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**European Migration Network Status Report 2011**

*Accompanying the document*

**Report from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament  
on the Development of the European Migration Network**

{COM(2012) 427 final}

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This third Status Report,<sup>1</sup> accompanying the Report on the Development of the European Migration Network (EMN),<sup>2</sup> reports on progress made by the EMN during 2011, a pivotal year in respect of evolutions undertaken in order to increase further its relevance and impact in supporting policymakers.

An overview of the main outputs of the EMN in 2011 is given first, all of which are publicly available from the EMN's website,<sup>3</sup> followed by the extensive networking that occurred and the activities taken to promote the EMN to policymakers in particular. Information on how the EMN was managed is then provided, followed by concluding remarks.

## **2. EMN OUTPUTS IN 2011**

This section provides a summary of the EMN's main achievements and impacts in the framework of its 2011 Work Programme. Its core activity continued to be analysing information to support policymaking on migration and asylum in EU Member States. Synthesis Reports, highlighting the main findings within an EU perspective, were produced for each annual report and study on the basis of National Reports produced by EMN National Contact Points (EMN NCPs) following common specifications. Whilst every effort was made to have national contributions from all EMN NCPs, this was not possible for some Member States. Norway<sup>4</sup> continued to be a pro-active contributor to and participant of the EMN.

A significant development during 2011 was the introduction of *EMN Informs*, providing concise policy relevant outcomes from a particular EMN activity. Three were produced and widely disseminated; for the studies on Satisfying Labour Demand through Migration and on Temporary and Circular Migration, plus for the Migration and International Protection Statistics 2008 report.

### **2.1 Annual Policy Reports**

These reports provide an overall insight across the EU into the most significant political and legislative (including EU) developments, as well as public debates, in the area of migration and asylum, along with relevant statistics. They are one basis for the Commission's Annual Report on Immigration and Asylum,<sup>5</sup> notably the national developments reported in the accompanying Commission Staff Working Paper. Like for previous years, the contributions from the EMN NCPs, within the context of the *EMN Annual Policy Report 2011*, were provided by the end of 2011. Additionally, the *EMN Annual Policy Report 2010*, based on 23 National Reports, was finalised in mid-2011 adding to a series of such reports since 2004.

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<sup>1</sup> As required by Article 4(5c) of Council Decision 2008/381/EC. Previous versions were also published and translated into a number of Member State languages as Commission Staff Working Papers in 2010 as SEC(2010) 1006 and in 2011 as SEC(2011) 1273.

<sup>2</sup> COM(2012)427

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.emn.europa.eu>

<sup>4</sup> Commission Decision C(2010)6171 of 13th September 2010 established the basis for administrative cooperation between the European Commission and the Ministry of Justice and the Police of the Kingdom of Norway for the participation of Norway in the European Migration Network.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, COM(2012) 250 final and SWD(2012) 139 final

## 2.2 Annual Reports on Migration and International Protection Statistics<sup>6</sup>

These reports provide an analysis of statistical trends in asylum and migration, primarily drawing on the Commission's Eurostat statistics. The Synthesis Report for the *Annual Report on Migration and International Protection Statistics 2008*, based on 23 National Reports and, for the first time, analysing data produced in accordance with the Migratory Statistics Regulation 862/2007, was finalised in October 2011, along with a corresponding *EMN Inform*. The EMN also developed the *Annual Report on Migration and International Protection Statistics 2009*, based on 21 National Reports, with the Synthesis Report then finalised in May 2012. Whilst both reports might be considered as 'historical,' nevertheless they contribute to a suite of such reports stretching back to 2001 and thus able to provide a longer-term assessment of asylum and migration trends.

Owing to the inherent time lag in producing these reports, however, where elements of the relevant data are available only some 15 months after the end of a particular reference year, the external evaluation recommended the discontinuation of further reports, a decision endorsed by the EMN Steering Board in October 2011. As a result, future EMN analytical work will focus on only the most relevant and up-to-date statistics, compiled in relation to specific Reports and Studies, and in relation to the *EMN Bulletin*.

