



April-June 2024

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NEWS FROM THE EU

General developments

The Pact on Migration and Asylum was [adopted](#) on 14 May. This marked a significant milestone in the EU's efforts to manage migration effectively and humanely, in line with European values. Following this, the European Commission adopted the [Common Implementation Plan](#) on 12 June to ensure that EU Member States are adequately prepared to implement the Pact Instruments.

The EMN Belgium Presidency High-Level Conference, held on 25-26 June, discussed the operationalisation and implementation of the New Pact on Migration and Asylum. The [conference](#) presented the work done by the European Commission and the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the EU. It also launched the debate on the upcoming steps to make the Pact a reality.

On 11 June, the European Commission [proposed to extend temporary protection](#) for those fleeing the war in Ukraine for another year until 4 March 2026. The council [decision](#) will affect nearly 4.2 million displaced people currently registered for temporary protection in the EU.

On 13 June, the [revised EU Anti-Trafficking Directive](#) was adopted to reinforce the fight against trafficking in human beings. The revised Directive introduces stricter criminalisation, provides stronger tools for law enforcement and judicial authorities to investigate and prosecute new forms of exploitation, including

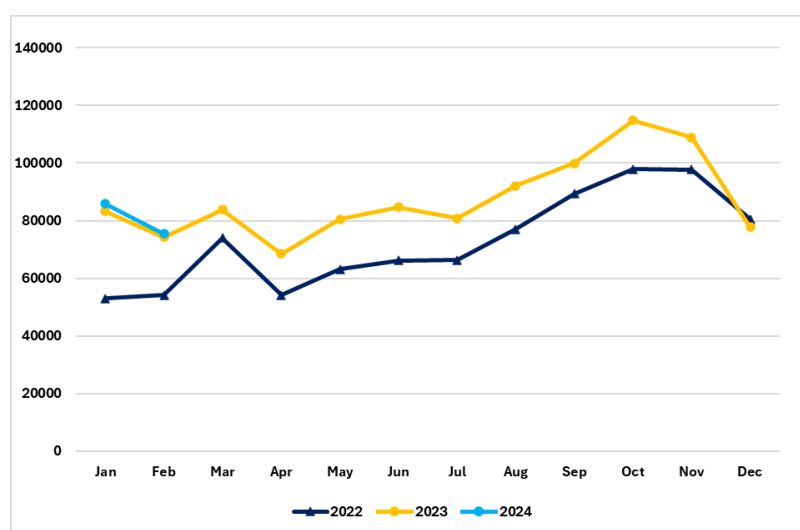
those that take place online, and ensures a higher level of assistance and support to victims. EU Member States will have to transpose and implement the new provisions by 15 July 2026.

On 13 June, the Council of the EU agreed its position on the proposal for a [Regulation](#) establishing an EU Talent Pool. The aim of the proposal is to facilitate international recruitment and provide for opportunities to third-country nationals to work in EU-wide shortage occupations at all skills levels. By supporting international recruitment, the EU Talent Pool aims to facilitate access to legal migration pathways as part of the EU's comprehensive approach to migration.

CJEU preliminary ruling on stateless Palestinians

On 13 June 2024, the [CJEU ruled](#) that stateless persons of Palestinian origin who are registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) should, in principle, be granted refugee status if UNRWA's protection or assistance is considered to have ceased. The cessation of UNRWA's assistance or protection is particularly considered when the agency finds itself unable, for whatever reason, to ensure dignified living conditions or minimum-security conditions to any stateless person of Palestinian origin. This applies to those staying in the sector of UNRWA's area of operations, in which the applicant had his or her habitual residence.

Figure: First-time asylum applications in the EU-27 (January-March 2024)



Source: Eurostat [[migr_asyappctzm](#)], first-time asylum applicants, extracted on 4 July 2024.

NEWS FROM EMN MEMBER AND OBSERVER COUNTRIES

1. General developments

Cyprus

Establishment of Deputy Ministry of Migration and International Protection

The [2024 Law](#), effective from 17 June, establishes the newly formed Deputy Ministry of Migration and International Protection as the competent authority for migration and Asylum Policy. The Department of Civil Registry and Migration and the Asylum Service are currently under the umbrella of the newly formed Deputy Ministry, while previously under the administrative authority of the Ministry of Interior.

