



**2024 Annual Session**  
**Report of Vice-President Dr. Daniela De Ridder,**  
**Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration,**  
**to the Plenary**

*(Bucharest, 2 July 2024)*

Madam President,  
Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for this opportunity to provide a short overview of the activities of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration since the Winter Meeting.

**I. Field Visits**

As planned, our Committee carried out two field visits to Italy and Türkiye – two key countries along the Central and Eastern Mediterranean migration routes respectively. The Committee chose to focus on the Mediterranean this year due to the sharp uptick in arrivals – along the Central Mediterranean route in particular – in 2023.<sup>1</sup>

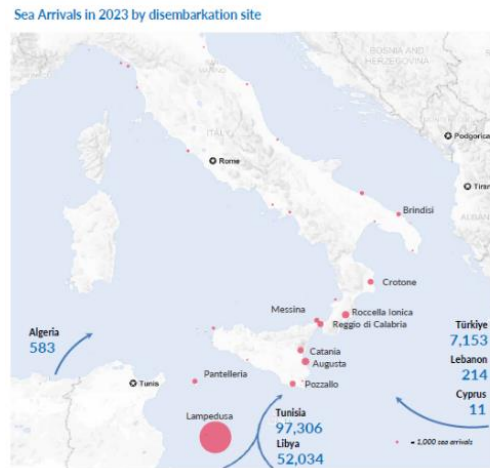
I would like to take this opportunity to extend my deepest appreciation to the Chamber of Deputies of Italy, in particular Mr. Eugenio Zoffili, Head of the Delegation of Italy, and to the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye and Committee Member Kemal Çelik, for their hospitality, as well as the staff members of the two delegations and the OSCE PA International Secretariat for putting together a comprehensive programme which enabled us to engage with a broad range of stakeholders to address many different aspects connected with managing irregular migration and to visit a number of facilities hosting refugees and migrants.

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<sup>1</sup> Over 270,180 irregular arrivals were recorded in the Central Mediterranean in 2023, the highest number since the “migration crisis” of 2015-2016. This figure includes sea arrivals to Italy, Cyprus, and Malta, and both sea and land arrivals to Greece and Spain (including the Canary Islands). See: UNHCR, Mediterranean situation, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean>.

## A. Italy (Rome, Lampedusa, 6-8 March 2024)

Last March, I led a high-level delegation<sup>2</sup> of the Committee, together with the OSCE PA Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime, Eugenio Zoffili (MP, Italy)<sup>3</sup> and OSCE PA President Pia Kauma (MP, Finland), to Italy with the objective to witness first-hand the challenges faced by Italy in dealing with irregular migration along the Central Mediterranean route. The focus was on the island of Lampedusa – the southernmost part of Italy which is closer to Tunisia than to Sicily, and which in 2023 accounted for about 70 per cent of all irregular sea arrivals in Italy. One of the main topics addressed was understanding how organized criminal networks exploit mixed migration flows to traffic human beings and smuggle migrants across borders.



A separate report on the visit has been shared. I will therefore focus on some of the key takeaways here.

- Solidarity, co-operation, co-ordination and shared responsibility are key guiding principles in addressing the challenges connected to migratory movements. No entity, state or organization, when acting alone, can make a lasting difference. The Italian border at Lampedusa is a European border. Greater shared responsibility is needed to address the challenges related to irregular migration with the ultimate goal of ensuring the security of the entire OSCE region.
- The Italian authorities have made tremendous efforts over the years to welcome refugees and migrants arriving irregularly across the Central Mediterranean route and to save lives.
- Co-operation, co-ordination and data exchange between Italian, European and International authorities involved in border control and combatting human smuggling, trafficking in human beings and other forms of organized crime appear to be at a good level, and are characterised by a high degree of professionalism and reliability.
- Still, fighting the organized crime networks behind migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings – two distinct but often overlapping crimes –

<sup>2</sup> The following Members of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration participated in the visit: Chair Daniela DE RIDDER (MP, Germany); Vice-Chairs Kyriakos HADJIYIANNI (MP, Cyprus), Farah KARIMI (MP, Netherlands), and Gudrun KUGLER (MP, Austria); as well as Members Alessandro ALFIERI (MP, Italy), Kristian KLINCK (MP, Germany), Malik BEN ACHOUR (MP, Belgium), Kemal ÇELİK (MP, Türkiye) and Fabrizio COMBA (MP, Italy).

<sup>3</sup> For more on the Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime, please see: <https://www.oscepa.org/en/activities/special-representatives/combating-organized-crime>.

needs to be stepped up. Migrant smuggling and trafficking are also used to finance other criminal operations such as drug and arms trafficking. Promptly identifying new migrant arrivals, duly patrolling borders and conducting joint investigations are therefore critical steps to fight criminal cartels preying on the vulnerability of migrants. Co-operation with Third Countries to investigate, arrest and prosecute smugglers and traffickers must also be intensified, including online.

