Budapest Process
4th Working Group on the Black Sea Region
Sofia, 17-18 March 2015

Summary/conclusions
1. On 17-18 March 2015, the 4th meeting of the Budapest Process Working Group on the Black Sea Region was held in Sofia, Bulgaria. The meeting was chaired and hosted by Bulgaria, Chair of the Black Sea Region Working Group.

2. The Working Group meeting gathered participants from 23 countries - Afghanistan, Albania, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bulgaria, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iran, Iraq, Italy, Luxemburg, Moldova, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkey, the United Kingdom, Ukraine - and 11 further stakeholders - the European Commission, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), Frontex, the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO), Hanns Seidel Foundation, the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the MARRI Regional Centre, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

3. The topic of the meeting was “Effects of Crisis on Migration Management” and the meeting aimed at exploring this issue from pre-crisis to post-crisis management, including prevention, protection, combating migration related crime, durable solutions and integration. For the purpose of the meeting, the word “crisis” referred to all events that cause significant movements of people – whether environmental, economic or security related.

4. The meeting addressed the topic from the perspective of migration management authorities – how they perceive crisis, how they take measures to deal with the effects of crisis, what the main challenges are that they encounter and their good practices for dealing with such situations. The meeting aimed at strengthening regional cooperation as well as to share experiences, lessons learned and good practices between countries and identify good practices with regard to migration management in crisis situations.

5. Several countries in the Black Sea and Silk Routes regions have been affected by such events, putting a severe strain on the work of migration management authorities. Four thematic panels were organised in this regard:
   i. Preventing and preparing for crisis through migration management
   ii. Responding to crisis; international protection and migration management
   iii. Combating migration related crime during and in post-crisis situations; smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings
   iv. Post-crisis migration management: durable solutions and integration
6. The first panel: “Preventing and preparing for crisis through migration management” was chaired by Bulgaria, also giving the first presentation of the panel. Further presentations were given by Georgia, Afghanistan and IOM. Interventions were made by ICMPD, Iraq, Hungary, European Commission and the Russian Federation. The following examples and practices should be mentioned:

i. It is important to have a solid legal and policy framework in the field of migration, including provisions of how to handle exceptional migration situations. If a good system is place it is easier to respond efficiently to ensuing situations.

ii. Equally important to a strong legislative framework is the institutional framework, which must allow for efficient coordination among different authorities, especially in times of crisis. Here special structures for coordination (for example a board or commission) can be considered.

iii. Systems should take into account the need for broader consultation between stakeholders also outside the migration field in times of crisis.

iv. It is vitally important to have a solid migration strategy – addressing all aspects of migration - combined with annual action plans for implementation involving all relevant stakeholders. This should also include contingency planning for crisis; such plans should contain management mechanisms, necessary emergency measures, allocation of additional resources and steering.

v. Careful attention should be put towards monitoring for crisis situations, and to analyse signs, as a way to reduce the element of surprise at the outbreak of a crisis.

vi. A strong data management system is furthermore important for increasing the knowledge base on migration which facilitates preparedness, management and reporting.

7. The second panel; “Responding to crisis; international protection and migration management” was chaired by Romania. Further presentations were given by Pakistan, UNHCR, Greece, the IFRC and Azerbaijan. Interventions/questions were made by the Russian Federation, Iran, the European Commission and Bangladesh. The following examples and practices should be mentioned:

i. Migration and crisis situations must be actively managed.

ii. Solidarity and burden-sharing are key elements to limit the negative effects of crisis. Distribution of responsibility is very important.

iii. Coordination and communication between all different stakeholders must be kept during a crisis. This includes also regional and international cooperation.

iv. It is important to coordinate with, and engage, organisations which give practical support to states in times of crisis.

v. The necessary procedures to deal with persons affected by crisis must be in place – asylum procedures and procedures for other forms of protection. States also have to ensure access to protection to everyone.

vi. Special attention should be paid to vulnerable persons, especially children, which are often the hardest hit by crisis. Efforts must be made to help families reunite.

vii. There has to be a thorough identification of needs, followed by an adequate response and emergency system. At the outbreak of a crisis and emergency situations the main prerogative will be to protect the life & health.
viii. There are different treatments of migrants and varying respect of migrants’ rights in different countries. For this reason general minimum standards for the treatment of migrants would be needed.

ix. It is not enough to deal with crisis situations. Route causes must also be addressed in order to prevent mass movements of people. Legal channels for migration must be strengthened.

