



ANNUAL OVERVIEW

2021

April, 2022

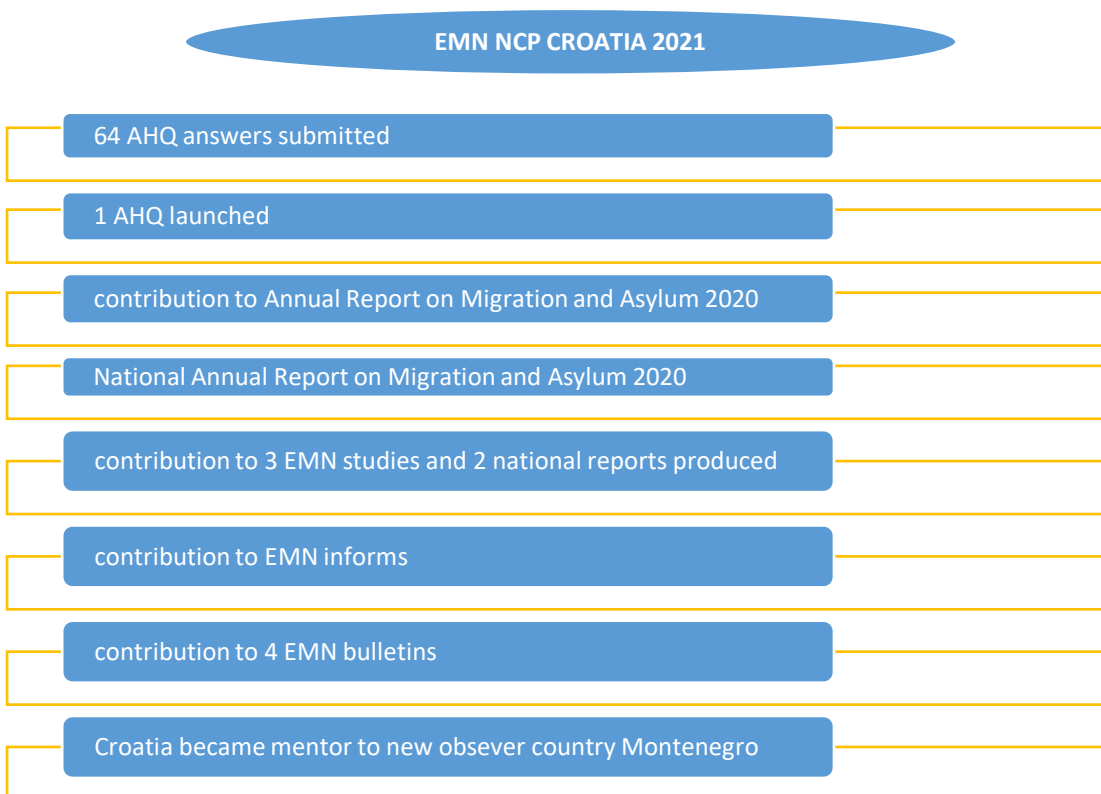
1 INTRODUCTION

The European Migration Network was established in 2008 by the EU Council with the aim of providing support to the European political decision-making on migration questions. Croatia joined the EMN in 2013 after entering the European Union. From the beginning of 2019, the role of the National Contact Point for Croatia is held by Ministry of Interior.

The **EMN Status Report 2021 Croatia** briefly presents the EMN NCP Croatia's outputs produced during 2021: summarizes the networking activities that took place at EU and national level and provides information about the dissemination and communication activities undertaken to promote the work of EMN to policymakers and wider audiences. It also provides information on how the EMN NCP HR was managed during 2021.

2 EMN NCP HR OUTPUTS IN 2021

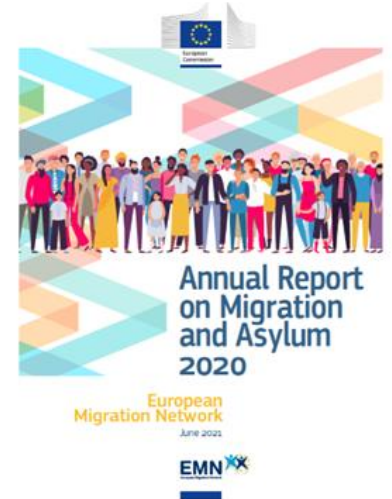
This section provides an overview of the main EMN outputs and impacts, within the framework of the EMN Work Programme 2021/2022. It focuses on the activities undertaken to respond to and anticipate policy-makers' needs, and the subsequent collection and analysis of information and statistics to meet these needs, in various formats (see below).