- The contribution of emergency services, civil society organizations and citizens is paramount to "humanize" procedures and to address the needs of especially more vulnerable refugees and migrants, and to ensure that they are treated with empathy and dignity. Greater involvement of non-state actors has also proven to enhance prospects for the identification of victims of trafficking in human beings as their trust in authorities tends to be low.
- Recognizing the life-saving efforts of NGOs in the area of Search & Rescue at sea and the gap which they are seeking to fill in this regard, their efforts need to be better co-ordinated with the Italian authorities, bearing in mind not only the well-being of the rescued migrants but also the need to ensure that they can be received in adequate conditions. While, ultimately, the responsibility for deaths at sea lies with the smugglers, traffickers and also migrants themselves, the current loss of life cannot be tolerated. Compromises must be found to minimise the suffering of all the parties concerned: people on the move but also the authorities as well as humanitarian staff, volunteers and citizens.
- The implementation of returns of persons not deemed in need of protection to their countries of origin should also be enhanced through stronger incentives for Third Countries to readmit their nationals. This is vital to alleviate pressure on countries of first arrival.
- We should also strive to honour the memory of those who perished while attempting to cross the sea in pursuit of better lives. The majority of victims are either lost at sea or buried without having been identified. We can do better to bring closure to relatives by establishing mechanisms for sharing information on missing and dead migrants.

The recent agreement between the EU and Tunisia and also the earlier agreement with Libya were also discussed quite extensively. In this context, the Committee noted that:

- The assessment of the impact of bilateral agreements with countries of origin and transit remains mixed. While there are positive results in terms of capacity building and human rights training of border and police authorities and a decrease in irregular arrivals in some cases, credible and documented reports of serious human rights violations raise ethical questions as to the price to be paid for the results achieved as well as the sustainability of these approaches.

Notwithstanding the need to prevent irregular migration by protecting borders and dismantling human trafficking and smuggling networks, we must also provide more safe and legal routes for those in need of protection so that they do not embark on perilous journeys. It is also vital to also seek to better understand and to address the reasons triggering mobility. Such a multi-pronged approach is essential for designing and implement better migration and asylum policies and for good governance. At the same time, we need to continue to ensure the dignified treatment of all people on the move, be they refugees, economic migrants or persons displaced due to climate change and natural disasters.

### **B. Türkiye (Ankara, Adana, Gaziantep, 20-23 May 2024)**

From 20-23 May 2024, a delegation of ten members<sup>4</sup> of the OSCE PA Ad Hoc Committee on Migration<sup>5</sup>, led by its Chair OSCE PA Vice-President Daniela DE RIDDER (MP, Germany), was hosted in Türkiye by Mr. Kemal ÇELİK (MP, Türkiye), Member of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration.

The objective of this visit was to better understand the challenges associated with hosting over 3 million Syrian refugees since 2011 and providing them access to shelter, education, labour, health care and other services. These challenges have been furthermore compounded by the prolonged conflict in Syria as well as the economic crisis, Covid-19 pandemic and, last but not least, the devastating earthquakes which struck the refugee-hosting region of southeast Türkiye in February 2023. Other main topics included implementation of the March 2016 EU-Türkiye Statement, and efforts to save lives and combat irregular migration along the Eastern Mediterranean route. Throughout its work, the Committee pays special attention to the treatment of, and procedures for, migrants in vulnerable categories, notably unaccompanied minors, women, victims of trafficking in human beings and gender-based violence.

The delegation was first briefed by a broad range of stakeholders in Ankara, including representatives of migration management authorities, Türkiye's Coast Guard Command, and the ministries of foreign affairs, education, health and labour. The delegation also met with provincial and district authorities in Adana and Gaziantep as well as with a broad range of international governmental organizations as well as NGOs working with refugees and migrants and involved in the earthquake recovery effort. The delegation also visited two container camps:

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<sup>4</sup> The following Members participated in the visit: Chair Daniela DE RIDDER (MP, Germany); Vice-Chairs Kyriakos HADJIYIANNI (MP, Cyprus), Farah KARIMI (MP, Netherlands), and Gudrun KUGLER (MP, Austria); as well as Members Canan BAYRAM (MP, Germany), Kemal ÇELİK (MP, Türkiye), Kristian KLINCK (MP, Germany), Dimitrios MARKOPOULOS (MP, Greece), Özgül SAKI (MP, Türkiye) and David STÖGMÜLLER (MP, Austria). The programme of the visit is in Annex I.

<sup>5</sup> For more on the mandate and activities of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration, please see: <https://www.oscepa.org/en/activities/ad-hoc-committees-and-working-groups/migration>.

one in Adana – the largest such camp for Syrian refugees, as well as a temporary camp set up for Syrian victims of the earthquake in İslahiye.

The delegation heard about Türkiye's efforts to step up the fight against irregular migration, human trafficking and migrant smuggling, and also to save lives at sea. The positive impact of improved co-operation between Greece and Türkiye on reducing irregular migration in the Eastern Mediterranean was also underlined.

One key message was that Türkiye has displayed outstanding generosity and hospitality in hosting over 3.4 million refugees of whom 3.1 million are Syrian refugees. However, it has reached its capacity. It is time for Europe to step up to take on a greater share of responsibility for Syrian and other refugees. Greater efforts are also needed to address the root causes of the Syrian conflict. Turkish authorities would also like Europe to support efforts to repatriate Syrians to so-called "safe zones" established by Türkiye in northern Syria. However, many of the interlocutors stressed that the conditions for safe, dignified and voluntary returns were not currently met due to serious concerns about the security and humanitarian situation in these zones.