8. The third panel; “Combating migration related crime during and in post-crisis situations; Smuggling of Migrants and Trafficking in Human Beings” was chaired by Bulgaria. Presentations were given by Moldova, Iraq, Bulgaria, Turkey and ICMPD. Interventions/questions were made by IOM, Pakistan and Hungary. The below recommendations/practices were mentioned:

i. Smugglers and traffickers exploit people in time of need. Crime knows no borders - it is therefore important to continue and step up international cooperation in order to fight criminal groups. An immense amount of money is paid to criminal groups – one should reflect on what could be done with these funds in the right hands.

ii. Prevention includes having a suitable legal framework in place for fighting migration related crime – it is important that countries cooperate on the criminalisation of these actions.

iii. Cooperation also needs to be stepped up regarding the prevention of and the use of false and falsified documents.

iv. Very central factors are information collection and exchange, covering trends, figures, inceptions, modus operandi, false and falsified documents etc. Information exchange has to be timely both within the own borders and externally with partners.

v. Information and info-campaigns to people regarding the dangers of migration related crime has to be used both as a matter of preventive strategy, but also be intensified in times of crisis in order to prevent victims of a crisis also to fall victim to criminal groups.

9. The fourth panel; “Post-crisis migration management: sustainable solutions and integration” was chaired by Turkey. Presentations were given by the Russian Federation, Iran and the OSCE. Interventions/questions were made by the European Commission, IOM, Turkey and Hungary. The below examples and practices were highlighted:

i. An example for post-crisis migration management could be taken from countries managing large refugee populations – where the refugees are treated generously living side by side with the general population.

ii. Post-crisis situations are impossible to manage for one country alone. This is true at the outset of a crisis and in the long-term. In order to find sustainable solutions, burden sharing is crucial.

iii. More support in general is needed by the international community; it is also important to coordinate efforts in order not to have duplications.

iv. It is difficult to make forced return to countries without stability, security or livelihood options sustainable. It is important to invest in countries of origin, also to make return possible. The problem is universal for all countries.
10. As an important topic for further discussions in the Budapest Process, the issue of “smuggling of terrorism” was brought up and the recruitment in crisis situations of “foreign fighters”.

11. The Chair thanked all participating countries for their engagement and contributions and entrusted the Secretariat with the task of summarising discussions and conclusions as well as to circulate results.
Summary of statements/presentations:

1. The meeting started with introductory remarks by Bulgaria, Turkey, Hungary, ICMPD and the Hanns Seidel Foundation.
   - Bulgaria welcomed all participants and expressed great satisfaction with the broad participation at the meeting, illustrating the importance of the topic and the need to discuss among countries and regions in order to share good examples and experiences.
   - Turkey high-lighted its role as a country both on the Black Sea and in the beginning of the Silk Routes and the connections between the two regions. It also pointed out that in times of crisis, migration management authorities need to work together in order to find suitable solutions and protect those in need – those affected by crisis are particularly vulnerable.
   - Hungary pointed out that migration has no borders and for this reason cooperation, especially in times of crisis, is crucial. Hungary also referred to the present urgent situation it is facing with a dramatic increase in inflow and asylum applications from Kosovo*.
   - ICMPD called attention to the imperative to act - and to act timely and together – to deal with the effects of crisis on migration management - as an unattended crisis can have serious effects on people and destabilising effects on societies.
   - The Hanns Seidel foundation expressed its support to the host and the meeting, highlighted the importance of the topic and referred to migration as one of the most important processes world-wide.

