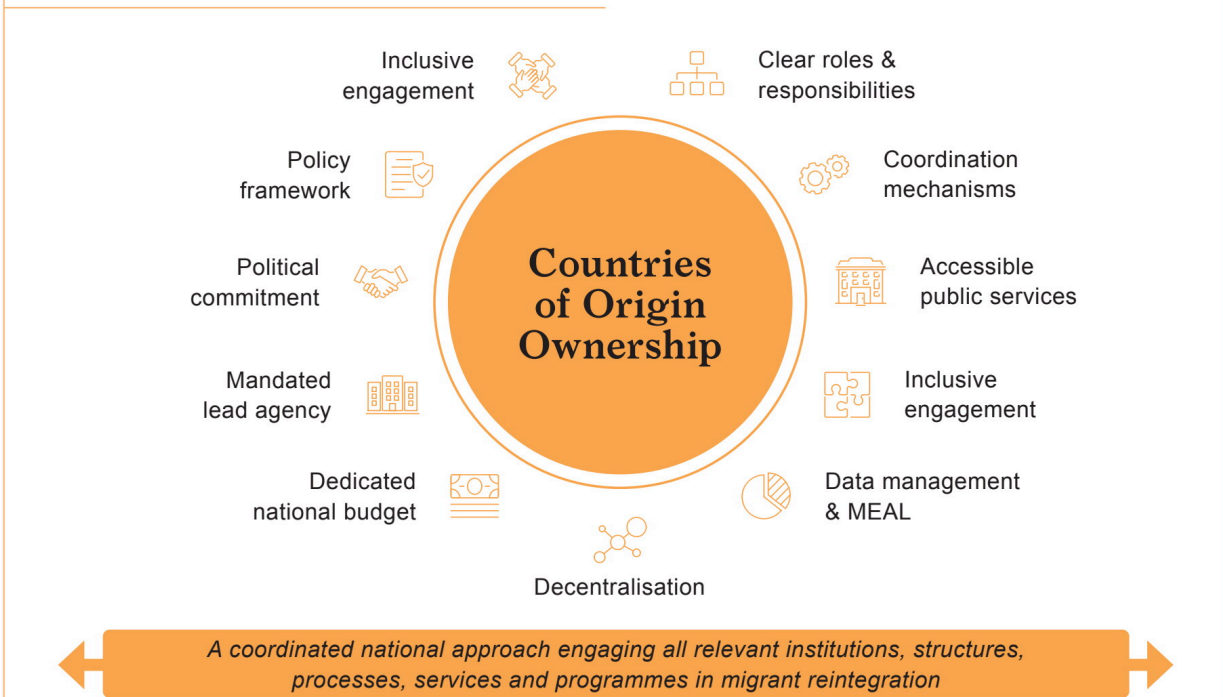
Establishing sustainable national reintegration systems requires more than isolated programme delivery. It depends on political commitment and a clear policy and legal framework,

anchored in a mandated national coordinating entity able to mobilise a whole-of-government and whole-of-society response. Effective systems rely on decentralised and accessible public services, supported by structured coordination mechanisms, standard operating procedures, national referral mechanisms, and robust data management and MEAL frameworks. Reintegration must be mainstreamed across sectors and accompanied by progressive national budget engagement to ensure continuity beyond external funding.

Ownership is decisive

Reintegration needs to become a routine responsibility of the State rather than an externally driven agenda. External partners remain indispensable, but their role should evolve from direct implementation towards enabling country-of-origin-led systems through co-design, institutional and human capacity development, material support and long-term accompaniment. ▶

FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS OF NATIONAL REINTEGRATION SYSTEMS



Gradual transfer of responsibilities to national actors

Policy action should prioritise building national reintegration systems over multiplying short-term projects. Partners should co-design interventions with countries of origin, align support with national policy frameworks, and support the strengthening of core system components such as standard operating procedures, national referral mechanisms and coordination structures. Investment is needed in decentralised and accessible public services, as well as in data management and learning systems. Reintegration should be systematically mainstreamed into employment, youth, social protection and development policies. A progressive transition is essential, with operational and financial responsibilities gradually transferred

to national actors, supported by predictable and flexible financing and accompanied by increasing national resource mobilisation to ensure long-term sustainability.

ICMPD actively supports this shift in partnership with countries of origin. In Pakistan, an [EU-funded initiative](#) supports government counterparts to strengthen reintegration governance, coordination and service linkages for returnees, while in Iraq the [NORAQ framework](#) reinforces nationally led mechanisms, referral pathways and institutional capacity to connect returnees with public services and local development opportunities. These initiatives demonstrate how partnership-based, country-of-origin-led approaches can translate policy commitments into sustainable reintegration systems that endure beyond project cycles. ●

ABUJA KNOWLEDGE PAPER ON SUSTAINABLE REINTEGRATION

[The Abuja Knowledge Paper on Sustainable Reintegration](#), developed under the Nigerian Chairmanship of the Rabat Process (2025–2026), contributes to strengthening migration governance through cooperation, knowledge exchange and evidence-based policymaking in the region.

At a time of increasingly complex migration dynamics, it makes the case for nationally led and internationally supported reintegration systems as a prerequisite for sustainability. Drawing on perspectives from stakeholders across Africa and Europe, the paper analyses the opportunities and challenges of building inclusive, coordinated and responsive national reintegration structures, and positions country-of-origin ownership as central to effective, evidence-driven and partnership-based reintegration practice.

This focus will remain a priority under the Swiss Chairmanship of the Rabat Process, ensuring continuity with previous efforts and promoting the exchange of good practices and experiences at national, regional and cross-border levels.

The background of the entire page is a light orange color. Overlaid on this is a repeating pattern of stylized, bold orange geometric shapes. These shapes are arranged in a grid-like fashion, with each shape being a variation of a simple, angular form that resembles a stylized letter or symbol. The shapes are oriented in a way that they appear to be part of a larger, continuous pattern.

**PAN-
AFRICA**

Multilevel responses to African migration dynamics

Migration dynamics across Africa continued to be shaped by a convergence of demographic change, climate pressures, conflict dynamics, and evolving economic opportunities. These forces generated increasingly complex mobility patterns across and beyond the continent. They call for coordinated, multilevel responses grounded in policy coherence, regional cooperation and practical action.

In 2025, ICMPD's engagement played a pivotal role in advancing more integrated migration governance against the backdrop of more complex mobility patterns. By connecting dialogue processes with policy development and operational engagement, the organisation helped bridge Africa–Europe and intra-African priorities by strengthening collective responses. Through mutually beneficial partnerships with African and European partner countries, regional and international organisations, civil society organisations and the private sector, ICMPD supported initiatives that promote safe, orderly and regular migration, while upholding the fundamental rights and dignity of migrants.

RESPONDING TO NATIONAL PRIORITIES: THE DEMAND-DRIVEN FACILITY IN WEST AFRICA

In June 2025, ICMPD expanded technical assistance through the launch of the Demand-Driven Facility under FMM West Africa II. Covering 10 thematic areas – including border management, labour migration, anti-trafficking, diaspora engagement, and climate-induced displacement – the facility enables tailored support to government institutions across ECOWAS Member States and Mauritania. By September 2025, 25 requests had been received, with nine approved for implementation starting in 2026. Applications continue to be reviewed on a rolling basis through early 2028, ensuring responsive support to emerging migration governance needs.

ICMPD also played a central role in reinforcing the Africa–Europe migration dialogue as a cornerstone of coordinated and forward-looking migration governance. Through sustained support to key dialogue frameworks, ICMPD helped ensure that political commitments were translated into practical cooperation, evidence-based policymaking, and inclusive engagement with a broad range of stakeholders.

Translating migration dialogues into action

Under the Africa–EU Migration and Mobility Dialogue Support Programme, progress was made across all major dialogue platforms. Participating States in the Khartoum Process adopted a new Declaration and Action Plan, providing renewed strategic direction for cooperation along the Horn of Africa–Europe migration route. At the same time, the Rabat Process entered a new leadership phase, with Nigeria assuming the Chairmanship and launching the [Abuja Knowledge Paper on Sustainable Reintegration](#), contributing to strengthening migration governance through cooperation, knowledge exchange and evidence-based policy approaches across the region.

Cooperation under the Joint Valletta Action Plan Follow-Up advanced through the development of new analytical tools and the roll-out of a data collection cycle. At the continental level, the AU–EU Continent-to-Continent Migration and Mobility Dialogue launched new training manuals on migration governance targeting policymakers,

media practitioners and communication specialists, as well as a study assessing the challenges and opportunities related to the ratification and popularisation of the African Union Free Movement Protocol.

In parallel, the MMD Grant Facility is supporting grant projects implemented by 29 civil society organisations and non-State actors, working in consortia across 25 African countries. These projects span the thematic domains of the JVAP and aim to enhance the role of CSOs in delivering innovative migration initiatives along Africa–Europe migration routes, while strengthening their positioning and role within Africa–EU migration diplomacy, including participation in high-level MMD dialogue events.

Interregional cooperation was further strengthened through the [Joint Thematic Meeting of the Khartoum, Rabat, and Niamey Processes](#), held in Lagos in November 2025. Bringing together 166 participants from 41 countries, alongside regional and international organisations and civil society, the meeting applied the “4Ps” framework to discussions on prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnerships. Participants highlighted the importance of evidence-based prevention, survivor-centred protection, and closer judicial cooperation, reaffirming that sustainable responses along Africa–Europe migration routes depend on strong partnerships and coordinated action.

Supporting free movement and combating trafficking in West Africa

In West Africa, ICMPD’s work in 2025 focused on supporting regional integration, safe mobility, and protection through its partnership with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Two complementary initiatives – the EU-funded Supporting Free Movement of Persons and Migration in West Africa (FMM West Africa II) and the Denmark-funded Strengthening Mobility in West Africa (SMiWA) – supported

the effective implementation of the ECOWAS Free Movement Protocol while strengthening regional responses to trafficking in persons and related crimes (TIP+).

A defining achievement was the national adaptation of the ECOWAS TIP+ Strategy in four pilot countries – Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone. This comprehensive framework addresses trafficking in persons and related offences while expanding protection for vulnerable groups, including women, children, persons with disabilities and internally displaced persons. In Nigeria, the National Strategy to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Violence Against Persons (2025–2027) integrated trafficking offences into a broader framework of violence-related crimes, establishing coordinated action across prevention, protection, prosecution, policy and partnerships, and aligning national frameworks with ECOWAS standards and international commitments.

Operational progress on free movement was achieved through the revitalisation of the ECOWAS Regional Monitoring Mechanism (RMM) for interstate passenger vehicles along the Lagos–Abidjan corridor, covering Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Ghana, and Côte d’Ivoire. The RMM addresses persistent challenges faced by ECOWAS citizens, including harassment at crossing points, procedural delays and inconsistent enforcement of free movement protocols.

Standard operating procedures were developed to clarify institutional roles among immigration, customs, police, and health authorities, promoting

ADVANCING RIGHTS-BASED RESPONSES TO MISSING MIGRANTS

Partner countries of the Rabat and Khartoum Processes have increasingly prioritised strengthening policy dialogue, as well as regional and cross-border cooperation, to prevent migrants from going missing across all routes covered by both dialogues, improve search and identification mechanisms, and ensure meaningful support for affected families and communities. Central to these efforts is a commitment to place the rights of affected families at the centre of policy responses, including their right to know the fate and whereabouts of their loved ones who have gone missing along migratory routes.

In this regard, the Network of National Focal Points for Missing Migrants, launched in 2024 by the ICRC, alongside Switzerland and The Gambia, and reinforced by its first in-person meeting held in Banjul in July 2025, constitute a key milestone. Within the Rabat Process region, it offers a dedicated platform for national authorities, international organisations, and experts to advance policy dialogue and operational cooperation to strengthen the tracing of missing migrants and uphold families' fundamental rights.

consistent practices at border crossing points. The framework also encourages digital solutions, such as electronic passenger manifests and vehicle tracking systems, to improve efficiency and transparency. Regional training further equipped border officials with practical skills in integrated border management, human rights protection, gender sensitivity, and the identification of potential trafficking victims at ECOWAS Joint Border Posts, ensuring that facilitation of movement does not compromise security or protection.