2.1. Annual report on Migration and Asylum 2020

Each year, the EMN produces its Annual Report on Migration and Asylum, presenting the key European and national developments in the fields of migration and asylum that took place during the previous year. The report consists of two parts.

The EMN published the **Annual Report on Migration and Asylum 2020**, which explores trends in migration and asylum across the EU and Norway. It showed that during 2020, COVID-19 related travel restrictions resulted in a significant decrease in the numbers of third-country nationals entering the EU, either as legal migrants or as asylum seekers, and those leaving the EU in the framework of return procedures. Furthermore, electronic systems and digital tools played a key role in maintaining the functioning of migration and asylum systems. Increasing the efficiency for better migration management was a common theme at EU and national level. The European Commission's new Pact on Migration and Asylum laid out a comprehensive approach in the areas of migration, asylum, integration and border management. Member States adopted new strategic directions and priorities, as well, focusing on the attraction of new talent and labour market integration.

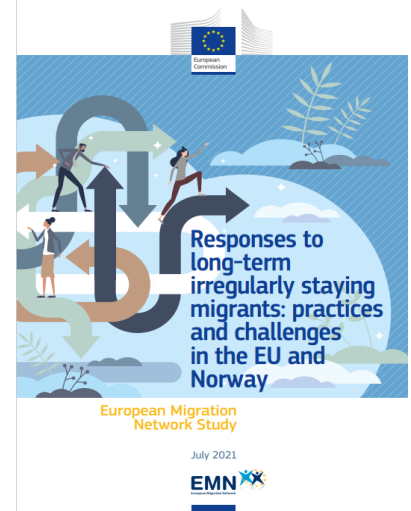


Last year, the EMN NCP HR prepared [the sixth annual report on migration and asylum](#), which covers the period from 1 January to 31 December 2020. The report presented the context of the development of asylum and migration policy in 2020 with an emphasis on Croatia's presidency of the EU Council in the first half of the year, and provided an overview of news through the following migration thematic areas: legal migration, international protection, unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable groups, integration, citizenship and statelessness, borders, visas and Schengen, irregular migration and migrant smuggling, trafficking in human beings and return and readmission. The report was presented at the 10th meeting of the national migration network organized by the EMN NCP HR on 10 June 2021.

2.2. EMN studies



The EMN finalized three studies in 2021: "Accurate, timely and interoperable? Data management in the asylum procedure"; "Responses to long-term irregularly staying migrants" and "Detention and Alternatives to Detention". The latter study was published in 2022. Related informs and flashes were produced for each published study to facilitate dissemination. These study packages were published on the EMN website, on the EMN NCP HR national website, and disseminated through the EMN bulletin and via the EMN's mailing list.



The EMN NCP HR created two national reports in 2021, as contributions to the following studies: "Detention and Alternatives to Detention" and "Victims of human trafficking: detection, identification and protection".

As in previous years, all studies and national reports were developed in collaboration with relevant policymakers, experts and practitioners on a national level. The studies and national reports were developed from national contributions based on desk analysis of secondary information including existing legislation and policy documents, reports, academic literature, internet resources as well as reports and information from national authorities and civil society stakeholders. Statistics were sourced from Eurostat, national authorities and other (national) databases.

2.3. EMN informs

Three EMN informs were published in 2021, as following: "Separated and missing migrants"; "Exploring legal pathways to fulfil labour needs" and "Impact of COVID-19 in the migration area in EU and OECD countries". Each year, the EMN NCP HR participates in the production of informs based on contributions collected through ad-hoc inquiries and which are more concise than situation reports. All informs are published on the EMN NCP HR official website.