2. Following the welcome addresses, an introductory presentation was given by Frontex addressing "Migration flows and trends in the Black Sea region". Some of the important points highlighted were:
   - The three main areas at the moment regarding migration flows to Europe are; Eastern Mediterranean, Central Mediterranean and the Western Balkans. Libya and Turkey remain the main countries of departure of the larger share of the migrants that arrive irregularly to the EU borders.
   - Bulgaria has seen a dramatic increase in clandestine entries especially during 2013 at the border between Bulgaria and Turkey. Several measures have been taken to control this flow, which has now been reduced.
   - The increase on the Western Balkans route mainly relate to the increase of persons from Kosovo* entering Hungary via Serbia.
   - There has been an increase in incidents and interceptions on the Black Sea; however, due to the rough conditions on the Black Sea, the use of this route remains negligible and is not expected to increase much. However, for the same reason, the need for search and rescue operations might increase.

3. Bulgaria, as the Chair of the Working Group commented that the countries around the Black Sea are witnessing an increase in migration movements, even if still limited in comparison with the Mediterranean routes. The Black Sea region links migration flows from several regions – such as South East Europe and Silk Routes. Further comments were given by

* Under UNSCR 1244.
Hungary, regarding the ongoing situation with large amounts of Kosovars passing through Serbia into Hungary. MARRI reminded the participants about the role it can play in this regard and informed participants about a regional meeting it will organise in week of 23 March.

4. The European Commission pointed to the need to separate types of migratory flows in the discussions (keeping in mind of course that all flows are in reality mixed);

- Some flows (for example recently from Kosovo*, or in 2011 from Tunisia), consist to a large extent of people without genuine protection needs. Such flows can be curbed and stopped relatively quickly, provided that the origin country cooperates in readmitting the irregular migrants or makes efforts to prevent their departure. While these flows are ongoing the challenge of the authorities of the destination country is to set up an efficient system of interception, identification and return of the irregular migrants and to address the pull and push factors.

- Some flows consist of people who are displaced due to wars and/or disasters (for example persons entering Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon from Syria). Such flows cannot and must not be stopped. The challenge in addressing these flows consist first in quickly organising the humanitarian response, but also in elaborating a long-term response enabling that the refugees' stay in the hosting country is sustainable.

5. The first panel: “Preventing and preparing for crisis through migration management” was chaired by Bulgaria, also giving the first presentation of the panel. Further presentations were given by Georgia, Afghanistan and IOM. Interventions were made by ICMPD, Iraq, Hungary, European Commission and the Russian Federation. From the presentations and discussion the following should be mentioned:

- Bulgaria referred to the recent situation with major inflows and an increase from 2075 persons apprehended in 2013 to 11,618 in 2014, especially from Syria, and described its national experience in handling this situation and migration in general. The presentation showed the importance of having a solid migration strategy – addressing all aspects of migration - combined with annual action plans for implementation. All necessary stakeholders, including NGOs, must be engaged and coordination on higher level among involved authorities is necessary. Contingency planning is crucial; Bulgaria has a national action plan for addressing crisis situations caused by increasing migration pressure. Such plans should contain management mechanisms, necessary emergency measures, allocation of additional resources and steering.

- Georgia described crisis situations it has experienced during the past years and made reference to the building up of a strong migration management system including both strong legislative and institutional frameworks. The State Commission on Migration Issues (SCMI) was especially mentioned as an important coordinating function, also in crisis situations. The SCMI consists of 12 state agencies. 7 International Organizations and 5 local NGOs have consultative status in the Commission.

- Afghanistan underlined the importance of understanding the factors why people want to leave their countries of origin. Afghanistan has unfortunately been affected by several such factors such as general instability, poor economy, natural disasters

* Under UNSCR 1244.
(droughts and floods), land confiscation or usurpation as well as lack of shelter and sanitation. As a good practice for coordination between authorities the recent establishment of the Afghan Migration Board was especially mentioned. The board brings together 13 national ministries involved in the field of migration and offers a coordination possibility also in times of crisis. In order to increase knowledge about migration it is also extremely important to improve data management. Further highlighted was the importance that additional resources are allocated to handle migration management in crisis.