While achievements especially in the area of access to education of Syrian children under temporary protection were highlighted, a number of issues were also raised, notably the increased difficulty of registering and accessing services following changes made in 2022, the 25 per cent quota which prohibits new refugee registrations in many of the larger cities including Istanbul and Ankara, the difficulty of obtaining work permits, and changing attitudes of the Turkish population towards refugees. Concerns about persisting child labour and child marriage were also raised.

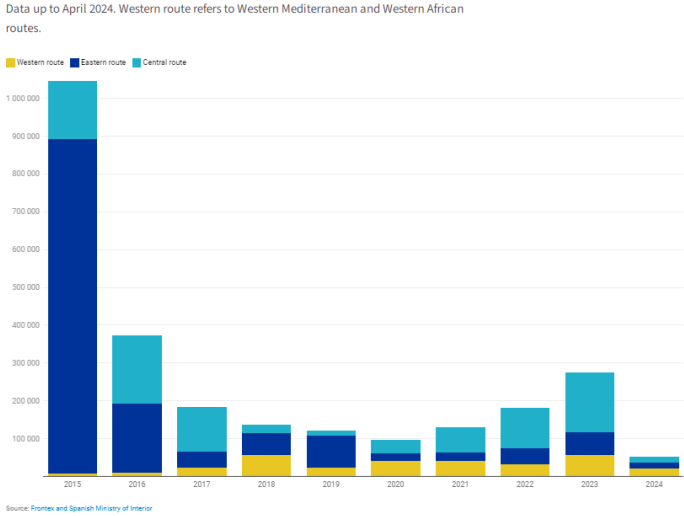
Tremendous efforts have been devoted to rebuilding the areas impacted by the earthquakes. Still, there is an urgent need for more international support for the recovery effort with humanitarian organizations experiencing huge funding shortfalls. Syrian humanitarian staff are also facing difficulties obtaining or renewing their residency and work permits, with profound repercussions for humanitarian operations in the region.

**C. Field visit(s) focussing on irregular migration along the Western Mediterranean and Western African/North Atlantic routes**

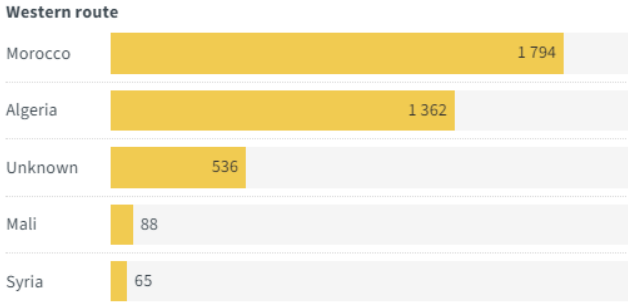
The Committee plans to visit Morocco in September, together with the OSCE PA Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs Pascal Allizard, to learn more about Moroccan migration governance. A National Strategy on Immigration and Asylum was adopted in 2013. Special attention is also being devoted to the regularisation of sub-Saharan African migrants. The EU is funding migration-related measures including border control through a number of instruments.

Morocco is the only African country to share a land border with the EU by virtue of the two autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla that are surrounded by Moroccan territory. Morocco thus plays a key role in preventing irregular migration to the EU through Spain along the Western Mediterranean route (via Ceuta and Melilla) and the Western African/North Atlantic route (via the Canary Islands).

Yearly irregular arrivals (2015-2024)



**Top Nationalities on the Western Route (Western Mediterranean + Western African)**



Source: Frontex

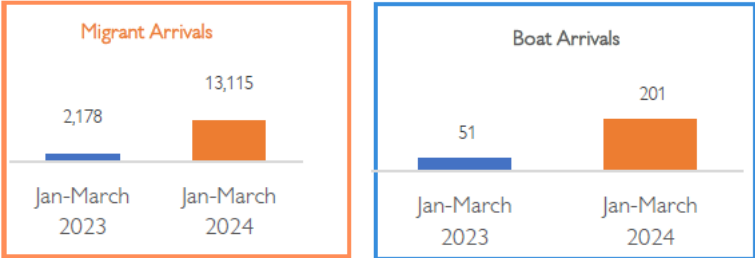
Source: Frontex, at: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/migration-flows-to-europe/>, accessed 17 June 2024.

In 2023, Morocco reportedly stopped over 75,000 people from entering Europe, a 6 per cent increase in interceptions compared to the previous year.

Attempts to cross into the autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla in 2023 were down 62 per cent compared to 2022 due to enhanced security measures implemented by Moroccan and Spanish authorities around the enclaves.

At the same time, tighter surveillance of Morocco’s northern borders has been accompanied by an increase in the number of migrants attempting the riskier and longer North Atlantic route from the West Coast of Africa to the Canary Islands. This increase is believed to be primarily driven by foreign rather than Moroccan migrants. Smuggling networks have countered the increased law enforcement efforts by shifting departure points and migrant hiding locations, and expanding their use of simultaneous departure operations to overwhelm security forces and reduce interception risks.

Irregular Movements to the Canary Islands



Source: IOM, Irregular Migration Routes to Europe, Western Africa –Atlantic Route, January – March 2024.

Thus, overall, irregular migrant arrivals in Spain almost doubled in 2023 compared to the previous year: around 57,000 migrants entered Spain irregularly as arrivals on the Canary Islands in fragile boats from west Africa surged to record levels.<sup>6</sup> The Spanish government last year intensified its contacts with authorities in countries such as Senegal and Mauritania to try to reverse the trend. Spain also had to create additional emergency accommodation for migrants in military barracks, hotels and hostels across the country. The trend is continuing in 2024:

The Committee hopes to follow up with a visit to Spain at a later date.