## 2.3 EMN Studies<sup>7</sup>

The EMN finalised and published a number of relevant studies in 2011. These were *Satisfying Labour Demand through Migration* (June 2011) and *Temporary and Circular Migration: policy, practice and future options* (September 2011). Work was undertaken to progress the following 2011 studies: *Visa Policy as a Migration Channel*; and *Practical measures for reducing irregular migration*. A pilot focussed study on *Individual profiles and migration trajectories of third-country national cross-border workers - the case of Luxembourg* led by the LU EMN NCP was also started.

Work also began on developing the specifications for the EMN main study: *Immigration of international students to the EU* and the template for the first Focussed Study: *Misuse of the Right to Family Reunification: marriages of convenience and false declarations of parenthood*. Summaries of the progress of the Reports, and, where relevant, examples of impact, are set out below.

### 2.3.1 Satisfying Labour Demand through Migration

This study served to inform the debate on the contribution of economic migration to addressing labour shortages, which are already being experienced by many Member States. The aims were to identify those sectors experiencing labour shortages in the Member States, to outline the national strategies for addressing labour market needs with third-country national migrant workers and to gain an understanding of the perceived effectiveness of these strategies, including examining the impact of the recent economic downturn and recovery on them. A compilation of available statistics was also provided, aiming to present the nature and extent of labour market shortages and the extent to which they are filled by third-country nationals.

One conclusion from the study, based on 23 National Reports, was that whilst economic migration from third countries may not be considered by the Member States as the main solution to the challenges of ageing societies, declining populations and skills shortages in Europe, nevertheless

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<sup>6</sup> Reports are available from the EMN website <http://www.emn.europa.eu> under "EMN Outputs: Migration and International Protection Statistics"

<sup>7</sup> The various reports are available from the EMN website <http://www.emn.europa.eu> under "EMN Outputs: EMN Studies"

well-managed immigration can bring positive consequences, particularly by increasing labour supply and alleviating labour market shortages, both in the short and longer term. To achieve this, and to compete more effectively worldwide, EU Member States need to be attractive destinations for third-country nationals with relevant skills and competences.

The study, published in June 2011, proved to be both topical and timely within a number of policy debates, and was widely disseminated at events and conferences, via the EMN website, and in hard copy, at both EU and national levels. The European Parliament also translated the Synthesis Report into DE, IT, ES, FR and IT and circulated it to members of their LIBE and EMPL committees. The study's findings also contributed to, and were referenced in, the Communication on the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility.<sup>8</sup>

### ***2.3.2 Temporary and Circular Migration: policy, practice and future options in EU Member States***

Progress has been made with the EU and the international community to promote the developmental benefits of migration, another main tenet of the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility.<sup>9</sup> This EMN study provided a detailed analysis of the evidence supporting the benefits of such migration patterns, and their status across the EU Member States. The aim of the study was to analyse the characteristics of temporary (broadly understood to refer to a single movement and then limited stay in the EU) and circular (considered in the context of a back-and-forth movement between the EU and a country of origin) migration policy and practice across EU Member States.

The main findings, based on 24 National Reports, were that the development and promotion of policies on temporary and circular migration in the EU Member States is still at a very early stage. Initial evaluations of existing programmes to support temporary and circular migration have confirmed positive results for participating migrants in some cases. Overall, however, the study concluded that evidence for the 'triple-win,' bringing benefits for the host society, the migrant and the country of origin, remained inconclusive. National statistics indicate the scope and scale of temporary and circular migration in Member States, but tend to be limited and lack comparability. However, the study does identify a number of indicators used to quantify these types of migration, including temporary residence permits; certain types of visas; employment databases; population registers; survey data and data on seasonal workers.

### ***2.3.3 Visa Policy as a Migration Channel***

This study, based on 21 National Reports, aims to analyse the possible nexus between visa policy and migration management and control, including tackling irregular migration. It will also generate evidence concerning the effectiveness of different strategies to use visa policy to manage migration, including cooperation with third countries, particularly concerning facilitation and bilateral/multilateral agreements and highlighting best practice, as well as helping to contextualise national policies and practices by providing an overview of policy in this area across the EU. Finally, the Study will explore the effects of EU policy and legislation on national policymaking and practices. A number of country-based case studies will be presented, including China, Nigeria, Russian Federation and Turkey, and the study will draw on good practice from other countries too. It will be published in 2012.