Building institutional resilience in Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal

Through integrated operational and strategic interventions, ICMPD advanced border management in the region. Capacity-building activities strengthened document security capacities through targeted training, mentoring and the effective use of specialised equipment. This

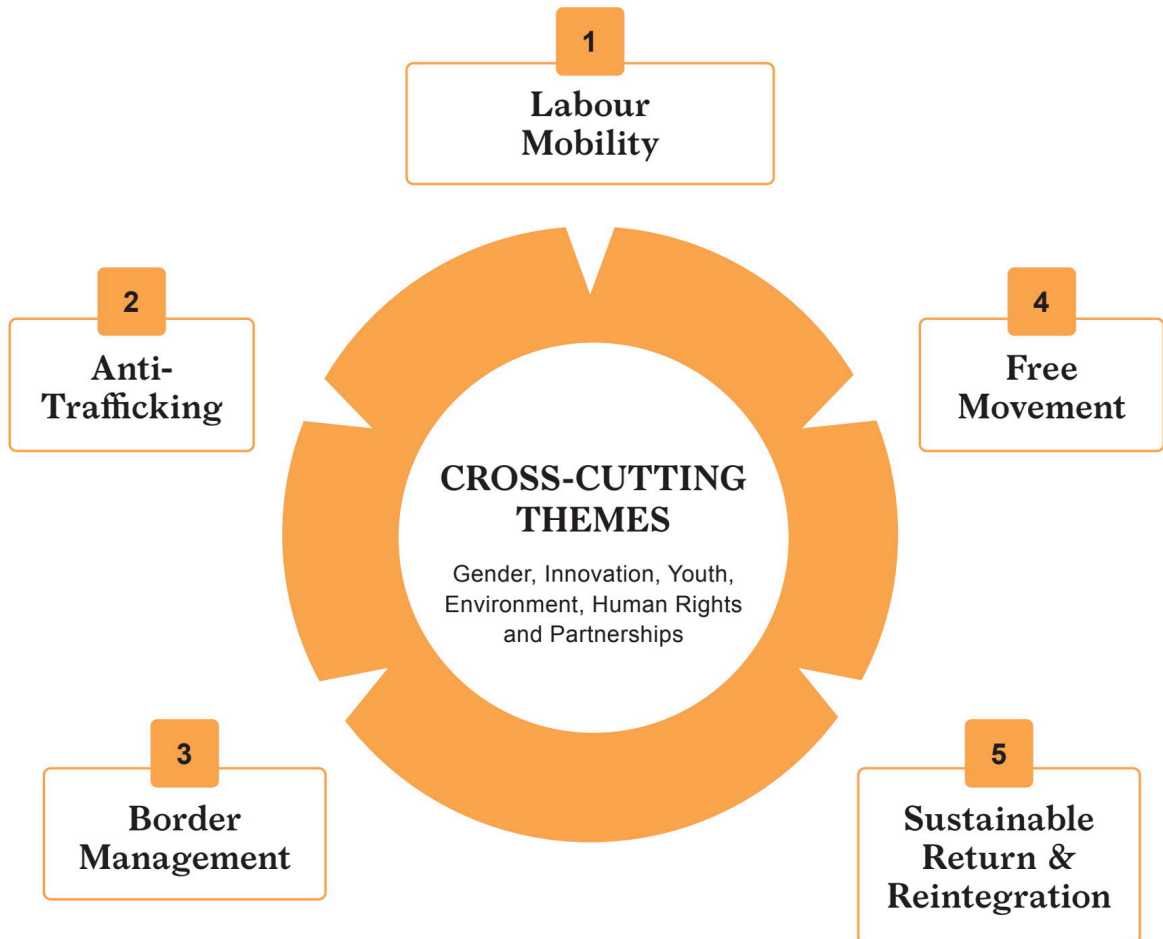
significantly improved the ability of border officials to detect fraudulent documents, particularly in high-risk border areas.

In Côte d'Ivoire, ICMPD complemented its operational support with strategic assistance to national authorities in drafting the country's first border law. The new legal framework is expected to improve inter-agency coordination, clarify institutional mandates, and lay the foundation for a more coherent and sustainable border management system. By linking operational improvements with structural reforms, ICMPD's interventions in 2025 reinforced both immediate border control capacities and the long-term governance of borders.

Prevention efforts against irregular migration and trafficking in persons were also expanded through institutional support and targeted awareness-raising in at-risk communities. By supporting the decentralisation of the National Committee for the Fight against Trafficking in Persons (CNLTP), ICMPD contributed to the establishment of regional structures capable of coordinating and delivering prevention activities at community level, while capacity-building workshops for social workers, civil society organisations, and criminal justice actors strengthened local response mechanisms.

In Senegal, ICMPD focused on strengthening document security systems by investing in the institutional capacities of border authorities. A pool of police officers was trained to become trainers, contributing to the local acquisition of skills and establishing a sustainable training ecosystem. Through hands-on, practical training, Senegalese border officials improved their ability to detect fraudulent documents and imposters at border crossings, contributing to regional security through more secure and resilient borders. ●

**FOCUS AREAS
IN THE PAN-AFRICA REGION**



Khartoum Process

In 2025, the Khartoum Process entered a new strategic phase, marked by the adoption of the Cairo Ministerial Declaration and Action Plan. Under the Egyptian and subsequently the French Chairmanship, the dialogue advanced its transition towards stronger policy orientation and enhanced operational cooperation.

A DECADE OF THE KHARTOUM PROCESS: RENEWED COMMITMENTS FOR THE FUTURE

A key milestone in 2025 was the [Second Khartoum Process Ministerial Conference](#), hosted by Egypt in Cairo in April, marking the tenth anniversary of the process. Ministers took stock of a decade of progress in dialogue, trust-building and cooperation on migration between the Horn of Africa and Europe, reaffirming the importance of sustained international partnership and solidarity. The Cairo Ministerial Declaration and Action Plan set renewed strategic direction, prioritising stronger policy coordination, improved data exchange, reinforced legal and protection frameworks, and increased attention to emerging challenges, including climate-induced mobility and migration-related misinformation.

The year was characterised by reinforced partnerships through an inclusive and multi-stakeholder approach. Synergies with other migration dialogues were further strengthened, notably through a joint thematic meeting with the Rabat Process and the Niamey Declaration focused on combating migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings. This initiative underscored the added value of cross-route coordination and collective responses to shared challenges.

Dialogue and peer exchange were deepened to support improved migration governance and strengthened international protection systems. Dedicated discussions addressed safe and dignified return and sustainable reintegration, as well as legal identity as a cornerstone for access to rights, protection, and effective governance.

The process also broadened its thematic scope to include emerging priorities, such as the issue of missing migrants. A first-ever webinar on this topic raised awareness of the scale and human impact of disappearances along migration routes, and encouraged more coordinated, protection-oriented responses among partner countries. ●

Rabat Process

2025 marked the beginning of a new leadership chapter under Nigeria's Chairmanship, driving renewed momentum across the dialogue and advancing the Cadiz Action Plan through strengthened knowledge exchange, regional cooperation and evidence-based policymaking. Under Nigeria's guidance, the Rabat Process broadened its thematic scope, fostered inclusive engagement and deepened synergies with other migration dialogues.

Throughout the year, the Rabat Process steered attention towards priority themes under its strategic framework. Key milestones included the first-ever webinar dedicated to migration data for evidence-based policymaking, reinforcing the importance of reliable data in shaping informed policies. A Special Event further explored the interlinkages between climate change and mobility, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of how environmental factors influence migration dynamics across the region.

Stakeholder engagement was significantly expanded. Youth participation was strengthened, national statistical offices became more actively involved and partnerships with international actors working on missing migrants were reinforced. Cross-dialogue cooperation also intensified, notably through a first-of-its-kind joint thematic meeting with the Khartoum Process and the Niamey Declaration

ADVANCING YOUTH EMPOWERMENT THROUGH DIALOGUE AND ACTION

In 2025, the African youth were recognised as essential drivers of innovation and sustainable development during the Rabat Process [Thematic Meeting on Youth, Education and Innovation](#), held in Abuja on 13–14 May 2025 and co-chaired by Nigeria and Spain. The event gathered over 120 participants from 38 African and European countries, youth representatives, governments, civil society, academia, the private sector and diaspora organisations. As the first thematic meeting under Nigeria's chairmanship, the event underscored the need for stronger investment in education, innovation and youth engagement. Two dedicated youth-focused sessions generated 32 concrete [recommendations](#), outlining key challenges, good practices and actionable steps to strengthen youth empowerment across origin and destination countries.

focused on combating migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings.

A major institutional development was the consolidation of the Network of National Focal Points for Missing Migrants. Established in 2024, the network met twice online in 2025 and held its first in-person meeting in Banjul, co-chaired by The Gambia and Switzerland with support from the ICRC. To date, 25 partner countries have designated national focal points, strengthening coordinated responses to the issue of missing migrants across regions. ●



**EASTERN
EUROPE AND
CENTRAL ASIA**

Laying the groundwork for resilience, recovery and development

In 2025, ICMPD's work across the EECA region included advancements in the Cooperation Dialogue on Migration and Mobility between EU and India. The formal adoption of a National IBM Strategy was an important hallmark in Iraq. Pakistan expanded MRCs' reintegration services and provided direct support to more than a thousand returnees in one year.

From information provision and support to displaced Ukrainians in the EU Member States to Migrant Resource Centres in Central Asia, civil society partnerships and long-standing border management initiatives, ICMPD combined operational support with strategic policy engagement. These efforts contributed to protecting human capital, safeguarding rights and laying the groundwork for resilience, recovery and sustainable development across the region.

COOPERATION WITH CIVIL SOCIETY FOR MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Throughout 2025, the Regional Office deepened cooperation with civil society organisations, recognising their role as key drivers of change in protecting migrants' human rights, improving living conditions in border regions and enhancing migration's contribution to local development. Civil society-focused initiatives were implemented in Georgia and across five Central Asian countries, supporting CSOs to increase their impact, sustainability and engagement with local communities and authorities.

Supporting migrants' informed choices

In 2025, more than 60,000 displaced Ukrainians in the Czech Republic, Germany and Poland received individual consultations through ICMPD-established Ukrainian Consultation Centres. Established in 2023, these Centres are now gradually transformed into Unity Hub-like structures, in line with the Council Recommendation of September 2025 on a coordinated approach to the transition out of temporary protection for displaced persons from Ukraine.

Through this transformation, ICMPD's Ukrainian Centres continue to ensure access to accurate, timely, and reliable information for people benefiting from temporary protection. The centres support informed decision-making based on full knowledge of available options, help maintain institutional links with the Ukrainian State, facilitate transitions to other legal statuses and assist with preparations for voluntary return programmes. By safeguarding Ukraine's human capital abroad, this work contributes directly to the country's long-term resilience and future reconstruction.

This flagship initiative will remain central to ICMPD's work in 2026,

with plans to expand to additional EU Member States and to actively share lessons learned and practical experience.

In Central Asia, ICMPD supports informed migration decisions through three Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs) operating in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Alongside individual consultations, the MRCs organised awareness campaigns and remote outreach sessions in 2025, significantly extending their reach to potential migrants and scaling up their impact.

In Uzbekistan, these activities were complemented by targeted irregular migration prevention efforts in five selected regions, involving local media, educational institutions and mahallas in border areas. In 2025, three MRCs in Central Asia provided information and assistance to more than 44,000 migrants.