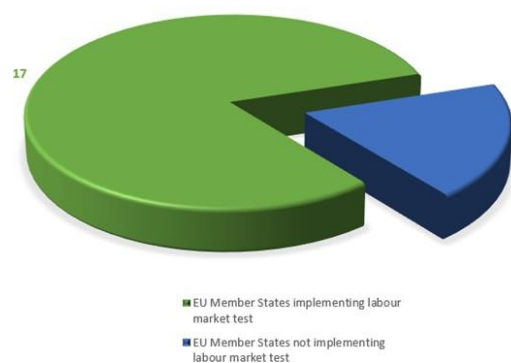
2.4. EMN AHQ

The EMN ad-hoc query (AHQ) tool continued to operate throughout 2021 to obtain comparative information from across EU Member States and Norway, on specific and timely topics. In 2021, the EMN NCP HR submitted their contribution to 64 AHQ. AHQ topics that Member States launched in 2021 included economic migration, protection, return, irregular migration, students, visas, residence and others.

The EMN NCP HR launched an AHQ "Labour Market Test" during 2021 in collaboration with members of National Migration Network from Croatian Employment Service. The query-collected information related to the employment control frameworks of third-country

nationals and labour market management. The focus of the query was put on the labour market test applied in most EU Member States, emphasizing the steps of the labour market test procedure, methodology, role of employment authorities, employer responsibilities, conditions and criteria for restricting employment by labour market test, checking the availability of workers in other Member States, and available data on the ratio of positive and negative labour market test decisions during 2019 and 2020 were presented. Ad-hoc query data was collected thanks to contributions from 22 EMN NCPs, which you can access on the [EMN website](#).

IMPLEMENTATION OF LABOUR MARKET TEST IN EU MEMBER STATES



2.6 Immigration Portal

The Immigration Portal continues to be useful source of information for newcomers, making the complex information easily accessible, and to reduce irregular migration. The European Commission, using updated information provided by EMN NCPs, maintained the portal during 2021. EMN NCP HR submits the information regularly and will submit a comprehensive update on the Immigration Portal in line with new Aliens Act.



3 NETWORKING AT EU LEVEL

3.1 National Contact Point, Steering Board meetings and networking

The EMN adapted to become a virtual network in response to travel restrictions imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This approach ensured that all networking meetings continued seamlessly throughout the year. Four EMN **Steering Board** meetings (27th to 30th) and 7 EMN **NCP meetings** (from 111st to 117th) were held virtually during the year.

Working groups continued to meet regularly throughout 2021.

The **EMN Communication and Dissemination Working Group (CD WG)** was co-chaired by EMN France and EMN Finland in 2021. The group met twice in 2021, and the EMN NCP HR attended both meetings virtually. Work continued on updating the EMN Communications and Dissemination Strategy, enhancing EMN visibility, and coordinating the introduction of national communication plans.

The **EMN Working Group on Cooperation with Third Countries (CTC WG)** held two virtual meetings. As Georgia and Moldova are now formally part of the EMN as observers, the working

group discussed the finalization of the 'Guidelines for collaboration with Third Countries having an Observer Status', to be submitted to the EMN Steering Board in its upcoming meeting in April. The working group will take opportunity to reflect on the plan for monitoring the collaboration with Georgia and Moldova.

The EMN NCP HR attended three **EMN Information and Awareness Raising Campaigns Working Group (INFO WG)** meetings held online. During 2021, co-chair presented a work plan that focuses the future activities of the INFO working group in particular on digitalization and social networks, which represent a new era of communication.

Last year, the EMN NCP HR actively participated **Ad Hoc Working Group (AH WG)** about creation of EMN corporate video. Working group met virtually and held five meetings in 2021 (16 September, 28 September, 19 October, 26 November and 21 December 2021). The meetings continued in 2022, and the video is yet to be published.

During 2021, EMN NCP HR attended four capacity building and five thematic workshops.

In January, a capacity building event on **EMN informs** was organized by EMN Netherlands. The aim of this workshop was to provide an opportunity for participants to discuss challenges faced in the production of inform, the procedures in place, as well general guidelines related to the format and content. **Digitalization and artificial intelligence in migration management** was another capacity-building workshop that took place in April 2021, where the importance of digitalization and its implementation was thoroughly discussed. The EMN NCP HR also attended the capacity building on **National communication plans**, in May. The rationale behind this workshop was to provide a simple template that would support EMN NCPs in carrying out communication activities. Finally, the EMN NCP HR members have attended capacity-building workshop **ARM 2021 Common Template** held in November.

