

Budapest Process

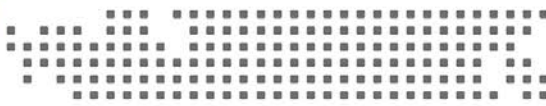
Annual Senior Officials Meeting

Istanbul, 4-5 December 2019

Summary

1. The Annual Senior Officials Meeting gathered **82 participants from 37 countries** – Afghanistan, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iraq, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Moldova, Montenegro, the Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom – as well as the European Commission, the Council of the European Union, the European External Action Service (EEAS), the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (FRONTEX), the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
2. **Director General Abdullah Ayaz** from Turkey's Directorate General for Migration Management (DGMM) opened the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM), representing Turkey as Chair to the dialogue. He reiterated the importance of engagement and partnership between all participating countries. **Deputy State Secretary Ferenc Dancs** from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Hungary provided an opening statement as Co-Chair to the Dialogue and reminded participating states that respect of different opinions in a dialogue context is crucial. **Silvena Pesta, Deputy Head of Unit** at the European Commission underlined that migration remains a priority for the new College of Commissioners, Europe will be looking at a fresh start on migration, involving a comprehensive approach, where reaching partnerships with countries of origin, transit and destination is of crucial value. **Martijn Pluim, Director for Migration Dialogues and Cooperation** at ICMPD in charge of the Budapest Process Secretariat welcomed the new ideas in the updated Implementation Plan such as forecasting migration trends and engaging with diaspora organisations.
3. The Chair gave the floor to ICMPD as Budapest Process Secretariat to present the results of two EU-funded **projects implemented under the umbrella of the Budapest Process** in 2019. The project **"Improving Migration Management in the Silk Routes Region"** briefly reported on activities conducted to support the dialogue (BP). The short-term actions implemented by the Silk Routes Facility of the project highlighted its role in supporting governments from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq develop comprehensive policies related to migration. In addition, six grants awarded under the Facility for projects to be implemented in line with the six priority goals of the Istanbul Commitments were presented. The results obtained under the flagships initiatives of the project, including through the Migrant Resource Centres in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iraq, protection of migrants' rights (MIGRAP) and regional law enforcement cooperation initiative (RELEC), were shared with the participating states and organisations. This was followed by a presentation on the first year of implementation of the **"Integrated Border Management in the Silk Routes Countries"** project and the progress made in terms of launching of activities to develop Integrated Border Management (IBM) strategies and build capacities of the governments involved.

4. The Budapest Process Secretariat then presented the **updated “Strategic Document and Implementation Plan”** shared with participating countries and organisations ahead of the meeting. The meeting held in Skopje as well as bilateral consultations in summer - autumn had provided sufficient information to prepare a comprehensive overview of the activities. The current version focused on being leaner and more action-oriented, aiming at striking a balance between the type of activities under the six priority goals and a tentative timeline. It was highlighted that the implementation plan can be updated and that its activities can be further tailored in the next five years as it seeks to be implemented.
5. The Chair opened the plenary for comments. Countries overall welcomed the updated Implementation Plan and reiterated their strong support to the dialogue and its activities. **Bulgaria** mentioned that the plan was ambitious and that they would continue supporting the dialogue in their role as Chair of the Black Sea Regional Working Group as well as their willingness to host a meeting in 2020. **Afghanistan** as Co-Chair of the Silk Routes Regional Working Group stated they stood ready to support the implementation of the plan. **Pakistan** agreed that the implementation plan should remain flexible and a blue print for future activities. **Sweden** committed to contributing with knowledge to the meeting on unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups. **Latvia** and **Azerbaijan** flagged their commitment to the dialogue and their willingness to host a meeting in 2020. **Poland** reiterated their support to the activities of the South East European Regional Working Group. **North Macedonia** as current Chair of the South East European Regional Working Group requested that three specific points related to the regional priorities discussed in Skopje be added to the plan ahead of its endorsement. **Hungary** affirmed their commitment to contribute to activities related to IBM, smuggling and trafficking as well as return and reintegration. The **Czech Republic** reaffirmed their commitments to the implementation plan despite not adopting the declaration. The **European Commission** mentioned that they support the action plan and requested that a stronger link be made between the current implemented projects and the future activities and the Call for Action. The **Netherlands** welcomed the balanced approach among the priority areas and highlighted their willingness to contribute to the actions regarding return and reintegration. **Serbia** proposed to add the word ‘prevention’ when mentioning counteracting irregular migration.
6. On the second day, the Secretariat opened the floor thanking countries for their comments and offers to host activities from the implementation plan and sharing the **revised version with North Macedonia’s comments**. A short list of the upcoming activities in 2020 and their hosts was presented with activities on return, reintegration, smuggling and legal pathways for migration.
7. The Co-Chair then gave the floor to **UNODC to present GLO.ACT**, a project in selected countries of the Silk Routes assisting in developing and implementing comprehensive national counter-trafficking and counter-smuggling responses. To this end, a prevention, protection, prosecution and partnership approach has been adopted through six pillars of implementation over four years. The European Commission then took the floor and presented an overarching view of the **European Union’s involvement in the Silk Routes Countries** in three regional projects of 12 M EUR each: Improving Migration management in the Silk Routes Region, Integrated Border Management in the Silk Routes Countries and GLO.ACT. Furthermore, it was reiterated that approach since 2016 towards the Silk Routes Region has led to a portfolio of 300 M EUR mobilised for migration management and addressing the displaced, when including bilateral initiatives. Finally, **ILO Turkey** presented the specific challenges migrants and refugees face in accessing decent work conditions. They also shared their work within Turkey and the Refugee Response Programme aiming at increasing employability of refugees



and supporting labour migration governance. The Chair thanked presenters for sharing information of these relevant projects and how these related to action points in the Call for Action.

8. The Secretariat introduced the concept of the “**Results-oriented Learning Tool**” which will be used throughout the implementation of the Call for Action. The changed wording was explained in part due to the scope of the tool, which can adapt to the dialogue’s needs and remain flexible. The tool would focus on looking at results over the next 5 years based on a series of outputs/outcomes and indicators to ensure on-going learning and feedback from activities as well as tracking and assessing results. The Secretariat indicated the first steps of the tool’s structure and assured they would provide further information on the tool in 2020 bearing in mind that it will be used at the annual Senior Officials meeting in 2020.
9. The Chair and participating countries endorsed the Strategic Document and Implementation Plan while remaining committed to update it as necessary. The Chair ensured they would **share the final version** of the documents to the Budapest Process network as well as a calendar of meetings and activities in 2020 before the end of the year.
10. The **Turkish Chair thanked** all participants for their engaged discussions and valuable comments as well as the Co-Chair and the European Commission for their support and the Secretariat for the preparations and organisation.