In Armenia, ICMPD continued to provide consultations to returning migrants, including referrals to available services, while simultaneously strengthening institutional capacities for the development and implementation of a sustainable reintegration framework.

Empowering vulnerable populations

The establishment of civil society facilities for migration and development represents a key initiative implemented by ICMPD in recent years, particularly in the South Caucasus and Central Asia. Civil society organisations play a critical role in safeguarding the rights of vulnerable populations affected by migration. Through ICMPD's small grants facility, 33 civil society-implemented projects received financial and methodological support across Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

The supported initiatives focused on empowering vulnerable populations in border and migration-affected areas, strengthening livelihoods, and promoting access to rights and services. In addition, the projects provided targeted support to diaspora communities, children left behind by migration and victims of human trafficking, addressing their specific protection, psychosocial and socio-economic needs. Collectively, these interventions contributed to enhanced community resilience, social inclusion and improved protection mechanisms in migration-affected regions.

Enhancing border management in the EECA region

In 2025, ICMPD's EECA Regional Office continued to support border management initiatives in line with the EU approach, balancing the facilitation of legitimate border crossings with effective migration management, enhanced security and human rights-based implementation.

Support for Ukraine and Moldova remained a priority, reflecting ICMPD's continued commitment to both countries following Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Project teams provided modern equipment and communication tools and delivered targeted capacity-building activities aimed at facilitating legitimate cross-border movement and trade while

AREAS OF WORK OF THE UKRAINE UNITY HUB

1

Legal residence in EU MS

ICMPD consultations and referrals on transition to non-protection statuses on social, economic and cultural integration in EU MS in consultation with EU MS agencies

2

Return home

ICMPD consultations and referrals on preparations to return home and sustainable reintegration in cooperation with Ukrainian State and non-governmental actors

3

Maintaining ties with Ukraine

Cooperation with diaspora organisations and other State/non-State agencies on provision of social, cultural, language, youth, educational and similar activities in the centre and referrals to other facilities

4

Networking

Organisation of networking events: direct consultations by relevant UA State actors (on preparations to return: social, mental health, education, documentation, etc.), diaspora networking, business networking

5

Communication

Communication measures to EU MS and the Ukrainian population on the situation in Ukraine and of Ukrainian citizens – from vulnerability to empowerment

strengthening border security.

The long-standing Border Management in Central Asia (BOMCA) initiative, supported by ICMPD for over two decades, will enter its 11th phase in February 2026, this time under ICMPD's leadership.

Policy support and capacity building

ICMPD continued to support countries across the EECA region with migration, border management and related policy advice. In Ukraine, this included ongoing expert support for the development of future return, reintegration and diaspora policies. Integrated border management strategies and action plans in Ukraine and Moldova remained a focus of both ongoing and planned interventions.

Capacity building and education continued to be a cornerstone of ICMPD's work. In 2025, the annual summer school in Armenia brought together students from Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova and Kyrgyzstan, fostering interregional exchange and learning. A project development bootcamp for Central Asian NGOs shared best practices in fundraising, project design and implementation, contributing to the growing self-sufficiency of the civil society sector in the region.

All 13 projects implemented by the EECA Regional Office across 10 countries in 2025 included capacity-building components, ranging from training civil servants on migration and border management and study visits to supporting diaspora organisations to contribute to the development of their countries of origin, and, in the case of Ukraine, to resilience and recovery efforts. ●

MIGRATION DIALOGUES

Prague Process

In 2025, the focus was on a wide range of activities and on identifying priorities for the coming five-year period in very challenging circumstances.

The year 2025 saw the implementation of 17 Prague Process activities. Special attention was given to the priority issues of trafficking in human beings and border management, addressing both policy and operational aspects. The study visits on return and reintegration to Denmark and on labour migration to Romania generated strong interest and positive feedback.

Meanwhile, the online offerings of the Migration Observatory and Training Academy included the newly released e-course Introduction to Migration Studies, the roll-out of two additional EAC modules provided by EUAA, an initial info session on the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, a webinar on

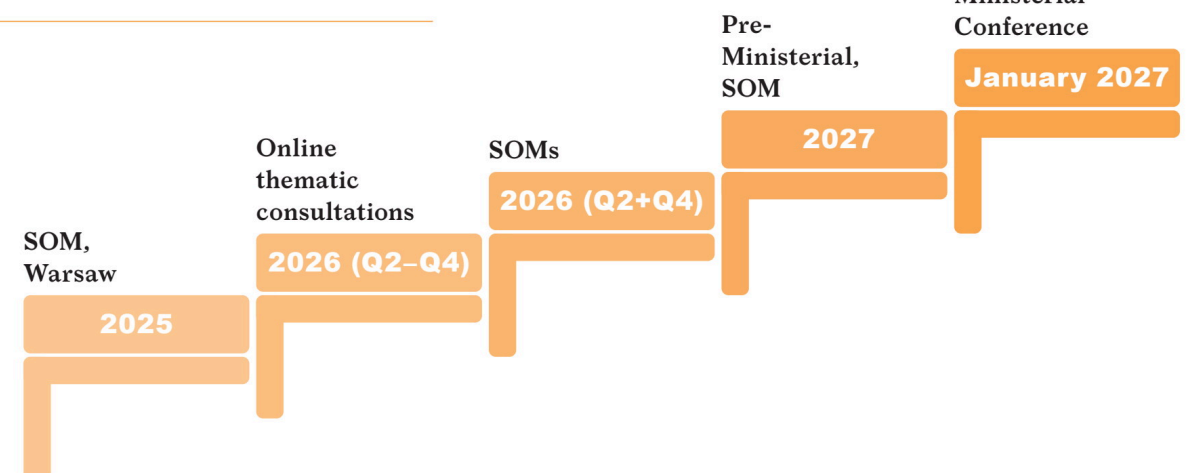
Ukraine, and the traditional policy talk assessing the year ahead.

The Senior Officials Meeting acknowledged the positive findings and recommendations of the Prague Process external evaluation and shared its priorities and vision for the coming five-year period (2028–2032). ●

PREPARING THE FIFTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

As the upcoming Lithuanian EU Presidency will be hosting the fifth Ministerial Conference in Vilnius in January 2027, senior officials gathered in Warsaw in October 2025 to reflect on the implementation of the Action Plan 2023–2027 and set out their vision for future cooperation. They emphasised the need to further advance modernisation and digitalisation, foster innovation and resilience, and strengthen the operationalisation of their joint endeavours.

MILESTONES TOWARDS THE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE



MEDITERRANEAN

From dawn to day: gearing capacity partnerships into action

In 2021, ICMPD set a new course in the Mediterranean by adopting the Migration Capacity Partnerships framework, convinced that migration partnerships deliver better results when partners' capacities are mobilised. By 2025, this approach had moved into full daylight, demonstrating in practice how joint leadership and shared responsibility translate into action.

In an increasingly complex migration context, strengthening governance requires more than policy alignment or isolated support. It calls for sustained investment in the capacities of the institutions and practitioners who shape migration outcomes on a daily basis. Through the Migration Capacity Partnerships for the Mediterranean, ICMPD has anchored regional engagement within a delivery framework that places capacity at the heart of cooperation.

In 2025, MCP Med consolidated this intervention logic by addressing structural needs that enable partners to engage with migration as a system. Governance frameworks provided clarity, professional practice delivered upskilling aligned with modernisation, infrastructure upgrades were matched with digital solutions, and communication evolved to reflect the new paradigm at national and regional levels. In doing so, MCP Med reinforced migration partnerships in practice across migration governance, responses to irregular migration and cooperation along migration routes.

Equal-footed cooperation requires partners to mobilise their own capacities. A defining feature in 2025 was how joint leadership moved from principle to practice. Jordan, as Chair of the MCP Med Training Institute Governing Board and supported by European partners, used its institutional and diplomatic capacities to engage Syrian counterparts in structured capacity-development cooperation. The initiative focuses on strengthening the institutional capacities necessary for Syria's recovery and reconstruction, while positioning ICMPD as a trusted partner. This engagement showed how investing in professional and institutional capacities enables partners to assume leadership roles themselves, generating shared responsibility rather than dependency on external intervention.

Jordan also exercised regional leadership through the Amman Call, inviting Arab partners to support post-conflict capacity development related to Syria. The initiative demonstrated how MCP Med promotes coordinated approaches and allows partners to mobilise capacities beyond national borders, creating space for regional responses grounded in cooperation, professional standards and mutual accountability. It also highlighted the Training Institute's role as an instrument for operationalising migration partnerships.

Professionalisation remained central. Through the Training Institute, ICMPD supported regionally embedded pools of trainers and delivered accredited programmes via

an expanding network of licensed venues. In 2025, ICMPD launched the Migration Capacity Partnership Algeria, an initiative bridging professionalisation and modernisation that integrates digital solutions to boost sustainable upskilling. In Tunisia, infrastructure upgrades were paired with accredited training to ensure that facilities operate with the skills, procedures and institutional cultures required to do so responsibly. By aligning infrastructure development with professional standards, MCP Med helped embed human rights considerations into everyday governance practices relevant to border management and irregular migration.

Modernisation further supported informed governance. Jordan continued to host pilots of digital and data-driven tools that enhance transparency, coordination and institutional learning. Designed with human rights in mind, these tools helped authorities exercise responsibilities more consistently across immigration management, border procedures and return processes, while strengthening accountability.

Across the Mediterranean, governance frameworks, professional standards, infrastructure and digital solutions reinforced one another. Human rights were embedded as a quality benchmark throughout. By consolidating MCP Med in 2025, ICMPD demonstrated that investing in, valuing and mobilising capacities is essential to making migration partnerships deliver tangible results, turning joint leadership and shared responsibility into lived practice. ●

Human rights in practice: Embedding standards through capacity

Across the Mediterranean, ICMPD is strengthening migration governance by embedding human rights as an operational standard within capacity development. Under the Regional Migration Governance Programme 2024–2029, and in cooperation with the Danish Institute for Human Rights, ICMPD integrates human rights–based approaches into training systems that support institutions over time, moving beyond stand-alone awareness to durable change.

A central focus is the training of trainers, ensuring that principles such as participation, non-discrimination and accountability are consistently applied and multiplied across institutions. Human rights are structurally embedded across accredited training programmes, including on legal migration, trafficking in human beings and irregular migration, using victim-centred and participatory methodologies.

In countries such as Tunisia, this approach has strengthened national training systems through the authorisation of governmental trainers and alignment with public service training institutions. By anchoring human rights within professional standards and institutional practice, ICMPD supports authorities in exercising their responsibilities in a sustainable, accountable and rights-based manner across the Mediterranean.

ALGERIA JOINS MCP IN ACTION

In 2025, ICMPD launched its first bilateral engagement with Algeria under the Migration Capacity Partnerships framework, responding to a direct request from Algerian authorities to strengthen institutional capacities. Supported by the Netherlands, Denmark and Switzerland, the partnership combines professionalisation and modernisation to deliver lasting impact.

Through the Training Institute, curricula are co-developed, training facilities licensed, and a national pool of authorised Algerian trainers established, with courses integrated into public service training centres. Digital solutions, including tutor bots and microlearning tools, further enhance learning outcomes. The initiative illustrates how investing in national capacities enables ownership, scalability and shared responsibility in migration governance.



**SILK
ROUTES**

Enhancing legal mobility, border governance and reintegration services

In 2025, ICMPD strengthened migration governance across the Silk Routes region by supporting national reforms, promoting legal mobility pathways and scaling up Migrant Resource Centres. The aim is to enhance prevention, protection and reintegration services for migrants and returnees.

MIGRANT RESOURCE CENTRES ON THE RISE

Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs) were rolled out throughout the region and new capabilities were added. In Iraq, ICMPD opened two new MRCs in 2025, namely in Baghdad and Sulaymaniyah.

In Pakistan, three MRCs have been fully operational. They expanded their reintegration services and provided direct support to more than a thousand returnees in just one year.

