

Migration Update

November 2024



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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. Arnaud Navarre wrote up the coverage of the Irish election campaign. Rainer Münz contributed a news item. Should you have any questions or comments, please contact Vít Novotný at vn@martenscentre.eu.

According to OECD's [International Migration Outlook 2024](#), **2023 set a historic new record** with 6.5 million new **permanent-type immigrants** in the OECD area. Most of the 2023 increase was driven by family migration (+16%), but humanitarian migration (+20%) was also on the rise.

- After an unprecedented increase in 2022, **temporary labour migration** [...] also continued to grow. More than 2.4 million work permits and authorisations were granted in OECD countries (excluding Poland) representing a 16% year-on-year increase.
- International **student flows** also continued to rise (+6.7%) to reach over 2.1 million new permits in 2023.
- The number of **new asylum** seekers... also broke a new record in 2023, with 2.7 million new applications registered (+30%). The surge was largely driven by the US.

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LABOUR MIGRATION

More [Polish companies](#) are choosing to **hire workers from outside the EU**, mainly from **Ukraine, Belarus and Asia**. Companies anticipate a further increase in the employment of foreigners. As many as 61 per cent of firms that already employ non-EU foreigners plan to increase their numbers in 2025. In some companies, migrants make up as much as 25 per cent of the total workforce. The report 'Migrants in

Polish companies. Employment Practices, Forecasts and Barriers' shows that the largest share of foreigners is found in large companies in the IT and communications sector, where the figure stands at 28 per cent. The logistics, transport and industrial production sectors also make intensive use of foreign labour.

- [According to](#) Andrzej Kubisiak of the Polish Economic Institute, in ten years' time, there will be a shortage of around 400,000 people to fill all positions. 'The Polish economy will no longer be able to benefit from the so-called demographic dividend [of the past decades], i.e., the relatively large human resources that fuelled consumption, ensured large tax revenues and the availability of cheap labour. These resources, on which Poland built its economic growth after 1989, will increasingly shrink. This should prompt us to redefine our economic model and steer it towards technology and innovation, or what is called the knowledge economy. Immigration and labour activation alone will not be enough to cope with the growing demographic collapse' [due to the collapsing birth rate].

Without immigration, the labour force in **Germany** will shrink by 10 per cent by 2040, [according to](#) a Bertelsmann study *Immigration and the labour market: An analysis for Germany and the federal states*. The authors of the study, Alexander Kubis and Lutz Schneider show in their projections that, without additional immigrants, the number of workers would fall from the current 46.4 million to 41.9 million by 2040 and to 35.1 million by 2060. In order to meet the needs of the future labour market and to prevent the labour force potential from collapsing, around **288,000 international workers** will be needed each year until 2040. Labour migration from non-EU countries, while it has increased in recent years, remains well below the projected needs, currently at a net inflow of only around 50,000 to 60,000 people a year.

ITALY-ALBANIA

The Italy-Albania deal continues to face legal obstacles.

On 9 November, an Italian navy ship *Libra* [brought](#) eight more migrants to the Gjadër reception centre in Albania. One member of the group, an Egyptian man, was [diagnosed](#) with psychological problems and was immediately transferred to Italy.

Following a [request by an Italian court for a preliminary CJEU ruling](#), detention of the remaining migrants [could not be 'validated'](#) within the required 48 hours. As a result, the Italian government had to transfer the seven people, five from Bangladesh and two from Egypt, to Italy. The lead judge responsible for the referral, Luciana Sangiovanni, stated in a note accompanying the decision, that the panel of judges judged a referral "the best course of action, rather than issuing another autonomous judgement." Although the Italian government had passed an emergency decree with "immediate effect" to prevent such a judicial action, the Italian judges said they believed it was up to the EU court system to evaluate whether or not Italian national law was compatible with current European rulings.

The Guardian [reported](#) on 24 November that 'dozens of Italian police officers and social workers deployed by Italy's... government in migrant centres in Albania **have returned home**, after it emerged that the facilities, praised as a model to reduce

refugee arrivals, have been empty for weeks. Just over a month after the much-publicised opening of the multimillion-euro detention centres for asylum seekers in Albania, which were supposed to receive up to 3,000 men a month, more than **50 police officers were moved back to Italy two weeks ago** while dozens of social workers have left over the weekend [of 23-24 November], with their presence in Albania considered “needless”.

- Also according to *The Guardian*, the government has said the centres in Albania “will remain open and operational” and that the transfers to Italy have been made according to staffing needs. [According to a diplomat familiar with the matter, another 220 Italian officers are remaining on site.]
- Since the opening on 11 October, only 24 asylum seekers have been sent to the centres in Albania. Five spent fewer than 12 hours in a detention centre, while the rest stayed for just over 48 hours.... All were transferred to Italy after Italian judges deemed it unlawful to detain them in Albania before repatriation to countries, such as Bangladesh and Egypt, considered “safe” by Rome.’

