

Migration Update

October 2025



Wilfried
Martens Centre
for European Studies

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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. Oleksandra Antypenko covered the Czech and Dutch elections. Rainer Münz supplied a news item. Should you have any questions or comments, please contact Vít Novotný at vn@martenscentre.eu.

- [According to](#) Eurostat figures cited by Politico, ‘**Italy** received 42,807 requests from other EU countries to readmit asylum seekers or take charge of their applications in 2024 but accepted just 60. **Greece** received 17,163 requests but accepted only 26.’

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UKRAINIANS

[According to](#) *Kyiv Post*, some European countries have started preparing financial aid for Ukrainians who choose to **voluntarily return**. Ireland is developing a new programme that could pay up to €2,500 for individuals and €10,000 to families. In Norway, refugees under collective protection receive about 17,500 kroner (\$1,500), while Sweden offers between 10,000 kroner (\$1,600) and 40,000 (\$6,400). Finland plans to provide up to €5,300.

DW [reported](#) that after the **government lifted the ban on Ukrainian men aged 18 to 22 leaving the country** at the end of August, the number of applications for temporary protection in **Germany** from this age group rose from around 100 to 1,000 per week... As of 4 October 2025, a total of 1,293,672 people who had fled to Germany since February 2022 were registered in the Central Register of Foreigners. However, it is not clear how many of them had already left Germany. At the end of September, there were about 450,000 migrants from Ukraine registered as 'not entitled to stay' in Germany.

For the same reason, **Czech** authorities are registering an [increase in applications](#) for temporary protection. Whereas the authorities issued an average of 1,500 temporary protections per week up until August, in September and early October the weekly average was 3,100. In September, 13,500 temporary protections were issued in Czechia, the highest monthly number this year. "[IM] Minister Rakušan emphasised that if this trend continues, we must also discuss changing the conditions for granting temporary protection." Currently 395,669 people with temporary protection reside in Czechia, of whom 121,930 are men aged 18 to 65. By mid-September, Czechia [granted](#) special EU protection status to the total of around 734,000 refugees.

SYRIANS

Syria [has seen](#) **1 million internationally displaced refugees and 1.8 million internally displaced persons** return to their original areas since December 2024. The largest numbers of voluntary returns have been from [Türkiye and Jordan](#).

On 8 October, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) [facilitated](#) the voluntary return of 152 Syrians in vulnerable situations from **Libya to Damascus**, marking the first voluntary humanitarian return flight to Syria organised by IOM since the beginning of 2025.

NEW PACT

Poland's President Karol Nawrocki (ECR) [informed](#) the European Commission President von der Leyen that he 'would never agree to the implementation of the Migration and Asylum Pact in Poland' because 'the overwhelming majority of Poles, regardless of their political sympathies, reject the mandatory relocation of migrants to Poland' and because 'the Polish state is spending considerable resources on securing the EU's eastern border and, at the same time, is bearing the costs associated with supporting war refugees from Ukraine.' A Polish radio station subsequently [stated](#) that **Poland is to be excluded from... 'financial contributions under the EU migration pact**. Representatives of Law and Justice (PiS) claim that this is the result' Nawrocki's letter. 'Deputy Minister of the Interior... Maciej Duszczyk (EPP) emphasised that such decisions are not made on the basis of a single letter but are the result of long-term diplomatic work. Donald Tusk's government spokesman pointed out that it is the current government's tough stance that has brought results.'

'Upon the invitation of the Italian Department of Public Security, Frontex, the European Union Agency for Asylum and Europol, together with the **Italian**

authorities, [completed](#) a test exercise of the new EU screening process in Lampedusa. The two-week trial was designed to test the practical implementation of the **Screening Toolbox**, a form developed jointly by Frontex and the EUAA for the screening of migrants who enter the EU irregularly. The toolbox is a key operational element of the new Screening Regulation foreseen by the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum.

LABOUR AND STUDENT IMMIGRATION

Denmark is [set to](#) impose stricter academic entry requirements, restrictions on spouses, national reviews of forged documents, and shorter post-study work permits for third-country students – making it harder for applicants to study at Danish universities.

