Migration Update

May 2022

The purpose of these news summaries is to provide a factual base for migration debates within the European centre-right. Vít Novotný is responsible for the selection of information items from the media, governments and social media. The value of these summaries is in the categorisation of information items and in listing those items that readers might have missed. Facts and opinions are conveyed as they are reported. Original comments are kept to a minimum.

These news summaries are not subject to a formal editorial process. Should you have any questions or comments, please contact Vít Novotný at vn@martenscentre.eu

According to UNHCR data from 29 May, 6,801,987 people have left Ukraine since 24 February. As part of this figure, the Russian authorities have deported at least one million people from Ukraine to Russia.

According to Ukraine's border force, between 25,000 and 30,000 people are returning to Ukraine each day.

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UKRAINE

According to the UNHCR, almost **half the refugees** who fled from Ukraine to neighbouring countries have since moved on to other European nations. **Germany, Italy and Czechia** are the most common destinations.

According to an ILO report, in addition to Ukrainians, **208,000 non-EU nationals** have fled **from Ukraine** to neighbouring countries, including between 37,000 and 60,900 undocumented migrant workers, and around 61,000 students.

Frontex reported that 'Polish and Romanian border sections continue to be the most affected' among the eastern frontline states welcoming Ukrainian refugees. By 17 May, **3,437,155 crossed the Ukraine-Poland border and 1,238,258 crossed the Moldova-Romania border**.

Italian services are warning that the country risks being hit by an 'extraordinary flow of arrivals… "Four hundred thousand," confirms a member of the [government].' This would come as a direct result of the Russian blockage of grain exports from Ukraine. Larger than usual numbers are already arriving to Italy from **Egypt, Bangladesh, and Tunisia**.

Frontex
On 4 May, Frontex reported that:

- 'there are currently **520 standing corps officers** working along the eastern [EU] border from Finland to Romania. This includes 362 officers working at the EU-Ukraine borders'.
- see the breakdown of officer numbers by country here.
- to support Moldova […] Frontex deployed **73 officers to help Moldovan authorities**.
- Frontex supported the organisation of **16 humanitarian return flights** helping 722 non-EU citizens fleeing the war. This included 698 people on four charter flights and 24 people who returned via 12 scheduled flights. Humanitarian voluntary return flights were carried out from Poland to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in cooperation with the relevant embassies.

Temporary protection
Complete data on **registrations for temporary protection** continues to be unavailable.

- In the second week of May, the Swedish government published a breakdown of registrations by country. Several countries are missing from the breakdown. Data on **Belgium** are here.
- On 31 May, the European Commission launched an 'EU platform for registration of people enjoying temporary protection or adequate protection under national law.' The platform does not appear to be public.

Reports are multiplying of Hungarian officials offering no assistance to Ukrainian refugees and, instead, directing them to other countries, especially Czechia.

- According to *Hospodářské noviny*, this includes people of Roma origin from Ukraine who tend to speak only Hungarian and in many cases possess double **Ukrainian-Hungarian citizenship**. Hungarian officials tend to ignore the refugees' Hungarian passports whose possession disqualifies the refugees from temporary protection. In addition, the officials do not stamp the refugees' Ukrainian passports as having entered the territory of Hungary.
- *EurActiv.cz* reported that 'international trains on the Warsaw-Prague-Bratislava-Budapest line have become a new "home" of Roma refugees from Ukraine. Not one country wants to take care of them, and is instead throwing them around like a "hot potato". Bratislava reportedly provides food and accommodation for one night to anyone who comes from Ukraine, including those without a passport. Then people have to register and find accommodation locally, which is a problem, because not many owners agree to let to Roma families. In response, some NGOs are reportedly transporting Roma families to Germany.'
- As of 16 May, Czechia began requiring applicants seeking temporary protection to show a stamp on their passports proving they crossed the Ukrainian border.

In Czechia, reports are emerging of some regional registration centres refusing to register Ukrainian Roma for temporary protection. Part of the problem seems to be in the inability to verify the identity of the people concerned.

Employment
Out of 345,000 registered Ukrainians in Czechia, some **50,000 have found jobs** by mid-May. According to the labour ministry, "Ukrainian refugees most often take up positions in manufacturing, construction, services or transport. Most of these are long-term vacancies."