SCHENGEN

Austria, Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania [issued](#) a joint declaration on **the full accession of Bulgaria and Romania** to the Schengen zone. From the declaration:

- ‘... In comparing the first three quarters of 2023 and 2024, illegal entries in Bulgaria have gone down by 47 %, in Romania by 53 % and in Austria by 67 %. In the same time period, asylum applications in Bulgaria have decreased by 40 %, in Romania by 75 % and in Austria by 57,3 %...’
- ‘The Hungarian Council Presidency, Romania, Bulgaria and Austria have on 22 November 2024 jointly acknowledged the progress reached in reducing illegal migration ... and have together agreed to... do their utmost to prevent illegal onward transit of migrants through their countries and to smoothly conduct returns and transfers in accordance with the relevant agreements’;
- ‘to mitigate the potential change of migratory patterns that may arise as an immediate consequence of the absence of internal borders, **continue conducting internal border controls** ... in accordance with Art. 25a (4) and (5) of the Schengen Borders Code **at land borders between Hungary and Romania and Romania and Bulgaria for an initial period of at least six months** to prevent any serious threat to public policy or internal security’;
- ‘in the spirit of solidarity, continue supporting Bulgaria in protecting the EU external land border with Türkiye by **deploying a multilateral police** contingent of 100 border guards (Austria 15, Bulgaria 25, Hungary 20 and Romania 40)’.

By concluding and implementing this declaration, the parties agreed ‘to initiate the necessary steps for adoption of the formal Council decision on setting the date for the lifting of checks on persons at internal land borders with and between the Republic of Bulgaria and Romania, until the end of this year.’

IRELAND-UK

More than 2,000 people who arrived in Ireland illegally have been [issued deportation orders](#) so far this year, a 156% increase on the same period in 2023. However, only

129 of those people (just over 6%) are confirmed to have since left the state. The government has said it will begin chartered deportation flights in the coming months.

- Asylum applications in Ireland have risen by nearly 300% so far this year compared to the same period five years ago. A spike in arrivals from the UK has been driven by various factors, among these the UK's tougher stance post-Brexit, including the fear of deportations to Rwanda, as well as Ireland's relatively healthy economy.
- Tens of thousands of international protection applicants--some already with asylum status in Ireland, others waiting to be processed--have been sent to communities around the country, accommodated in hotels, former schools, apartments, even large tented camps.
- According to an Irish police officer, "If they don't have status to be in Ireland, we bring them to Dublin," he explains. "They're removed on a ferry back to the UK on the same day."

RUSSIA

[According to Die Welt](#), local police authorities in Russia have begun circulating images of raids on migrant workers, typically men from Central Asia. 'It doesn't matter whether they have done anything wrong, it's the picture that counts...When four Tajik IS assassins killed 145 people in March, the Putin regime radically tightened its approach to migration.'

- **It is nothing less than a departure from the steady liberalisation that the Kremlin had previously pursued....** Migrant workers have [now] become a welcome scapegoat for everything that goes wrong in Russia.
- Instead of economists, the...security elite are now in charge of migration policy.
- A nationwide ban on family reunification is being discussed.
- The Russian state is effectively legalising discrimination... Some high-ranking officials do not even shy away from openly racist statements: the police chief of Moscow Oblast said that his region must become "whiter" again. Constant raids and mass entry bans have even triggered diplomatic protests from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.
- The economy already lacks 4.8 million workers, according to the Institute of Economics of the Russian Academy of Sciences.... In the Krasnodar region, Russia's breadbasket, foreigners are no longer allowed to work in agriculture, which is causing acute staff shortages.
- See more [here](#).

NATIONAL ELECTIONS

Ireland

Ireland held an early general election on 29 November, with migration, asylum and security emerging as central campaign topics amid [the highest immigration numbers](#) in the country since 2007. **Fine Gael** (EPP) advocated for a 'fair, but firmer migration system'. The party proposed a [new contribution model](#) for asylum seekers. Asylum applicants, excluding those unable to work, would pay weekly charges for services. The party's [manifesto](#) reiterated the importance of the implementation of the New EU Pact on Migration and Asylum through a proposed International Protection Act that

provides clear timeframes and strong border security. **Fianna Fáil** (Renew) outlined in its [election manifesto](#) a commitment to deliver ‘a fair, efficient and sustainable’ model of accommodating asylum applicants, predominantly in state-owned accommodation. The party also said it would align efforts with other EU members. **Sin Féin** (The Left) [prioritised](#) setting up a new Immigration Management Agency with responsibility for processing enforcement, registration and accommodation. The party also aimed to end the current Accommodation Recognition Payment scheme for Ukrainian refugees. The **Green Party** (EGP) [programme](#) included facilitating family reunification by demanding the removal of minimum income requirements from all applications including spousal visas. Please find the result of the election [here](#).

MARTENS CENTRE PRODUCTION

T. Lavrelahsvili, *Confronting Europe’s Labour Shortage: A Strategic Blueprint to Attract Global Talent and Reverse Population Decline*, [Martens Centre](#), November 2024

SELECT EXTERNAL PUBLICATIONS

F. Caselli et al., *Migration into the EU: Stocktaking of Recent Developments and Macroeconomic Implications*, [International Monetary Fund](#), September 2024

A Knoll, *Mapping Legal Pathways: Horizontal Report (2024)*, [ICMPD](#), November 2024, [accompanied by a mapping of national pathways](#) by different authors.