

INFO FLASH 4/06

EU INSTITUTIONS

European Commission

(30/05) EU budget: A new Social Fund, Globalisation Adjustment Fund and Justice, Rights and Values Fund. For the next long-term EU budget, the Commission proposes to further strengthen the Union's social dimension with a renewed European Social Fund, the 'European Social Fund Plus' (ESF+), and a strengthened and more effective European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF). For the period 2021-2027, the European Social Fund Plus would be worth €101.2 billion, and the Globalisation Adjustment Fund €1.6 billion. Both are geared to invest in people: ensuring they are equipped with the right skills needed to deal with challenges and changes on the labour market, following up on the European Pillar of Social Rights. The Justice, Rights and Values Fund will be worth €947 million over 7 years. It will further support the development of a European Area of Justice based on the rule of law and mutual trust and ensure people can enjoy their rights. Press release [here](#).

(29/05) EU Trust Fund for Africa: new programmes worth €173 million to protect migrants and support stability and employability in the Sahel and Lake Chad region. Today the Operational Committee of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa has adopted a new set of 6 programmes for the Sahel and Lake Chad region. This new package complements 79 already ongoing actions amounting to €1,376 million in that region approved in six packages in January 2016, [April 2016](#), [June 2016](#), [December 2016](#), [December 2017](#) and [February 2018](#). The new actions aim at further fostering stability and economic opportunities in the region, and increasing the protection of migrants. Full press release [here](#).

(29/05) EU Trust Fund for Africa: new programmes worth €294 million to further foster stability and jobs and growth in the Horn of Africa. Today, the Operational Committee of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa has adopted a new set of 8 programmes and 4 riders worth €294 million for the Horn of Africa region. This new package complements 50 previously adopted actions amounting to €820.3 million for the Horn of Africa. Approved in seven packages in [December 2015](#), [April 2016](#), [October 2016](#), [December 2016](#), [April 2017](#), [December 2017](#) and [February 2018](#), these actions all contribute to improving stability and addressing the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement in the Horn of Africa region. Two additional cross-window measures (€26 million) also benefit the region in the area of protection of migrants along the Central Mediterranean route and in technical assistance. Full press release [here](#).

(23/05) Factsheet: European Commission and African Union Commission step up their cooperation to support young people, jobs and peace. At the 9th high level meeting between the Commissions of the European Union and the African Union, both sides have adopted today concrete actions measures to address pressing global issues in key areas such as peace and security, migration, job creation and agriculture. These initiatives follow up on the commitments made at the 5th AU-EU Summit, which was held in November 2017 in Abidjan, notably deepening and expanding cooperation in science and technology; agribusiness and renewable energy, blue and green economy; skills and education; governance and election observation and peace and security. The Pan-African Programme is

the first ever EU programme in development and cooperation that covers Africa as a whole. It was adopted in 2014 for a total budget of €845 million, as a dedicated financial instrument to support the Africa-EU Partnership. The first phase of the programme 2014-2017 helped to progress on the operationalisation of the AU Human Rights system. Moreover, it played a significant role in promoting migration dialogue and in supporting the AU Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa. Through its second phase, the Pan-African Programme will continue its support to these and new projects with an added value for both the African and European continent. Full press release [here](#).

(23/05) EU and African Union Commissions step up their cooperation to support young people, jobs and peace. This 9th Commission to Commission meeting of the two organisations was co-chaired by the President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, with the participation of all African Union Commissioners and 16 European Union Commissioners. The two sides had agreed on a set of priorities at the [November 2017 AU-EU Summit in Abidjan](#) and today the two Commissions took stock of progress made to chart the way forward. The two commissions discussed their cooperation to enhance resilience, peace, security and governance, including support to African peace initiatives such as the G5 Sahel joint force. In this regard, the two sides signed a Memorandum of Understanding reinforcing the existing cooperation in the area of peace and security. In addition, they agreed to continue and consolidate the important work made by the AU-EU-UN task force on migration. The parties committed to invest in economies and people by stepping up existing cooperation on agriculture and agribusinesses and the digital economy, and dedicated themselves to continue the active engagement with youth in the Africa-EU partnership in innovative and meaningful ways. In the context of the AU-EU partnership, the EU made available an additional €400 million towards continental and regional projects. These include support to institutional capacity building of the African Union Commission and regional integration on the continent, as well as support to young people. The assistance will facilitate the continental mobility of young people, for example through reinforcing exchange programmes among African universities, and enhancing the recognition of qualifications and the harmonisation of higher education in Africa. Full press release [here](#).