### ***2.3.4 Practical measures for reducing irregular migration***

Reducing irregular migration and actions against trafficking in human beings remain a key priority

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<sup>8</sup> COM(2011) 743 final (p.3)

<sup>9</sup> SEC(2011) 1353 final (p.5)

at both EU and national level, as exemplified by the Justice and Home Affairs Council approval in April 2012 of the *EU Action on Migratory Pressures - A Strategic Response*.<sup>10</sup> Development of this strategy began under the auspices of the Polish Presidency in the latter half of 2011. Against this background, the overall objective of this study was to provide an overview of existing practical approaches, mechanisms and measures implemented by Member States to reduce irregular migration to the EU in relation to pre-entry, entry, stay and regularisation, and return stages. A number of Ad-Hoc Queries launched in 2011 enabled the EMN to provide up-to-date information in relation to the issue of irregularity, in advance of the findings of the study. Many National Reports were published in the latter half of 2011 and the Synthesis Report itself, based on 22 National Reports, will be finalised in 2012 and aim to inform the implementation of the above-mentioned strategy. The EMN Conference 2011 (see [Section 2.4.1](#)) also served to promote the study to a wide audience of policymakers and practitioners, with initial findings presented by a number of EMN NCPs, as well as at the national meeting of the FR EMN NCP in November 2011.<sup>11</sup>

### ***2.3.5 Misuse of the Right to Family Reunification: marriages of convenience and false declarations of parenthood***

A public consultation on the Family Reunification Directive 2003/86/EC was launched in 2011<sup>12</sup> in order to collect opinions on how to have more effective rules on family reunification at EU level and to provide factual information and data on the application of the Directive. To directly inform the consultation process, the EMN undertook its first Focussed Study in order to provide up-to-date information specifically on marriages of convenience and on false declarations of parenthood across the EU. The aim of the study was to identify the scale and scope of this type of misuse and to provide clear evidence, to the extent possible (i.e. where the misuse was detected), including available statistics. The study also summarised Member States' best practices in the prevention of these types of misuse and identified any changes in practice or in legislation that can assist in preventing such misuses. The outcomes of the study were first presented at the public hearing on the Family Reunification Green Paper in June 2012.<sup>13</sup>

### ***2.3.6 Immigration of International Students to the EU***

Following the Commission's report on the application of Directive 2004/114/EC<sup>14</sup> and its possible amendment, this study aims to provide an overview of the immigration policies implemented by (Member) States regarding international students, with a view to assisting policymakers and practitioners to achieve a balance between actively attracting international students into the EU for the purposes of study, and preventing the misuse of international student routes to migration. The results of the study will be published in Autumn 2012 and its outcomes also presented at the EMN Conference 2012 under the auspices of the Cypriot Presidency.

## **2.4 EMN Ad-Hoc Queries**

EMN Ad-Hoc Queries continue to be a highly responsive mechanism for collecting comparative information from Member States and Norway, on a specific, topical issue, within a short timeframe. An Ad-Hoc Query can be launched by an EMN NCP, or the Commission, with a typical response period of four weeks, after which a compilation of all responses is produced and circulated. Some

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<sup>10</sup> <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/12/st08/st08714-re01.en12.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.immigration.gouv.fr/spip.php?page=dossiers\\_det\\_res&numrubrique=376&numarticle=2617](http://www.immigration.gouv.fr/spip.php?page=dossiers_det_res&numrubrique=376&numarticle=2617)

<sup>12</sup> Outcomes of this public consultation are available at [http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/news/consulting\\_public/consulting\\_0023\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/news/consulting_public/consulting_0023_en.htm).

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.events-and-activities-european-integration-forum-7>

<sup>14</sup> COM(2011) 587 final

EMN NCPs made use of a *scale of unit costs* ("lump sum") to cover the costs of providing a response.