<sup>6</sup> A total of 56,852 migrants illegally entered Spain by land or sea in 2023, the highest number since 2018, when 64,298 arrivals were registered, according to data of the Spanish Interior Ministry. The Canary Islands, which are situated around 100 km off Africa’s northwestern coast, accounted for the bulk of arrivals: 39,910 – up 154 per cent from a year earlier and surpassing the archipelago’s previous record of 2006 when 31,678 people arrived.

## **II. Policy Discussions: Implementation of the EU Migration and Asylum Pact**

The Committee has been following the final phases of the adoption of the EU's **Pact on Migration and Asylum**. On 14 May the European Council announced the final adoption of the Pact which is expected to result in a complete overhaul of the EU's asylum and migration system.<sup>7</sup> A total of ten legislative acts were adopted as part of this ambitious initiative. Member States have two years to put these laws into practice, with the assistance of the European Commission.

Of particular interest is the *Asylum Migration Management Regulation* which establishes a Voluntary Solidarity Mechanism which foresees the relocation of asylum seekers to pledging Member States for one year, primarily from Member States confronted with disembarkations. Committing Member States can contribute financially or in other ways if they are unable to fulfil their relocation pledges (e.g., by providing border guards or helping with the deployment of reception centres).

The *Asylum Procedures Regulation* which seeks to make asylum, return and border procedures quicker and more effective is also of particular interest.

The *Crisis and Force majeure Regulation* which seeks to ensure that the EU is prepared in the future to face situations of crisis, is another important component.

While opinions may be divided regarding the Pact and its many proposals, as we enter the implementation phase it is important that we, as parliamentarians, are well informed about the wide-ranging impacts which it will have. These are complex proposals which the Committee looks forward to discussing in the near future with the key stakeholders in Brussels – either in person or online –with a view to better understanding the implications, achievements and challenges which lay ahead.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2024/05/14/the-council-adopts-the-eu-s-pact-on-migration-and-asylum/>.

### III. Other main migration-related developments in the OSCE Region

#### A. Ukraine Refugee Situation

While our recent activities have mostly focussed on the Mediterranean region, the Committee continues to monitor the situation of Ukrainian refugees throughout the OSCE region. The number of Ukrainian refugees globally has grown to over 6.5 million, including nearly 6 million in Europe. There were furthermore 3,548,000 IDPs within Ukraine.<sup>8</sup>

#### Refugees from Ukraine recorded in Europe<sup>1</sup>

**5,996,500**

Last updated 13 June 2024 - Source: UNHCR collation of statistics made available by the authorities

#### Refugees from Ukraine recorded beyond Europe<sup>2</sup>

**558,300**

Last updated 13 June 2024 - Source: UNHCR collation of statistics made available by the authorities

#### Refugees from Ukraine recorded globally

**6,554,800**

Last updated 13 June 2024 - Source: UNHCR collation of statistics made available by the authorities

REFUGEES FROM UKRAINE ACROSS EUROPE (as of 15 May 2024)



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.  
\*Serbia and Kosovo (S/RES/1244 [1999]) Source: UNHCR Regional Bureau for Europe

The majority of refugees from Ukraine are registered for asylum, Temporary Protection, or similar national protection schemes in a hosting country in Europe. The European Council has recently announced the intention to extend the Temporary Protection Directive, which was triggered in March 2022 and was due to run until 4 March 2025, by another year, until 4 March 2026.

According to a recent survey, despite a predominantly vulnerable population profile (35 per cent of families consist of a single adult woman with dependents),<sup>9</sup> labour

<sup>8</sup> IDP data as of April 2024. UNHCR, Ukraine Situation Flash Update #70, 13 June 2024, at: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/109336>.

<sup>9</sup> Approximately 80 per cent of refugees are women and children and 15 per cent of households have an elderly person over the age of 60. There are other vulnerable and marginalized populations

force participation rates among Ukrainian refugees are comparable to those of host country nationals.<sup>10</sup> However, unemployment rates remain alarmingly high at 14 per cent. Additionally, gender gaps are prominent in refugee households in terms of poverty and employment. The same holds true for households that contain members with disabilities. Overall, refugee households from Ukraine are facing a high degree of economic vulnerability, with half of them falling below the poverty line based on reported income. At the same time, if accommodation support (provided either via host governments, local homeowners, or other arrangements) is factored in as an indirect source of income, the poverty rate is reduced to 32 per cent, demonstrating the importance of such interventions. Based on these findings, the following recommendations have been issued by the organizations participating in the Regional Refugee Response for Ukraine:<sup>11</sup>

- Any transitions from subsidized accommodations are handled with extreme care. Almost 20 per cent of all refugee households depend on this aid to stay out of poverty;
- Labor market inclusion efforts continue and interventions target the removal of the most commonly reported barriers (local language proficiency, lack of decent work opportunities, a mismatch in skills);
- A special focus is put on addressing the needs of female only led households or members with disabilities. Both groups are more likely to find themselves below the poverty line.

