



## **EMN Ad-Hoc Query on Experience with returns of Uzbek nationals to their country of origin**

Requested by Petra MASKOVA on 14th August 2017

### **Return**

Responses from Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, Norway (24 in total)

#### *Disclaimer:*

*The following responses have been provided primarily for the purpose of information exchange among EMN NCPs in the framework of the EMN. The contributing EMN NCPs have provided, to the best of their knowledge, information that is up-to-date, objective and reliable. Note, however, that the information provided does not necessarily represent the official policy of an EMN NCPs' Member State.*

### **Background information:**

In connection with the increased number of applicants for international protection and illegally residing foreigners of Uzbek nationality in the Czech Republic, the associated security risks arise. Based on recent findings, these groups might include radical Islamists or persons connected to other Islamist groups. Therefore we would like to address other EU Member States plus Norway with a query on the experience with returns of Uzbek nationals to their country of origin.




Please note that information provided by your MS is only for our internal needs. Therefore, findings of the query will not be disseminated any further.


### **Questions**



1. 1. Have you noticed an increase in the number of Uzbek applicants for international protection in the territory of your MS in recent years?
2. 2. What are the grounds for submitting an application for international protection that are most often mentioned by Uzbek nationals?
3. 3. Do your MS grant international protection to Uzbek nationals? If yes, what kind of protection? For which grounds it is being granted?
4. 4. Do you have any information from the Embassy of your MS in Uzbekistan or from other sources regarding the situation of returnees, i. e. unsuccessful applicants for international protection, or those returning to Uzbekistan after staying abroad for a longer period of time?
5. 5. Have you noticed an increase in the number of illegally staying Uzbek nationals or detained Uzbek nationals in the territory of your Member State in recent years?
6. 6. What is the reason most often mentioned by Uzbek nationals for being reluctant to return to the country of origin?
7. 7. Do you carry out forced returns of Uzbek nationals from the territory of your Member State to Uzbekistan?
8. 8. What experiences do you have considering voluntary or forced returns of Uzbek nationals, who do not dispose of travel documents or are unwilling to cooperate? How would you describe the cooperation with the Uzbek authorities in this matter, i.e. providing its nationals with necessary travel documents etc.?
9. 9. What are your real experiences with cooperation with the Uzbek state authorities when carrying out the return of unsuccessful applicants for international protection or of Uzbek nationals illegally staying in your Member State to Uzbekistan?





### **Responses**


	Country	Wider Dissemination	Response
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	Austria	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> In 2016, in comparison to the year 2015, an increase of applications for international protection by Uzbek nationals has been recorded (2015: 38 applications, 2016: 45 applications), however to a very limited extent. Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p> <p><b>2.</b> No information was provided by the Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p> <p><b>3.</b> In 2017, international protection has not yet been granted to Uzbek nationals. Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p> <p><b>4.</b> No information was provided by the Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p> <p><b>5.</b> No, with respect to apprehensions of irregularly staying Uzbek nationals in the last years a decrease has been recorded (2014: 9, 2015: 5, 2016: 3). There are no data on Uzbek nationals in detention. Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p> <p><b>6.</b> No information was provided by the Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p> <p><b>7.</b> No information was provided by the Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p> <p><b>8.</b> This is a relatively small number of people. The cooperation with the embassy of Uzbekistan works quite well and no special problems are known. Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p> <p><b>9.</b> No information was provided by the Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p>
	Belgium	No	
	Bulgaria	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> No applications for international protection have been submitted by Uzbek nationals in recent years.</p> <p><b>2.</b> N/A</p>