Finland

Government action plan supports Ukrainians in finding work and settling in Finland

On 14 June, the ministerial working group on employment and entrepreneurship adopted an [action plan](#) to help beneficiaries of temporary protection (BoTP). The action plan contains 30 measures aiming to support Ukrainians' participation in Finnish society and enter the labour market.

Germany

Entry facilitation extended for Ukrainian nationals

With the approval of the [Bundesrat on 17 May](#), the Ukraine Residence Transition Ordinance was extended for the fifth time. Ukrainian nationals can continue to enter Germany without a residence permit until 31 December.

Payment card for asylum seekers

After an amendment to the [Asylum Seekers' Benefits Act](#) which entered into force on 16 May, asylum seekers receive benefits via a payment card, which they can use to make payments, rather than cash.

Greece

Ministerial decision regarding operation of the registry of NGOs and members of NGOs

[A revised decision](#) now allows already registered and certified NGOs, active in the field of international protection, migration and asylum social integration within the Greek Territory, to maintain their registration status, provided they meet all relevant conditions and requirements.

Ireland

Valid biometric passport mandate reinstated for Ukrainians travelling to Ireland

As of [5 June](#), Ukrainians travelling to Ireland must possess a valid biometric passport, marking the end of temporary exemptions previously enjoyed.

The Netherlands

Temporary protection extended for non-Ukrainian residents, pending CJEU Ruling

Following a ruling of the Council of State, the Minister for Migration [extended temporary protection](#) for non-Ukrainians who had a temporary Ukrainian residence permit until the CJEU delivers its judgment. This follows objections to the Council's earlier decision enabling the termination of this group's protection.

New timeframe set on application process for displaced people from Ukraine

As of 17 June, displaced people from Ukraine arriving in the Netherlands must undergo an [eligibility assessment](#) within four weeks of municipal registration to verify eligibility under the Temporary Protection Directive.

Spain

Royal decree restructures Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration

[Royal Decree 501/2024](#), issued on 21 May, enhances the legal certainty and efficiency of the Ministry by adapting its structure and reducing unnecessary administrative burdens.

Norway

Instruction tightens Norway's visa restrictions for Russian tourists

[Instruction GI-06/2024](#) has further tightened Norway's visa restrictions for Russian tourists to safeguard its foreign policy interests and international relations.

Georgia

National Strategy for the development of official statistics was approved

The Georgian Government approved the '[2024-2027 National Strategy for the Development of Statistics](#)' on 24 April, aiming to enhance the country's statistical system and migration data.

2. Legal migration

Austria

Amendments to the Seasonal Quota Regulation

The Seasonal Quota Regulation was amended in [April](#) and [June](#), raising the quota for temporary foreign employment in agriculture and forestry in Vienna as well as in tourism in Carinthia and Lower Austria.

Settlement regulation 2024 introduces quota for residence permits in Austria

The [Settlement Regulation 2024](#), effective from 28 June, governs the total number of residence permits subject to quota requirements in Austria for 2024 (5 846), distributed by permit type and province.

Bulgaria

Amendment to Foreigners Law simplifies seasonal work procedures

The [amendment](#) to the Law on Foreigners in Bulgaria (SG 39/2024) simplifies access for third-country nationals to the national labour market as seasonal workers, allowing them to work up to 180 consecutive days annually without leaving the country.

Finland

Automated post-decision monitoring of residence permits introduced

The Finnish Immigration Service introduced [automated post-decision monitoring](#) of startup entrepreneurs' residence permits on 24 April and of specialists' residence permits on 17 June to ensure ongoing compliance with permit requirements.

France

Mobility agreement with the Republic of Korea for professionals and trainees

A decree of [17 May](#) enables long-stay visas for Korean professionals and interns under a France-Korea agreement. These visas, valid for up to four years for professionals and 18 months for interns, can be renewed based on the individual's profile.

Germany

Points system for the 'opportunity card' validated

All parts of the new [Skilled Immigration Act](#) including those concerning the opportunity card and the expansion of the Western Balkans regulation came into force on 1 June.

Greece

Residence permits connected with real estate investments

[Art. 62 of Law 5100/5-4-2024](#) modifies migration code 5038/23, to provide balanced incentives for third-country nationals to invest in real estate in Greece, while ensuring coverage of the housing needs of Greek citizens.