In some cases, the capacity of countries' health systems has been able to accommodate and meet the needs of both refugees and host communities. In others, the refugee situation has revealed and exacerbated underlying gaps in health systems and unmet needs remain. Additionally, host communities'<sup>12</sup> perceptions of Ukrainian refugees have shifted now that it has been more than two years since the start of the crisis, with some refugee-hosting country nationals

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among refugee populations in hosting countries, including persons with disabilities, stateless persons, sexual and gender diverse minorities, and ethnic minorities.

<sup>10</sup> The countries surveyed were the following: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, and Slovakia. Regional Refugee Response for the Ukraine Situation, Helping Hands: The Role of Housing Support and Employment Facilitation in Economic Vulnerability of Refugees from Ukraine – An Interagency Exploration of Socioeconomic Data, April 2024, at: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/108068>, accessed 18 June 2024.

<sup>11</sup> UNHCR, UNICEF, IOM, UNDP, UN Women. Regional Refugee Response for the Ukraine Situation, Helping Hands: The Role of Housing Support and Employment Facilitation in Economic Vulnerability of Refugees from Ukraine – An Interagency Exploration of Socioeconomic Data, April 2024, at: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/108068>, accessed 18 June 2024.

<sup>12</sup> The countries surveyed were the following: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, and Slovakia. Regional Refugee Response for the Ukraine Situation, Navigating Health and Well-Being Challenges for Refugees from Ukraine – An Interagency Exploration of Data, May 2024, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/108629>, accessed 18 June 2024.

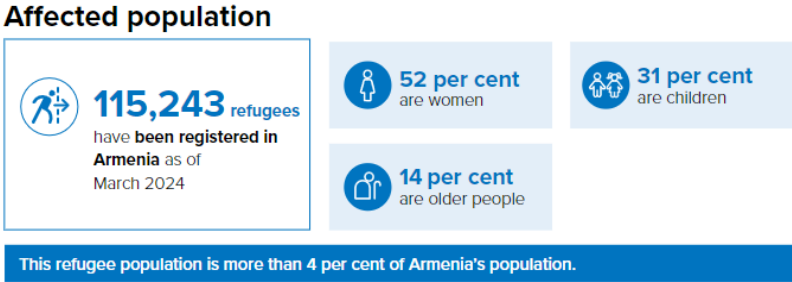
expressing discriminatory rhetoric towards refugees or perceived differences in provision and quality of health services.<sup>13</sup>

More than two years of war have taken a huge toll on the children of Ukraine. In the current academic year, nearly one million children – a quarter of all Ukrainian children enrolled in school – have been unable to attend in-person learning. Children with disabilities or special educational needs have been particularly affected. Frequent air raid alarms and power outages have further disrupted their education, leading to significant learning losses and long-term implications for their development.<sup>14</sup>

The Ad Hoc Committee on Migration will continue to raise these issues and promote the sharing of best practice when it comes to promoting durable solutions with respect to Ukrainian refugees. As a Member of the OSCE PA Parliamentary Support Team for Ukraine, I will also continue to advocate for support for displaced Ukrainians within and beyond the borders of Ukraine.

### B. Refugees in Armenia

According to UNHCR, since September 2023, over 115,257 refugees (as of May 2024) have arrived in Armenia from the Karabakh region of Azerbaijan who are in urgent need of protection and support.<sup>15</sup>



Source: UNHCR, Armenia Emergency Six-Month Impact Report, September 2023 – March 2024.

They have been recognised as Refugee under the Temporary Protection regime of the Law on Refugees and Asylum (2008) of the Republic of Armenia. Temporary protection has been granted for a duration of one year, beginning 28 October 2023, with the possibility of extension based on the Government’s decision. Thus far, 91,479 have been issued with refugee documentation and 1,855 have applied for naturalisation.

<sup>13</sup> Regional Refugee Response for the Ukraine Situation, Navigating Health and Well-Being Challenges for Refugees from Ukraine – An Interagency Exploration of Data, May 2024, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/108629>, accessed 18 June 2024.

<sup>14</sup> UNHCR, Ukraine Situation Flash Update #70, 13 June 2024, at: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/109336>.

<sup>15</sup> UNHCR, Armenia Refugee Situation Population Factsheet May 2024, at: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/109134>.

As the number of arrivals to Armenia has stabilized and contributions from donors have been received, many of refugees' most immediate needs have been met. However, longer-term needs include stable accommodation, regular utility costs and tailored services for people with disabilities and other people with specific needs. The top priority needs remain access to affordable housing, employment opportunities and healthcare support. UNHCR has also stressed the critical importance of continuing cash assistance for the most vulnerable refugee families continues so that they can pay rent and utilities.<sup>16</sup> Longer-term psychosocial support is also essential.

### **C. Situation along other irregular migration routes**

Tensions are again on the rise along the EU's external borders with Belarus, notably with Poland and also Lithuania. Since 2021, Belarus President Lukashenko has been accused of 'weaponising' migrants by encouraging them to seek to enter the EU illegally through Belarus' border with Poland, Lithuania and Latvia. Pushbacks have also been regularly documented as migrants are being pushed back and forth. Irregular crossings were again on the rise at the so-called Eastern land border, with 4,451 irregular crossings so far, almost double compared to the same period last year. This increase, while notable, still represents the least active migratory path into the EU among the major routes. However, recent trends suggest that the Eastern Land route is becoming more active.