			<p><b>3.</b> N/A</p> <p><b>4.</b> N/A</p> <p><b>5.</b> As of today, no Uzbek citizens are accommodated in the Special Homes for Temporary Accommodation of Aliens at Migration Directorate - Ministry of Interior in Sofia and Lyubimets.</p> <p><b>6.</b> It is not known why Uzbek citizens are willing to return to their country of origin.</p> <p><b>7.</b> For the period 2012 - 29.08.2017, the Migration Directorate - Ministry of Interior has implemented imposed administrative measures on the basis of the Foreign Nationals Act in the Republic of Bulgaria (LRA) against 7 (seven) citizens of Uzbekistan.</p> <p><b>8.</b> The number of Uzbek returnees referred to in question 7 have been returned voluntarily, without accompaniment to the country of origin. There are no diplomatic and consular representations of the Republic of Uzbekistan on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria. In the event of the need to issue new travel documents or to extend the validity of existing ones, the assistance of the nearest diplomatic or consular representation of the Republic of Uzbekistan shall be sought.</p> <p><b>9.</b> N/A</p>
	Croatia	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> 1. No. There was no significant increment of Uzbek applicants for the international protection. In 2015 and 2016 there were no Uzbek applicants, while until the end of June 2017, two Uzbek applicants have been registered.</p> <p><b>2.</b> 2. N/a.</p> <p><b>3.</b> 3. No.</p> <p><b>4.</b> 4. N/a.</p>


			<p>5. 5. No.</p> <p>6. 6. N/a.</p> <p>7. 7. N/a.</p> <p>8. 8. N/a.</p> <p>9. 9. N/a.</p>
	Cyprus	Yes	<p>1. No applications for international protection have been submitted by Uzbek nationals in Cyprus</p> <p>2. n/a</p> <p>3. n/a</p> <p>4. n/a</p> <p>5. No</p> <p>6. n/a</p> <p>7. No</p> <p>8. n/a</p> <p>9. n/a</p>
	Czech Republic	No	


	Estonia	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> In Estonia there have been only two asylum applications from Uzbek nationals and therefore it can be said, that there is no increase in the number of Uzbek applicants for International protection.</p> <p><b>2.</b> N/A</p> <p><b>3.</b> Every asylum application is processed individually and the decision for international protection is made on individual basis.</p> <p><b>4.</b> Estonia does not have experience with the return of Uzbek nationals so far.</p> <p><b>5.</b> N/A</p> <p><b>6.</b> N/A</p> <p><b>7.</b> N/A</p> <p><b>8.</b> N/A</p> <p><b>9.</b> N/A</p>
	Finland	No	
	France	No	
	Germany	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> The number of Uzbek applicants has been quite low in the past years, almost always around 20 to 25 applicants per year. There has been an increase of the numbers in 2016 with a peak of 91 applicants. The number of Uzbek applicants for international protection has decreased in the year 2017, to a number of 26 so far. Compared to other groups of asylum seekers in Germany, the number of Uzbek applicants is very low.</p>



			<p><b>2.</b> Out of legal principle, no data about the reasons for applying for international protection is collected.</p> <p><b>3.</b> International protection can be granted in regard of the individual case. There is a possibility for Uzbek nationals to be granted international protection according to the German Asylum Law and the Residence Act. Others may not be granted international protection, depending on the individual case.</p> <p><b>4.</b> Considering the low number of applicants, no data on this question is available</p> <p><b>5.</b> Considering the low numbers of Uzbek nationals in Germany, no information in this regard can be given.</p> <p><b>6.</b> No information available, see question 2.</p> <p><b>7.</b> Forced returns are carried out occasionally, but the numbers are very low. In recent years, only one or two persons per year have been forcibly returned to Uzbekistan.</p> <p><b>8.</b> Only a very small number of Uzbek nationals (one or two per year) have returned to their country of origin voluntarily. So far there have been no reports about problems in this regard.</p> <p><b>9.</b> The numbers of Uzbek nationals who have been returned to their country of origin has been very low. There is no information available about problems specific to this nationality.</p>
	Hungary	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> No.</p> <p><b>2.</b> Between 15 September 2015 and 29 August 2017 the Immigration and Asylum Office registered one Uzbek applicant only. A full decision has not been made, as the applicant left the designated residence without permission to an unknown destination.</p> <p><b>3.</b> According to the Act LXXX of 2007 on Asylum: 6.-7. §: Hungary shall recognise as refugee a foreigner who complies with the requirements stipulated by Article XIV (3) of the Fundamental</p>