In Sri Lanka, MRCs focused on addressing trafficking in human beings and irregular recruitment.

Regional MRC exchange and cooperation were strengthened in 2025, involving government participants from eight countries across 12 operational MRCs, addressing migrant protection, service access and reintegration.

In 2025 the Migrant Resource Centre **Afghanistan** reached over 12.3 million Afghans in Afghanistan, neighbouring countries and beyond with timely and accurate information on European resettlement programmes and complementary pathways, while sustaining structured cooperation with the EUAA through regular quarterly meetings involving participating EU and non-EU countries.

In Bangladesh, ICMPD delivered document security capacity building, training over 100 immigration police officers and expanding the pool of national master trainers in 2025. These interventions strengthened operational capacity to detect and prevent document fraud and were conducted within the framework of the continuation of the Migration Capacity Partnership, which is funded by the Ministry of the Interior and Administration of the Republic of Poland.

In India, ICMPD continued to deliver targeted activities under the Cooperation Dialogue on Migration and Mobility (CDMM) Phase II project, facilitating exchange and collaboration on important issues related to visa processes and student mobility. ICMPD has also been selected to implement the first European Legal Gateway Office in India, focusing on the ICT sector, to be officially launched in February 2026.

HOW THE EUROPEAN LEGAL GATEWAY OFFICE WORKS



Formal adoption of a National IBM Strategy in Iraq

In Iraq, the National IBM Strategy, developed with the support of ICMPD, was endorsed by the Prime Minister in March 2025. Since then, ICMPD has been supporting the National Security Advisory by designing Iraq's first annual Integrated Border Management policy cycle and developing a comprehensive MEL framework. A human rights-based approach (HRBA) was integrated into the national border management training system and operational practices, alongside mentoring for the newly established Risk Analysis Units and the pool of master trainers.

Two Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs) were launched, one in Sulaymaniyah and one in Baghdad, further enhancing return and reintegration services, including support for labour market reintegration and access to technical and vocational education and training. The MRCs in Iraq (Baghdad, Erbil and Sulaymaniyah) conducted 183 outreach sessions, reaching 9,204 beneficiaries, while 1,463 clients received counselling and 1,282 queries were addressed. This included support

for 301 returnees through counselling and 46 psychosocial sessions, with services focused on skills development, employment and economic support.

The results of the MRC Impact Assessment 2025 show that counselling and referral support increased returnees' reintegration knowledge on the referral process by almost 19%. Iraq's MRCs also achieved strong outreach, generating approximately three million reaches and engagements through digital campaigns.

In addition, over 100 government officials benefited from a comprehensive capacity-building programme focusing on reintegration, project management and MEL. Officials were identified and selected for a train-the-trainer programme. ICMPD also supported the creation of an MTC in Baghdad to serve as a future training hub, while a Digital Capacity Building Needs Assessment was conducted to inform future activities.

In Pakistan, ICMPD established immediate, mid- and long-term

Sustainable reintegration of returnees and improved migration management in Pakistan

Funded by the EU, the project focuses on the economic, social and psychosocial well-being of Pakistanis by enabling reintegration pathways from the point of arrival. Returnees and their access to rights and services are at the centre of reintegration efforts. Well-shaped government services are thus necessary for achieving sustainable reintegration in communities.

The MRC-operated Airport Reception Desks in Lahore, Islamabad and Peshawar are a first point of contact for returnees seeking reintegration assistance, ensuring immediate reception, initial assessment and provision of further support. In the first year alone, 1,886 returnees were assisted, returning from 32 countries bound for 41 districts.

Further reintegration services include counselling, skills and business development, prioritising returnee empowerment and vulnerability considerations. Awareness raising bridges the gap in access to services and addresses the stigma associated with return. The draft National Reintegration Policy supports duty-bearers in managing reintegration. It elaborates a rights-based framework for returnees, emphasising human rights, gender-responsive approaches, and government ownership and accountability.

reintegration services for returning migrants in close cooperation with government counterparts. This included expanded referral networks and active Airport Reception Desks at three locations. A draft National Reintegration Policy and Framework and a strategic roadmap for diaspora engagement were also developed. Three MRCs have been fully operational, reaching over 4.5 million people and providing counselling, pre-departure briefings, training and job fairs to over 400,000 people last year.

A sustainability strategy for MRCs was submitted to national counterparts. A soft-skills training module was developed and is now a mandatory

pre-departure requirement, with over 300,000 registered users. The National Emigration and Welfare Policy for Overseas Pakistanis was approved by the Special Cabinet Committee and awaits final Cabinet endorsement.

The second-line border control was expanded to Sialkot International Airport in 2025, and a new second-line interface was integrated into the national entry/exit system, digitising referrals from first to second line. Risk analysis was extended to four zonal/regional levels covering Faisalabad, Gujranwala, Lahore and Multan.

A gaps-and-needs assessment examined policy, trends and fraudulent online recruitment linked to irregular migration. A Business Model Canvas analysis evaluated transnational fake job-scheme operations. ICMPS supported a draft inter-agency Charge Matrix to standardise case categories, legal anchors, referrals, traceable case IDs and timelines. A draft National Awareness-Raising Framework was also developed to coordinate and sustain prevention messaging against fake job advertisements.

In Sri Lanka, around 45,000 potential migrants were reached through MRC activities during 2025, which focused on addressing trafficking in human beings and irregular recruitment. Eight training sessions were also conducted for government officials and foreign employment development officers in five districts.

Regional MRC exchange and cooperation were strengthened, involving government participants from eight countries across 12 operational MRCs and addressing migrant protection, access to services, and reintegration.” ●

Budapest Process

2025 marked the first year of the Call for Action 2025–2030, focusing on strengthening the link between policy dialogue and action.

In 2025, the Budapest Process launched the implementation of the Call for Action 2025–2030, following its adoption at the Seventh Ministerial Conference in 2024. Three thematic working group meetings were convened. In-depth dialogue on return and reintegration, skills partnerships, legal pathways for migration, integrated border management and law enforcement cooperation brought together senior officials and practitioners from more than 40 participating States. Under the Chairmanship of Türkiye and Hungary, these exchanges marked the beginning of a new phase focused on strengthening the link between policy dialogue and action.

In 2026, the Budapest Process will prioritise operationalising the work of the thematic working groups. This will involve establishing the conditions for concrete, regionally grounded initiatives, supporting follow-up actions, and fostering cross-regional cooperation to deliver tangible outcomes. ●

BUDAPEST PROCESS

In June 2025, the Budapest Process convened its first thematic meeting in Pakistan in over a decade, underscoring the country's growing role in regional migration cooperation. The meeting focused on legal pathways for migration and skills partnerships, aligning national priorities with the dialogue's strategic shift towards operational cooperation and delivery-oriented engagement across participating States.

TÜRKİYE

Integrated migration solutions for a lasting impact

ICMPD's work in Türkiye is organised around four key portfolios: migration management, border management, migration and development, and interdisciplinary matters. In response to Türkiye's evolving migration needs and regional developments, the Representation of ICMPD in Türkiye supports partners and stakeholders through an integrated, programme-based approach, implementing diverse thematic projects designed to provide complementary, needs-based assistance and address multifaceted priorities.

ENFORCEMENT OF MIGRATION GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERSHIP THROUGH A HOLISTIC APPROACH

The EMPATHY project addresses irregular migration by aligning Türkiye's migration governance with EU priorities and international human rights standards. It strengthens return procedures that uphold dignity, legality and autonomy, ensuring safe, humane and voluntary returns with full information and no coercion. Enhanced case management systems support tailored information, procedural safeguards, follow-up, data protection and non-discrimination. The project boosts National Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (NAVRR) outreach to ensure equitable access to reliable information for all migrants. Complementary measures promote alternatives to detention. Sustainable reintegration emphasises economic stability, social inclusion, education, health care and civic participation. Finally, it supports the enhancement of inclusive, transparent cooperation among relevant stakeholders and partners.

The Representation of ICMPD in Türkiye addresses irregular migration, return, international protection, the prevention of human trafficking and social cohesion, meeting the varied needs of stakeholders involved in migration governance. The National Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (NAVRR) project, jointly funded by the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway, was a flagship initiative in voluntary return and reintegration. Running from 2021 to 2025, NAVRR supported the stabilisation and enhancement of return programmes in line with Türkiye's migration priorities. Over its four-year implementation period, the project facilitated dignified and safe returns and provided reintegration support, contributing sustainably to individuals' long-term economic and social inclusion.

The Border Management Portfolio focused on strengthening institutional structures and legislative frameworks to create a more effective, coordinated and comprehensive approach to border control. Through technical assistance, capacity development and institutional cooperation, initiatives under this portfolio continue to support Türkiye's efforts to improve operations and coordination across national and regional border management actors. Funded by the European Union's DG HOME, the flagship ENGAGE project aims to strengthen Türkiye's border management capacities, particularly through the Presidency of Migration Management's coordination of national border responses, enhanced operational capacity at the western borders and improved international cooperation mechanisms.

Advancing socio-economic integration

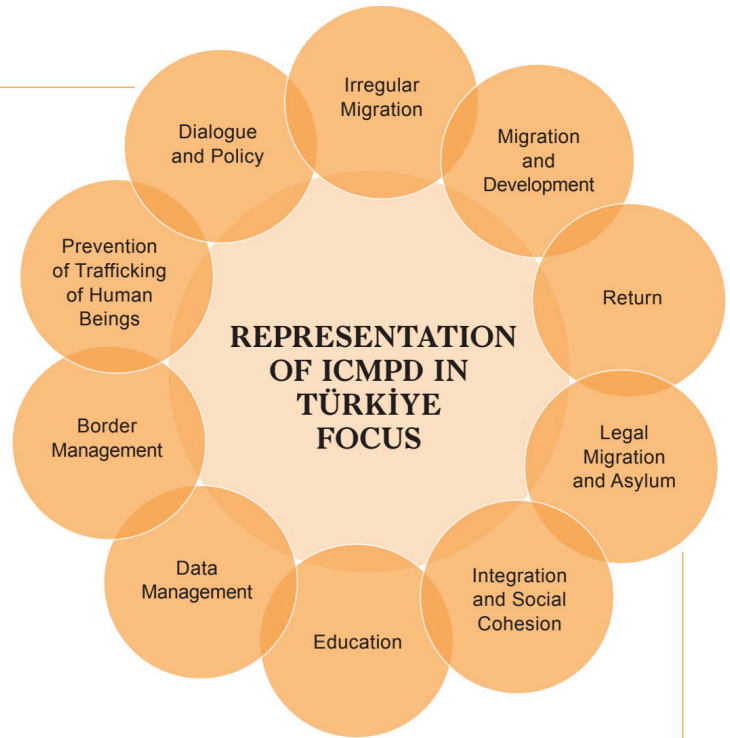
Under the Migration and Development Portfolio, the Representation of ICMPD in Türkiye made significant strides in advancing socio-economic inclusion, particularly for Syrians under temporary protection. A key achievement was the successful implementation of the EU-funded ENHANCER project, part of the EU Facility for Refugees in Türkiye. The ENHANCER PRO project, spanning 48 months from December 2024 to December 2028 with a total budget of EUR 70 million, aimed to boost entrepreneurial capacities and promote socio-economic integration for Turkish citizens, Syrians under temporary protection and persons under international protection. By expanding economic opportunities and supporting labour force participation, the project improves the livelihoods of both refugee entrepreneurs and host community members.

Interdisciplinarity for sustainable solutions

The Interdisciplinary Portfolio addresses complex migration challenges that cut across policy, security, legal, social and educational domains, promoting sustainable and inclusive solutions through multi-stakeholder collaboration. It supports evidence-based policymaking, facilitates dialogue between public institutions, civil society, academia and private sector actors, and strengthens institutional capacities to respond holistically to migration dynamics.