On 13 June 2024, Poland reintroduced restrictions on movement along parts of its 400 km border with Belarus due to increased migration pressure and instances of violence against Polish security officials. Polish officials have stated that the purpose of this buffer zone is to ensure the safety of outsiders and of border guards, soldiers and police. It also seeks to limit the activities of migrant smugglers. Human rights activists have criticised this move as it limits their ability to provide medical and other assistance to migrants.

### **D. Developments in other regions of the OSCE**

It is important keep in mind that Europe is not the only region facing grappling with irregular migration. At the beginning of June 2024, the situation on the US-Mexico border was again in focus as US President Biden issued an executive order to temporarily suspend the processing of most asylum claims at the southern border when the seven-day average of unauthorized crossings exceeds 2,500. There will be some exceptions, notably for persons facing a credible fear of prosecution or torture, victims of trafficking, and unaccompanied minors.

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<sup>16</sup> UNHCR, Armenia Emergency Six-Month Impact Report, September 2023 – March 2024.

This measure was justified by the increase in attempted crossings. Yet it raises questions not only concerning its legality not only in terms of international human rights and refugee law which guarantees the right to seek asylum, but also US law. It also raises questions as to how Mexico and local communities will be able to cope with increasing numbers of migrants, a large share of whom are vulnerable migrants (families, and to a lesser extent, unaccompanied minors). The situation at the US-Mexico border is yet another stark reminder of the need to address the root causes of forced migration.

#### **IV. Cooperation with the OSCE and Institutions and relevant International Organizations**

At our last meeting on the sidelines of the Winter Meeting in Vienna I invited the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, Dr. Kari Johnstone, to highlight the role which parliamentarians can play in preventing and combating trafficking in human beings in the context of irregular migration. We also held a follow-up online meeting with Dr. Johnstone and UNHCR representatives on 15 March to share our observations from the visit to Lampedusa. The discussion focused on the possible linkages between trafficking in human beings and human smuggling, and cases where migrants who have been smuggled might fall prey to traffickers and be compelled to engage in migrant smuggling in turn. The importance of early victim identification and protection was highlighted, with Dr. Johnstone underlining the need for co-ordination on the ground between governments, NGOs, and international organizations for effective victim identification and prosecution of traffickers and smugglers. She thus called upon parliamentarians to urge their governments to give civil society organizations access to people on the move as they are inherently less likely to trust officials and share their experience of trafficking. Other points raised during this meeting included the need enhance legal pathways for migrants and the possible human rights implications of the agreements between the European Union and North African countries such as Libya and Tunisia. The EU Migration Pact and its potential impact on anti-trafficking policies were also discussed.

At our meeting in Bucharest on 30 June we have invited a migration expert, Dr. Guido Tintori, currently at the office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, to share his views on how to ensure that migration policies are based on sound evidence and data. He will also share the key takeaways of a recently completed OSCE project funded by the EU which aims to enhance strategic communication on migration. We will also discuss how to better capture data on the irregular migrant populations of OSCE participating States.

On 3 April, we organized an online policy discussion on the topic of addressing mixed migration movements across the Central Mediterranean with the participation of Vincent Cochetel, UNHCR Special Envoy for the Central Mediterranean Situation, and Mr. Stefan Maier, Head of Policy and Legal Support

Unit, UNHCR Representation for EU Affairs. Mr. Cochetel provided a comprehensive overview of recent dynamics along the Central Mediterranean route, highlighting protection needs with a focus on vulnerable categories. He drew attention to ongoing conflicts in Africa while underlining that the majority of displacement is expected to remain within Africa, particularly in the coastal countries of West Africa rather than in North Africa. This nuanced perspective showed the broader context of migration dynamics, cautioning against oversimplifying migration as solely a European concern and emphasizing the need for comprehensive regional responses to address the root causes. The low implementation rate of returns due to the lack of repatriation agreements with a number of countries of origin was also mentioned as a significant obstacle for effective asylum systems. A substantive part of our discussions was also focussed on EU partnerships with Third Countries such as Libya, Tunisia and Egypt and concerns due to the lack of comprehensive asylum legislation and widespread human rights violations. The need to develop effective protection systems including mechanisms to monitor the situation of migrants and asylum seekers in these countries, as well as the need to provide more legal pathways for migration were also emphasized.

We will continue to regularly engage with the OSCE and its Institutions as well as with representatives of UNHCR, IOM as well as international and local NGOs where relevant in connection with our field visits.