The responses are publicly available on the EMN's website,<sup>15</sup> subject to the agreement of the contributing EMN NCPs. There are now almost 400 Ad-Hoc Query compilations, responding to an extensive range of migration and asylum issues which provide a valuable information resource for the Commission, EMN NCPs, and the wider public. In total, 76 Ad-Hoc Queries were launched during 2011, with each query having on average 17 individual Member State responses (equivalent to over 1 300 individual responses from the EMN NCPs). Almost all EMN NCPs and COM launched at least one Ad-Hoc Query during 2011.

The most frequent topic addressed was **international protection, including asylum** accounting for 20% of all Ad-Hoc Queries. The main aspects addressed within this topic related to reception conditions; proof of relationship of applicants for international protection; cash and other benefits for asylum applicants; documentation issued for asylum seekers; and the evaluation of asylum systems. A number of Ad-Hoc Queries concentrated on the specific circumstances of nationals from third countries, including Albania, Somalia and South Ossetia. **Return** accounted for a further 15%, with Ad-Hoc Queries addressing issues such as the acceptance of return decisions made by another Member State; payment of the costs of removal; and use of language analysis during the removal process. The value of Ad-Hoc Queries as a mutual learning and sharing instrument to tackle common issues was effectively evidenced by Member States making use of the tool to address questions related to return policy for Syrian nationals; forced removals for Afghan nationals and expulsions to Libya, all in response to new circumstances presented by the Arab Spring. **Residence** represented some 13% of all Ad-Hoc Queries, and included themes such as security risks when issuing residence permits; the limitations to acquiring real estate by third-country nationals; and residence permits issued to citizens of the Republic of China (Taiwan). Ad-Hoc Queries relating to the direct implementation of **EU Acquis** accounted for a further 11%. Other themes of note included **economic migration, family reunification, irregular immigration, integration, students, trafficking and visas**.

The Commission has also made effective use of Ad-Hoc Queries in relation to high profile issues, such as the European Court of Justice's decision on the Zambrano (C-34/09) case in 2011, where the Commission used the EMN to rapidly assess the conditions of automatic and unconditional granting of citizenship to persons born on the territory of a Member State, irrespective of the immigration status of the parents (unconditional *jus soli*). Another Ad-Hoc Query initiated by the Commission, with direct policy implications, concerned the status of national data stored in relation to harmonised residence permits. The information provided by Member States was used in the context of negotiations between the co-legislators on the Single Permit proposal.

## 2.5 EMN Glossary<sup>16</sup> and Thesaurus

The development of these tools to facilitate comparability was undertaken by the EMN's Glossary and Thesaurus Working Group, comprising of EMN members and the Fundamental Rights Agency. The group met four times in 2011, in conjunction with an EMN NCP meeting, to introduce, discuss, refine and agree upon the terms and the format for the updated Glossary publication, and to structure and develop the EMN Thesaurus. An updated version of the multilingual EMN Glossary was developed and published in 2011, with more than 1 500 copies distributed to national and EU stakeholders. The Glossary is also available as a web-based tool on the EMN website<sup>17</sup> and the

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.emn.europa.eu> under "EMN Outputs: EMN Ad-Hoc Queries"

<sup>16</sup> ISBN 978-92-79-23336-4 (January 2012), available also from <http://www.emn.europa.eu> under "EMN Outputs: EMN Glossary."

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.emn.europa.eu> under "EMN Glossary".

terms are to be incorporated into IATE (Inter-Active Terminology for Europe).<sup>18</sup> Translations of the definitions, as well as the terms, in the updated glossary into DE, ES, FR, IT and PT took place during the year, and each language version will appear as a separate publication in 2012. Good progress was also made towards the development of the EMN Thesaurus, which will facilitate structured searching of the documents available through the EMN's Information Exchange System.

### **3. NETWORKING**

Extensive networking continued in 2011, amongst the EMN NCPs themselves, and at national level, as detailed below. This has contributed to strengthening the network and to boost its impacts. A more strategic approach has been adopted towards other relevant entities.