In regards to thematic workshops, they started in late January with a discussion session on **Roundtable events in 2021** in cooperation with external stakeholders. The objective of this workshop was trying to establish a platform that promotes innovation in migration by bringing together actors who broadcast their experience at all levels along the migration cycle. It was a workshop organized in collaboration with the World Bank. Furthermore, in March, the EMN NCP HR attended a workshop to discuss **EMN collaboration with third parties** that emphasized the importance of cooperation with third parties in certain thematic areas. The EMN NCP HR also attended the **EMN Budget Training** in July and a follow-up meeting of the **EMN Proposal submission preparation** in September. Lastly, EMN NCP HR along with a representative of the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities have attended a workshop on **topic proposals** held in November.

4 NETWORKING AT NATIONAL LEVEL

4.1 National conferences and workshops

In 2021, the EMN NCP HR organized a wide range of activities and outputs, including national conferences and networking events, hosted websites and disseminated newsletters, amongst other activities. In this way, the EMN NCP HR animates their national networks of relevant stakeholders working on migration and asylum policies and facilitates the exchange of information and alignment of objectives. The majority of the national events took place online, due to the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic.

During 2021, the EMN NCP HR organized two online national EMN network meetings for members of the national migration network:

- **10th national network meeting** was organized on 10 June 2021. Approximately 20 participants of the National Migration Network, which consists of national authorities and non-governmental and international organizations, including the Ministry of Interior, which acts as the EMN NCP HR, attended the meeting. The meeting was an opportunity for all participants to present news in their respective fields and work on the issue of migration since the last meeting of the network. In addition, the EMN NCP HR presented the Annual Report on Migration and Asylum for the Republic of Croatia for 2020, which through various thematic areas presents the most important political and legislative innovations in the field of migration, referring to the impact of COVID-19 on all thematic areas.
- **11th national network meeting** took place on 23 November 2021. The EMN NCP HR presented its working plan and activities for the Republic of Croatia for 2022 as well as the Report on Migration and Asylum published by the European Commission. **ReSettle in Croatia**, an application with the aim of providing faster and easier access to information and guidelines for persons who arrive in the Republic of Croatia under a resettlement program, and who are granted international protection upon arrival, was presented to the participants of the meeting.

Apart from two national network meetings, the EMN NCP HR organized **two days training of national REG experts** in cooperation with the Border Directorate (MoI). National coordinator of the EMN NCP HR had a presentation about the European Migration Network and its current activities and outputs (national reports, studies, ad hoc queries, informs). She presented the national EMN website where all relevant outputs and information can be found. She informed participants about this year's REG meetings attended by the representatives of Croatia and presented the activities of the EMN REG working group as well as with the possibilities of using EMN outputs in their regular work. Training covered following topic: *New legislative framework on the treatment of foreigners; Determining the identity and circumstances of illegal border crossing and illegal residence; Decision-making regarding return; Monitoring of forced return; Allegations of treatment of migrants; Protocol on the treatment of unaccompanied children; Standard operating procedures; Readmission; Forced removal; Restrictions on freedom of movement in detention centers; Free legal aid in the return procedure; Fingerprinting for Eurodac and The use of translators in the return process.*

Regarding other meetings and workshops organized on a national level, in January, the EMN NCP HR attended a roundtable organized by Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts. The subject was **Law enforcement during the COVID-19 pandemic**. The roundtable was held as a video conference. The situation caused by COVID-19 has been discussed by scholars dealing with those branches and areas of law whose application is most affected by change and by leading practitioners.

Later on, the EMN NCP HR participated an online meeting related to **application of Aliens Act** organized by Directorate for Immigration, Citizenship and Administrative Affairs and attended training on the **EMN Return and Reintegration Assistance Inventory**.