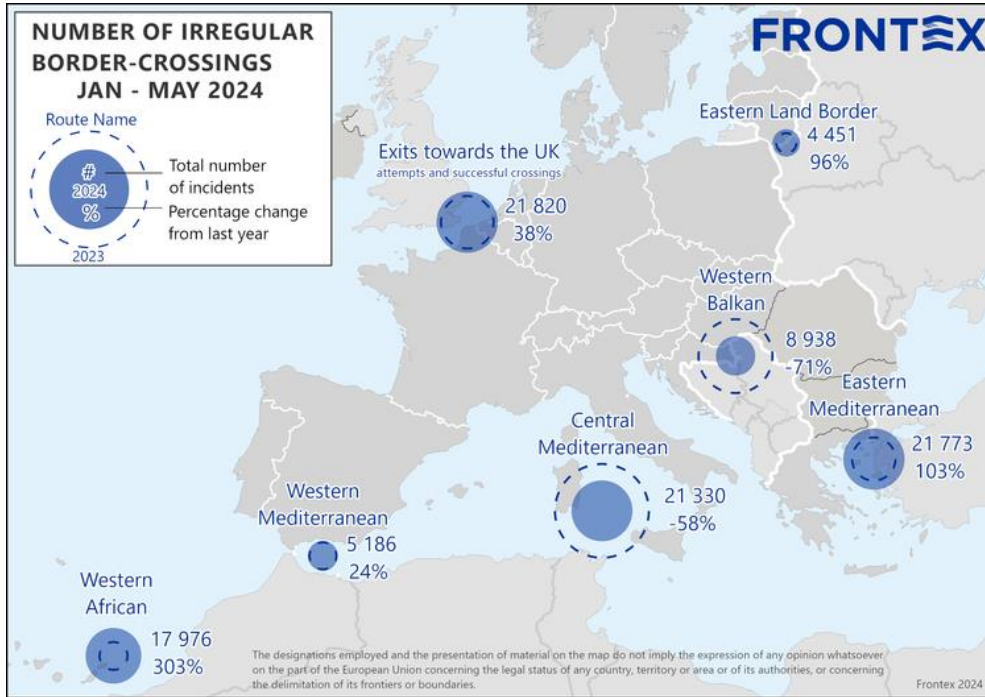
As mentioned above, the Committee also plans to engage with the European Commission, the European Parliament and other key stakeholders in the coming months to discuss implementation of the EU Asylum and Migration Pact.

## **V. Next Steps**

Our Committee will meet here in Bucharest on 30 June to discuss the recent field visits and put together a draft work plan for the coming year. I also hope that the draft resolution on “Strengthening Safe and Regular Pathways for Migration” which I have put forth will inspire good discussion on how we can enhance migration management in the OSCE region to make it more effective and humane but also more forward-looking and resilient, without losing sight of the individuals behind the statistics.

Thank you for your attention.

# ANNEX I



ROUTE	MAY 2024	JAN-MAY 2024	JAN-MAY 2024/JAN-MAY 2024	TOP NATIONALITIES (JAN-MAY 2024)
Central Mediterranean	5 125	21 330	-58%	Bangladesh, Syria, Tunisia
Eastern Mediterranean	4 160	21 773	+103%	Syria, Afghanistan, Egypt
Western African	2 100	17 976	+303%	Mali, Senegal, Mauritania
Western Balkan	1 654	8 938	-71%	Syria, Türkiye, Afghanistan
Western Mediterranean	922	5 186	+24%	Algeria, Morocco, Mali
Eastern Land Border	1 552	4 451	+96%	Ukraine, Somalia, Ethiopia
Exits towards the UK	4 569	21 820	+38%	Afghanistan, Vietnam, Iran

## **ANNEX II**

### **OSCE PA Ad Hoc Committee on Migration**

#### **A. Mandate**

The Ad Hoc Committee on Migration was established following the unanimous decision of the OSCE PA Standing Committee on 25 February 2016 in Vienna. Its mandate is defined as follows:

- Serve as a focal point for the OSCE PA's work in the field of migration in all three dimensions of the OSCE: political and security questions; economic issues; and human rights and humanitarian questions; and report back to the President and the Standing Committee;
- Develop policy recommendations aimed at enhancing OSCE work in the field of migration and at improving the treatment of, and prospects for, migrants in OSCE countries;
- Promote discussion within the Assembly on issues related to migration, and promote parliamentary exchanges of best practice in these fields;
- Work closely with the OSCE Secretariat and Institutions as well as with relevant outside actors on issues related to migration to promote the understanding among the members of the Assembly of the importance of the work done in this field.

#### **B. Membership (as of 16 June 2024)**

1. Chair: Ms. Daniela DE RIDDER (Germany), OSCE PA Vice-President
2. Lord Alfred DUBS (United Kingdom), Vice-Chair
3. Mr. Kyriakos HADJIYIANNI (Cyprus), Vice-Chair, OSCE PA Vice-President
4. Ms. Farah KARIMI (The Netherlands), Vice-Chair
5. Ms. Gudrun KUGLER (Austria), Vice-Chair
6. Mr. Alessandro ALFIERI (Italy)
7. Mr. Jan BAUER (Czechia)
8. Ms. Canan BAYRAM (Germany)
9. Mr. Malik BEN ACHOUR (Belgium)
10. Ms. Valérie BOYER (France)
11. Mr. Johan BÜSER (Sweden)
12. Mr. Kemal ÇELİK (Türkiye)
13. Mr. Fabrizio COMBA (Italy)
14. Mr. Halis DALKILIÇ (Türkiye)
15. Ms. Hedy FRY (Canada)
16. Ms. Sheila JACKSON LEE (United States of America)
17. Mr. Kristian KLINCK (Germany)
18. Mr. Dimitrios MARKOPOULOS (Greece)
19. Ms. Gwen MOORE (United States of America)
20. Ms. Lucie POTŮČKOVÁ (Czechia)
21. Ms. Özgül SAKI (Türkiye)