Lithuania's migration department has [stopped accepting applications](#) to hire new foreign workers as the annual quota for 2025 has been reached. 'Although the number of migrants has stabilised at around 210,000, the migration department reports a growing influx from Central Asia – roughly 20,000 people. "The risk of radicalisation exists, even if we don't currently face major problems," said Deividas Matulionis, the President's Chief Adviser. As a result, the government has **tightened the list of countries** from which employers can hire low-skilled workers.... The most serious difficulties are expected in sectors such as transport and metalwork, where demand for drivers and welders is highest. It is estimated that the transport industry alone could lose around €30 million in revenue.'

Some migrants coming to the **UK** will need to [speak English to an A-level standard](#) under new rules set to be introduced by the government. The changes, which will come into force from 8 January 2026, will affect some graduates and those applying for skilled worker or scale-up visas, which are for people employed by fast-growing businesses.

ITALY-ALBANIA

On 7 October 2025, there [were](#) 17 people detained in the Gjadër centre in Albania. The Italian government has repurposed the centre as a repatriation centre following judicial challenges to the centre serving as an asylum processing facility. In May, **five Egyptian citizens were repatriated from Tirana to Cairo**, although a critic pointed out "Tirana airport is not under Italian jurisdiction".

UK-EU-WESTERN BALKANS

An Iranian man sent back to France under the "one in, one out" scheme has [returned to the UK on a small boat](#). The man wants to claim asylum in the UK. He is being held in a UK immigration detention centre and claims to be a victim of modern slavery at the hands of smugglers in northern France.

British border security officers have been [deployed to the Balkans](#) for the first time in an effort to disrupt the networks smuggling migrants into the UK. Officers have been sent to develop new ways of **working with Frontex**, the EU's border agency, to track down and arrest people-smugglers operating along key routes into Western Europe. As part of the initiative, UK officers are training border guards

across the Western Balkans to use British-made drones and biometric tracking systems to track migrants. Officials are also sharing techniques for detecting visa and passport fraud to block migrants before they reach the Channel.

ENTRY-EXIT SYSTEM

The EU's Entry-Exit System (EES) for non-EU citizens [was launched](#) on 12 October and will **progressively be rolled out** at the EU's external borders over the course of the next six months. The EES is a new IT system that will digitally record the entries and exits of non-EU nationals travelling to 29 European countries (EU member states, minus Cyprus and Ireland, but including Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland), for short stays. From 12 October, participating countries started introducing the system at their external borders. Full implementation should take place from 10 April 2026.

RETURNS

Latvia [ordered](#) **841 Russian citizens** to leave the country by 13 October after they failed to prove their Latvian language proficiency and to undergo mandatory security checks. Following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in early 2022, Latvia amended its Immigration Law later that year — and further tightened it in 2024 — making the rules stricter for Russian nationals who want to stay in the Baltic country... Around 30,000 Russian citizens were affected by the new rules. While most managed to comply, about 2,600 have voluntarily left Latvia. However, 841 Russian citizens failed to submit the required documents in time.

In order to facilitate repatriations, **German** authorities have allowed [Taliban representatives](#) to serve in Afghan consulates in the country, making Germany the first EU country to do so. Germany has [deported](#) more than 100 Afghans since 2014.

SAUDI ARABIA

Saudi Arabia [announced](#) in June 2025 the **end of its decades-old kafala sponsorship system**. This affects roughly 13 million migrant workers (over 2.6 million of them being Indian). This change dismantles the employer-tied visa rules that long governed Gulf labour markets, aligning Saudi Arabia's Labour Law more closely with international standards and its own Vision 2030 modernisation agenda. The employment relationship is now grounded in a [documented employment contract](#) enforceable through judicial/administrative channels.

THE US

Belize [signed](#) an agreement to act as a '**safe third country**' for migrants as they seek asylum in the US. PM John Antonio Briceño said the deal - which still needs approval from the Belize Senate - will mean that migrants deported from the US could apply for asylum there instead of returning to their home countries. The US State Department called it "an important milestone in ending illegal immigration" and "shutting down abuse" of the US asylum system. The agreement appears to be similar to one with **Paraguay** announced in August.

NATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

Czechia

Czechia's parliamentary election took place on 3 and 4 October. The **ANO** movement ('Yes', **PfE**) [campaigned](#) on the platform of rejecting the EU Migration Pact, strict protection of the EU external border, 'tough negotiation with the countries of origin' and conditioning any EU aid based on those countries' cooperation. Party leader Andrej Babiš [called](#) for symbolic deterrents like "sinking empty smugglers' ships". As for Ukrainian refugees, a leading party figure [stated](#) that the hard-working people are welcome. See the full programme [here](#). The electoral coalition **SPOLU** (ODS, TOP 09, KDU-ČSL; ECR and EPP) [advocated](#) for stronger border controls and measures against smuggling, framing migration as a governance and security issue. 'Those who were forced to flee Ukraine and want to stay with us are a natural part of our society and are integrated into the labour market.' **Mayors and Independents party** (STAN, EPP) [supported](#) EU-level cooperation on migration and emphasised rapid assistance to countries facing high migratory pressure. The **Piráti party** (Greens/EFA) [advocated](#) for measures to attract high-skilled and student immigration. **Freedom and Direct Democracy party** (SPD, ESN) [accused the government](#) of privileging Ukrainians over Czech citizens and called for their repatriation after the war. The party [rejected the EU Migration Pact](#). **Motoristé sobě** (AUTO, **PfE**) [rejected](#) the Migration Pact and demanded tougher measures against benefit fraud. See the results [here](#).

The Netherlands

The Netherlands held an early general election on 29 October 2025. **Democrats 66** (**D66**, Renew Europe) [shifted its stance](#) on asylum migration, proposing that applications be made outside EU borders under a "Canadian model." Party leader Rob Jetten [called](#) the current system "broken" and urged treaty reforms to regain control over migration. **The Party for Freedom** (PVV, **PfE**) [advocated](#) a five-year freeze on non-Western immigration, strict asylum quotas, and deporting 'criminal migrants'. See the full programme [here](#). **The People's Party for Freedom and Democracy** (VVD, Renew Europe) [aimed to reduce](#) the number of migrant workers, tighten housing rules, and introduce a national register to track them. It also proposed returning homeless EU workers to their countries of origin. **GroenLinks-PvdA** (EGP and PES) [aimed](#) to limit net migration to 40,000-60,000 annually to ease pressure on housing, healthcare, and education. According to [the programme](#) the party aimed to reduce low-paid labour migration. **The Christian Democratic Appeal** (CDA, EPP) [supported](#) processing asylum applications outside the EU and proposed a two-tier protection system. It advocated penalties for rejected asylum seekers who refused to cooperate with return procedures. The full programme is [here](#). **The Farmer-Citizen Movement** (BBB, EPP) [prioritised](#) stricter border controls and proposed capping asylum admissions at 15,000 per year. BBB also advocated limiting family reunification, processing asylum applications outside the EU, and tightening integration requirements. **The Socialist Party** (SP, The Left) [aimed](#) to cap the annual migration balance at 40,000 and regulate labour migration through mandatory permits and housing requirements. Election results are [here](#).

MARTENS CENTRE PRODUCTION

L. Tungul, *Danish Immigration and Integration Policy: Guiding Principles or Limited Lessons?*, [Martens Centre](#), October 2025

V. Novotný, 'Protecting EU Borders and Improving Migrant Integration ', in: *Strategic Policy Recommendations for the European People's Party*, [Martens Centre](#), October 2025

SELECT EXTERNAL PUBLICATIONS

D. Pinkus and J. F. Kirkegaard, *The macroeconomic impact of ageing, EU immigration policy and pension expenditures*, [Bruegel](#), October 2025

A. H. Neidhardt and V. Jacob, *EU migration and asylum at a crossroads: Planning for uncertainty*, [European Policy Centre](#), October 2025

F. M. Sarapo et al, *Population dynamics and education for a shared Mediterranean future* [Joint Research Centre](#), October 2025

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