

Annex I: Member State practices

Member States practices are provided in the tables below, listed in alphabetical protocol order.

Czechia

Name of scheme	-
Link	-
Potential beneficiaries	Human rights defenders at risk globally
Number of beneficiaries	Depending on the year, between a few to several hundred
Visa type	Schengen C visa
Residence permit	No
Relevant legislative act and article (link)	EU Visa Code linked to §20 of the Act No. 326/1999 Coll. on the residence of foreigners in the territory of the Czech Republic (Zákon o pobytu cizinců na území České republiky), 1 January 2000
Length of stay	Up to 3 months
Vetting process	Through national NGOs working with civil society abroad and embassies
Family members covered	Yes
Financial support	No (not from the state, but through cooperating NGOs)
Provision of housing	No (not from the state, but through cooperating NGOs)
Work permit	No
Access to banking services	No
Health insurance	No

Additional support	Advocacy support given to beneficiaries through cooperating NGOs
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Alternative text: See descriptions in text ([Chapter 4.2](#)).

Source: FRA, 2023.

Name of scheme	Civil Society Programme
Link	https://www.mzv.cz/jnp/cz/informace_pro_cizince/aktuality/program_obcanska_spolocnost.html
Potential beneficiaries	Human rights defenders from Russia and Belarus
Number of beneficiaries	Quota of 500 per year
Visa type	Various national long-stay visa (such as: work permit; long-term residency visa for the purpose of studies; long-term visa for scientific research; long-term visa for business purposes; long-term visa for other purposes)
Residence permit	Yes for Russian and Belarus defenders under this scheme
Relevant legislative act and article (link)	Resolution of the Government of the Czech Republic of 18 May 2022 No 418 (208)
Length of stay	1 year with possibility of applying for a long-term residence
Vetting process	Through specified partner NGOs in cooperation with MFA
Family members covered	Yes
Financial support	No (not from the state – cooperating NGOs undertake to cover their expenses)
Provision of housing	No (not from the state – cooperating NGOs undertake to cover their expenses)

(208) Government of the Czech Republic (2022), ‘Resolution of the Government of the Czech Republic of 18 May 2022 No 418’, ([“Usnesení vlády české republiky”](#)), 18 May 2022.

Work permit	Yes for Russian and Belarus defenders in case of employment / study visa, no for all others
Access to banking services	Yes
Health insurance	No

Alternative text: See descriptions in text ([Chapter 4.2](#)).

Source: FRA, 2023.

Estonia

Name of scheme	-
Link	-
Potential beneficiaries	Human rights defenders from Russia and Belarus, independent journalists from Russia and Belarus
Number of beneficiaries	No publicly available
Visa type	Various (visa on humanitarian grounds to enter, national long-term visa to stay and work)
Residence permit	Yes (to stay and work as a journalist; additionally for Belarus citizens, to stay and work in the ICT sector)
Relevant legislative act and article (link)	Regulation by which the State imposed restrictions and derogations from restrictions (209)

(209) Riigi Teataja (2022), 'Imposition of a sanction by the Government of the Republic in connection with the aggression of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus in Ukraine' ("[Vabariiqi Valitsuse sanktsiooni kehtestamine seoses Venemaa Föderatsiooni ja Valgevene Vabariiqi agressiooniga Ukrainas](#)"), 8 April 2022.

Length of stay	In the case of a visa on humanitarian grounds up to 3 months, long-term visa up to 12 months, residence permit up to 5 years.
Vetting process	Journalists must be accredited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia
Family members covered	It is possible to apply for a visa or residence permit as a family member according to the regular rules.
Financial support	No
Provision of housing	No
Work permit	Yes, if applicable (needed in case of staying on the basis of a long-term visa)
Access to banking services	Yes
Health insurance	Yes
Additional support	No

Alternative text: See descriptions in text ([Chapter 4.2](#)).

Source: FRA, 2023.

Finland

Name of scheme	Emergency hosting for artists at risk
Link	www.artistsatrisk.org
Potential beneficiaries	Artists and cultural professionals including journalists under threat
Number of beneficiaries	38 in 2022
Visa type	Schengen visa
Residence permit	Residents can apply for work-based residency permits for visits lasting more than 90 days. Temporary protection status is provided for artists from Ukraine.