Launch of the Greece-Egypt agreement's digital platform for seasonal workers recruitment

As part of the Greece-Egypt agreement for agricultural seasonal workers, an online platform for employers to facilitate hiring Egyptian workers is operational on the [Greek Migration and Asylum Ministry's website](#) since 10 June.

Ministerial actions for the new Migration Code execution

During the reporting period, three ministerial decisions were issued to enhance the new Migration Code's implementation, addressing a) [health insurance](#) for residence permit, b) [invitation procedure](#) for the purpose of work (seasonal, dependent, high skilled) and c) [online residence permit](#) applications.

Ireland

Employment Permits Act 2024 signed into law

The Employment Permits Act 2024, [signed into law](#) in June, aims to consolidate the law and update the employment permit system according to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, following the 2018 economic migration policy review.

Italy

Initiation of work corridors

On 12 April, several ministries and the community of Sant'Egidio launched the '[Work Corridors](#)' initiative, aiming to align job vacancies, particularly in high-demand professions, with foreign workers' skills. Over two years, 300 individuals from Lebanon, Ethiopia and Côte d'Ivoire will be selected and trained.

Latvia

Amendments to the Immigration Law

As of 8 June, the [Immigration Law was amended](#), granting the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs the power to prohibit natural or legal persons from inviting third-country nationals to work in the case of certain legal violations. It also eased labour recruitment in specific sectors and allowed the Cabinet of Ministers to limit visa applications and entry into Latvia for third-country nationals under certain geopolitical circumstances.

Lithuania

Parliament approves quotas for third-country workers

In June, Parliament approved [amendments to the Law](#) on the Legal Status of Foreigners and the accompanying Law on Employment to regulate labour migration flows more efficiently and to ensure migration that creates value for Lithuania, while safeguarding national security interests.

Migration Department revokes residence permits

In May, after the inspection of foreign nationals under labour migration control measures, the Migration Department [revoked the residence permits](#) of 1 483 foreigners due to the absence or termination of an employment contract.

The Netherlands

Residence scheme for foreign investors abolished

As of 17 April, [changes to the Aliens Decree 2000](#) eliminated the 'wealthy foreign national (foreign investor)' residence permit policy after EU discussions regarding potential criminal risks associated with these residence schemes.

Slovak Republic

New regulation broadens job scope for third-country nationals

As of 9 May, the [Slovak Government Regulation](#) increased job options (like butter maker, housekeeper, etc.) for selected third-country nationals, with a yearly cap of 10 000 national visas.

Spain

Regulation ISM/1417/2023: collective management of recruitment in the country of origin by 2024

This [order](#), effective from 29 December, aims to fill vacancies requiring foreign recruitment based on a national employment analysis. It allows seasonal recruitment in the country of origin for third-country nationals via circular migration.

State public employment service resolution publishes catalogue of occupations

The [resolution](#) publishes the catalogue of occupations that are difficult to cover for the first quarter of 2024.

Georgia

Visa free regime updates for 2024

On 23 April, visa free stay for Ukrainians in Georgia was extended from two to three years; and new bilateral visa-free agreements were enacted with [Peru](#) and the People's Republic of [China](#).

Sweden

Pilot for digital identification launched

On 17 May, the Swedish Migration Agency launched a [pilot](#) for digital passport control to facilitate residence permit applications. Students and workers from 22 visa-free countries and territories may use an identification app to present their passports, saving money and time by avoiding visa visits.

3. International protection including asylum

Austria

Restrictions on family reunification

On 5 May, the Minister of the Interior announced stricter measures for family reunification for beneficiaries of international protection, including DNA tests and enhanced document inspections, leading to the [reopening of numerous cases](#) and mass cancellation of visa appointments.

Belgium

Updated list of safe countries of origin

As of 27 May, Belgium's Official Journal lists Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia, India, and Moldova as [safe countries](#). Citizens from these countries are presumed not to require international protection, placing the burden of proof on asylum seekers.

Bulgaria

Memorandum of cooperation for refugee integration

In June 2024, the State Agency for Refugees (SAR) and the rector of the University of National and World Economy [signed](#) a memorandum of cooperation focused on training programmes and policies for the protection and integration of foreigners granted international protection in Bulgaria.

