

Memorandum of Understanding

between

Hungary, the Republic of Austria and the Republic of Serbia

on enhancing trilateral cooperation in effectively combating illegal migration

Hungary represented by Prime Minister H.E. Mr. Viktor Orbán, the Republic of Austria, represented by Federal Chancellor H.E. Mr. Karl Nehammer and the Republic of Serbia, represented by President H.E. Mr. Aleksandar Vučić, hereinafter referred to as “the Sides”,

Bearing in mind that migration is a common challenge which the Sides will address together as well as within European and international fora,

Concerned about the significant increase in the number of illegal migrants reaching Europe and especially the Republic of Austria, Hungary and the Republic of Serbia,

Considering that the Republic of Austria, Hungary and the Republic of Serbia are particularly exposed to high migratory pressure,

Reconfirming the need of a comprehensive approach in the countries of origin, along the migration routes, in transit countries as well as in destination countries,

Committed to contribute to the creation of a better international protection system that focusses on protection in or as close as possible to the region of origin, to the promotion of the first safe country concept, to encourage the establishment of reception facilities as close to the countries of origin as possible as well as the prevention of transcontinental illegal migratory flows by further improving border protection,

Aware that illegal migratory flows are closely related to various forms of organized crime, which pose a threat to all countries and require a comprehensive approach in addressing migratory flows,

Aspiring to effectively combat illegal migration, to step up police cooperation and to facilitate successful readmission by and return to countries of origin of illegal migrants,

Willing to further strengthen cooperation in the field of return in accordance with the provisions of customary international law, the respective readmission agreements and national legislation,

Based on existing friendly and fruitful relations between their countries,

Confirming the necessity of a stable, secure and prosperous Western Balkans region,

Welcoming the Republic of Serbia's efforts as a candidate for full membership of the European Union and *supporting* a more active EU involvement of the Western Balkans region on its EU integration path,

Acknowledging that the enlargement of the European Union is a geostrategic investment and *calling for* the acceleration of the accession process.

Having met on 3 October 2022 in Budapest and on 16 November 2022 in Belgrade,

Decide to further strengthen cooperation against illegal migration, especially in the core fields of border protection, combating migrant smuggling and stepping up activities in the field of return.

In this spirit, the Sides have reached the following understanding:

1. The Sides will further enhance cooperation in the field of border protection at the Serbian-North Macedonian border, in particular focusing on migrant smuggling, human trafficking and other forms of organized crime, terrorism and terrorism-related criminal acts. In this regard, the Republic of Austria and Hungary will actively contribute to improving the Serbian-North Macedonian border security through the deployment of border control personnel. Further cooperation in the field of border protection will be carried out through mutually decided measures, the sharing of expert knowledge on innovative technical border protection solutions as well as on education and training and the rapid exchange of information for early warning purposes. Concrete forms of cooperation have been jointly decided between the competent authorities.

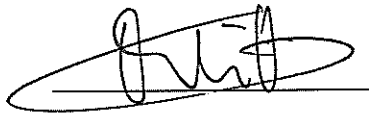
2. Hungary and The Republic of Austria will increase efforts and seek the realization of operative measures to support the Republic of Serbia in returning third country nationals not entitled to remain on the territory of the Republic of Serbia to their countries of origin, in full compliance with respective national and international legislation (i.e. cooperation on the organization of return flights). Focus will be laid on needs-oriented capacity building and training in all relevant phases of the return and readmission process, as well as on information campaigns and innovative communication strategies to promote voluntary return. The Joint Coordination Platform (JCP) will support this process.
3. Hungary and The Republic of Austria appreciate the Republic of Serbia's commitments to harmonise its visa policy with the European Union's visa acquis. The Republic of Austria welcomes that the Republic of Serbia has terminated the visa exemption regime with the Republic of Burundi and will terminate the visa exemption regime with the Republic of Tunisia on 20 November 2022 and with India by the end of this year. In line with its commitments in the European Union's accession process, the Republic of Serbia will end visa-free travel as soon as possible with regard to additional third countries from where illegal movement of persons to the EU particularly originates from.
4. Hungary and The Republic of Austria will consider further support in the field of border protection, smuggling of people on those borders of the Republic of Serbia which are exposed to particularly high migratory pressure and in the field of return, by engaging additional human resources as well as undertaking necessary and appropriate measures in accordance with their national legal frameworks. Further details will be jointly decided between the competent authorities.
5. The Sides invite the European Union to provide additional means, including financial support, for enhanced border protection and further operative measures.
6. The Sides will review the progress achieved at the next follow-up meeting in Vienna.

The Sides will invite the European Union and especially affected countries within Europe and the region, to join in the above-mentioned combined efforts to combat illegal migration more effectively.

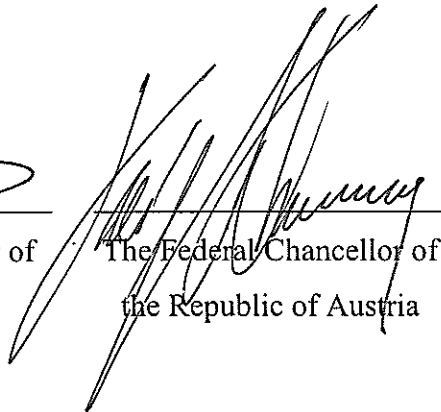
This Memorandum of Understanding will take effect from the date of signature. Any future modification to this Memorandum will be effected by mutual understanding of each Side and requires written form.

Each Side may cancel this Memorandum of Understanding by written notification. Such notification will become effective six months after its receipt by the other two Sides.

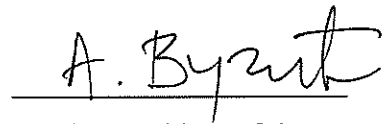
Signed in Belgrade on 16 November, 2022 in three copies in the English language.



The Prime Minister of
Hungary



The Federal Chancellor of
the Republic of Austria



The President of the
Republic of Serbia