One of the key initiatives of the portfolio is the EU Scholarships project, which expands access to higher education and employability for students, including those under temporary and international protection, while promoting social cohesion and skills development. The portfolio also involves policy research, capacity development and cross-sectoral coordination to inform integrated migration responses and enhance resilience.

The Representation of ICMPD in Türkiye operates with a multidimensional approach, adapting to the country’s rapidly changing migration dynamics and providing strategic guidance to national and regional stakeholders. Through its portfolios, it helps strengthen governance frameworks, improve institutional capacities and promote integrated policy responses. By engaging with public institutions, civil society, academia, private sector actors and international partners, ICMPD enhances collaboration and regional cooperation on migration issues. Its programmes contribute to efforts towards sustainable socio-economic inclusion, humane border practices and comprehensive migration governance. In doing so, ICMPD supports Türkiye in responding effectively to current and emerging migration challenges while advancing stability, resilience and shared prosperity across communities. ●





**WESTERN
BALKANS**

Advancing return management and labour migration governance in the Western Balkans

Labour migration plays a central role in shaping socio-economic development across the Western Balkans. Once defined by high emigration, the region has increasingly become both a transit route and a destination for third-country nationals through legal migration pathways. In this evolving context, ICMPD continues to refine its approaches and build strong partnerships to support the region effectively.

In 2025, ICMPD's regional focus in the Western Balkans centred on strengthening return, readmission and reintegration (RRR) systems, paired with targeted engagement on labour migration governance in response to emerging regional priorities. This work was advanced through two major regional actions:

The Western Balkans Return Mechanism (**WBRM**) project, ICMPD's flagship initiative, was successfully concluded in August 2025, providing a strong operational foundation for the EU-funded Joint Action "Strengthening Return Management Systems in the Western Balkans". Launched later in 2025 and running until 2029, the Joint Action is implemented in close cooperation with IOM, Frontex and the Joint Cooperation Platform (JCP), guided by a jointly agreed Return Roadmap that ensures coherence across EU-funded efforts. Within this framework, ICMPD, together with a consortium of EU Member States led by the Netherlands, continues to support Western Balkan partners in designing and operational-

ising return and reintegration systems that are rights-based, evidence-driven and sustainable, while promoting national ownership and regional cooperation.

Addressing the complexity of labour mobility

The regional Preventing Secondary Irregular Migration Movements to the EU by Strengthening Labour Migration Governance (**PSIMM**) project addressed the growing complexity of labour mobility to the region, particularly as the Western Balkans increasingly become a destination for workers from third countries. In this context, ICMPD supported research and data collection on labour migration dynamics. This work brought together 17 institutions, including employment services, labour inspectorates and relevant ministries, at regional level for the first time.

By convening all key actors involved in the recruitment and management of foreign workers, the project created

a platform for regional dialogue, peer learning and information exchange – laying the groundwork for more coherent and rights-based labour migration policies.

At national level, ICMPD continued to contribute to EU accession processes and to the strengthening of cooperation between the European Union and the Western Balkans. Support focused on border management and security in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania, implemented through a combination of high-value procurement and targeted capacity-building activities, while ensuring full alignment with EU *acquis* and international human rights standards.

Skills development in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia

Skills development and professional vocational training remained a cross-cutting priority in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. ICMPD developed and delivered tailor-made migration-related training programmes, including courses leading to EU-recognised qualifications, supported by the ICMPD Training Institute on Migration Capacity Partnership for the Mediterranean.

In Serbia, support was provided for the development of a national roadmap on Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR), complemented by cultural mediation trainings aimed at ensuring return procedures that are efficient, humane and dignified. These actions were further supported by infrastructure upgrades, resulting in improved reception conditions and enhanced protection standards for unaccompanied minors.

BUILDING TRUST THROUGH DIALOGUE FOR FAIR LABOUR MIGRATION

In 2025, ICMPD achieved a key milestone through the regional labour migration network by delivering six country reports across the Western Balkans. Developed through close institutional collaboration, the reports provide evidence on legal and institutional frameworks, labour market demand and inflows, screening and verification of foreign workers, risks of secondary movement, and cooperation with countries of origin. Together, they offer a strong evidence base to better understand challenges driving secondary movements from the Western Balkans to the EU.

The 2025 work sets the stage for 2026, when the findings will be consolidated into a regional comparative analysis and translated into a jointly developed roadmap. The roadmap will propose practical solutions to key challenges and guide future policy and operational reforms, while remaining adaptable to national contexts.

Institutional processes

Lastly, in 2025, in parallel with the above-mentioned achievements from our operations in the region, we also advanced several important institutional processes in Serbia and Albania. The negotiations on the draft agreement between ICMPD and the Government of the Republic of Serbia on the status of the ICMPD Representation in Serbia were successfully concluded, and everything is now in place for the agreement to be signed in 2026. In Albania, ICMPD and the Albanian authorities made significant progress in the negotiations on Albania's accession to the organisation. We expect Albania to join the ICMPD family as an observer in 2026, followed by full membership in 2027.

Looking ahead to 2026, ICMPD will build on these foundations to move from dialogue to implementation, further strengthening sustainable and protection-oriented migration systems across the region. ●



**GLOBAL
INITIATIVES
UNIT**

Global Initiatives Unit

In 2025, the Global Initiatives Unit consolidated its role as a key EU implementing actor by advancing four global facilities: diaspora engagement, labour migration partnerships, capacity development, and return and reintegration. It delivered scalable impact and innovation, and strengthened cooperation worldwide.

EU Global Diaspora Facility (EUDiF)

In 2025, EUDiF entered full implementation, launching nine capacity-development projects with public institutions. These initiatives spanned heritage tourism, mental healthcare, inclusive dialogue, talent attraction and scientific diaspora engagement. In parallel, the newly launched Diaspora 4 Development (D4D) grants helped kickstart and support 11 diaspora-led initiatives across four continents, driving progress in health, education and climate action. The year concluded with the fourth Future Forum, the EU's flagship event on diaspora engagement, which brought together 76 partners from over 40 countries. The forum served as a platform for exchanging practices and

strengthening collaboration between diaspora organisations, governments, development agencies and the European Union. Together, these actions continue to solidify EUDiF's position as a leading global expert and a reliable partner for innovative diaspora development projects.

Diaspora driving local human rights

By fostering partnerships between diasporas, governments and local communities, EUDiF is helping to strengthen human rights at a grassroots level. Working in partnership with the Kyrgyz Parliament's Migration and Human Trafficking Council and the women-led diaspora organisation Danaker, the Kurak Voices project promoted inclusive public dialogues

in rural Kyrgyzstan. The initiative created platforms where communities, particularly women, can engage in rights-based discussions that strengthen accountability, democratic participation and locally driven development.

Meanwhile, in Burundi, a diaspora-led initiative supported through the Diaspora 4 Development grants has improved maternal and neonatal healthcare in rural hospitals through portable ultrasound technology, professional training for doctors and midwives, and community awareness campaigns. These measures are expected to improve diagnostics for around 250 pregnant women per week, strengthening access to essential services and contributing to the fulfilment of Sustainable Development Goal 3, Right to Health, while embedding sustainable capacity within national health systems.

Return and Reintegration Facility (RRF)

In 2025, the RRF cemented its role as a strategic operational partner for EU Member States and Schengen-associated countries, supporting dignified return and sustainable reintegration. The facility deepened cooperation with all actors, while significantly expanding operational delivery and knowledge exchange.

Over 330 returnees received comprehensive reintegration support in 2025, bringing the total to over 800 since 2023 and demonstrating consistent, scalable impact. Capacity development remained central, including specialised training on return counselling, peer-to-peer exchange among frontline practitioners, and innovative pilots – such as referral desks in countries of origin – that are proving their operational feasibility. ►

STRENGTHENING RETURN COUNSELLING CAPACITIES IN MEMBER STATES

Strengthening return counselling capacities across Member States remained a key priority of the Return and Reintegration Facility (RRF) in 2025. Through the Return Counselling Lab, the RRF developed practical guidebooks and training packages for counselling families with children and empowering women in return counselling. These tools were delivered through six tailored training sessions to five Member States, reaching over 50 participants and equipping frontline practitioners with applicable skills to provide informed, ethical and client-centred counselling.

Implemented in close coordination with Frontex, these activities strengthened operational capacities to ensure better-prepared returns and more sustainable reintegration outcomes. For example, in Ireland, where the unit was newly established, the training helped staff quickly develop their capacities, demonstrating tangible impact in their daily work.

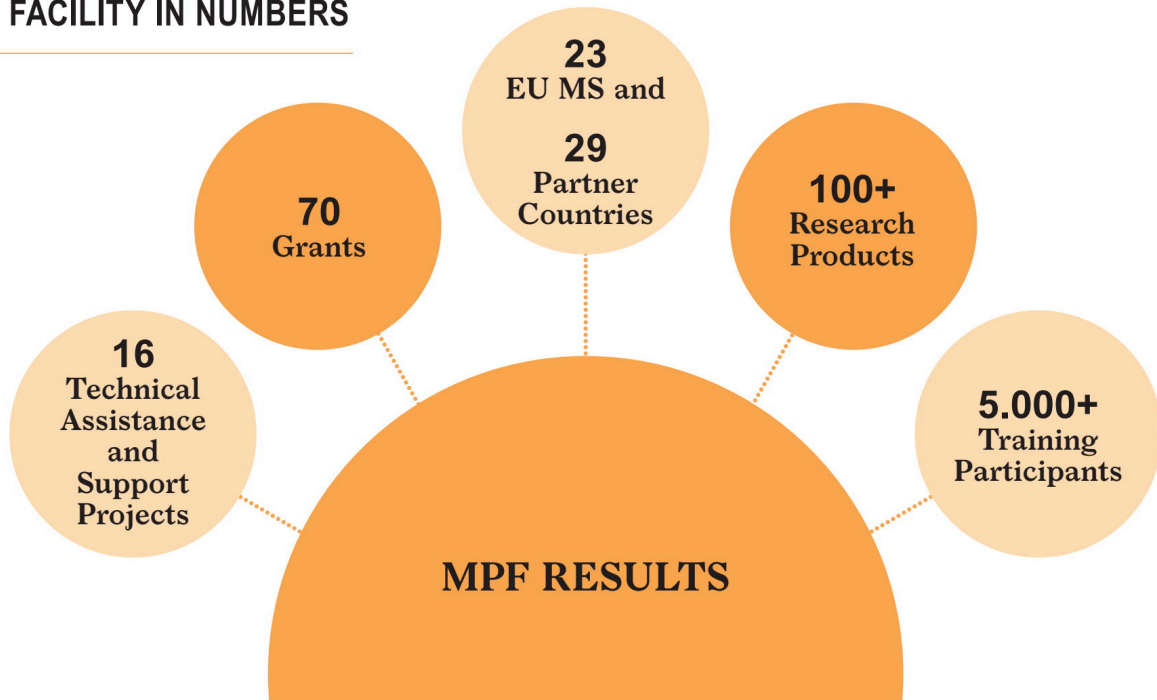
The development and implementation of the Reintegration Assistance Tool (RIAT) continue to gain importance. With over 1,600 active users, RIAT has established itself as the EU's central digital infrastructure for reintegration assistance. Over 1,500 cases are introduced monthly by 29 Member States across 40 countries of origin.

This demonstrates that the tool meets the policy objectives of the EU Strategy on Voluntary Return and Reintegration by supporting the EU and its Member States in harmonising

reintegration case management, improving data quality and enhancing operational planning across reintegration programmes.

These developments underscore the RRF's growing maturity in supporting Member States to strengthen capacities and delivery, while fostering local ownership and sustainable reintegration in countries of origin. As the RRF's importance increases, it stands ready to meet the evolving demands of the Pact on Migration and Asylum and to support harmonised, evidence-based reintegration across the EU.