France

Guidelines for 2024 resettlement policy

[An administrative notice on 23 May](#) aims to resettle 6 000 individuals in 2024-2025, with 2 000 arrivals planned in 2024 to be dispersed across the country, excluding the Paris region due to the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Ireland

Further measures to expediate international protection application processing

Starting from [23 April](#), Ireland will expedite the processing of applications from the country with the most number of applications in Ireland over the previous three months, with decisions made within 90 days. This top applicant country will be reassessed quarterly.

Income assessment for daily allowance of international protection applicants

From June, the Department of Social Protection will assess the [income of international protection applicants](#) aged 18 and above. Those earning over € 125 weekly for 12 weeks or more will not receive the daily expense allowance.

Italy

Decree on foreigner's financial guarantee for entry

The [decree](#) of 19 June allows foreigners, subject to the accelerated border procedure, to provide a financial guarantee, ranging from € 2 500 to € 5 000, as an alternative to detention upon arrival (aimed at verifying the prerequisites for entry and stay), within seven working days from the date of receiving the communication of the determined amount. This guarantee can be provided by a bank guarantee, insurance contract or relatives residing legally in Italy or any other EU Member State. In case the foreigner absconds, the authority shall proceed to immediate transfer the amount of the guarantee to the State budget.

The Netherlands

Measures to increase reception capacity

In April, the Dutch government announced plans to create 5 000 reception places by May 2024 and [further expand capacity](#) until July 2025, including [emergency](#) reception by municipalities and use of state-owned land for temporary facilities.

Change in Dublin procedures: no indirect refoulement assessments for foreign nationals

The Council of State has [ruled](#) that, in Dublin procedures, the Minister for Migration is no longer required to assess if a transfer of a foreign national within the EU results in indirect refoulement. This change is a consequence of a ruling of the CJEU of 30 November 2023 ([ECLI:EU:C:2023:934](#)).

Spain

Government approves the national refugee resettlement programme for 2024

The Council of Ministers, at the proposal of the Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration, has approved the [National Refugee Resettlement Programme](#) in Spain for 2024 in which Spain has committed to welcoming up to 1 200 refugees.

Sweden

Vulnerable women, girls and LGBTI persons prioritised in resettlement programme

The Swedish Ministry of Justice has [announced](#) the distribution of 900 quota refugees for 2024, prioritising vulnerable women, girls, and LGBTI persons, with 50 places reserved for emergency cases.

4. Unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable groups

Austria

UN Committee against Torture publishes findings on Austria

The UN Committee against Torture [expressed concerns](#) about Austria's alleged breaches of the non-refoulement principle and the absence of a mechanism to identify vulnerable asylum-seekers.

Bulgaria

Safe zone for unaccompanied minors

In May, a [safe zone](#) for unaccompanied minors seeking international protection was open in the registration and reception centre in Harmanli within the State Agency for Refugees.

Greece

Collaboration between Ministry of Migration & Asylum and Médecins du Monde – Greece

A one-year [contract was signed](#) to operate an accommodation centre for 90 vulnerable women.

Latvia

Enforcement of the Istanbul Convention

On 1 May, the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, known as the Istanbul Convention, [entered into force](#).

Additional support for children in out-of-family care

On 4 May, [regulations](#) were enforced to provide additional support to children in out-of-family care, including orphans and those without parental care, even after they reach the age of majority.

The Netherlands

Efforts to improve the reception of unaccompanied minors

The Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (COA) and Nidos Foundation for youth care [face challenges](#) in providing adequate reception for unaccompanied minors, many of whom are housed in hotels unsuitable for to meet their needs. Efforts currently aim to improve their reception situation as quickly as possible.

5. Integration and inclusion

Czech Republic

Fostering self-reliance in housing for beneficiaries of temporary protection (BoTP)

In June, AMIF funded [projects](#) were launched to foster the long-term, sustainable integration of Ukrainian BoTP in the Czech Republic.

Finland

Amendments to the Integration Act reform to increase immigrants' own responsibility for their integration

The Integration Act reform, [approved](#) in 2023 and effective from 2025, has been amended by the current government to strengthen finances and increase immigrants' responsibility for their integration.

France

Integration policy priorities for newly-arrived third-country nationals in 2024

[An instruction dated 30 April](#) sets out guidelines for the integration of newly-arrived third-country nationals, including refugees, emphasising collaboration, regional steering, and the AGIR programme (Comprehensive and Individualised Support for Refugees). The instruction reaffirms the priorities of integration through language, employment, culture and sport.