- IOM mentioned that provision of correct information in a crisis facilitates correct handling of situations (for example to know who is migrating). A crisis will normally interrupt normal patterns of seasonal and circular migration. At the same time, in crisis, people tend to follow established patterns and seek to join existing diaspora. The Migration Crisis Operational Framework, a tool for managing mobility in crisis situations, was described. The Migration Crisis Operational Framework identifies fifteen possible sectors of assistance including both typical humanitarian actions; “traditional” migration management sectors; and medium to longer term transition and development sectors. The framework helps identifying types and levels of assistance as well as the relevant national and international actors per sector of assistance. Coordination between stakeholders in crisis is crucial, both between the many ministries and other authorities that have a mandate for migration management in one country, but also with stakeholders outside the migration field. The Migration Crisis Operational Framework is complementary to the “Cluster Approach”, which is used in times of crisis for coordination between different international and local organisations.

- In the following discussion ICMPD raised that it is in the nature of the matter that a migratory crisis is unexpected, even if the signs of a possible crisis can sometimes be noted. Monitoring and planning remains a crucial factor. The Russian Federation emphasised that countries should share concrete practices for how to handle the outbreak of migration related crisis. Iraq mentioned the following needed elements of response in times of crisis:
  
  a. Provision of food, water, shelter and sanitation to displaced people
  
  b. It is necessary to increase aid but it is also very important to coordinate the provision of aid in order to fully use existing resources and avoid duplication
  
  c. A speedy response is vital

6. The second panel; “Responding to crisis; international protection and migration management” was chaired by Romania, also providing some initial information on the situation in the country – pointing out that Romania has new legislation on migration also dealing with possible massive influxes of people and has very good cooperation with neighbouring countries, especially Bulgaria. Further presentations were given by Pakistan, UNHCR, Greece, the IFRC and Azerbaijan. Interventions/questions were made by the Russian Federation, Iran, the European Commission and Bangladesh. The following high-lights were made in the presentations:

- Pakistan explained that two main trends have had significant impact on the socio-economic milieu of the country - emigration to the Gulf in the 1970s and the influx of Afghan refugees into Pakistan in the 1980s (some of them now living in Pakistan for the second and third generation). Presently main arrivals are from Afghanistan,
Central Asia, Bangladesh and the Far East; however there are also not insignificant inflows from African countries such as Nigeria and Somalia. There is indeed a humanitarian national architecture in place to meet the assistance and protection needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees. There are however potential gaps in the international legal architecture for how to deal with persons moving as result of a crisis – these gaps should be identified and addressed. There is furthermore a danger with too much deterrence which can push people into illegality. The requirements of security and immigration controls must be balanced with migrant’s rights. In the following discussion the Russian Federation proposed cooperation on asylum centres and high-lighted the importance of timely exchange of data between countries.

- UNHCR pointed out that the refugee population had increased in general during the past years. At the end of 2013, there were 6 million more people forcibly displaced than in 2012. The main reason for the increase is the war in Syria, which, at the end of 2014 forced 2.5 million people into becoming refugees and made 6.5 million internally displaced. UNHCR would like to see several actions to address current and future arrivals of asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants by sea to Europe. In a document of 12 March 2015 these measures include rescue at sea, intra-EU solidarity, external solidarity, integration and return of persons not in need of international protection. UNHCR supported Bulgaria during the massive increase of mostly irregular entries in 2013 over the Bulgarian - Turkish border, leading to strained reception capacities and overcrowded facilities in the country. Apart from a massive increase in arrivals and asylum applications there was also a five time increase in unaccompanied minors.

- Greece informed that arrivals are granted temporary stay while their status is determined. Most stay at reception centres at the Evros river. Greece retains reception centres as open establishments. For unaccompanied children special care is given, provision of custody and legal assistance, efforts to get proper documentation and reunite minors with their families. Illegal migration is not a criminal offense in Greece, only an administrative offense.

- IFRC: The Red Cross and Red Crescent societies have an immense network of volunteers and a system in place for tracing family members that have lost contact in times of crisis. Their emergency relief fund gives assistance such as food, water and sanitation in crisis situations as well as special support to children.