'Unequal treatment'
Reports are emerging from across the EU of 'unequal treatment' of Ukrainian versus other refugees.

Deportations to Russia
Lyudmila Denisova, the Verkhovna Rada Commissioner for Human Rights (Omudswoman), stated at the beginning of May that the Russian forces had **deported to Russia some 1 million Ukrainian citizens**, of which 182 thousand were children. "They are distributed throughout Russia, especially to poor regions, to help develop the economy."

- According to one observer, figures reported by the Russian government appear in UNHCR statistics as refugees.

Russia also claimed it had "evacuated" one million people from the war zone. The *i* magazine reported that "There is ample evidence that thousands of Ukrainians were taken to Russia under duress."

- The sites for accommodation identified by *i* by cross-checking local news reports with Russian mapping websites are known in Russia as Temporary Accommodation Points (TAP). They include dozens of sanatoriums and former children's wilderness camps, at least one "patriotic education" centre and even a former chemical weapons dump. They stretch across the vast Russian Steppes and **across 11 time zones** over the Ural Mountains from Belgorod in the west to the remote Kamchatka Peninsula on the edge of the Pacific Ocean and Vladivostok at the end of the Trans-Siberian railroad.
- In mid-April, Lyudmyla Denisova, the Ukrainian human rights ombudsman, [encouraged](#) her compatriots who had been forcibly sent to Russia to leave Russia via Narva, a town on the Russian border in **north-western Estonia.** [It was not clear how free the forcibly evacuated were free to do so.]

Public opinion
[According to](#) the Eurobarometer poll, 55% of surveyed Europeans fully approve welcoming Ukrainians fleeing the war and 34% tend to approve. 6% tend to disapprove and 3% fully disapprove.

RUSSIA
[According to](#) official data, in the first quarter of 2022, **3,880,679 Russian citizens left the country.**

- Most left for partially recognised **Abkhazia** (744,548, compared to 789,330 in the same period last year).
- 204,947 persons travelled to **Kazakhstan** (122,330 last year).
- 134,129 persons to **Armenia**, three times more than for the first four months of 2021 (44,586).
- 125,426 [travelled](#) to **Estonia**.

The above data [does not show](#) how many people returned to Russia in the same period.

The number of Russians who were in **Georgia** in March 2022 increased by 559% compared to March 2019. This is according to a study by the Georgian non-governmental organisation IDFI.

FRONTEX
On 29 April, the European Commission [took note](#) of 'the **resignation** with immediate effect of the **Executive Director** of the European Border and Coastguard Agency (Frontex), Fabrice Leggeri. As the most senior Deputy Executive Director of Frontex, **Aija Kalnaja** will deputise and assume the lead of the Agency with immediate effect. To ensure full continuity of the agency, the Commission will proceed quickly with recruitment and appointment of a new Executive Director.'

- Leggeri's resignation [followed](#) the 'European Anti-Fraud Office's (OLAF) investigations against three staff members of Frontex including the Agency's Executive Director'.

Switzerland

71.5 per cent of Swiss voters showed their support for **the increase of the financial contribution** of Switzerland to Frontex in a referendum held on 15 May.

- The referendum was organised after over 62,000 signatures were collected by Swiss parties and NGOs in a bid to prevent the increase of Switzerland's contribution to Frontex from CHF24 million in 2021 to CHF61 million in 2027.

SMUGGLING

The Austrian police charged 205 people with smuggling. In the course of a year and a half, the **group smuggled over 36,000 people**, mostly Syrians, from Hungary to Austria and then through Czechia to Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and France.

SCHENGEN

Following the adoption of its Schengen Strategy in June 2021, the European Commission presented on 24 May three reports concerning the Schengen area.

1. State of Schengen Report

The first State of Schengen Report 'is the starting point for the new annual Schengen cycle. The cycle provides for a regular 'health-check' on Schengen… The report sets a list of priority actions for 2022-2023 that are to be addressed at both national and European level such as:

- implementing the new IT architecture and interoperability for border management,
- making full use of cross-border cooperation tools,
- ensuring systematic checks at the external borders of all travellers,
- ensuring that Frontex reaches the full potential of its mandate,
- lifting all long-lasting internal border controls, and
- adopting the revised Schengen Borders Code.