Relevant legislative act and article (link)	Ukraine: https://migri.fi/en/ukraine Others: https://migri.fi/en/residence-permit-for-an-employed-person
Length of stay	Between 2-24 months depending on type of visa or residence permit
Vetting process	By Artists at Risk employed specialists carrying out background checks and assessments.
Family members covered	Yes
Financial support	Yes (incl. emergency living grants, travel expenses, travel insurance, housing costs)
Provision of housing	Yes
Work permit	Artists at Risk-residents staying more than 90 days can apply for a work permit. Artists from Ukraine may work in Finland after they have applied for temporary protection after their arrival
Access to banking services	Yes for residents with a work permit and for Ukrainians with temporary protection.
Health insurance	Artists at Risk-residents with 90 days Schengen visas have travel insurance from their country of origin. Artists at Risk-residents with work permits can apply for a KELA card, which entitles an access to Finnish healthcare.
Additional support	Working together with Artists at Risk-Finland Residency hosts, the AR-Finland Residency Coordinator and AR-Safe Haven Helsinki Residency Assistant support artists on a variety of issues such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ receiving payments ■ SIM and travel cards, ■ opening bank accounts as well as ■ visa issues, ■ health matters, ■ schools or kindergartens, ■ language learning and ■ psychological support (if required) <p>If the artists want to practise their art, the development of artistic productions are supported, and networks are created for artistic work.</p>

Alternative text: See descriptions in text ([Chapter 4.2](#)).

Source: FRA, 2023.

France

Name of scheme	L'Initiative Marianne / The Marianne Initiative
Link	https://www.initiativemarianne.fr/en/
Potential beneficiaries	HRDs at risk globally
Number of beneficiaries	27 as of 2023
Visa type	National temporary long-stay visa
Residence permit	No
Relevant legislative act and article (link)	-
Length of stay	6 months
Vetting process	Application form accessible online, selection committee composed of renowned personalities
Family members covered	No
Financial support	Yes (monthly grant and travel costs)
Provision of housing	Yes
Work permit	No, however HRDs accessing the programme are expected to work on a project linked to their human rights work during their stay in France
Access to banking services	Yes
Health insurance	Yes
Additional support	Personalised support; training programme; networking opportunities, depending on the expressed needs of the participants; psychological support

Alternative text: See descriptions in text ([Chapter 4.2](#)).

Source: FRA, 2023.

Germany

Name of scheme	Elisabeth Selbert Initiative (ESI)
Link	https://www.ifa.de/en/funding/elisabeth-selbert-initiative
Potential beneficiaries	Human rights defenders at risk globally
Number of beneficiaries	Not publicly available
Visa type	National D visa
Residence permit	No
Relevant legislative act and article (link)	Visas are issued in line with generally applicable legal provisions for national D visas
Length of stay	4-6 months, renewable for another 4-6 months in case of need
Vetting process	<p>Vetting for funding by the programme: The decision about funding is made by an independent committee, consisting of four to six people proposed by the German Federal Foreign Office, ifa, the German Institute for Human Rights and the Forum Menschenrechte. If the committee chooses the applicant, a contract is concluded between the host organisation and ifa.</p> <p>Vetting for visa: ESI sends a recommendation letter to the visa authority, indicating that a certain HRD has been chosen for the programme.</p>
Family members covered	In exceptional circumstances
Financial support	Monthly scholarship covering housing, living expenses, local public transport, communication, and travel costs

Provision of housing	Yes
Work permit	No, however defenders are placed in organisations where they can work
Access to banking services	Yes
Health insurance	Yes
Additional support	Yes (psychosocial support, networking and training opportunities)

Alternative text: See descriptions in text ([Chapter 4.2](#)).

Source: FRA, 2023.

Ireland

Name of scheme	Facilitated Visa Procedure for Human Rights Defenders
Link	-
Potential beneficiaries	Human rights defenders a risk globally
Number of beneficiaries	Approx. 900 since 2005
Visa type	Limited territorial validity (LTV) visa on humanitarian grounds (accelerated processes possible in case of immediate risk)
Residence permit	No
Relevant legislative act and article (link)	N/a
Length of stay	3 months (renewal for another 3 months in exceptional cases)
Vetting process	verified by the NGO Front Line Defenders
Family members covered	No
Financial support	No (not from the state, but through cooperating NGOs)

Provision of housing	No (not from the state, but through cooperating NGOs)
Work permit	No
Access to banking services	No
Health insurance	No (not from the state, but through cooperating NGOs)
Additional support	No (not from the state, but through cooperating NGOs)

Alternative text: See descriptions in text ([Chapter 4.2](#)).