- Azerbaijan highlighted that as a country of transit and destination, located at the crossroads between East and West, its role in international migration processes is gradually increasing. The lasting occupation of 20 percent of the country’s territory as a result of military aggression, the ensuing refugee and IDP situation concerning more than 1 million persons of the population (that have been forced to leave their native lands) as well as mass and gross violation of the rights of these people were stated as major problems for the country. The importance of addressing topics such as the situation of migrants, needs and demands of IDPs and human trafficking, as well as the need to take preventive measures against current threats and challenges on these kinds of cooperation platforms was emphasised. Furthermore, it was pointed out that environmentally induced migration remains a background issue of importance for several countries in crisis situations.
Bangladesh firstly mentioned that it is also hosting a large number of refugees that have been in Bangladesh for a long time. Bangladesh has a problem sheltering these people; in addition, there are problems with identification. Several of these people are undocumented but have blended into the Bangladeshi society, gotten married to Bangladeshi people etc. Secondly, labour migrants are due to be returned from Libya due to the crisis there. These persons are often undocumented and although they claim to be Bangladeshis, this is not always the case. Thirdly, Bangladesh is currently preparing for potential large-scale displacement due to global warming. There is a need to increase the general preparedness for this imminent problem.

7. The third panel; “Combating migration related crime during and in post-crisis situations; Smuggling of Migrants and Trafficking in Human Beings” was chaired by Bulgaria. Presentations were given by Moldova, Iraq, Bulgaria, Turkey and ICMPD. Interventions/questions were made by IOM, Pakistan and Hungary. The following high-lights were made in the presentations:

- **Moldova** explained that the numbers of arrivals in the country have doubled due to the crisis in Ukraine. It emphasised the legislative work done in order to counteract illegal migration as well as smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons. Migration legislation has been established, facilitation of illegal migration has been criminalised, and many readmission arrangements have been signed. In addition, operational units have been established under the Ministry of Internal Affairs for countering facilitated illegal migration. A large problem relates to abuse and misuse of visa and identity documents. For human trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation, new destination countries in the EU have been noted lately. This new trend could be linked to the visa liberalisation process.

- **Iraq** described the extreme crisis situation that has been developing in the country with huge amounts of displaced people. Large parts of the country are in the hands of terrorists that are destructing societies and working against humanity. Horrifying crimes are carried out. The contributions by the international community are needed, but coordination between givers is crucial. There is a risk otherwise that several donors provide the same aid. Joint planning is necessary. IOM complimented the Iraqi government for the work carried out and referred to it as a good example. Lessons learned in terms of preparedness could be drawn from the experiences of the Iraqi government.

- **Bulgaria** described efforts relating to the fight of organised crime in relation to migration and presented statistics on people who decide not to cross the Bulgarian-Turkish border illegally (26,475 in 2014 compared to 1,827 in 2013) and those apprehended by Turkish border guards upon request of Bulgarian authorities (6,004 in 2014 compared to 3,385 in 2013). There has been an increase of people apprehended at sea borders. There has also been an increase in search and rescue operations; in 2014 there were two incidents – one on 25 May 2014 involving 1 Iraqi and 31 Afghan migrants (6 children) and one on 16 August 2014 involving 56 Afghan migrants (16 children). The figures presented illustrate the migration pressure towards the external borders and the improvement of operational cooperation with the Turkish authorities in 2013 and 2014. Taking into account the number of detected migrants, it is clear that there was no increase in 2014 in comparison to 2013. The majority of migrants were detected by the integrated border management system for surveillance and by the border police officers. According to Bulgarian legislation,
crossing the state border outside the Border Crossing Points (BCP) is a criminal
offence. Persons suspected of committing such crimes are arrested and registered
(fingerprints are also taken). In case these people are detained later on in another
EU country, they can be identified via fingerprints, and will be returned to the country
of first entry (following the principles of the Dublin Convention). At the same time, of
course all people are free to apply for asylum when reaching the official BCP.