THE MIGRATION PARTNERSHIP FACILITY IN NUMBERS



European Union Migration and Displacement Capacity Assistance Project (EU-MIDCAP)

Reflecting the European Union's strong commitment to strengthening migration and forced displacement management systems in partner countries, the new EU-MIDCAP was launched in 2025. Funded by the EU (DG INTPA) and co-implemented by a consortium led by ICMPD, together with the authorities of the Czech Republic, Poland, Spain and Sweden, as well as two UN agencies (UNHCR and UNICEF), EU-MIDCAP delivers rapid, peer-to-peer technical assistance across legal migration, migration and development, irregular migration and forced displacement.

Through EU-MIDCAP, ICMPD is pioneering a new collaboration model by bringing together an unprecedented diversity of actors within a single global facility and establishing strong coordination and operational modalities. The first EU-MIDCAP pilot Action was launched in Côte d'Ivoire in December 2025, focusing on trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants, and paving the way for future actions under the facility.

Migration Partnership Facility (MPF)

During 2025, the 45 active projects under the Migration Partnership Facility's portfolio continued to turn EU strategic interests into operational realities. Several mobility schemes attracted thousands of interested candidates from partner countries.

The MPF supported the setup of the European Legal Gateway Office – India, marking an important milestone in cooperation between India and the European Union in the field of migration management. New countries, such as Mauritania, were also added to the portfolio.

A strong emphasis on the link between research and practice continued with the production of three studies in areas related to labour migration. In 2026, the facility's 10-year anniversary will provide an opportunity to assess its role in supporting the EU external dimension of migration and asylum. ●



**EXTERNAL
RELATIONS**

Shaping transition together: ICMPD's governance, Member State ownership and strategic dialogue

Institutional transition and strategic reflection defined ICMPD's engagement with its Member States in 2025. The Director General election marked a pivotal moment for the organisation. It placed questions of governance continuity, leadership and long-term direction at the centre of political dialogue. Throughout this period, the Steering Group remained the key forum for collective exchange.

Building on its role as the primary interface between ICMPD and its Member States, the work of the External Relations team in 2025 focused on supporting governance processes and maintaining structured political dialogue during a year of significant institutional change. Through coordination of the Steering Group and other statutory bodies, its relationship-building efforts contributed to ensuring continuity, transparency and alignment between Member State expectations and ICMPD's evolving strategic direction.

In 2025, the Steering Group remained the key forum for collective exchange, enabling Member States to navigate change together while reinforcing trust, ownership and a common strategic direction. The Steering Group was chaired by Sweden, providing steady leadership during a period of institutional transition. Under the Swedish Chairmanship, the Steering Group facilitated inclusive and forward-looking discussions on governance continuity, strategic priorities and the

organisation's long-term positioning. Towards the end of the year, the Chairmanship was handed over to Poland, ensuring a smooth transition and continuity in the Steering Group's work as ICMPD prepared to enter the next phase of its institutional development in 2026.

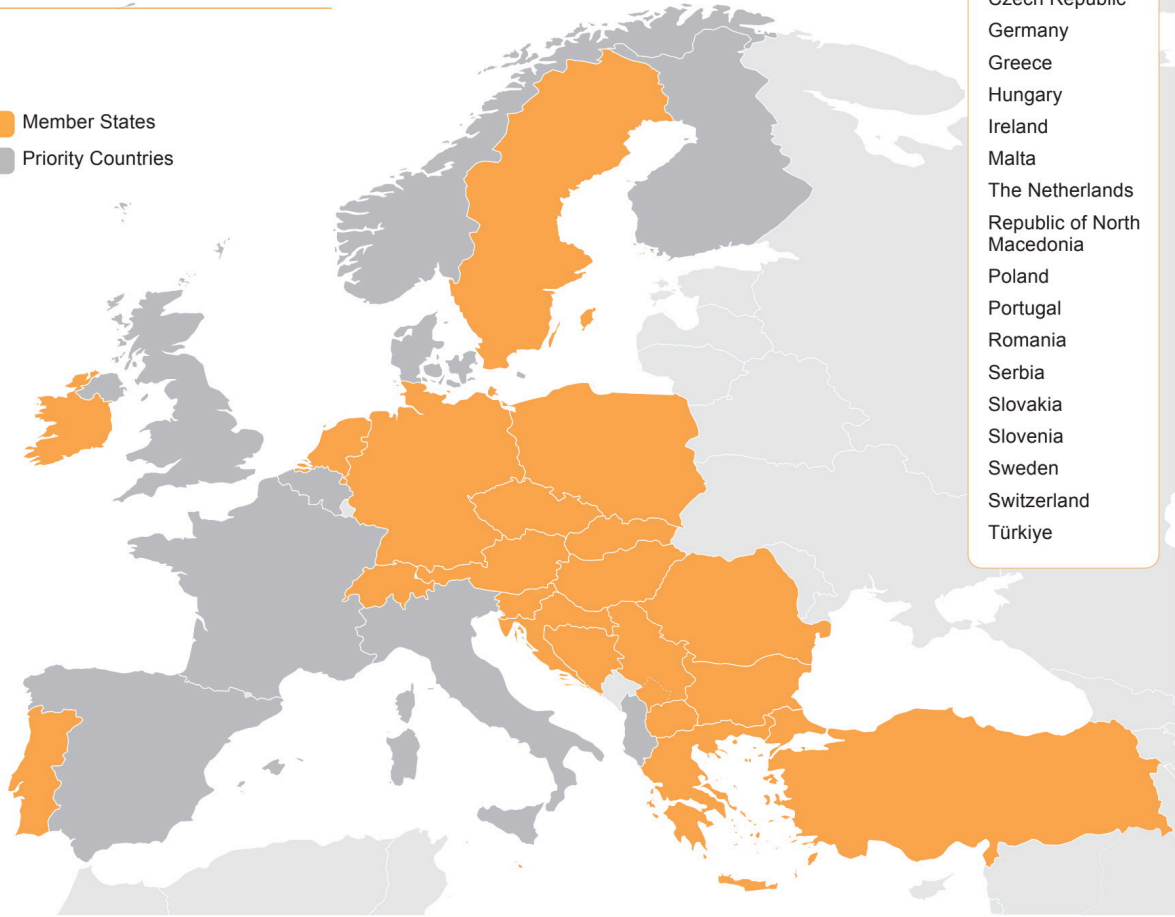
Beyond formal decision-making, governance-related discussions throughout the year also focused on strategic development. Member States engaged in open exchange on ICMPD's mandate, and added value and future direction, especially in the current dynamic migration and political landscape. This reinforced the organisation's Member State-driven character and its role as a trusted forum for dialogue on migration governance.

Enlargement and institutional change

Apart from the leadership transition, 2025 saw intensified discussions within the Steering Group on enlargement and related institutional change, with particular attention given to potential new Member States. Member States engaged in structured dialogue on the development of an enlargement policy framework, aimed at clarifying principles, expectations and the

ICMPD MEMBER STATES

- Member States
- Priority Countries



- Austria
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Czech Republic
- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
- Ireland
- Malta
- The Netherlands
- Republic of North Macedonia
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Serbia
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Türkiye

implications of future enlargement for ICMPD’s governance, mandate and operational coherence. These exchanges were closely linked to discussions on ICMPD’s long-term strategic direction under Strategy 2030, as described above, and enlargement as a strategic, Member State-driven process, firmly anchored in ICMPD’s governance framework and long-term vision.

Throughout the year, External Relations supported the Steering Group as the key forum for political dialogue, reflecting a diversity of national perspectives while also demonstrating a shared interest in ICMPD’s future role. ●

ELECTION OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

In 2025, ICMPD’s Member States elected a new Director General. The election process was accompanied by a structured dialogue within the Steering Group to support a smooth leadership transition. The election process was designed to safeguard Member State ownership, ICMPD’s institutional stability, transparency and continuity. ICMPD demonstrated its capacity to navigate institutional change while upholding strong governance standards.



**MEMBER
STATES
PROGRAMME**

Operational support for migration policy reform in Member States

The programme serves both as a strategic platform for informal, solutions-oriented dialogue and peer-to-peer learning, as well as a gateway to ICMPD's institutional expertise. In 2025 ICMPD significantly strengthened and diversified its support to Member States, with a particular focus on advancing the operationalisation of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum.

Adopted in 2024, the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum marks the most significant overhaul of Europe's migration and asylum framework in more than a decade. From June 2026, it will begin to apply across the Union, ushering in a new phase of shared responsibility, faster procedures and stronger safeguards. As the Pact moves from legislation to practice, Member States entered a demanding implementation phase in 2025 – one that also offers a unique opportunity to reform and strengthen national migration administrations while building systems that are both efficient and resilient in response to evolving migration dynamics.

Against this backdrop, in 2025, ICMPD played a pivotal role in supporting a number of EU Member States, namely the Czech Republic, Estonia, Ireland and Romania, in putting their National Implementation Plans for the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum into practice. Working closely with national authorities, ICMPD supported Member States in advancing key policy and operational reforms required under the Pact.¹

¹ Support was provided within the framework of the Technical Support Instrument (TSI) funded by the European Commission's Secretariat-General Reform and Investment Task Force (SG REFORM).

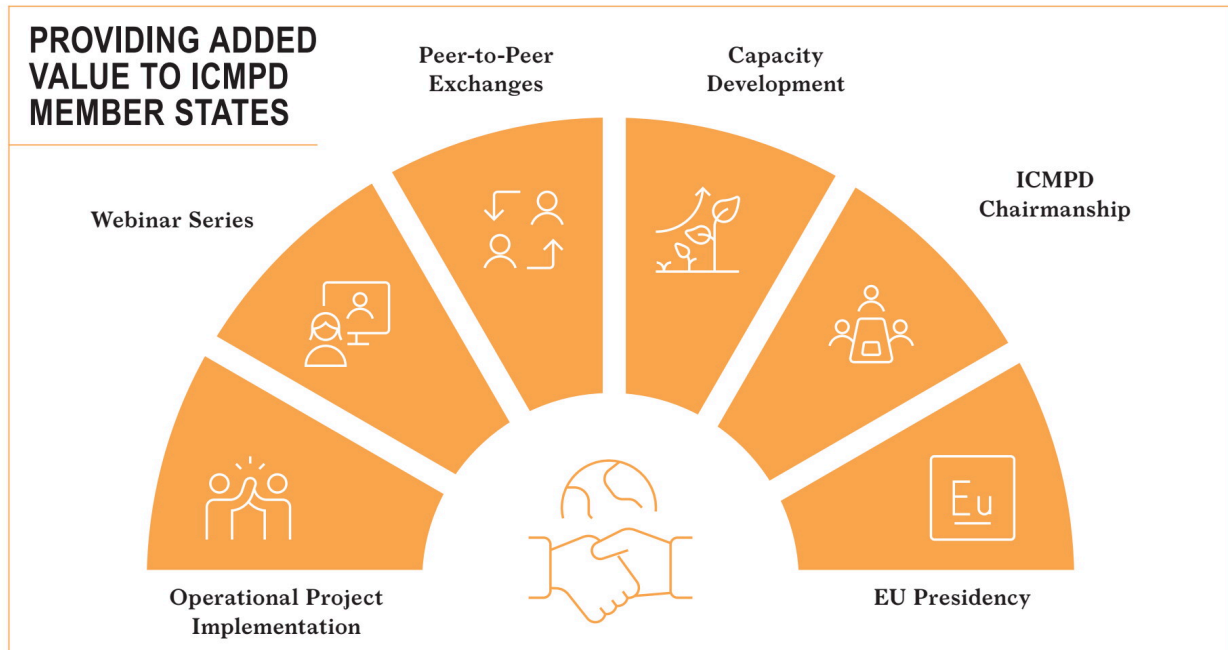
The assistance focused on practical areas such as developing new legislation, strengthening the interoperability of data systems, aligning screening and border procedures, introducing new alternatives to detention, and adapting national workflows related to responsibility sharing and vulnerability assessment. ICMPD also supported the establishment of independent monitoring mechanisms, contributing to stronger safeguards and oversight in the context of pact implementation.