#### **3.1 Networking amongst EMN NCPs**

Seven EMN NCP Meetings (46<sup>th</sup> to 52<sup>nd</sup>) were organised and hosted by the Commission, bringing together the EMN NCPs approximately every 6-8 weeks. Meetings were mainly held in Brussels, although the 51<sup>st</sup> meeting was held in Warsaw, Poland in conjunction with the EMN Conference 2011. The meetings focused on the delivery of the outputs set out in the EMN Work Programme, but were also effective in reviewing and discussing the findings and recommendations of the external evaluation and how these were to be implemented. Meetings were typically attended by one or two delegates from each EMN NCP, along with other invited representatives, notably from the Commission's Eurostat and from the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA).

EMN NCP workshops continued during 2011, in conjunction with the formal EMN NCP meetings and in response to identified needs. As well as the two workshops supporting the External Evaluation (on 9 February and 23 May 2011), there were also workshops on new formats to improve the policy-relevance of EMN outputs (13 July 2011); on the development of study specifications for the 2011 EMN study on Irregular Migration (5 April 2011) and for the 2012 Main Study and first Focussed Study (16 December 2011); on the further development of the EMN website and the IES (5 April 2011); and on the management of EMN NCP grants (23 September 2011), in preparation for the submission of the 2011 Final Reports.

Twinning collaborations, cluster meetings and conferences hosted by an individual EMN NCP to facilitate information exchange amongst EMN NCPs on specific topics of common interest and to improve access to information continued in 2011, with over 30 events held in total. Many were additionally attended by a representative from the Commission and/or the EMN Service Provider.

#### **3.2 Networking at National level**

EMN NCPs are required to develop and maintain a national network comprising a wide range of relevant stakeholders. EMN NCPs and Steering Board members actively enhance the visibility of the EMN at national level, particularly in relation to policymaking, through a wide range of activities, including the organisation of national conferences and networking events. Almost all EMN NCP organised at least one or more national network meetings and other events involving their network partners, often in conjunction with a twinning/cluster meeting with other EMN NCPs. It was notable in 2011 how many national networking events were successful in attracting high level policymakers, including Ministers, and how many acted as a channel for collecting and feeding a range of perspectives into national policy and legislative debates.

Several EMN NCPs also used their national events to promote recent EMN studies, reports and other outputs, or to discuss upcoming ones. The EMN study on "*Practical responses for reducing*

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<sup>18</sup> <http://iate.europa.eu/>

*irregular migration*,” also the topic for the EMN Conference in 2011, was discussed during events in BG, FI, FR, LT, MT and NO; other events organised included the themes of *Temporary and Circular Migration* (UK) and *Visa Policy* (BG, IT, MT). The IT EMN NCP promoted a cycle of national events to publicise the EMN Glossary, which received considerable media attention. Upcoming EMN studies were also discussed, for example, *International Students* (DE). Other events focussed on capacity building of the EMN (DE, LT) in light of the findings and recommendations of the EMN External Evaluation.

### 3.3. Networking with other relevant entities

The EMN again stepped up its collaborative work with other entities<sup>19</sup> during 2011, in line with its mandate to ensure that its activities are consistent and coordinated with relevant EU instruments and structures, and in direct response to the recommendations of the External Evaluation Report. Cooperation took the form of contributions to EMN NCP meetings and workshops, and to specific EMN studies and other outputs.

In relation to EMN NCP meetings:

- Representatives of the Commission's **Eurostat** plus from the **FRA** regularly attended EMN NCP meetings throughout the year and a representative from the **European Asylum Support Office (EASO)**<sup>20</sup> attended the meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2011 for the first time;
- A regular item was introduced into the meeting agendas to allow relevant entities, and EMN NCPs, to present recent, relevant policy updates to the network. This has proved to be highly effective. Representatives from the Commission's **Directorate General (DG) for Research and Innovation** attended the EMN NCP meeting on 15 December 2011 and presented their activities in the field of migration. **DG Home Affairs**, which co-ordinates the EMN, presented *inter alia* an overview of recent developments in relation to **Integration** on 22 September 2011, and a representative of the EMN subsequently attended the meeting of the **National Contact Points on Integration**<sup>21</sup> on 8 November 2011, where the two networks sought to improve the mutual sharing of information.