When we talk about the integration of the refugees, it is important to mention the EMN NCP HR's participation in the conference **New Neighbors - Croatian Media Portrait of Integration in the European Context** organized by Jesuit Refugee Service, in February. The focus was on the documentary series "New Neighbors", more precisely, on the episode "House of the People" directed by Nebojsa Slijepcevic, who tried to show how Croatian society

welcomes refugees and helps them in their integration. At the conference, participants discussed ways to nurture and build relationships with new neighbors.

The EMN NCP HR attended an event related to the **Day against Trafficking in Persons** organized by the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities. The event was held on July 30, 2021. The main goal of this meeting was to assess the extent to which the institutional and legal framework and the National Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for the period from 2018 to 2021 are successful in combating trafficking in human beings and protecting and exercising the rights of victims of trafficking. Accordingly, within the evaluation, recommendations were made regarding the measures and activities of the new National Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, which the Government of the Republic of Croatia should adopt for the coming period.

The EMN NCP HR took part in **"Conference on the Future of Europe"**. On the September 24, 2021, the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Croatia organized a Conference on the Future of Europe. The focus of the Conference was put on the new EU Talent Partnership initiative proposed under the new Migration and Asylum Pact, as well as on strengthening the legislative framework on the European Blue Card, and other initiatives related to legal migration, as the concept of "digital nomads".



The Conference was also an opportunity for exchanging perceptions on whether new EU initiatives and modern approaches to the labor market could be a solution to the current challenges faced by the European Union regarding illegal migration. The Conference brought together professionals and experts who initiated a dialogue on an innovative legislative framework. Ms. Ivana Perlić Glamočak, EMN NCP Croatia, presented the concept of Talent Partnership, which is part of the EC Pact on Migration and Asylum 2020; as an integral part of strengthened tailor-made partnerships with third countries.

In addition, HR EMN NCP attended **Council of Europe Judgments seminar**.



Last year, in December, the EMN NCP HR also attended a panel **Inclusion of refugee women in society: opportunities and challenges** organized by the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities. The round table was part of the activities of the INCLuDE project - Interdepartmental Cooperation in Empowerment of Third-Country Nationals, co-financed by AMIF, and organized within the Human Rights Film Festival. The aim of this round table was to present the

key challenges in the integration of women of migrant origin with an emphasis on women who have been granted international protection.

Finally, in December, the EMN NCP HR organized a **virtual working meeting** to prepare members of the National Migration Network for the submission of contributions for the **annual report**. Since the contributions of various bodies and institutions are collected every year, this meeting was intended to provide support in the preparation and delivery of contributions, and to provide useful information regarding the technical part of writing, scope and practical advice.

4.2 Other NCPs national conferences

The EMN NCP HR participated in webinar **Young migrants in transition to adulthood** organized by members of EMN Cyprus, EMN Greece, EMN Italy and EMN Luxembourg and it was held in January.

On 30 April 2021, the Portuguese Immigration and Borders Services (SEF) organized the EMN Annual e-Conference titled **Digital transformation in migration**. This virtual conference brought together European and national stakeholders in the migration field, as well as experts in digital transformation and artificial intelligence technologies to consider the risks and opportunities for more digitalization of migration processes and the technologies envisaged for the future. It provided participants with an overview of recent policy developments at EU and national level, as well as practical examples and lessons learned from implementing digitalization processes.

The EMN NCP HR attended an online meeting related to **launch of the EASO report**, during which the most important items of the tenth EASO report were presented. The meeting was held in July.

Last year, the EMN NCP HR attended **EMN Slovenia Presidency Conference** "EU Preparedness on future migration flows". Conference took place on 5 and 6 October 2021 in Ljubljana, Slovenia, and aimed to share knowledge, experience and views among representatives from EU Member States, EU institutions and international organizations on EU preparedness in relation to asylum and irregular migration flows. Ms. Lidija Pentavec, Head of Section in Service for Illegal Migration, Ministry of the Interior and national coordinator for EMN NCP HR gave a presentation by the title "The position of the Republic of Croatia in the migration context".

Magdalena Barišić has attended a **workshop by EMN France related to visas for startup and ICT talents**. This workshop, held in October, gathered many participants, including representatives of the French Ministries of the Interior, Economy, Finance and Recovery, Business France, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), as well as representatives of EMN National Contact Points, national development agencies, science parks, entrepreneurs' organizations, and ministries from more than a dozen of Member States. This workshop was structured into two presentation sessions and aimed at presenting the information collected in the 2019 EMN study on migratory pathways for start-ups and innovative entrepreneurs in the EU, as well as the European and national schemes recently implemented in order to attract start-ups and international talents to Europe.

