

ADDENDUM

TO

THE VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA TO THE STATUS OF  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GLOBAL COMPACT FOR SAFE, ORDERLY AND REGULAR  
MIGRATION SUBMITTED IN 2020

MAY 2022

## **Abbreviations**

AVRR      Assisted





Competent authorities cooperate with Europol's European Migrant Smuggling Centre on several levels. Serbia participated in several international operations combating irregular migration and trafficking in human beings. The Permanent Task Force, established by the order of the Prosecutor for Organised Crime, including representatives of the Prosecution Office for Organised Crime, the MOI, the Security Information Agency, the Customs Administration and the Anti-Money Laundering Directorate, actively coordinates activities on uncovering human smuggling cases.

Between 1 January and 31 December 2021, the MOI, on reasonable suspicion that perpetrators committed the crime of illegal crossing of the state border and human trafficking, filed a total of 129 criminal charges (128 criminal charges in 2020) against 190 persons (177 in 2020). Of this number, the Service for the Fight against Organised Crime, the Department for the Suppression of Trafficking in Human Beings and Smuggling filed 7 criminal charges in 2021 against 46 members of organised criminal groups, who smuggled irregular migrants to BiH, Hungary and Croatia.

The ongoing SDC-funded project, Strengthening Capacities and Partnerships for Migration Management in Serbia, implemented by IOM, together with the SRCM, MLEVSA and the MOI, also seeks to build the capacities of the teams for preventing and combating human trafficking.

In early 2021, two laws were adopted, which will improve international cooperation in the area of border management and anti-smuggling and anti-trafficking:

The Law on Ratification of the Agreement between the Governments of Serbia and North Macedonia on cooperation in the field of combating migrant smuggling, regulating the exchange of information and data, establishment of joint investigation teams, implementation of joint projects, organisation of joint trainings and seminars, in order to prevent and strengthen capacities to combat migrant smuggling.

Law on the Ratification of the Status Agreement between the Republic of Serbia and the EU on actions carried out by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (EBCG), establishing the legal framework to regulate all aspects of coordination necessary for the implementation of actions of the EBCG that might be taking place in the territory of Serbia.

Serbia has a voluntary return support programme for foreigners for 2021-2025 including funding for information and identification of potential returnees in place. Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) programme is implemented with support, in cooperation with IOM. The Republic of Serbia has been continuously working on improving the voluntary return system, primarily by providing information and counselling to potential returnees. In each centre housing migrants run by the SRCM, adequate information is provided in languages that potential returnees can understand.

Although the number of persons returning to the Republic of Serbia pursuant to readmission agreements has decreased considerably, the Republic of Serbia is investing significant efforts to implement the reintegration programme, and monitor and evaluate the process of reintegration. Within the annual programme of incentives for migration policy objectives, funds have been set aside for the programme of reintegration of returnees pursuant to readmission agreements in 2021 and 2022.

### **1.3 Supporting the integration of migrants and their contribution to development Objectives 14, 15, 16, 19, 20 and 22**

The most important integration-related activities have been those on improving healthcare rights and inclusion of various migrant categories in local community migration policy action plans.

Serbia enabled fully free vaccination of foreigners against COVID-19 and was the first country in Europe to start vaccinating asylum seekers and irregular migrants. This is certainly the result of migrants being identified and mainstreamed in key national policies, such as the national healthcare policy. During the

pandemic, in addition to enjoying access to healthcare without discrimination, the National Commission for Infectious Diseases has been paying special attention to migrants as a vulnerable group, taking into account their specific needs. In line with the above, a special document has been prepared, Protocol for Responding to Suspected SARS-cov-2 Cases in Asylum and Reception Centres.

35 diaspora mentors selected; 20 diaspora brokers identified, over 40 diaspora investors mapped; 20 early-stage entrepreneurs receiving mentorship support for starting a business in Serbia identified. All of these categories include vulnerable group members.

Diaspora Business Hub was created in 2020 as a unit in both Belgrade and Vienna and transferred to Chamber of Commerce for sustainability to help Serbian small and medium enterprises and LSGs find diaspora partners and investors.

#### **1.4 Improving value-driven and evidence-based policy making and public debate and enhancing cooperation on migration Objectives 1, 3, 7, 17 and 23**

**The Programme of Official Statistics 2021 2025** by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (SORS) is an important step towards harmonizing national activities with EU standards and practices. The following is relevant for GCM objectives:

Within the demography and social statistics area, statistics on migration, as well as statistics on asylum seekers, residence permits, and illegal migration are cited as priority development areas. The programme includes internal migration (number and territorial distribution of migrants according to demographic, ethnic and economic characteristics).

Activities are planned to establish statistics on external migration (immigration, emigration, acquisition and loss of citizenship).

Memorandum of Cooperation with competent authorities and institutions for migration monitoring to facilitate implementation of all activities related to the introduction of statistical surveys on external migration, as well as to improve national legislation and harmonisation with international regulations.

**Action Plan 2021 2023 on the Implementation of the Economic Migration Strategy** was adopted in September 2021, which elaborates in more detail activities for the implementation of the objective: *Build and strengthen institutional capacity to monitor and improve the quality of economic migration data* and the measures envisaged to achieve this objective:

Strengthen the capacity of institutions responsible for monitoring migration movements.

Upgrade or reform the existing institutional framework in accordance with the needs for more efficient management of economic migration.

Establish a greater degree of coordination to support the inclusion of the concept of economic migration in development policies

Establish a regular, updated, synchronised statistical database for monitoring migration flows in the Republic of Serbia.

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