(16/05) European Agenda on Migration: Still fragile situation gives no cause for complacency. The Commission is today reporting on progress made under the European Agenda on Migration and the Commission's roadmap from December 2017, and is setting out further key actions to be taken. While joint EU efforts have continued to show results, the situation remains fragile due to ongoing migratory pressure, as evidenced by newly increased arrivals along the Eastern and the Western Mediterranean routes. This requires the EU as a whole to show the necessary vigilance and preparedness to respond to any seasonal peaks or shifts in pressure, including from one route to another. Today's report identifies where the current response needs to be strengthened: plugging persistent gaps in assets for the European Border and Coast Guard; improving returns; boost resettlement; and better protecting migrants along the routes. Full press release [here](#).

(16/05) EU Visa Policy: Commission upgrades the Visa Information System to better secure the EU's external borders. The Commission is today proposing to upgrade the Visa Information System (VIS), the database containing information on persons applying for Schengen visas, in order to better respond to evolving security and migratory challenges and improve the EU's external border management. The proposed changes will allow for more thorough background checks on visa applicants; close security information gaps through

better information exchange between Member States; and ensure full interoperability with other EU-wide databases. The Visa Information System (VIS) is an EU database which connects border guards at the EU's external borders with Member States' consulates across the world. It provides visa issuing authorities with key information on applicants for short-stay Schengen visas while allowing border guards to detect travellers that may pose security risks. Today's proposal expands the scope of the VIS – notably by adding long stay-visas and residence permits to the system – in full respect of data protection rules, to ensure that these authorities have the information they need, when they need it. The proposal is the second step of the reform of the common EU visa policy and follows the amendments to the Visa Code, presented by the Commission in March 2018. Full press release [here](#).

European Parliament

European Council / Council of the EU

(28/05) Human rights and democracy in the world: EU annual report 2017 adopted. On 28 May 2018, the Council adopted the EU's annual report on human rights and democracy in the world in 2017. In 2017, human rights remained at the heart of the European Union's external action, and the EU reaffirmed its role as a leading global proponent of the promotion and protection of human rights. The EU continued to oppose firmly any unjustified restrictions of the rights of freedom of association and peaceful assembly, as 2017 saw a continued backlash against civil society. The EU strongly supported an enabling environment for non-governmental organisations and human rights defenders through bilateral dialogues including human rights dialogues, financial support and in multilateral fora. 2017 marked a milestone on the EU's global work with the rights of the child with the update of the guidelines on the promotion and protection of the rights of the child, which date back to 2007. Full press release [here](#).

(14/05) EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia: operation to contribute to better information sharing on crime in the Mediterranean. The Council today adopted a decision allowing for the creation of a crime information cell within EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia. The information cell will be composed of up to 10 staff members from relevant law enforcement authorities of member states and from the EU agencies FRONTEX and EUROPOL in order to improve information sharing between them. The cell will be tasked to facilitate the receipt, collection and transmission of information on human smuggling and trafficking, the implementation of the UN arms embargo on Libya, illegal trafficking, as well as crimes relevant to the security of the operation itself. Full press release [here](#).

(14/05) EU training mission in Mali: Council extends mission for two years with broadened mandate to include support for G5 Sahel Joint Force. The Council extended the mandate of the EU training mission in Mali (EUTM Mali) for two years, until 18 May 2020. The Council also amended the mandate of the mission to include in its objectives the provision of advice and training support to the G5 Sahel Joint Force, as part of the EU's ongoing efforts to support the G5 Sahel process. The Council also agreed to allocate a significantly increased budget of € 59.7 million to the mission for the period from 19 May 2018 to 18 May 2020, compared to € 33.4 for the current two-year period. This decision means that the efforts carried out over recent months to regionalise the work of both civilian and military CSDP missions (EUTM Mali, EUCAP Sahel Mali and EUCAP Sahel Niger) in the

Sahel will become more operational. The aim is to support regional security cooperation, as set out in the Council conclusions on Mali and the Sahel of 19 June 2017. Press release [here](#).

Others

(28/05) EU Court of Auditors - EU Auditors highlight key areas for simplifying Cohesion policy after 2020. Simplifying rules for Cohesion spending is a key challenge to be addressed for the post-2020 period. In a new Briefing Paper from the European Court of Auditors, the auditors set out a series of principles to be followed and key areas that need attention by the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Member States when deciding on new rules. Full press release [here](#).

