

EMN IRELAND MIGRATION MEMO #6: How do EMN Member Countries design and implement migration strategies?

This EMN Ireland Migration Memo summarises the finding from the EMN – OECD inform on Designing Migration Strategies. This Migration Memo was prepared by Dervla Potter and Emma Quinn. [EMN Ireland](#) is the Irish National Contact Point of the [European Migration Network](#) and is located in the [Economic and Social Research Institute](#) (ESRI) and the Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration.

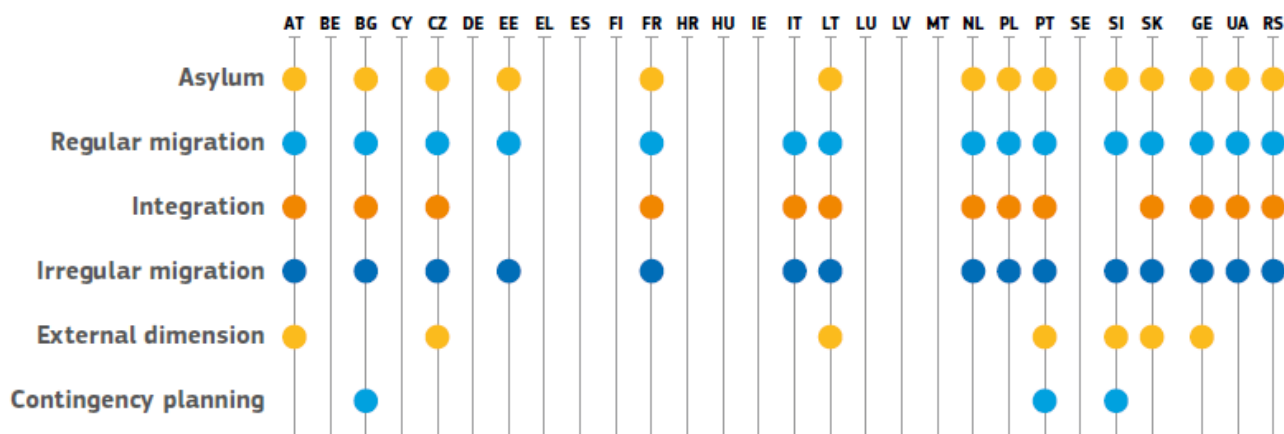
THE ISSUE

A migration strategy sets out a country's strategic approach to migration policy, establishing the rationale behind government actions on migration, within a formal, medium-to-long term policy framework. Such strategies can be valuable tools in migration governance and are common in EMN member and OECD countries. Their importance has grown recently. The Asylum and Migration Management Regulation, part of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, requires EU Member States to establish national strategies by June 2025, to show capacity to run effective asylum and migration management systems. This EMN Ireland Migration Memo looks at national strategies introduced since 2018 and provides a comparative overview of how EMN countries are designing, implementing, monitoring and communicating their overarching and sectoral migration strategies, outlining good practices that could be useful in the Irish context.

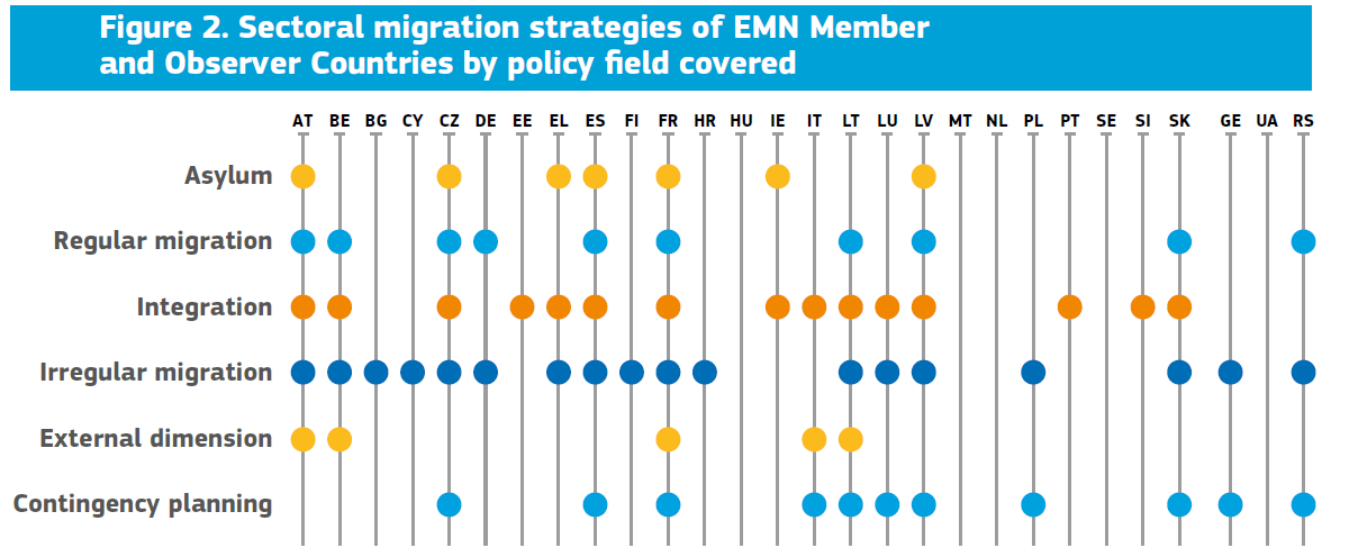
OVERVIEW OF STRATEGIES IN PLACE ACROSS EMN MEMBER COUNTRIES

The **majority of EMN Member Countries have one or more strategies** in place, while eleven have both an overarching strategy and one or more sectoral strategies. Ireland has sectoral strategies in the area of asylum (White Paper to End Direct Provision and Comprehensive Accommodation Strategy) as well as integration (National Action Plan Against Racism) but does not have an overarching migration strategy. The legal base of strategies can vary between countries; many countries have non-binding policy documents, while France, Italy and Spain have national legislation as the main document that defines multi-annual objectives and priorities. France sets its strategy and priorities within the framework of various immigration laws, and each law falls within the framework of the country's Finance Act, which allocates the resources needed to implement the measures included in the strategy.