			<p>Law. A foreigner shall not be recognised as refugee in respect of whom any of the exclusion clauses stipulated in Article 1 D, E or F of the Geneva Convention prevails.</p> <p>4. No.</p> <p>5. No.</p> <p>6. The Immigration and Asylum Office has no information on this.</p> <p>7. The Immigration and Asylum Office did not carry out forced returns in the recent years to Uzbekistan.</p> <p>8. No relevant experience.</p> <p>9. Nothing worth mentioning.</p>
	Ireland	No	
	Latvia	No	
	Lithuania	Yes	<p>1. No. Only 1 Uzbek national applied for asylum in Lithuania (in the period of 2014-2017).</p> <p>2. There are not many asylum seekers from Uzbekistan, which is why it certain grounds cannot be distinguished. Each application is examined individually.</p> <p>3. 1 Uzbek national was granted asylum in 2014-2017.</p> <p>4. N/A</p> <p>5. No.</p>





			<p><b>6.</b> N/A</p> <p><b>7.</b> Yes, in 2014–2017 4 Uzbek nationals were returned (2017 – 0, 2016 – 1, 2015 – 1, 2014 – 2).</p> <p><b>8.</b> N/A. The returned Uzbek nationals submitted their travel documents and were willing to cooperate.</p> <p><b>9.</b> N/A</p>
	Luxembourg	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> No. During 2016 there was one Uzbek international protection applicant. The applicant was considered a Dublin Case and a decision of transfer was taken. From 01/01/2017 until 31/07/2017 there has not been a single application for international protection of an Uzbek national.</p> <p><b>2.</b> N/A. In the last 19 months there has been only one application and it was a Dublin case so the individual was transferred to another MS.</p> <p><b>3.</b> In the last 19 months there has not been any international protection granted. Luxembourg treats every international protection application on a case by case basis analysing the facts described by the applicant as well as the evidence provided and taking into consideration the general situation of the country of origin. If yes, what kind of protection? N/A For which grounds it is being granted? N/A</p> <p><b>4.</b> No. Luxembourg does not have a diplomatic representation in Uzbekistan. The application for visas for coming to Luxembourg are handled by the French Embassy at Tashkent.</p> <p><b>5.</b> No.</p> <p><b>6.</b> N/A.</p> <p><b>7.</b> During 2015 and 2016 there were neither voluntary nor forced returns to Uzbekistan.</p>


			<p>8. N/A.</p> <p>9. N/A.</p>
<p>+</p> 	Malta	Yes	<p>1. No. The Office of the Refugee Commissioner only received a very limited number of applications for international protection from Uzbek nationals (4 in total), with the last one dating back to 2015.</p> <p>2. Out of 4 applications lodged by Uzbek nationals only 3 were examined since 1 of them was closed as implicitly withdrawn. Out of the 3 applications that were examined, 2 applicants claimed protection on the basis of threats received from private individuals, and 1 applicant claimed protection on the basis of a well-founded fear of persecution from the State authorities.</p> <p>3. Each application received by the Office of the Refugee Commissioner is assessed on its own merits, and depending on the particular circumstances of the case, an Uzbek national could be granted international protection. To date, only one Uzbek national was granted refugee status, which was granted on political grounds.</p> <p>4. No.</p> <p>5. No.</p> <p>6. 2 applicants claimed that they could not return to Uzbekistan for fear of being harmed or killed by the individuals who were threatening them, and 1 applicant claimed that he could not return to Uzbekistan for fear of the State authorities.</p> <p>7. MT has no experience with forced returns to Uzbekistan.</p> <p>8. As in 7.7</p> <p>9. As in 7.7</p>

	Netherlands	No	
	Portugal	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No, there's no increase on this nationality. Figures are zero or lower than 5.</li> <li>2. N/A.</li> <li>3. N/A.</li> <li>4. No, there's no representation on this nationality. Figures are zero or lower than 5.</li> <li>5. No.</li> <li>6. N/A.</li> <li>7. N/A.</li> <li>8. N/A.</li> <li>9. N/A.</li> </ol>
	Slovak Republic	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No.</li> <li>2. N/A</li> <li>3. No such cases have been recorded.</li> <li>4. No. There have not been any significant numbers of returnees.</li> <li>5. No.</li> <li>6. N/A</li> </ol>

