



The Budapest Process Ministerial Declaration



WE, the Ministers and Representatives responsible for migration and migration-related matters of the Budapest Process States¹ that gathered in Budapest on **12th November 2024**, at the 7th Ministerial Conference of the Budapest Process, at the invitation of Hungary, in the presence of observer States², representatives of the European Commission, international organisations and other observers;

Thanking the Chair, Türkiye and Co-Chair, Hungary, for their timely initiative and support, and the Secretariat, the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), for its administrative and substance preparations;

Recognising the unique role and strong impact of the Budapest Process and the Silk Routes Partnership for Migration since its inception in 2013 as well as the substantial progress made regarding migration cooperation with and within the Silk Routes Region;

Affirming the need for a renewed political commitment, translating global commitments into regional realities and practical measures;

Taking into account the main developments in the Budapest Process regions since our 6th Ministerial Conference in 2019 in Istanbul which have a tangible and direct influence on migratory movements along the routes in and within the Budapest Process States;

Acknowledging that migration and international protection issues should be handled in accordance with relevant applicable international law, as stipulated inter alia in the UN conventions, while taking full account of national laws and competences;

Recognising existing frameworks and instruments which affect the governance of migration at national, regional and international levels, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted in September 2015;

Taking into account the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees³ by several Budapest Process States in December 2018, reflecting the commitment of the respective States to migration governance and international protection, while taking full account of national competences;



Recalling the adoption of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum⁴ by the EU and its relevance to the external dimension of migration and migration cooperation platforms, such as the Budapest Process dialogue;

Considering the efforts taken to strengthen international cooperation against migrant smuggling, in particular the Global Alliance to Counter Migrant Smuggling launched by the European Commission in November 2023 and existing various initiatives at local and regional levels as well as lessons learned;

Conscious that States of the Budapest Process have been historically affected by large-scale movements of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, and have experience and a constructive role in finding solutions to managing large movements of people;

Recognising the important role of cooperation frameworks for migration and mobility among the Budapest Process States and the bilateral cooperation which ensues;

Concerned about protracted crises, conflicts and wars, including their migration-related consequences, such as displacement and irregular migration;

Taking into account the multiple drivers of irregular migration and forced displacement, inter-alia related to wars, conflicts, economic instability, environmental degradation and climate change and the importance to mitigate their impact in the most affected regions, including the Silk Routes Region;

Recognising the numerous efforts undertaken and commitments made by the Budapest Process States to prevent irregular migration and fight against smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings, aware that this requires a coordinated whole-of-route approach;

Determined to find effective, comprehensive and coordinated approaches through the implementation of planned and well-governed migration policies to make migration orderly, safe, regular and responsible while continuing work to prevent irregular migration and fight against migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings, in full respect of national competences and priorities;

Taking into account labour shortages in specific sectors and the possibility to match these needs to a talent pool of available candidates in partner States, specifically in the Silk Routes Region, through regional and bilateral labour mobility partnerships, whilst acknowledging the need to prevent brain drain and respecting national competences and priorities;

Taking into account the importance of cooperation on safe, effective and prompt return, readmission and sustainable reintegration where reintegration is feasible, in a bilateral and multilateral frame, as well as the obligation of States to readmit their own citizens;

Acknowledging that orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration, including through the implementation of planned and well-governed migration policies, can enhance the development outcomes of migration;



Mindful of national security and convinced that only a comprehensive, over-arching and a whole-of-route approach, respecting the human rights of migrants, refugees and other persons in need of international protection, can ensure the success of our collective actions in the face of the complexity of the phenomenon of international migration and forced displacement;

Recognising the need to promote integration of regular migrants, refugees and other persons in need of international protection, including inter alia through initiatives aimed at fighting against racism, extremism, discrimination and xenophobia along the routes in and within the Budapest Process States;

Reiterating our individual and collective commitment to the Budapest Process, its principles and objectives;

Recalling the commitments made at all earlier Ministerial Conferences and the continued relevance of the 2013 Istanbul Declaration and the 2019 Istanbul Commitments;

Recognising the progress made on the implementation of the Call for Action and the need to strengthen the Call for Action to better achieve our objectives;

Adopt the attached Action Plan “The Call for Action 2025-2030” and its six following priorities, all of equal importance while taking full account of national competences:

- **Priority 1:** Prevent irregular migration and fight against migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings and reinforce cooperation in the field of border management, criminal investigations and prosecutions;
- **Priority 2:** Strengthen existing policies and pathways for legal migration and mobility;
- **Priority 3:** Strengthen international, regional and bilateral cooperation for safe, effective and prompt return, readmission and for sustainable reintegration;
- **Priority 4:** Strengthen the positive impact of migration on development, as well as address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement;
- **Priority 5:** Ensure international protection and the respect of the rights of refugees and other persons in need of international protection, in line with international law, as well as promote durable solutions;
- **Priority 6:** Support both the integration of regular migrants, refugees and other persons in need of international protection and counteracting racism, extremism, discrimination, and xenophobia;

Agree equally to adopt the following approaches and cross-cutting priorities to be mainstreamed throughout the implementation of the Call for Action:

- **A regional and whole-of-route approach:** the identification, formulation and implementation of actions will take into account local and regional specificities. In addition, the Budapest Process States will take into account migration and displacement patterns and trends along the whole routes, from countries of origin, transit and destination;
- **An inclusive and multi-stakeholder approach:** the partners will apply a whole-of- government and whole-of-society approach and seek to involve all relevant actors as well as relevant international organisations, to ensure coordinated and orderly management of all dimensions of migration and displacement;
- **A human rights-based approach:** the implemented actions will contribute to fully respecting, protecting and fulfilling the human rights and dignity of all people, including migrants, refugees and other persons in need of international protection as well as victims of trafficking in human beings, irrespective of their migration status;
- **Racism, discrimination and xenophobia:** Particular attention will be paid to the fight against racism, extremism, discrimination and xenophobia; the adequate access to basic rights (including but not limited to education, work, training, social protection, healthcare, justice) in line with international and national law; and a fact-based narrative on migration;
- **Protection of people in situations of vulnerability:** Particular attention will be paid to people in situations of vulnerability and groups at heightened risk;
- **Information exchange and data reliability:** Particular attention will be paid to exchange of information, reliable data and analysis on migration and displacement between countries of origin, transit and destination, in line with data protection standards to contribute to evidence-based migration policy-making processes;

Decide to strengthen the institutional governance of the Budapest Process by endorsing the role of the Reference Group, as set out in its Terms of Reference, to support the implementation of the Call for Action;

Decide to endorse the set-up of the three Thematic Working Groups, respectively on law enforcement cooperation to counter irregular migration, return and reintegration and legal pathways for migration, supported by the Budapest Process Secretariat, hosted by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD);

Agree to support the implementation of the Call for Action through the use of appropriate instruments and initiatives and national resources of Budapest Process States;

Commit ourselves, with the support of the Budapest Process Secretariat to periodically monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Call for Action in order to promote progress towards its objectives;

Congratulate the authorities of Hungary for the facilities made available to our 7th Ministerial Conference to ensure its full success.



Endnotes

1. While the Netherlands supports the overall goals of the Budapest Process, the Netherlands cannot support elements in the declaration and action plan.
2. Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, India, Iran, and the United States of America are observers to the Budapest Process and participate in relevant events and activities.
3. Without prejudice to the position of each participating or observer state of the Budapest Process towards the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees.
4. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:85ff8b4f-ff13-11ea-b44f-01aa75ed71a1.0002.02/DOC_3&format=PDF