22. Mr. David STÖGMÜLLER (Austria)

**ANNEX III**

**Implemented Activities 2023/2024**

**A. Implemented Activities (September – July 2024)**

12 October	Warsaw	Participation of the new Chair, Dr. Daniela De Ridder, OSCE PA Vice-President, in the <b>2023 Human Dimension Conference</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Remarks in Plenary Session VIII on Humanitarian Issues</li> <li>- Coordination meeting with ODIHR (Ms. Tea Jaliashvili, First Deputy Director; Ms. Julia Gebhard, Deputy Head, Democratization Department; and Ms. Alice Szczepanikova, Migration and Freedom of Movement Advisor, Democratization Department)</li> </ul>
3 November, 16:00-17:15 CET	<i>online</i>	<b>Meeting</b> of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration to discuss priorities and upcoming activities, incl. a presentation by the UNHCR Representative in Armenia Kavita Belani on the situation of refugees in Armenia.
9 November, 17:00-18:30 CET	<i>online</i>	<b>Panel discussion</b> on “ <i>Best practices and challenges regarding the sponsorship of refugees and the integration and settlement of newcomers to Canada</i> ”
10 November, 12:00-13:00 CET	<i>online</i>	<b>Co-ordination call with ODIHR</b> to discuss synergies and cooperation (Ms. Tea Jaliashvili, First Deputy Director; Ms. Alice Szczepanikova and Ms. Lola Girard, Migration and Freedom of Movement Advisors, Democratization Department; and Dr. Guido Tintori, Economic Affairs Officer, Economic Governance Unit, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (EEA))
18-20 November	Yerevan	<b>21<sup>st</sup> OSCE PA Autumn Meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Report of the Chair</b> to the Standing Committee (18 November)</li> <li>- <b>Meeting</b> of the Committee (19 November, 12:15-13:15), including a short report by President Pia Kauma and Special Representative on South Caucasus Kari Henriksen on their visit to the South Caucasus</li> <li>- <b>Statement of the Chair</b> to the OSCE PA Mediterranean Forum (20 November)</li> </ul>
18 December	<i>online</i>	<b>Statement</b> on the occasion of International Migrants Day
18 December	<i>online</i>	<b>Co-ordination call</b> with Mr. Guido Tintori, Economic Affairs Officer, Economic Governance Unit, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (EEA)
2024		
22-23 February	Vienna	<b>23rd OSCE PA Winter Meeting</b>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Meeting</b> of the Committee (22 February, 13:15-14:15), incl. remarks by the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings Dr. Kari Johnstone</li> <li>- <b>Report of the Chair</b> to the Joint Session of the Three General Committees (23 February)</li> </ul>
5-8 March	Rome, Lampedusa	<b>Field Visit to Italy (Rome, Lampedusa)</b> , together with OSCE PA Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime Eugenio Zoffili and OSCE PA President Pia Kauma
15 March	<i>online</i>	<p><b>Meeting</b> of the Committee with a focus on combatting trafficking in human beings in mixed migration flows with a focus on the Central Mediterranean, with the participation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dr. Kari Johnstone, OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings</li> <li>- Dr. Kari Johnstone</li> <li>- Mr. Dejan Kladarin, Head of the UNHCR Vienna Liaison Office, and Ms. Giulia Paglione, UNHCR Italy</li> <li>- <b>Debrief</b> on the visit to Lampedusa</li> </ul>
3 April	<i>online</i>	<b>Policy discussion:</b> “Addressing mixed migration movements across the Central Mediterranean” with the participation of Mr. Vincent Cochetel, UNHCR Special Envoy for the Central Mediterranean Situation, and Mr. Mr. Stefan MAIER, Head of Policy and Legal Support Unit, UNHCR Representation for EU Affairs
13 May	<i>online</i>	<b>Preparatory briefing</b> in advance of the Field Visit to Türkiye with the participation of representatives of UNHCR and IOM.
20-23 May	Ankara, Adana, Gaziantep	<b>Field Visit to Türkiye</b> to follow up on irregular migration flows across the Eastern Mediterranean, and the impact of the February 2023 earthquakes, including visits to Sarıçam Temporary Accommodation Centre in Adana and İslahiye 3 Living Space in Gaziantep Province.
14 June	<i>online</i>	<b>Co-ordination call with</b> Dr. Guido Tintori, Economic Affairs Officer, Economic Governance Unit, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (EEA), to prepare for the meeting of the Committee in Bucharest and to discuss further collaboration.
20 June	<i>online</i>	<b>Statement</b> on the occasion of World Refugee Day
29 June – 3 July	Bucharest	<p><b>31<sup>st</sup> Annual Session</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report of the Chair (Plenary, 2 July 2024)</li> <li>• Meeting of the Committee (30 June 2024, 14:30-16:00)</li> <li>• Discussion of the Supplementary Item “Strengthening Safe and Regular Pathways for Migration”</li> </ul>

**B. Upcoming Activities (August 2024 – June 2025)**

Week of 16-20 September (exact dates tbd)	Rabat, Tangier (tbc)	<b>Field Visit to Morocco</b> , together with the OSCE PA Special Representative on Mediterranean Affairs Pascal Allizard
2-4 October	Dublin	<b>22<sup>nd</sup> OSCE PA Autumn Meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting of the Committee (date tbd)</li> <li>• Remarks of the Chair in Session III on “Enhancing migration governance in the OSCE region to foster sustainable development”</li> <li>• Mediterranean Forum</li> </ul>
November/December	<i>online</i>	<b>Policy discussion</b>
18 December	<i>online</i>	<b>Statement</b> on the occasion of International Migrants Day
Spring	tbd	<b>Field Visit</b>
20 June	<i>online</i>	<b>Statement</b> on the occasion of World Refugee Day
June/July	Porto	32 <sup>nd</sup> Annual Session