In parallel, Lithuania was supported in implementing national reforms based on the 2023 Schengen Evaluation and Monitoring Mechanism recommendations, with a focus on strengthening training systems and enhancing situational awareness and operational effectiveness at the external border.

Community of practice on pact operationalisation

A key element of ICMPD's work with these five Member States was fostering structured exchange and mutual learning related to the Pact. ICMPD created a community of practice that enabled countries to share experiences, discuss common challenges and learn from each other's approaches. In 2025, this included peer exchanges on screening and vulnerability assessment, complemented by a debriefing on

PROVIDING ADDED VALUE TO ICMPD MEMBER STATES



the practical testing of the Screening Toolbox in Romania.

Support to the policy dialogue during the EU Presidency

Although centred on internal migration reforms, the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum also affects the EU's external migration relations. Changes to border procedures and return processes will influence cooperation with partner countries along migration routes. In this context, ICMPD supported EU-level policy dialogue, including targeted support to the Polish EU Presidency and contributions to the Working Party on External Aspects of Asylum and Migration, thereby helping to shape discussion on the Pact's external dimension during its early implementation phase.

Webinar series offering exclusive insights

The year also marked the launch of the ICMPD Regions in Focus webinar series, offering Member States region-by-region insights into migration trends, policy developments and ICMPD's operational engagement. Drawing directly on expertise from ICMPD

field offices, the series complemented existing formats and encouraged informed dialogue on emerging regional dynamics. This was further reinforced by additional thematic webinars presenting specific research findings on irregular migration and integration.

Strengthening institutional capacities in Member States

In 2025, ICMPD also expanded its capacity-development offerings for Member States. Dedicated training activities were delivered for the Ministry of the Interior of Serbia and Ireland's Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration. These tailored formats strengthened institutional capacities and were offered on demand to respond to specific Member State needs.

In 2026, the programme will focus on providing practical support for implementing the EU Pact, alongside peer exchange and targeted training for Member States. ●



**VIENNA
MIGRATION
CONFERENCE**

Vienna Migration Conference 2025

Europe's leading forum on migration

The 10th Vienna Migration Conference (VMC2025) marked a decade of sustained dialogue on migration governance, underscoring the conference's role as a forward-looking forum for high-level, policy-oriented exchange. Bringing together key policymakers, migration experts, and practitioners from across regions and sectors, the anniversary edition focused on emerging challenges and future priorities for migration governance in a rapidly evolving global environment. VMC2025 also marked the final conference under the leadership of Michael

Spindelegger as Director General of ICMPD, closing a chapter defined by dialogue, partnership, and multilateral engagement.

Against a backdrop of geopolitical fragmentation, shifting alliances, and mounting pressure on multilateral frameworks, discussions focused on how migration governance can remain effective, values-based, and forward-looking in an increasingly transactional international landscape. Participants examined recent European and global developments, exploring practical approaches across migration partnerships, labour mobility,

21–22 OCTOBER 2025
PALAIS NIEDERÖSTERREICH

Programme

15	Sessions, all live-streamed
48	Speakers

Event engagement

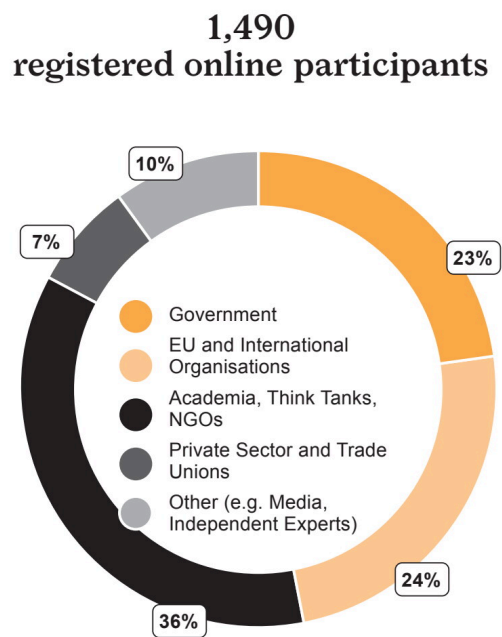
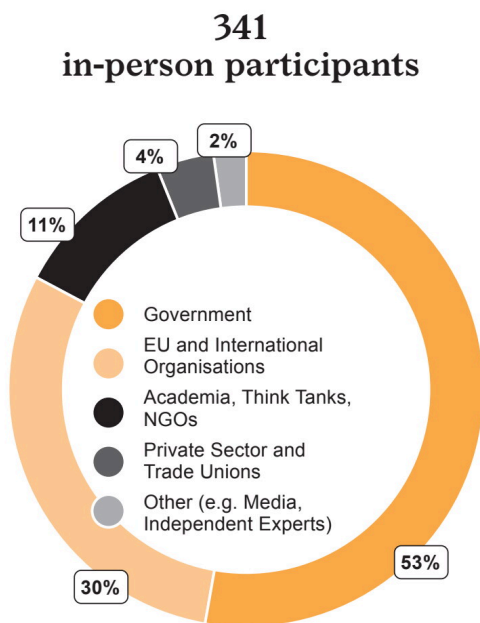
356	Slido participants
5	Audience polls

international protection, return and reintegration, EU reforms and the use of forecasting tools to anticipate future mobility trends.

A recurring theme was the need to rebalance policy responses: strengthening migration management while safeguarding human rights, expanding legal pathways alongside credible return systems, and ensuring that labour mobility delivers tangible benefits for both origin and destination countries. Particular attention was given to reintegration as a driver of development, the role of diasporas and returnees in post-conflict reconstruction

contexts such as Ukraine and Syria, and the limits of addressing mixed movements through asylum systems alone.

As migration continues to shape political, economic, and societal debates, VMC2025 reaffirmed the importance of inclusive dialogue, evidence-informed policymaking and international cooperation. Through its 10th VMC edition, ICMPD reiterated its commitment to providing a trusted space where diverse perspectives can engage openly, helping to shape pragmatic and sustainable migration solutions in a rapidly changing world. ●





**HUMAN
RESOURCES**

Who we are

Over the last year, ICMPD has seen a continuation of its growth by 11% with a significant expansion in its workforce, currently numbering 604 employees. Staff at ICMPD are internationally diverse, representing 73 nationalities across 32 duty stations worldwide.

GENDER RATIO

- 384 Females
- 220 Males



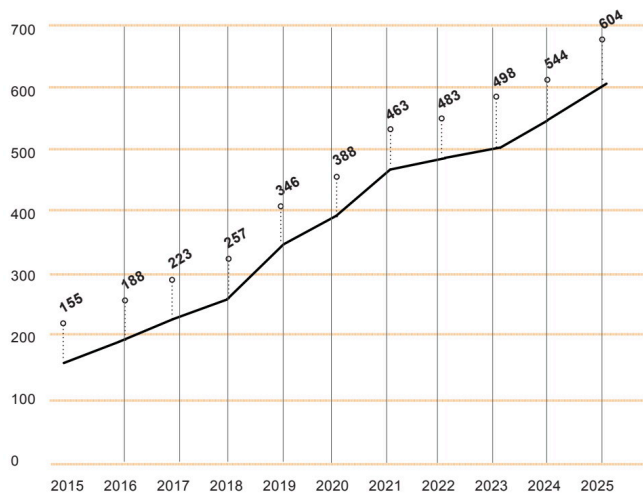
TOTAL STAFF

- 604 Employees
- 113 New Employees in 2025*



*113 of 604 are new employees. Employees that joined and left ICMPD in 2025 (5) are not shown.

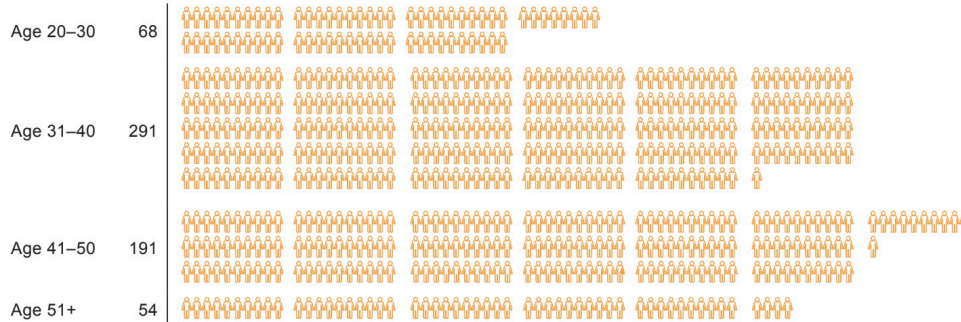
STAFF GROWTH



Women currently make up 64% of ICMPD's total workforce, reflecting the organisation's strong female representation across its positions. ICMPD remains committed to maintaining balanced and inclusive workforce representation across all levels and functions. ICMPD's expanding profile enhances its attractiveness as an employer of highly qualified professionals with expert knowledge and insight into the migration field. The organisation has established itself as an employer of choice for those pursuing a career in migration policy, which is reflected in the broad range of expertise among its staff. Working at ICMPD offers exposure to cutting-edge concepts, engagement with a diverse range of stakeholders and partners in multiple national and international contexts, and strong opportunities for professional development. The evolving nature of the organisation and its work provides the dynamism necessary for the development of new approaches and the foundation of new partnerships. ●