(18/05) European Economic and Social Committee - The European Commission's budgetary proposal lacks political ambition. An EESC conference on the future long term budget of the European Union calls for a swift agreement on an adequate and properly reformed financial framework that strengthens the European Union. The proposal for the EU's Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) post 2020, put forward on May 2 by the European Commission, does not go far enough and lacks political ambition. As a consequence, it can only be considered a starting point for further debates on a financial framework capable of providing the means to deliver on citizens' expectations and new needs and challenges. The proposed ceiling for EU expenditure and its distribution should be reviewed so as to strengthen the EU's position as a global player. These were the main conclusions of a conference on the MFF for 2021-2027 hosted by the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) on 15 May 2018. Full press release [here](#).

(17/05) EU Court of Auditors - Auditors identify challenges to integration of migrants in EU. The European Court of Auditors has identified a number of challenges to the integration of migrants from outside the EU into society where further EU action is needed. The challenges are set out in a new Briefing Paper on EU action to support the integration of those living legally in the EU but without EU citizenship, such as people migrating for the purposes of employment, family reunification or research, asylum seekers and refugees. The briefing paper does not cover people residing illegally in the EU. Full press release [here](#).

(16/05) Eurostat - Asylum applicants considered to be unaccompanied minors - Over 31 000 unaccompanied minors among asylum seekers registered in the EU in 2017 - Afghan continued to be the top citizenship. In 2017, 31 400 asylum seekers applying for international protection in the Member States of the European Union (EU) were considered to be unaccompanied minors. This was nearly half the number recorded in 2016 (63 200 unaccompanied minors registered) and almost one-third of the peak registered in 2015 (95 200), but over two and a half times higher than the annual average during the period 2008-2013 (around 12 000 per year). In total in the EU, unaccompanied minors accounted for 15% of all asylum applicants aged less than 18. Full press release [here](#).

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

(29/05) Europe's duty to internally displaced persons. "People are forced to leave their homes for different reasons, ranging from war and violence to natural disasters and climate change. However, this does not always entail the crossing of an internationally recognised border. Even if they do not leave their country, people who flee their homes are still very

much in need of protection”, says Dunja Mijatović, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, in her first Human Rights Comment published today. “This year marks the 20th anniversary of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, a comprehensive set of international standards addressing the rights of internally displaced persons (IDPs). The anniversary should prompt states to give serious attention to their needs.” Full press release [here](#).

CIVIL SOCIETY

(1/06) ECRE - Op-Ed: Deterrents turned detention - The impact of EU migration measures on migrants in Libya. In May 2017 almost 23,000 migrants reached Italy, [this month less than 4,000](#) migrants are recorded to have arrived in Italy from Libya, an almost six fold decrease. This drop coincides with a number of measures the EU and EU member states implemented together with the United Nations backed Government of National Accord in Libya and neighbouring Niger to stem the arrivals of migrants in Italy. Some of these include a Memorandum of Understanding signed between Italy and Libya’s UN backed government to improve border security along Libya’s western coast and southern borders, border management capacity building trainings for Libyan security and coast guards, and support in the return operations for refugees and migrants to their areas of origin or third countries. Full press release [here](#).

(1/06) ECRE - Return continues to Afghanistan in crisis. [According](#) to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) 285.000 Afghans have returned from Iran over the last five month constituting a 150.000 increase from the same period last year. 12,000 undocumented Afghans have [returned](#) or been deported from Pakistan since the beginning of the year, and 8,000 Afghans were [deported](#) from Turkey in April and early May. They return to an unstable country defined by [armed conflict](#), lack of protection of civilians and [poverty](#) and with 360,000 people internally displaced in 2017. Full press release [here](#).

(28/5) COFACE - The European Hunger Games: Who will actually benefit from the next EU budget? On 2 May 2018, the European Commission published its proposal of the multiannual financial framework (MFF) for the years 2021 to 2027, together with a Communication on the main priorities of next EU Budget. The European Commission promises nothing less, but a ‘New, modern Multiannual Financial Framework for a European Union that delivers efficiently on its priorities post-2020’. Undoubtedly, the European Union is facing new political, economic and social challenges. It is indeed time to reflect on what areas are worth the investment, or in other words, where EU money can have ‘added value’ and support initiatives that otherwise would/could not happen in and among the Member States. Whilst there may be need to invest taxpayers’ money in new priorities, such as security, or the integration of migrants, EU Member States should not forget about the existing needs of some of Europe’s most vulnerable citizens. Furthermore, the promotion of EU values and respect of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights is at the heart of EU added value. Therefore, EU funding should not support any action that goes against the rights and principles enshrined in the Treaties, the EU Charter for Fundamental Rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which is the first international human rights treaty the EU ratified. Full press release [here](#).