In relation to EMN studies and outputs, specific activities included:

- For the EMN study *Practical responses for reducing irregular migration*, co-operation took place with **FRA**, in the context of the FRA study on the *Fundamental Rights situation of Irregular Migrants* and from the **CLANDESTINO**<sup>22</sup> Project *Undocumented Migration: Counting the Uncountable Data and Trends Across Europe* in the form of contributions to the EMN Workshop on 5 April 2011;
- In the context of the development of the Main and first Focussed Studies for 2012, on the topics of, respectively *International Students* and the *Misuse of the Right to Family Reunification*, co-operation took place with the Commission's **Eurostat** and DGs for **Education and Culture** and for **Justice**, as well as specifically relevant units of **DG Home Affairs**. Representatives attended several EMN NCP meetings plus the EMN workshop dedicated to these topics on 16 December 2011.

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<sup>19</sup> An extensive list of relevant entities is available from the EMN website (<http://www.emn.europa.eu>) under "Useful Links," as well as, with regard to other databases, under "Activities: Other Databases."

<sup>20</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/policies/asylum/asylum\\_easo\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/policies/asylum/asylum_easo_en.htm)

<sup>21</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/en/about\\_us.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/en/about_us.cfm)

<sup>22</sup> <http://clandestino.eliamep.gr/>

The EMN also started its contributions to the EU Immigration Portal<sup>23</sup> by verifying that the content for their Member State on the portal website was correct, reliable and up-to-date. This involved first checking and updating the national information prior to the launching of the portal in November 2011.

#### **4. ENHANCING THE EMN'S VISIBILITY**

Steps to promote further the EMN to policymakers at national and European level, and to inform the wider public about its objectives, plus current and future activities, were intensified during the year, with several new elements included. All EMN outputs are available to the wider public, principally through the EMN website (and through EMN NCP national websites also), and publications of certain studies, and also presented at workshops, seminars, meetings and conferences at EU and national levels. The main activities undertaken, and progress made in 2011, are highlighted below.

##### **4.1 EMN Conference 2011<sup>24</sup>**

This took place under the auspices of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union, on the topic of *Combating irregular migration: practical responses* in Warsaw, in October 2011. The Conference was designed to link into the EMN Study on *Practical measures to reduce irregular migration* and involved representatives from the European Commission, 27 EMN National Contact Points, plus many international and regional organisations, such as the Council of Europe, International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative (MARRI); EU Agencies, such as FRA and Frontex; NGOs, such as the Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM), who all gave presentations; plus from Polish National and Academic Institutions. Overall there were some 160 participants.

The published Conference conclusions recognised that challenges remain in identifying and studying the issues of irregular migration and irregular migrants, but that effective tools have been developed that were impacting on the scale of irregular migration of third-country nationals in the EU Member States, and that practical measures needed to be sensitive to the geopolitical factors influencing irregular migration. A further important conclusion was the recognition that action taken to address irregular migration needed to be balanced whilst respecting migrants' dignity and rights.

##### **4.2 Other conferences and events in 2011**

In addition to the national conferences and events hosted by EMN NCPs (see Section 3.2), and consistent with its mandate to reach out to wider audiences, the EMN played a very active role in the 16<sup>th</sup> International Metropolis Conference: *Migration Futures: Perspectives on Global Changes* (12 – 16 September 2011), which drew together a global audience of policymakers, researchers and civil society. EMN inputs included organising three workshops,<sup>25</sup> a poster *Impact of immigration on ageing in Italy* under the theme of Ageing and Migration (IT) and participation in the Roundtable:

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<sup>23</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/immigration/>

<sup>24</sup> [http://emn.gov.pl/portal/ese/751/8888/EMN\\_Conference\\_2011.html](http://emn.gov.pl/portal/ese/751/8888/EMN_Conference_2011.html) containing also the conference conclusions.

<sup>25</sup> *From perceptions to policy: using public perceptions of migration to inform policy development* (DE, PL and UK EMN NCPs); *Under-explored aspects of emigration: observations from developed countries* (DE, IE, LT and UK EMN NCPs); and *Irregular migration: perspectives from both countries of origin and destination* (AT, FR and UK EMN NCPs);

*On the waterfront: Global migration and port cities*, via a presentation on *Sea migration and the EU Southern Borders* (PT).