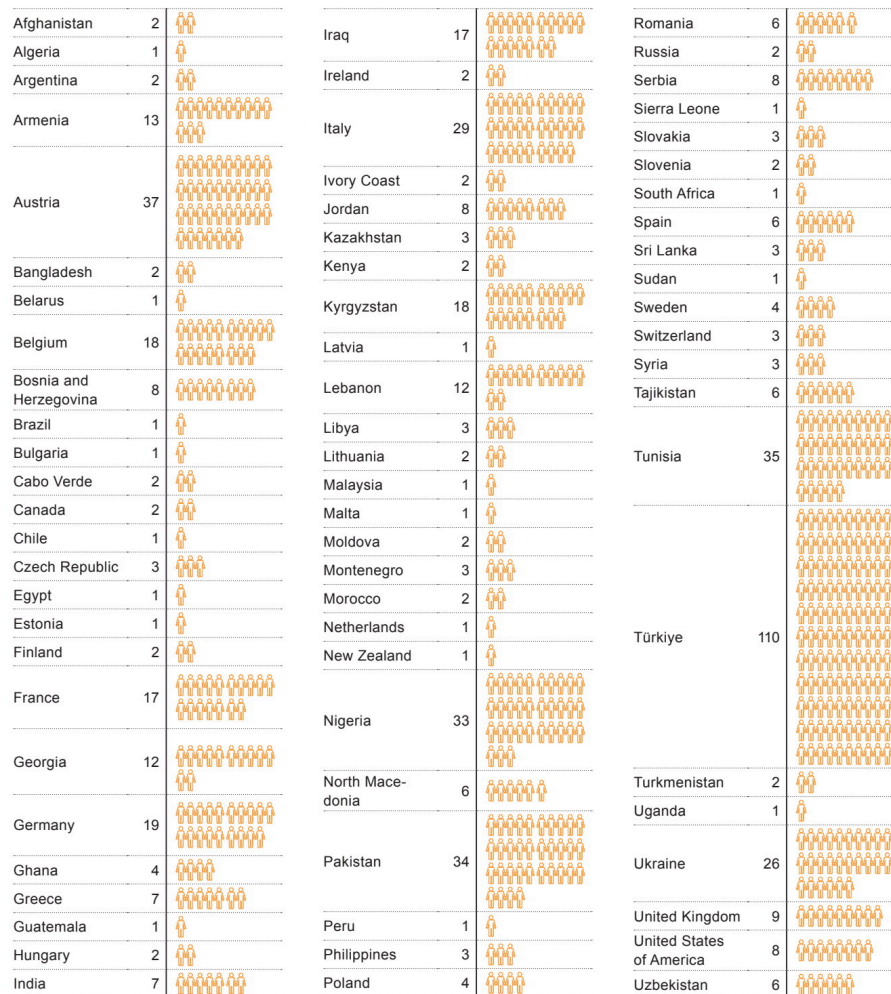
AGE PROFILE

Average age: 39



NATIONALITIES

73 different nationalities working together

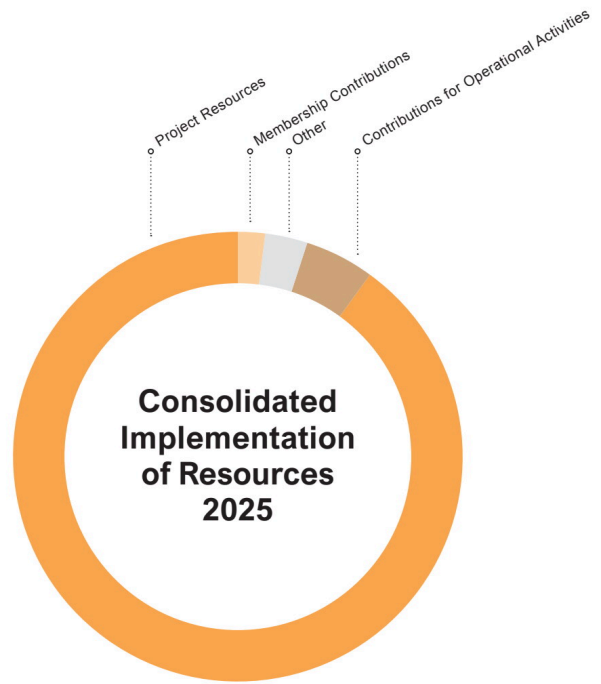




**FINANCIAL
INFORMATION**

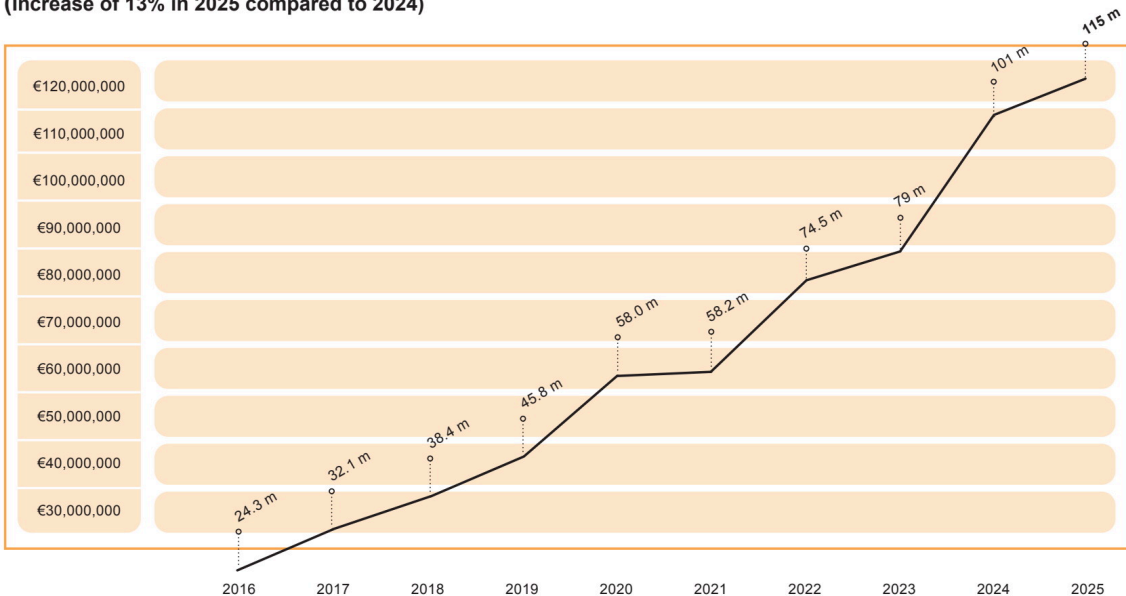
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

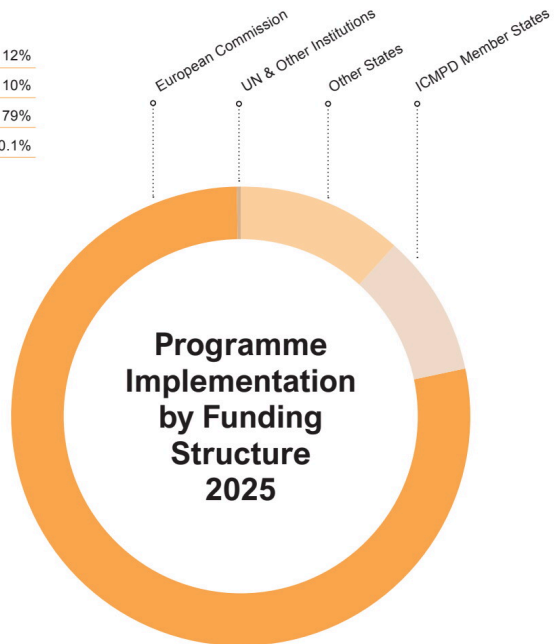
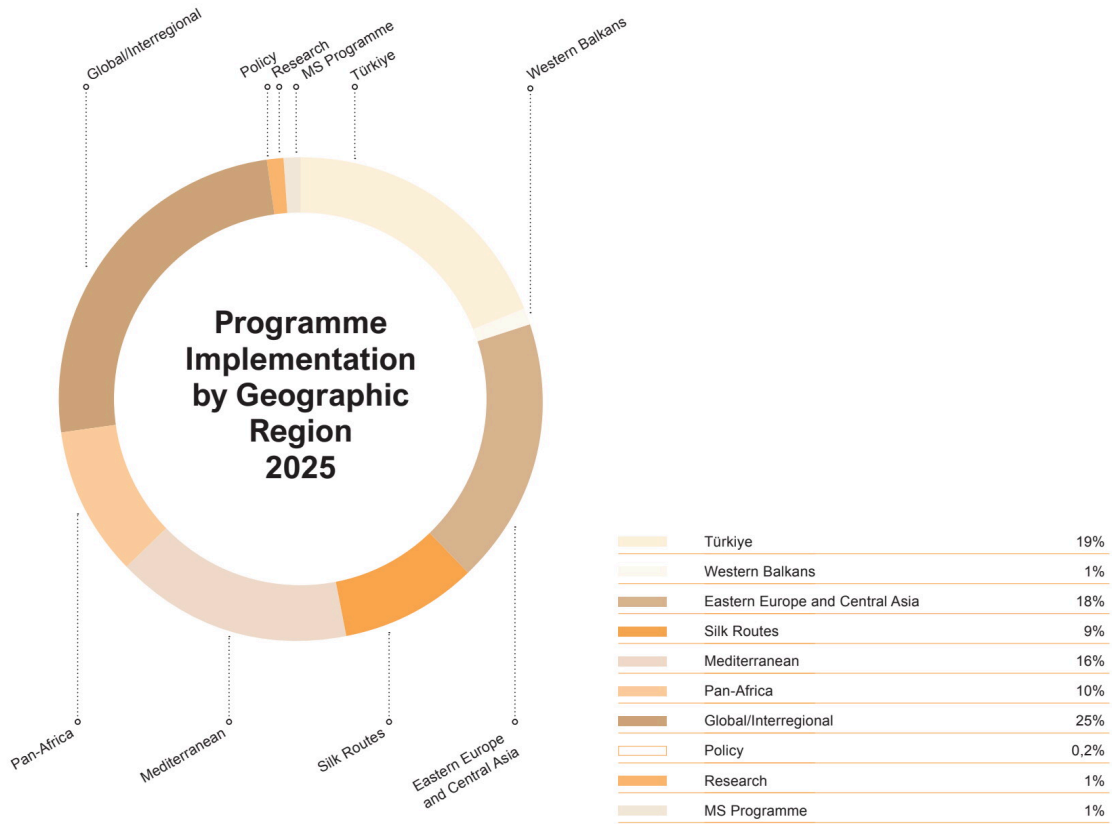
The financial report of ICMPD is prepared in accordance with the rules governing the financial framework of the organisation and the relevant decisions taken by the Steering Group. The report is prepared in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles and the International Public Sector Accounting Standards. The 2025 consolidated budget (Regular and Programme Budget) amounted to €114.6 million, and total assets to €143.4 million. The budget was financed by membership contributions from the Member States, other revenue, and to a larger extent by donor contributions for project resources. The consolidated budget includes two parts: the Regular Budget, which finances administrative costs including management and infrastructure expenses, and the Programme Budget, which includes earmarked resources for project implementation, specific programmes for Member States and support functions.



Membership Contributions	€ 2,027,431
Other	€ 2,952,893
Contributions for Operational Activities	€ 5,917,031
Project Resources	€ 103,753,191
TOTAL REVENUE	€114,650,546

Consolidated Implementation 2016–2025 (Increase of 13% in 2025 compared to 2024)





ICMPD in a Nutshell

KEY FIGURES

138 projects in 109 countries	600+ employees	32 duty stations
	73 nationalities	€ 726 million contracted project volume
	21 Member States	

DRIVING IMPACT

Understand

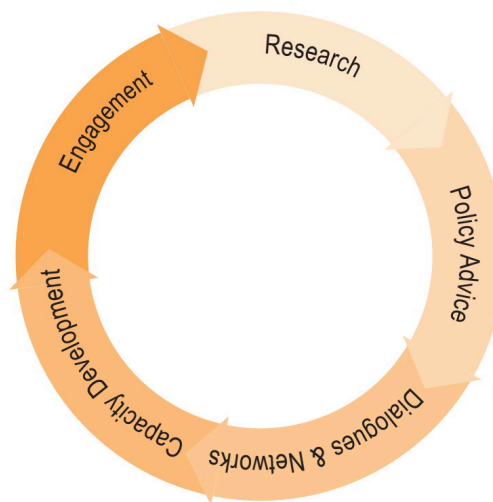
the challenges and needs of our partners

Connect

all relevant stakeholders

Empower

governments and administrations on the ground



STAKEHOLDERS

Policy Advice & Research

Policy-oriented, empirical research with a comparative, interdisciplinary, and international approach to various migration topics.

Dialogues & Networks

Support migration dialogues and cooperation between Europe, its Eastern neighbours, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.

Capacity Development & Engagement

Training, capacity development programmes, workshops, study visits, and support for international cooperation and institution building.

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Asylum, refugees and international protection	Migration and health
Border management and security	Migration, environment and climate change
Capacity development	Migration good governance
Dialogues	Migration narratives and public opinion
Diaspora	Policy
Integration and social cohesion	Research
Irregular migration	Return, readmission and reintegration
Legal and labour mobility	Trafficking in human beings
Migration and development	

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT



Susanne Raab
Director General



Sedef Dearing
Deputy Director General, Director of
Migration Dialogues & Cooperation



Romed Perfler
Chief of Staff



Ralph Genetzke
Head of Brussels Mission



Malin Frankenhaeuser
Director of Policy, Research & Strategy



John Aguirre
Director of Management

International Centre for Migration
Policy Development (ICMPD)

Rothschildplatz 4
1020 Vienna
Austria

www.icmpd.org

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, copied or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or the use of any information storage and retrieval system, without permission of the copyright owners.

Project responsibility:
Bernhard Schragl, ICMPD
Art direction, design and editing:
Fleisch Media
Photography: ICMPD Archive

International Centre for Migration
Policy Development (ICMPD) Austria,
2026

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on the maps do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by ICMPD.