- Also Turkey shared information on efforts to fight organised crime in the field of
migration. A comprehensive legal and institutional framework is in place with the
adoption of the new Law on Foreigners and International Protection and with the
establishment of the DGMM. Over the last ten years approximately 500,000 irregular
migrants have been apprehended. Turkey wishes to improve regional cooperation
and has intensified cooperation with Greece and Italy. In order to show the scale
of its expenditure on combating irregular migration, Turkey has stated that alone
the Turkish Coast Guard is spending 5 million Euro per month to fight irregular migration
at Sea. Pakistan commented and underlined the importance of burden-sharing and
knowledge transfer in order to improve skills of developing countries. Hungary
referred again to the situation with Kosovo* where people are deceived by smugglers
into believing that they will receive asylum status in EU countries and sell everything
in order to pay off smugglers. These people return with nothing, to nothing, which is
not only very tragic but also unnecessary.

- ICMPD presented an ongoing study titled “Assessment of the Impact of the Syrian
War and Refugee Crisis on Trafficking in Persons” including Syria, Turkey, Lebanon,
Jordan & Iraq. War is fertile ground for exploitation and the study aims at increasing
knowledge about this link in order to facilitate the appropriate approaches. There are
only preliminary findings so far but these indicate that among Syrian refugees and
IDP’s, large families are common, and teenage girls and young women are often
forced into temporary and/or early marriage. Especially children are used for begging
and men and women are exploited for labour purposes (for example domestic
servitude). Other vulnerable groups are Palestine refugees from Syria and host
countries; migrant workers (from South-East and South Asia), Iraqi refugees and
IDPs, religious and ethnic groups (e.g. Yezidis) targeted by ISIS/IS. Forms of abuse
include forced marriage, sexual exploitation and slavery as well as exploitation in
armed conflict. IOM referred to the need of an international humanitarian system –
drawing on the THB system.

8. The fourth panel; “Post-crisis migration management: sustainable solutions and integration”
was chaired by Turkey. Presentations were given by the Russian Federation, Iran and the
OSCE. Interventions/questions were made by the European Commission, IOM, Turkey
and Hungary.

- As chair of the panel, Turkey described the situation it is presently facing with Syrian
refugees: 1.7 million people from Syria are registered so far. 250,000 persons are
living in 25 shelters and 1.5 million outside, within the society. Refugees have
received temporary protection. 6 billion USD have been spent so far on this crisis
and the help from, and burden-sharing with, the international community is
insufficient. The geographic limitation is not implemented with regard to this situation
and UNHCR handles all cases without distinction. The principle of non-refoulement is
also upheld and if there is a risk of persecution, the person is not returned. Turkey

* Under UNSCR 1244.
has renewed the legislative framework and administrative infrastructure in the field of migration - the new legislation entered into force in April 2014. The amendments symbolise a major step forward in order to form an effective and strong migration/asylum management system in line with international standards. The new law aims at establishing a viable migration/asylum system in full consideration of and respect for human rights. Turkey has also adopted a Temporary Protection Regulation in October 2014, directed to grant temporary protection to Syrians in Turkey. The European Commission high-lighted the case of Turkey as a success story and model for how to handle a large scale refugee crisis, especially mentioning the capacity of reaction of Turkey and the excellent treatment of the affected people. The temporary protection centres have very high quality. Still, maintaining this high quality for long-term could not be sustainable. The refugee situation has now become protracted and the question is what to do now – after the humanitarian response. What options are available for the people and societies affected, that is to say, if the situation in their home countries does not improve? Some will of course leave and seek opportunities elsewhere, but there will be many staying on. If no decision regarding their future is taken, there is a risk to end up with a situation where people still live in camps after 40 years and are considered guests - however long-term residents without clear identity and uncertain social status. Turkey shared these concerns. Normally when a crisis is over, people should have the choice of returning home. Most refugees in Turkey do not live in temporary protection centres, they live among the population. However, integration is difficult in the case of mass arrivals, due to infrastructure and capacity of the society to deliver services. It is also important not to create a separate class in society. Relevant authorities of Turkey are preparing all the necessary arrangements within the framework of the Temporary Protection Regulation in order to grant additional rights such as education, work and health to Syrians. But to handle the crisis, more effective burden sharing from the international community is essential. IOM high-lighted that the Turkish example reveals that the number of persons handled by the EU, remains far below the number of persons handled by Turkey.