			<p>7. Recently, there have not been such cases.</p> <p>8. Slovak Republic does not have much experience with returns of Uzbek nationals.</p> <p>9. N/A</p>
	Slovenia	Yes	<p>1. We've had no cases of such.</p> <p>2. n.a.</p> <p>3. n.a.</p> <p>4. n.a.</p> <p>5. n.a.</p> <p>6. n.a.</p> <p>7. n.a.</p> <p>8. n.a.</p> <p>9. n.a.</p>
	Spain	Yes	<p>1. -</p> <p>2. -</p> <p>3. -</p> <p>4. No.</p>

			<p><b>5.</b> No. Numbers in Spain are close to 0.</p> <p><b>6.</b> N/A</p> <p><b>7.</b> N/A</p> <p><b>8.</b> N/A</p> <p><b>9.</b> N/A</p>
	Sweden	Yes	<p><b>1.</b> No</p> <p><b>2.</b> The Swedish Migration Agency (SMA) is unable to provide information regarding grounds claimed for international protection since this data not statistically recorded.</p> <p><b>3.</b> Yes, both refugee status and subsidiary protection. The SMA is unable to provide information regarding grounds since this data is not statistically recorded.</p> <p><b>4.</b> The Swedish Migration Agency does not have any information regarding the situation of those who have returned to Uzbekistan from Sweden.</p> <p><b>5.</b> Yes. During 2013 – 2015 the number of Uzbek nationals who were issued with a detention decision by the SMA was around 40 per year. In 2016 the number increased to just under 70 and so far during 2017 the number is over 100.</p> <p><b>6.</b> This data not statistically recorded and therefore the SMA is unable to provide this information.</p> <p><b>7.</b> Yes</p> <p><b>8.</b> Those who are required to leave Sweden and return to Uzbekistan but lack valid travel documents must personally submit an online application for a temporary travel document to allow them to return to Uzbekistan. Provided the application is fully completed and submitted</p>

			<p>online, it generally takes around 2 months for a travel document to be issued. The Swedish Migration Agency is not always involved in the process of obtaining travel documents as many returnees choose to take care of all contact with the Uzbek authorities themselves. In those cases where the SMA does have contact with the Uzbek authorities, we find that the authorities do issue travel documents, provided the online application form is complete.</p> <p><b>9.</b> See response to question 8 above.</p>
	<p>United Kingdom</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p><b>1.</b> No. The number of Uzbek nationals applying for international protection has been very low. Less than 25 applications per year for the last 5 years.</p> <p><b>2.</b> I'm afraid we do not have information on the reasons for an application.</p> <p><b>3.</b> Yes. International protection is granted on a case by case basis.</p> <p><b>4.</b> I'm afraid, given the low number, we do not have this information.</p> <p><b>5.</b> No, we have not noticed an increase.</p> <p><b>6.</b> I'm afraid we do not have this information.</p> <p><b>7.</b> Yes. Uzbek nationals are not exempt from forced returns.</p> <p><b>8.</b> Our relationship with the Uzbekistan Embassy here in London is very good. We have a process in place for obtaining travel documents although to date this has not been extensively tested as returns to Uzbekistan using a HO obtained travel document are very low.</p> <p><b>9.</b> Given the very small number who have been returned, we have not had any problems with the Uzbek authorities.</p>

	Norway	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Not at all. The numbers for 2016 and 2017 are roughly 25% of what they were in 2014. See table in attachment.</li><li>2. Information not available at this time.</li><li>3. YES Convention Refugees, other forms of protection, humanitarian grounds.</li><li>4. No system for collecting information about Uzbek returnees' situation that we know of.</li><li>5. We do not have this information, but believe that due to the low number of applicants in recent years that this is not a big problem.</li><li>6. Information not available at this time.</li><li>7. Yes. 48 forced returns carried out in 2014 to Uzbekistan, 5 in 2015, 11 in 2016 and 8 as of Aug. 31, 2017. (there were other forced returns of these citizens through Dublin-2, expulsion and deportation)</li><li>8. Information not available on forced returns: on assisted voluntary return we have not experienced problems with the Uzbek authorities.</li><li>9. In regards to assisted voluntary return we have not experienced any special problems with the embassy. No information about forced returns.</li></ol>
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