Italy

Enhancing integration measures for foreign pupils in Italian schools

On 31 May, Italy approved [measures](#) for integrating foreign pupils, including dedicated teachers and language courses.

Greece

Extension of the HELIOS Integration Programme in 2024

In June, the [HELIOS](#) integration programme for beneficiaries of international and temporary protection was extended until 30 September.

Successful completion of the Intercultural Mediators Training Programme in Greece

In April, a [pilot training programme](#) of 38 Intercultural Mediators was successfully completed. The project was an initiative of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum in cooperation with UNHCR.

Slovenia

Decree to support the integration of third-country nationals

Effective from 16 May, the [decree](#) aims to facilitate the integration of third-country nationals into Slovenia's cultural, economic, and social life. It provides free Slovenian language programmes and first examinations of Slovenian language at the survival level.

6. Citizenship and statelessness

Germany

Modernisation of Citizenship Law Act

Effective from 27 June, the [Act](#) stipulates that people who work in Germany and are well integrated can become German citizens after just five years instead of eight. They no longer need to give up their previous citizenship. At the same time, the requirements for commitment to liberal democratic principles are becoming stricter.

Sweden

Stricter requirements for young people applying for citizenship

The Swedish Parliament has decided to [tighten the rules](#) in the Citizenship Act. From 1 October, persons aged 15-21 applying for Swedish citizenship will have requirements such as not having been convicted for a serious crime, not being a threat to national security, nor being associated with any criminal groups or organisations.

Georgia

New citizenship tests launched

On 1 May, Georgia launched [new citizenship tests](#), assessing applicants' knowledge of the state language, history, and principles of laws. The tests are now conducted electronically and are a prerequisite for citizenship. Ordinance [N 996](#) establishes the instructions and rules for checking the level of knowledge and grounds for exemption from testing.

7. Border management and irregular migration

Austria

Temporary re-introduction of border controls at internal borders

Internal border controls were temporarily re-introduced with the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic from 3 June until 15 October and with Slovenia and Hungary from 12 May until 11 November with three regulations by the Austrian Minister of the Interior (from [16 April](#), [10 May](#) and [31 May](#)).

Belgium

Law allowing Frontex to support federal police

On 2 May, the Chamber of Representatives adopted [a law](#) allowing Frontex to conduct border controls at Belgium's external borders. The law laid the legal basis for using Frontex employees as escorts to carry out the forced return of foreigners.

Finland

New border procedure introduced

As of 1 September, Finland will introduce a [new border procedure](#) that allows asylum applications submitted by persons who already arrived, to be processed near the border, if preconditions are met.

Greece

National coordinator against migrant smuggling responsibilities

Greece specified the responsibilities of the National Coordinator against Migrant Smuggling on [28 May](#), including the establishment of an office at the Ministry of Migration and Asylum and their designation as National Contact Point within their competences.

Latvia

Schengen Information System amendments

On 13 June, Regulation No. 134 "[Regarding Personal Identification Documents](#)" and Regulation No. 708 [Regarding the Register of Invalid Documents](#) were amended, to comply with [EU legislation](#) and improve Latvia's security system.

Poland

Temporary border zone in Poland

On 12 June, the Minister of the Interior and Administration introduced a [temporary ban](#) on staying in a specific area in the border zone with the Republic of Belarus for 90 days from 12 June. The zone will cover a border length of 60.67 km.

Slovenia

Extension of border controls with Croatia and Hungary

On 19 June, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia issued an [Ordinance](#) on the temporary reintroduction of controls at its internal borders with the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of Hungary from June 22 until 21 December.

Sweden

Reintroduction of temporary border controls

The Swedish Government [reintroduced temporary border controls](#) at its internal border from 12 May until 11 November, due to the Swedish Security Service assessment of continuous threat to public order and internal security.

Republic of Serbia

EU and Serbia sign agreement to boost regional security

On 25 June, the EU and Serbia signed an [agreement](#) to enhance regional security and combat irregular migration and organised crime, aligning with the EU's Western Balkans Action Plan.

8. Trafficking in human beings

Austria

Operation Global Chain

In June, a large-scale joint operation against human trafficking '[Global Chain](#)' was led by Austria and coordinated by Romania, Europol, Frontex and [INTERPOL](#). It aimed to disrupt high-risk criminal networks, focusing on cases of sexual exploitation, forced criminality and forced begging. In Austria, two arrests were made and 21 victims were rescued.