### 4.3 EMN and National Websites

The EMN website serves as the main means by which the EMN's various outputs are made publicly available. In 2011, further work was undertaken by the Service Provider (iLiCONN) to enhance the website pages to improve access, and ensure that information remained relevant and up-to-date. Weekly monitoring of visitors to the website continued in order to better understand the scale and scope of access and to monitor progress towards increasing the visibility of the EMN. On average, 150 – 200 visits/day were received, and whilst the indications are that the website is primarily used by EMN members, there has been evidence of wider interest from other users, including from beyond Europe and particularly following the International Metropolis Conference and the launch of the EMN Wikipedia page.

The web-based Information Exchange System (IES) was used to share documents with EMN NCPs, including for meetings, studies and for reference, and to share information and tools developed by EMN NCPs in their national contexts (e.g. national newsletter, presentation templates). A business plan to redevelop the EMN website and IES was completed during the course of 2011, but work is yet to commence on implementing these changes.

At national level, many EMN NCPs have developed their own national websites, with reciprocal links to the EMN website.<sup>26</sup> In many cases they have proven to be an effective tool and focus for information gathering and sharing at national level, with some NCPs reporting 500-700 visits per week. Taken across the network, this constitutes a considerable flow of information from the EMN to the Member States and beyond.

### 4.4 EMN Wikipedia Page<sup>27</sup>

In line with its Communications and Dissemination Strategy, and as approved by the EMN Steering Board, the EMN made an initial step towards enhancing its visibility through social media by creating an EMN Wikipedia page in 2011. The page presents a succinct summary of the EMN, its legal basis, constitution, purpose and role, highlights its main outputs and achievements, and makes links to other relevant entities also described in Wikipedia. Some EMN NCPs have developed their own language versions of the page, which is now available in EL, FR, HU, IT, LV, NL, SE and SK, which can be reciprocally accessed from the various translated pages.

### 4.5 EMN Newsletter and EMN Bulletin Report

In order to provide regular and up-to-date information on EMN activities and outputs, and related policy developments, to all EMN stakeholders, and to enhance visibility, the EMN produced four editions of its quarterly Newsletter (EMN*ews*), distributed by e-mail to some 800 recipients, and via the EMN website accessible with an RSS feed. Several EMN NCPs also routinely produce their own Newsletter for their national network members.

The EMN Newsletter has been replaced in 2012 by a new Report, the *EMN Bulletin*. The Bulletin is targeted at (senior) policymakers and aims to provide, on a regular basis, latest published EU and National developments in migration policy, as well as an overview of key statistics on key topics,

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<sup>26</sup> Links to the various national websites are provided at <http://www.emn.europa.eu> under "EMN NCPs."

<sup>27</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European\\_Migration\\_Network](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Migration_Network)

including trends and analysis, and the latest EMN outputs and developments. The first edition was published in June 2012.<sup>28</sup>

## **5. MANAGEMENT OF THE EMN**

The Steering Board, which met on 13<sup>th</sup> May and on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2011, strengthened its role in providing strategic guidance to the EMN during the year. The Director General of DG HOME attended the May 2011 Steering Board meeting to provide a strategic overview of the future direction of the EMN, within the framework of future EU policy developments, and the growing need for more timely and policy-relevant information, drawing also on the draft results of the EMN External Evaluation.

As well as providing strategic guidance to the EMN and monitoring the implementation of EMN activities, a number of decisions were taken by the Steering Board, in line with its remit, which included *inter alia* the approval of the:

- *2012 EMN Work Programme*, including the range of new products developed in line with the recommendations of the EMN External Evaluation and designed to enhance the EMN's role in relation to timeliness and policy-relevance;<sup>29</sup>
- *2012 Study Topics*; these were, for the EMN Main Study: *The Immigration of International Students to EU Member States* and for the three Focussed Studies: *Abuse of residence permits for the purpose of family reunification: Marriage of convenience and false declaration of paternity*; *Challenges and practices for establishing applicants' identity in the migration process*; and *Intra-EU Mobility of Third-Country Nationals*;
- *The indicative minimum and maximum budgets* for each EMN NCP in 2012;
- *EMN Status Report 2010*;
- Measures to improve the *visibility of the EMN through Social Media*, enabling the launch of an EMN Wikipedia page.