- **The Russian Federation** referred to the importance of strategies and action plans to deal with unexpected situations and the importance to keep analysing and monitoring migration – and be helped by adequate data management systems. The present Russian migration policy runs until 2025 – one of its most important elements is international capacity building. 18 million migrants entered the country in 2014, most of them labour migrants from the Commonwealth of Independent States. There are several recent legislative changes in the field of migration including the abolishment of labour quotas for visa free persons, simplification of the legalisation of labour migrants, as well as certain additional requirements on labour migrants. An element especially high-lighted was the importance of language knowledge for integration into society. Several measures are necessary in order to reap the positive effects of migration. It is also important to counteract illegal immigration; estimations suggest that there are 4 million illegal migrants in the country. The present policy allows reacting to migration crisis situations – with the issuance of temporary permits for protection. A fund has been instituted to add resources for handling crisis situations. Important cooperation takes place within the framework of the Eurasian Union.

- **Iran** shared experience with a large population of refugees; ca. 4 million Afghan and 50,000 Iraqi refugees are present in the country and described the main challenges
faced, including economic, cultural, social and legal. Iran also reminded of the importance to keep monitoring potential crisis situations due to environmental degradation – such as the dust crisis threatening Iran and Iraq. Most of the above-mentioned refugees are living within the regular society structures; many have been present for long, even generations. It is difficult to manage return to the home country after generations in another country – the ties are very strong to Iran, and children of immigrants may have no connection with their country of origin. Going back for them would be like going to a new country. This should be seen in combination with the lack of opportunities and also inadequate safety situation in Afghanistan. Some legal amendments are now proposed in order to facilitate for second and third generation immigrants to get permanent residence rights.

Marriages between immigrants and Iranian women have also lead to problems with identification. Iran is reluctant to returning people forcefully, referring to the adverse effects this could have on people and societies - furthermore it is likely to make people try to go back again illegally. In order to make sustainable returns possible it is very important to work on rebuilding and strengthening countries of origin. Upon the questions by the European Commission, regarding access to school and health by undocumented migrants as well as unaccompanied minors, it was explained that national systems are in general not strict on requiring official identification documents for accessing society services. Social services are not restricted to people being registered or having a certain number but available to all – legal or illegal. Regarding minors, it was explained that most illegal migrants are adults. Many are undocumented. There have been efforts to remedy this – leading to a large numbers of Afghan persons getting Afghan passports and subsequently the correct visas. The Afghan embassy in Tehran has also helped issuing documents to Afghans. Iraq underlined the intention to help people return to Iraq. Returnees are offered money as well as land by the government to facilitate their reintegration. There are also attempts to facilitate the cases of mixed marriages with lacking identification where wives have not had the opportunity to return. An MOU from 2008 covers these issues. Iraqi embassies help to issue travel documents to Iraqis to facilitate their return, for example the cooperation with Bulgaria has worked very well. Hungary asked about the reasons for lack of registration – and if there have been campaigns to this end. Iran explained that flows of migrants are a daily, constant matter, thus people are always changing – it is like circular irregular migration. There is an agreement between Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan and UNHCR – the Solutions Strategy – also covering the matter of registration of Afghan persons. There is however a lack of infrastructure and funds to implement these plans. It should be remembered that according to UNHCR the crisis in Afghanistan ended in 2002, and the people arriving now are not any longer arriving as refugees. People are reluctant to get registered due to fear of being sent back.

- The OSCE linked post-crisis management and a successful post-conflict rehabilitation to economic development and growth and the role of migration as an integral part of a comprehensive economic strategy to address post-conflict rehabilitation. Labour migration was described as a key coping strategy for households and individuals to address social, economic and political uncertainties, to alleviate poverty and promote better prospects for the future of family members and the community as a whole. Furthermore as there is a significant deficiency of accessible, feasible and credible legal channels for would-be migrant workers, many of them resort to illegal means.