Poland

Poland upgrade to Tier 1

In a [report](#) published on 24 June, the U.S. Department of State upgraded Poland to Tier 1, indicating full compliance with the minimum standards in the fight against human trafficking, as set out in the American Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA).

Georgia

Structural reorganisation of the State Care Agency

From 1 April, a new Division of Services for Victims of Human Trafficking and Violence was created within the Agency for State Care and Assistance for the (Statutory) Victims of Human Trafficking, to facilitate and coordinate service provision to beneficiaries in crisis centres and shelters.

9. Return and readmission

Austria

Implementation of readmission agreement

On 3 April, Austria and Armenia [agreed](#) on the implementation of the agreement between the EU and Armenia on the readmission of persons residing without authorisation, which entered into force on 1 May.

Belgium

Adoption of proactive return policy law

On 2 May, the Chamber of Representatives [introduced](#) an obligation to cooperate in the return process, and expanded the pool of return escorts. The law also enshrined the principle of minor children not being detained in closed centres.

Czech Republic

Assisted return programme for foreigners

The Czech Republic initiated a [pilot project](#), which will run from June to November, aiming to assist 430 displaced persons from Ukraine in returning home. The programme primarily provides transport assistance, with special provisions for individuals with health complications.

Greece

Responsibilities of the National Return Coordinator

In May, a Joint Ministerial [Decision](#) specified the responsibilities of the National Return Coordinator and all the necessary relevant details concerning the exercise of competences, the establishment of an office at the Ministry of Migration and Asylum and their designation as National Contact Point within their competences.

The Netherlands

Obligatory country naming in return decisions

On 8 May, the Council of State [ruled](#) that the Minister for Migration must always name a country when issuing a return decision, even if the identity or nationality of the person involved is questioned by the Minister. This ruling aims to help foreign nationals defend their rights more effectively.

Aliens Act provides insufficient basis for searching phones of foreign nationals in detention without consent

On 3 April, the Administrative Jurisdiction Division of the Council of State [ruled](#) that the Aliens Act 2000 provides an inadequate legal basis for non-consensual phone searches of detained foreign nationals. The

ruling highlights the increased personal data in today's cell phones compared to 2012 when the law was introduced.

Slovenia

Morocco and Slovenia committed to strengthen cooperation

The Minister for Foreign and European Affairs and her Moroccan counterpart signed a [joint declaration](#) on strengthening cooperation between the two countries. Focus areas were irregular migration, safe returns, readmissions (including identification for the issuance of travel documents) and sustainable reintegration.

10. Migration and development

Cyprus

Development of the national system CY-ETIAS

On 23 May, a [funding agreement](#) was signed between the European Funds Unit and the Ministry of Interior for the initial phases of the design, development and implementation of the national ETIAS system.

Italy

Memorandum of Understanding with Tunisia on cooperation in education

The Italian Minister of Education and the Tunisian Minister of Education have signed a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) in April, to improve educational cooperation. The agreement envisages initiatives for Italian language teaching and technical education, with qualification programmes for Tunisian teachers.

Approval of the Community Reconciliation Initiative for Iraqis returning from Al-Hol.

In April, the Joint Development Cooperation Committee approved the [cooperation initiative](#) in Iraq for the community reconciliation and reintegration of Iraqis returning from the Syrian camp of Al-Hol, for a total amount of € 3 million, funding the United Nations Development Programme, for three years.

Sweden

New regional strategy for the Syria crisis adopted

In June, Sweden launched a three-year [strategy](#) for the Syria crisis, aiming to support Syrians and vulnerable groups, reduce irregular migration to the EU, and facilitate Syrian refugees' voluntary return.

Georgia

Diaspora forum held to strengthen ties and cooperation with the state

On 27 June, a [forum](#) dedicated to the day of the Georgian diaspora was held to strengthen cooperation between the state and diaspora, address challenges and opportunities, and enhance the role of diaspora representatives in the country's development.

11. EU legislation transposition

Lithuania

Working group established for the implementation of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum

In May, an inter-institutional working group was [established](#) by the Ministry of the Interior to align the national migration and asylum management system with the EU Pact.