



Participants of the 2024 Ministerial Conference

Budapest Process: Strategic migration dialogue

Migration along the Silk Routes and between Europe and its neighbours is shaped by shifting geopolitical realities, economic inequalities, and ongoing security concerns. These dynamics create both risks and opportunities for states, requiring sustained cooperation to ensure safe and orderly migration. Established 30 years ago to foster dialogue between Eastern and Western Europe, the Budapest Process now provides a crucial platform for over 50 participating states, including EU Member States, partner countries, and international partners to engage in dialogue, share expertise, and develop joint responses. The Dialogue strengthens migration governance by promoting safe, orderly, regular and responsible migration. Strategic dialogue meets operational cooperation in the Silk Routes Region since 2013.

Strategic and operational dialogue



Return and Reintegration
Thematic Working Group
Meeting

The 2024 Ministerial Declaration and Call for Action 2025–2030 establish a whole-of-route, multi-stakeholder framework for migration governance. Strategic dialogue through the Reference Group and Senior Officials ensures communication, needs assessments, and stronger partnerships, bringing together countries of origin, transit, and destination. This is complemented by three Thematic Working Groups on Law Enforcement Cooperation, Return and Reintegration, and Legal Pathways for Migration.

*“The Dialogue ensures inclusive and balanced participation, and fosters mutual respect and trust. **It provides a neutral and flexible framework which is crucial in facilitating open exchanges on complex migration issues.** The Budapest Process provides the alignment of policy dialogue with concrete capacity-building and pilot initiatives in the Silk Routes Region. These have reinforced the practical relevance of discussions. Lastly, the administrative and technical coordination provided by the Secretariat has ensured consistency.”*

- Budapest Process focal point

Enhancing law enforcement cooperation

The Dialogue's Thematic Working Group on Law Enforcement Cooperation is co-chaired by Iraq and Bulgaria focusing on Integrated Border Management (IBM), migrant smuggling and human trafficking. It fosters cross-border collaboration via a network of officials, boosting peer-to-peer learning, and operational coordination. Projects in the Silk Routes work on action points in the Call for Action. For example, **ICMPD trained over 1,700 country border officials** and supported national strategies in Silk Route countries. Synergies with the Regional Support Office of the Bali Process extended impact through exchanges on smuggling, border management, and attendance to the Border Forum annually.



Supporting return and reintegration

The Budapest Process advances cooperation and policy on Return and Reintegration and is co-chaired by Bangladesh, Iraq and Türkiye. The new Ministerial Declaration adds a priority goal on RR in light of the work on the topic since 2020 and the development of the Roadmap on Return and Reintegration. In 2020, states endorsed conclusions to boost cooperation, data sharing and sustainable reintegration. In Iraq, reintegration has been further strengthened through the NORAQ framework, where Nordic partners and ICMPD work together to **expand access to information, provide reintegration support, and build institutional capacities for sustainable return.**

BUDAPEST PROCESS THEMATIC MEETING ON LEGAL PATHWAYS FOR MIGRATION

Delegates during the Budapest Process Thematic Meeting in Pakistan

Information and advocacy

Migrant Resource Centres, first proposed at a Budapest Process meeting upon Pakistan's request, support regular migration through information, counselling, and reintegration. With Budapest Process focal point support, they became government-owned but backed by ICMPD and EU funding. By 2024, centres in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan reached over 12 million people, expanding knowledge and enabling informed migration.

About the MPF

The Dialogue is funded by the European Union through the Migration Partnership Facility (MPF), which is implemented by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) and supports the external dimension of the EU's migration policy. MPF funds projects that promote dialogue and cooperation on migration and mobility between EU Member States and partner countries outside the EU.

About the Dialogue

The Budapest Process is co-funded by the European Union through the MPF and by Türkiye, Hungary, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden and Australia. ICMPD acts as the Budapest Process Secretariat, responding to evolving context-specific priorities of the EU and Silk Routes countries. This is achieved through Strategic and Operational Dialogue at Senior Official, Ministerial and expert level, on law enforcement, return and reintegration and legal migration pathways.

About the evaluation

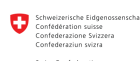
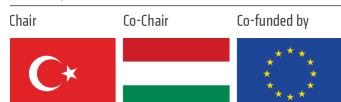
Testimonies used in this document were gathered as part of the mid-term review of the Budapest Process Dialogue, conducted between December 2024 and May 2025. The review was led by Samuel Hall, who is part of a consortium of six consultancies and NGOs, namely Blomeyer & Sanz, Diversity Development Group, Migration Policy Group, Policy Impact Lab, and Tandans.



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