(24/05) ECRE - Spain and Algeria agree on joint migration crackdown, while at Algeria’s southern border deported migrants perish in the desert. The Interior Ministers of Spain and Algeria signed an agreement this week to form a joint team of investigation with

the goals of fighting “illegal migration” and “preventing Islamist terrorism.” The agreement comes after recent crackdowns by the Algerian authorities during the first months of 2018 have reduced the number of undocumented Algerian migrants arriving in Spain, a reduction that was praised by the Spanish Interior Minister Juan Ignacio Zoido at their meeting in Madrid. Full press release [here](#).

(24/04) ECRE - AIDA Briefing: Relocation, a view from destination countries. An AIDA [Legal Briefing](#) published yesterday analyses the practice of countries receiving asylum seekers from Italy and Greece through the relocation scheme. The briefing sketches out the treatment of asylum seekers post-relocation in the areas of registration and processing of asylum claims, protection status granted, as well as reception conditions and content of protection provided by destination countries. Full press release [here](#).

(18/05) ECRE - Libya: evacuations to Niger resumed – returns from Niger begun. After being [temporarily suspended](#) in March as the result of concerns from local authorities on the [pace of resettlement](#) out of Niger, UNHCR evacuations of vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers from Libya through the Emergency Transit Mechanism has been [resumed](#) and 132 vulnerable migrants flown to the country. At the same time the [deportation](#) of 132 Sudanese nationals from Niger to Libya has raised international concern. Full press release [here](#).

(18/05) ECRE - Commission Progress Report reflects a Europe in continued crisis mode. The [Progress Report](#) on the Implementation of the European Agenda on Migration from the European Commission, also including progress on the Commissions [roadmap](#), reflects an EU in continued crisis mode with a strong focus on the number of arrivals and emphasis on increased protection of external borders. Full press release [here](#).

(18/05) ECRE - EU-Western Balkans Summit concludes with a focus on stemming migration. On May 17 EU leaders and their Western Balkan counterparts gathered in Sofia, Bulgaria for the EU-Western Balkans Summit. The talks concluded with the [Sofia Declaration](#), which established further cooperation in a number of areas, including migration where the emphasis was on stemming illegal migration – leaving out any references to rights or protection. Full press release [here](#).

(18/05) Social Platform - EU budget – First takeaways from leaked European Social Fund proposal. A leaked version of the next European Social Fund (ESF+) reveals the details of a highly anticipated proposal with a first in-depth insight into various provisions of the future financial instrument. The document with the draft regulations, which can be seen [here](#), also provides the answer to a pertinent question that we have been eagerly awaiting: sixth months after the interinstitutional [proclamation of the European Pillar of Social Rights](#), underpinned by two years of preparations and advocacy by Social Platform and our members, how well is the Social Pillar reflected in the most important Fund to drive social progress across the EU? Full press release [here](#).

(8/05) Social Platform - EU budget – Hope and hazards for social spending. On 2 May, the European Commission presented its long awaited multi-annual financial framework (MFF) proposal, also known as the European Union’s long-term budget for the years 2021–2027. [The package](#), released together with the main budget headings and figures foresees to strengthen several existing as well as emerging priorities including digital transformation, youth, research, migration and border management, security, and external action. While the proposed budgetary envelope amounts to an equivalent of 1.11% of the EU 27’s gross

national income (GNI) – which is less than the [European Parliament](#) had proposed, but more than some [Member States](#) might be willing to accept – 12% of the total budget may be financed from own resources including [three new own resources](#) developed as a proposal to reform the revenue side of the EU budget. Ideally, negotiations should be concluded by the next European Parliament elections in May 2019 to allow for sufficient time to programme funds at national level, but divergent positions at Member State level may still delay the adoption of the file. Full press release [here](#).

PUBLICATIONS

FRA - [A persisting concern: anti-Gypsyism as a barrier to Roma inclusion](#)

FRA - [Periodic data collection on the migration situation in the EU - May 2018 Highlights](#)

FRA - [#BigData: Discrimination in data-supported decision making](#)

ECRE - [ECRE Policy notes: The Price of Rights](#)

ECRE - [Policy note: The Price of Rights: Asylum and EU External Funding](#)

ECRE - [Policy note: The Price of Rights: Asylum and EU Internal Funding](#)

Council of EU General Secretariat - [Think Tank Review](#) (May)

Council of EU General Secretariat - [Think Tank Review](#) (The Western Balkans)

EPRS - [EU asylum, borders and external cooperation on migration](#)

EPRS - [EU funds for migration, asylum and integration policies](#)

Friends of Europe - [REFUGEE INTEGRATION: Millennials do it differently](#)

CER - [To manage migration, the EU needs to rethink its neighbourhood policy](#)