Lastly, in November, EMN NCP HR attended a conference organized by **EMN Spain "The recognition of skills in migration process"**. This conference wanted to emphasize skills as an important factor in migration and socio-economic development, and a key element in facilitating labour mobility, generating positive impacts on the country of origin, the country of destination and the migrant him/herself, fostering employability, supporting the sustainability of our welfare systems and fostering the creation of inclusive societies.

5 NETWORKING WITH THIRD COUNTRIES

5.1 Collaboration with Montenegro

The EMN Working Group on Cooperation with Third Countries was established in 2020. Guidelines on cooperation with third countries were developed by the working group and endorsed by the European Commission and EMN Steering Board as part of the preparations to welcome Georgia and the Republic of Moldova as observers to the network. During 2018 and 2019 Georgia and Moldova expressed interest to join EMN as non-voting observers, funding

their own participation and in the beginning of the year 2021. In March 2021, the European Migration Network welcomed for the first time countries outside the European Economic Area. As part of EMN, Georgia and Moldova participate in the exchange of information in the field of migration and asylum, benefit from the expertise of the network in developing their migration management systems and inform their public about EU migration developments.

In 2020, the migration authorities in four non-EU countries – Armenia, Montenegro, Serbia and Ukraine - informally expressed their interest in co-operation with the EMN. Such cooperation opportunities could be mutually beneficial where the EMN is tasked to develop outputs to meet the information needs of its audiences in policy areas where the benefits of cooperation with third countries are clearly embedded. **EMN members voted for EMN NCP Croatia to become a mentor country to Montenegro.**

On 15 September 2021, in Podgorica, Montenegro, a **"Fact finding mission"** meeting was held with representatives of Montenegro regarding the interest they expressed in order to obtain observer status within the EMN network and to determine the context and scope of future relations of cooperation. The meeting was attended by Ms. Ivana Perlić Glamočak, on behalf of the EMN NCP Croatia, Ms. Ave Lauren (EMN Estonia), Ms. Ilze Silina-Osmane (EMN Latvia), Ms. Sara Bagnato (EMN Service Provider) and Ms. Ivette Tarrida Soler, on behalf of the EC.

The meeting provided the EMN delegation with a better insight into the state of migration and asylum in Montenegro, as well as the existing procedures and goals of Montenegro in joining the EMN as an observer country. At the meeting, the representatives of Montenegro were given a detailed insight into the functioning of the EMN; its work, how it is structured, how it works in practice, what is the added value of being part of the EMN network, the challenges that arise, what resources are needed, what rules apply to observers.

The EMN NCP HR actively participates in the work of the Working Group for Cooperation with Third Countries (CTC WG) by participating in regular meetings (up to 2 per year) and, if necessary, participates in other activities. The working group aims to consider possible frameworks for cooperation with third countries.

6 EMN NATIONAL WEBSITE

The EMN website is the main vehicle for the EMN to make its outputs publicly available, updated on a regular basis. Every NCP maintains their own national website, which is linked to the EMN website. The EMN NCP HR regularly updates its website, notifies about all of EMN publications and publishes announcements and reports from various events and other news in the field of migration. You can access EMN NCP HR official website on this link: <https://emn.gov.hr/>



7 EMN BULLETIN

The EMN bulletin is designed to provide quarterly updates to policymakers on major EU and national developments in the field of migration and asylum policy, and statistical trends. New

developments are presented under broad thematic headings that can be accessed through links from the top menu.

In 2020, to improve the accessibility and outreach of the bulletin, the length was shortened, and the key findings were presented in an even more succinct newsletter format, the bulletin news flash. The bulletin is distributed to approximately 1 200 external contacts in addition to the internal EMN mailing lists, on a quarterly basis.

The EMN NCP HR contributed to EMN Bulletins throughout the year 2021. Contributions were submitted for 33rd, 34th, 35th and 36th EMN bulletins.