Figure 1. Overarching migration strategies of EMN Member and Observer Countries by policy field covered



Some interesting **examples of sectoral strategies** include those related to skilled labour/talent attraction/mitigating talent drain (Austria, Germany, Slovakia), the integration of beneficiaries of temporary protection (Czech Republic), vulnerable international protection applicants (France, Greece) and diaspora (Latvia).



DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES

Primary responsibility for the design of strategies often lies with a single government department with the input of other stakeholders in some cases, similar to Ireland. In Austria, Bulgaria, Georgia and Portugal overarching strategies were developed through working groups involving relevant government bodies and other relevant stakeholders. In Bulgaria, the overarching strategy on migration was drafted by the National Council on Migration, Borders, Asylum and Integration (NCMBAI). The NCMBAI is composed of high-level officials of various branches of the Bulgarian government and has the option to invite representatives of civil society and international organisations to participate, although they do not have a decision-making role.

Stakeholders involved in designing the objectives of strategies include: local government, the private sector, civil society and non-governmental organisations, international organisations, academics and independent experts, as well as people with lived experience of the issue (e.g. beneficiaries of international protection, diaspora associations, etc.). Several EMN Member Countries also launched public consultations.

Challenges associated with strategy development include limited financial resources and limited involvement of migrant groups (including refugees). Difficulties in prioritising and reconciling feedback from stakeholders, and inter-governmental and stakeholder coordination also posed issues. Maintaining the relevance of strategies in light of geopolitical changes, which can affect the migration situation of a country, was also noted as a challenge. **Good practices** reported include coordinating bodies, effective coordination mechanisms, broad consultation processes, and developing strategies in coherence with other policies.

Implementation varies depending on the type of strategy, the institutions responsible for overseeing the strategy and the policy field. In the Slovak Republic, for example, the government’s resolution approving the country’s overarching migration strategies also tasked several ministries with developing **individual action plans to implement specific sections of the strategy**. Overall implementation is coordinated by the Steering Committee for Migration, Integration and Inclusion of Foreigners, chaired by the Director of the Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic.

Challenges associated with implementation reported by member countries include lack of cooperation and limited involvement of stakeholders, financial limitations, changing migration context and sensitivity of migration as an issue among the general public, including where migration links to other issues such as housing. **Good practices** regarding implementation include coordination mechanisms and the creation of new bodies that facilitate implementation.

MONITORING AND COMMUNICATING

Institutions responsible for monitoring strategies include individual ministries, inter-ministerial bodies, operational agencies, specific monitoring/advisory bodies and technical working groups and committees. In several cases, strategies are monitored and evaluated by the same authorities who developed (or contributed to developing) them. The implementation of **Georgia's overarching migration strategy and related action plans** is regularly monitored through an **electronic platform** operated by the SCMI Secretariat. Implementing bodies are required to report on the progress of activities on a **quarterly basis** and on defined output indicators. Based on these reports, the SCMI prepares an **annual monitoring report with recommendations**, which are circulated to members and submitted to government. The strategy is to be evaluated in two stages: an interim evaluation, foreseen for the first half of 2026, and a final evaluation, to take place by the end of policy cycle, but not later than first half of 2031.

Six countries have a **communication plan for disseminating their strategies** (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Ireland, Luxembourg and Latvia). The Czech Republic also has a **stand-alone communication strategy** (see below). Bulgaria's overarching strategy includes reference to the principle of transparency and to increasing awareness among civil society regarding the importance of the national overarching strategy for the prosperity and development of the country. Other communication strategies reported include media contact (press conferences, press releases) and using stakeholder forums. France indicated that local authorities are involved in the dissemination of its national integration plan.

Case study: The Czech Republic Communication Strategy on Migration

The Communication Strategy of the Czech Republic on Migration is a cross-cutting instrument that aims to objectively inform the public about migration. The strategy identifies the channels, tools and activities to be used. It was prepared by the Office of the Government and representatives of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A dedicated communication unit located within the Department of Asylum and Migration Policy was established. The communication strategy focuses on practitioners and wider public, including migrants living in the Czech Republic. It also addresses communication directed towards other EU Member States and relevant EU institutions. Its objectives are implemented primarily through the media including by spots in public service media and paid formats in commercial media, as well as through educational seminars; and regional conferences.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Diverse Strategies Across EMN Member Countries:** Most EMN Member Countries have migration strategies in place, with many having both overarching and sectoral strategies.
- **Strategy Development and Implementation:** Challenges identified include limited financial resources, insufficient involvement of migrant groups, and difficulties in stakeholder coordination. Good practices identified involve effective coordination mechanisms and broad consultation processes.
- **Monitoring and Communication:** Strategies are monitored by various institutions, often the same ones that developed them. Effective communication plans are important, with some countries like the Czech Republic having dedicated communication strategies to inform the public and stakeholders about migration.

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