Source: FRA, 2023.

Latvia

Name of scheme	-
Link	-
Potential beneficiaries	HRDs from Russia and Belarus
Number of beneficiaries	Not publicly known
Visa type	National long-term visa (type D)
Residence permit	Yes (asylum or employment related, state interests or humanitarian reasons)
Relevant legislative act and article (link)	Immigration Law, Article 23 part 3 and Article 23. ¹ , Asylum Law https://likumi.lv/ta/id/68522-imigracijas-likums https://likumi.lv/ta/id/278986-patveruma-likums
Length of stay	Depending on type of visa or residence permit
Vetting process	State security institutions
Family members covered	Yes

Financial support	Depending on the granted status (asylum, residence permit) different types of benefits (social, health related) according to the relevant legislation
Provision of housing	No
Work permit	Depending on type of visa or residence permit
Access to banking services	Yes
Health insurance	No
Additional support	-

Alternative text: See descriptions in text ([Chapter 4.2](#)).

Source: FRA, 2023.

Lithuania

Name of scheme	-
Link	-
Potential beneficiaries	Human rights defenders from Eastern Europe and Central Asia
Number of beneficiaries	Around 800
Visa type	National type D national visas on the basis of a reasoned application and a confirmed need, and Schengen visas
Residence permit	Yes
Relevant legislative act and article (link)	Art. 130 ¹ of Law on Legal status of foreigners https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.232378/asr
Length of stay	Depending on type of visa
Vetting process	Via civil society organizations
Family members covered	Yes

Financial support	No
Provision of housing	No
Work permit	Yes, work permit is needed in case of visas (in case of residence permit, the third country national has the right to work without work permit)
Access to banking services	Yes
Health insurance	Yes, in cases of residence permit covering however only emergency care and essential services
Additional support	-

Alternative text: See descriptions in text ([Chapter 4.2](#)).

Source: FRA, 2023.

Netherlands

Name of scheme	Shelter Cities
Link	https://sheltercity.org
Potential beneficiaries	HRDs at risk globally
Number of beneficiaries	160 between 2012-2022
Visa type	Schengen C visa
Residence permit	No
Relevant legislative act and article (link)	EU Visa Code
Length of stay	3 months (renewable for another 3 months in exceptional cases)
Vetting process	Via the NGO Justice and Peace who prepare a shortlist to be passed on to an independent committee
Family members covered	Yes (only core family members)

Financial support	Yes (monthly stipend)
Provision of housing	Yes
Work permit	No
Access to banking services	No
Health insurance	Yes
Additional support	Yes - Tailor-made programmes developed by local partners, 10 day group training (security, effective communication, well-being and selfcare, networking and advocacy), public engagement, arrival and return security management, personal development, network opportunities, medical and psychosocial support if needed.

Alternative text: See descriptions in text ([Chapter 4.2](#)).

Source: FRA, 2023..

Poland

Name of scheme	n/a (commonly referred to as a "humanitarian visa")
Link	-
Potential beneficiaries	Human rights defenders from Central Asia, Russia, Belarus and South Caucasus
Number of beneficiaries	2020: 3,378 2021: 19,602 2022: 25,756 2023: 5,321 (by 09.05.23)
Visa type	National long-stay vis (D-21 visa). In particular cases Schengen visa (C). Aa special visa procedure for human rights defenders also exists, but is not usually activated.

Residence permit	Yes
Relevant legislative act and article (link)	Act on Foreigners (210) Article 60(1)(23) , Article 348
Length of stay	Max. 1 year (during this time it is necessary to apply e.g. for a temporary residence permit, extension possible in exceptional cases)
Vetting process	Usually first stage of vetting process is conducted by a verified partner organisation, second stage by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; other options possible
Family members covered	Yes
Financial support	Support with living expenses during the first three months of their stay, via civil society partners
Provision of housing	During the first three months of their stay, via civil society partners
Work permit	Yes
Access to banking services	Yes
Health insurance	Yes
Additional support	Via civil society organisations (e.g. Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights)

Alternative text: See descriptions in text ([Chapter 4.2](#)).

Source: FRA, 2023.