The report also reminds of the importance of completing the Schengen area and calls upon the Council to adopt the decisions to allow **Croatia**, as well as **Romania and Bulgaria** to formally become a part of it, in view of the fact that all criteria have been fulfilled. The same will apply to **Cyprus** once it has successfully completed the Schengen evaluation process.'

2. Consultation document on the European Integrated Border Management

A policy document, starting a consultation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the development of the multiannual strategic policy to steer European Integrated Border Management.

- This launches the multiannual strategic policy cycle for European Integrated Border Management, which will guide how all the actors within the European Border and Coast Guard operate over the next five years.

    3.   **Report on systematic border checks at the EU external borders**

Report on systematic border checks at the EU external borders, as required by Article 8(2) of the Schengen Borders Code.

- This measure was intended to strengthen the EU's internal security following findings that EU citizens were among foreign terrorist fighters returning to the EU. The report to the European Parliament and the Council analyses the implementation and impact of these systematic checks.

TURKEY

- Tensions in Turkey are rising over the presence of Syrian and other refugees. According to *FT*, 'it is no coincidence that the fears over refugees are mounting against the backdrop of a troubled economy. Inflation in Turkey reached an official rate of 70 per cent in April. The forthcoming elections have added to the charged atmosphere — and refugees have presented an easy target for politicians jostling for votes.'

Turkish forces rescued 17 migrants off coast of Misrata, **Libya**.

- Under a security cooperation agreement between Turkey and Libya, the Turkish defence ministry has been providing support and training to the Libyan Coast Guard since 2019.

SPAIN-MOROCCO

Statewatch reported that Spain and Morocco renewed 'security cooperation agreement linking organised crime and …. immigration'. [This agreement follows months of disagreements, including several extensive breaches of the physical barrier on the Morocco-Spanish border.]

LEBANON

Lebanese citizens are increasingly trying to escape the crisis-torn country **by boat** with the assistance of smugglers.

YEMEN-ETHIOPIA

The IOM resumed its Voluntary Humanitarian Return operations from Yemen to Ethiopia. More than 600 Ethiopian migrants – including 60 unaccompanied migrant children – have so far arrived in Addis Ababa from Aden on the first three VHR flights of the year.

JUDICIAL OBSERVATORY

Hungary infringed EU law by criminalising activities to initiate asylum procedures for people not fulfilling national criteria for granting that protection

On 16 November 2021, the CJEU ruled that Hungary infringed EU law. In 2018, Hungary amended certain laws concerning measures against illegal immigration and enacted provisions which, first, added a further ground of inadmissibility of an application for international protection and, second, criminalised organising activities facilitating the lodging of asylum applications by persons who are not entitled to asylum under Hungarian law, and which provided for restrictions on freedom of

movement on persons suspected of having committed such an offence. The court found that Hungary has failed to fulfil its obligations under the Procedures Directive by allowing an application for international protection to be rejected as inadmissible on the ground that the applicant arrived on its territory via a State in which that person was not exposed to persecution or a risk of serious harm, or in which a sufficient degree of protection is guaranteed.

- The Open Society Justice Initiative [welcomed](#) the ruling. The law was part of legislation dubbed the "Stop Soros" package by the Hungarian government, launched against the background of intense attacks on independent civil society groups in general, and on the Open Society Foundations and their founder George Soros in particular.

PUBLIC OPIONION

A Martens Centre [survey of 10 countries](#) found that between November/December 2021 and March 2022, the percentage of those who thought **migration was an important foreign threat declined from 25 to 14**.

- The question asked of the respondents was as follows: 'What do you regard as the two most important security threats coming from outside the EU'?

SELECT EXTERNAL PUBLICATIONS

L. Dražanová and J. Gonnot, *[Research on Public Attitudes to Migration: What, Where and by Who?](#)*, OPAM, Migration Policy Centre, May 2022

Statewatch and Transnational Institute, *[At what Cost? Funding the EU's Security, Defence, and Border Policies, 2021–2027](#)*, May 2022

N. Banulescu-Bogdan, *[From Fear to Solidarity: The Difficulty in Shifting Public Narratives about Refugees](#)*, Migration Policy Institute, May 2022

N. F. Tan, *[Externalisation of Asylum in Europe: Unpacking the UK-Rwanda Asylum Partnership Agreement](#)*, Odysseus Blog 17 May 2022

The Kiel Institute for the World Economy, *[Ukraine Support Tracker](#)*, this update 18 May 2022