Following approval of the Steering Board, the EMN Work Programme 2011 was adopted as Commission Decision C(2012) 1753 on 22 March 2012, permitting the financing of the EMN NCPs. This totalled €7.5M in 2011, of which up to €5 971 000 was allocated as grants for financing up to 80% of the activities of the EMN NCPs, the remaining 20% having to be provided by an EMN NCP's national authority. For some EMN NCPs, owing to the difficult financial climate, difficulties were experienced in obtaining their required national contribution. The remainder of the total budget (€1 529 000) is principally used for the EMN Service Providers,<sup>30</sup> the External Evaluation<sup>31</sup> and for visibility actions (e.g. printed publications).

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<sup>28</sup> Announced on DG Home Affairs Twitter site (@EUHomeAffairs), see <http://t.co/FDBAbFuO>.

<sup>29</sup> As well as in-depth Annual Reports and Studies, the Work Programme introduced for 2012, a range of shorter, more focussed products, aimed at improving the timeliness and policy-relevance of EMN information. The main developments included: plans to produce one, rather than two Main Studies, responding to the longer term needs of policymakers, and to develop up to three smaller, Focussed Studies, responding to information needs in the short term; the introduction of succinct *EMN Inform* policy briefs on specific topics; and the discontinuation of the EMN Newsletter, in favour of a new Report, the *EMN Bulletin*, to provide on a regular basis, latest EU and national policy developments, as well as the most recent statistics, replacing also the Annual Reports on Migration and International Protection Statistics.

<sup>30</sup> Two EMN Service Providers (GHK-COWI and iLiCONN), were appointed by the Commission in 2009, GHK-COWI's main priorities are to prepare *inter alia* draft common study specifications and Synthesis

Particular attention continued to be paid to ensuring that each EMN NCP received financing commensurate with its activities in order to better match finances with EMN NCP activities. In addition, the Commission prepared the package for grant applications 2012; evaluated final reports for grants from previous years; and managed the EMN Service Provider contracts, plus contracts for producing publications. Monitoring by the Commission of the progress of EMN NCPs, their impacts, and levels of spend, also took place through their submission of Work Progress Reports in advance of each EMN NCP meeting.

The Commission and the EMN Service Providers met regularly during 2011 to ensure the continued smooth functioning of the EMN, including support for the EMN NCPs in managing the change in the delivery of their work and demands placed on the EMN; preparing EMN NCP meetings; developing Synthesis Reports, Studies and Statistical Reports; and the on-going development and functionality of the EMN website and Information Exchange System.

## **6. CONCLUDING REMARKS**

2011 was a pivotal year for the EMN, which has seen the network respond rapidly to the recommendations set out in its external evaluation and endorsed by its Steering Board, and to step-up to the challenges of increasing its policy relevance and impact. In 2011, there were again many examples of how the work of the EMN has directly contributed to informing policymakers at EU level. New studies in 2012 will feed directly into areas of EU level policy and legislation that are undergoing review, for example, international students and the issue of misuses of the right to family reunification. Ad-Hoc Queries have again been used to inform highly topical Commission Communications and Staff Working papers. At national level there is increasing evidence of EMN events and outputs shaping and informing national debates, often directly linked to policy development processes. The changes introduced in 2011 have strengthened the position of the EMN to improve its efficiency and effectiveness to play an increasingly important role as an advisory council for migration and asylum policy.

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Reports and other outputs and to support the network; for iLiCONN (Interactive Listening and CONNecting) their priorities are to develop further the Information Exchange System and the EMN website.

<sup>31</sup> Undertaken by the Centre for Strategy and Evaluation Services (CSES) under Specific Contract No. HOME/2010/EMNS/FW/0005 implementing Framework Service Contract No. JLS/2009/A1/001.