(210) [Ustawa z dnia 12 grudnia 2013 r. o cudzoziemcach \(sejm.gov.pl\)](#)

Spain

Name of scheme	Spanish temporary shelter programme for human rights defenders at risk
Link	-
Potential beneficiaries	All groups of HRDs at risk from all over the world
Number of beneficiaries	Since 1995 to date 425
Visa type	A non-profit residence visa for exceptional circumstances type D with ROM code in application of Article 50
Residence permit	Non-profit temporary residence permit (no entitlement to work) up to 1 year
Relevant legislative act and article (link)	Article 50 of the Royal Decree 557/2011, of 20 April, https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2011-7703
Length of stay	Up to 1 year, with possibility of extension for another year if high challenges for a safe return
Vetting process	Spanish Embassies, the Office for Human Rights of the Spanish MFA that runs the Spanish temporary shelter programme for HRDs at risk.
Family members covered	YES
Financial support	Financial support provided by the Regional, municipal and NGOs temporary shelter programmes with which the Spanish MFA collaborates. Some of these Programmes apply for protectdefenders.eu funding support.
Provision of housing	Yes
Work permit	No
Access to banking services	Yes
Health insurance	Yes

Additional support	The regional, municipal and NGOs shelter programmes provide all the necessary accompaniment and support during HRDs stay in Spain (capacity building, medical, psychological, legal support, networking building, advocacy and awareness raising activities, support for their return)
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Alternative text: See descriptions in text ([Chapter 4.2](#)).

Source: FRA, 2023.

Sweden

Name of scheme	Swedish Artist Residency Network – emergency residences
Link	https://www.swanresidencynetwork.com/emergency-residencies Programme for artistic freedom (kulturradet.se) Fristad åt förföljda konstnärer - Migrationsverket
Potential beneficiaries	Artists at risk globally
Number of beneficiaries	No publicly known
Visa type	-
Residence permit	Yes, granted by the Swedish Migration Agency before entry
Relevant legislative act and article (link)	Aliens Act (Utlänningslag [2005:716]), Chapter 5, Section 5, third paragraph , accessible at https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/utlanningslag-2005716_sfs-2005-716
Length of stay	Two years, may be prolonged two more years
Vetting process	Yes(SIS)
Family members covered	Yes

Financial support	Yes, grant.
Provision of housing	Yes
Work permit	No, not for artists but a right to start own business. Family member/spouse may be granted work permit.
Access to banking services	Yes, as registered living in Sweden
Health insurance	Yes, as registered living in Sweden
Additional support	Art and production grant

Alternative text: See descriptions in text ([Chapter 4.2](#)).

Source: FRA, 2023.

Annex II: Methodology and acronyms

Methodology

At the request of the European Parliament Subcommittee on Human Rights and the European Parliament Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, the President of the European Parliament asked the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) in December 2022 to examine the opportunities for human rights defenders from third countries to enter and stay in EU Member States, including good practices and ways to improve the situation.

The report is based on input by FRA's research network [Franet](#) and on expert interviews and secondary research. Relevant stakeholders were consulted on the report's findings and suggestions of ways forward as regards their relevance and feasibility.

Franet mapped existing relocation programmes, schemes and measures that seek to facilitate mobility of human rights defenders from third countries to EU Member States.

For the purpose of this report, FRA conducted interviews with the European External Action Service (EEAS); the European Commission (Directorate-General for International Partnerships, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs); the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders; the Office of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights; representatives of several Member State programmes; the secretariats ICORN, Ubuntu Hub Cities and ProtectDefenders.eu; 13 civil society organisations that are implementing partners in relocation schemes and/or participate in the EU Temporary Relocation Platform; and a few relocated human rights defenders.

FRA also held an online consultation meeting with civil society from its Fundamental Rights Platform on the issue on 24 May 2023, and a consultative discussion with members of the EU Temporary Relocation Platform at their meeting on 8 June 2023.

The main topics investigated include how the existing relocation programmes function regarding entry to and stay in the EU for human rights defenders, including visas and residence permits, and the obstacles faced by defenders; and the type of support

defenders need and receive once relocated. For context, the EU policy framework and the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders were examined, as were the risks to human rights defenders that may lead to a need to relocate as identified in reports by the EU and international organisations.

The report also includes real-life stories of human rights defenders, highlighting their experiences and reasons for relocating from their home countries.

Acronyms

COHOM	Working Party on Human Rights
EEAS	European External Action Service
ETIAS	European travel information and authorisation system
FRA	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
ICORN	International Cities of Refuge
Interpol	International Criminal Police Organization
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
PTSD	Post-traumatic stress disorder
SIS	Schengen information system
SLTD	Stolen and Lost Travel Documents
TDAWN	Travel Documents Associated with Notices
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VIS	Visa Information System