

INFO FLASH 12/04

EU INSTITUTIONS

Commission

The European Commission presented options for reforming the Common European Asylum System and developing safe and legal pathways to Europe.

On 6/04 the European Commission [launched](#) the [process for a reform of the Common European Asylum System \(CEAS\)](#). The Commission has identified priority areas where the Common European Asylum System should be structurally improved, and proposed steps to enhance safe and well-managed pathways for legal migration to Europe. The Commission is expected to present an EU Action Plan on Integration later this year.

"Human mobility will be an inherent feature of the 21st century" Migration and Home Affairs Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos said. However, as First Vice-President Frans Timmermans underlined, "the current system is not sustainable. Different national approaches have fuelled asylum shopping and irregular migration, while we have seen in the ongoing crisis that the Dublin rules have placed too much responsibility on just a few Member States".

EU Justice Scoreboard 2016: learning from each other to improve the effectiveness of national justice systems

On 11/04 [the European Commission published](#) the [2016 EU Justice Scoreboard](#) which gives a comparative overview of the efficiency, quality and independence of justice systems in the EU Member States. Based on the results of Eurobarometer surveys on the perception of judicial independence in the EU, the Scoreboard aims to assist national authorities in their efforts to improve their justice systems by providing this comparative data. The findings of the 2016 Scoreboard are being taken into account for the ongoing country-specific assessment carried out in the context of the 2016 European Semester process.

The Scoreboard partly focuses on accessibility. One of the key findings in this area is that accessibility of justice systems is on the increase, in particular in matters like electronic submission of small claims or promotion of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) methods. However, there is still room for improvement in online availability of judgements or electronic communication between courts and parties.

International Roma Day: Statement by First Vice-President Timmermans, Commissioner Thyssen, Commissioner Jourová and Commissioner Crețu.

"Equality before the law and non-discrimination are fundamental values of the European Union. Yet, anti-Gypsyism is still very common worldwide and in Europe. The exclusion, inequality and discrimination many Roma continue to face, is in strong contradiction with the Union's core values.

Roma do not have the same access to jobs, education, housing and healthcare. Forced evictions of Roma continue to cause concern. Moreover, the fact that Roma children often cannot benefit from the same quality of education as other children, perpetuates their vicious

cycle of poverty. This is why we believe that there is an urgent need for Roma children in particular to get better access to education.

The European institutions and Member States are committed to fighting discrimination and segregation and improving integration of the Roma community. Although the integration of Roma is primarily the responsibility of Member States, the "Europe 2020" strategy prioritises actions that favour socio-economic inclusion of Roma people and prevent discrimination" (full text [here](#))

Civil society shapes the European migration agenda: employment & integration are key priorities.

The European Economic and Social Committee hosted the 2nd edition of the [European Migration Forum](#) (6-7 April) organised with the European Commission. The Forum has replaced the Integration Forum that was established by the Commission under the European Migration Agenda in 2009 to discuss over key topics that would benefit from a discussion with civil society. This time the Forum looked into the specific challenges faced by low and medium-skilled migrants, undeclared work and exploitation, access to the labour market, and the role of the local level and civil society in the integration process (background document [here](#)).

Participants gathered concrete policy outputs through participatory and interactive workshops. These conclusions will feed into the European Commission's forthcoming initiatives such as the "EU Action Plan on the integration of third-country nationals".

Parliament

EU - Turkey migration deal: Civil Liberties MEPs push for answers.

Civil Liberties MEPs [quizzed](#) the Commission on the conditions in the Greek reception facilities, the number and background of staff carrying out asylum interviews, returns and conditions for refugees in Turkey during this morning's debate on the EU-Turkey migration deal. MEPs also stressed the need to respect international law and live up to EU standards. You can find the video summaries of the debate [here](#).

Committee on Civil Liberty, Justice and Home Affairs - MEPs discussed amendments to the [DRAFT REPORT](#) on implementation of the Directive 2011/36/EU of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims from a gender perspective. The text will be voted within the Committee on 19/04 and in plenary sitting on 9/05.

Council

European Border Guard: Council ready to negotiate with the Parliament.

On 6 April 2016, [the Permanent Representatives Committee agreed](#), on behalf of the Council, its negotiating position on the proposed regulation on the European Border Guard. On the basis of this mandate, the Netherlands presidency will start negotiations with the European Parliament as soon as the latter has adopted its position.

The primary objective of the European Border Guard is to ensure and implement, as a shared responsibility, the European integrated border management at the external borders with a

view to managing migration effectively and ensuring a high level of security within the EU, while safeguarding EU-internal free movement. It will consist of an European border guard agency (the current Frontex agency with expanded tasks) and national authorities responsible for border management. The renewed Agency would focus its activities on the establishment of an operational strategy for the European integrated border management and on the assistance in its implementation of all member states concerned.

The negotiations with the European Parliament will start as soon as it adopts its position. The Presidency's intention is to reach a political agreement before the end of its term, as requested by the European Council of 18-19 February 2016. The proposal, which is part of the Borders legislative package, was submitted by the Commission on 15 December 2015.

EU Presidency - EU Youth Conference in Amsterdam: enabling young people to engage in a diverse, connected and inclusive Europe

The Dutch Presidency of the Council, together with the Dutch National Youth Council, the European Commission and [the European Youth Forum](#) hosted the EU Youth Conference in Amsterdam on 4-7 April, bringing youth delegates and policy makers to the same table to discuss youth issues.

This EU Youth Conference kicks off the V cycle of the Structured Dialogue (an innovative and unique participative process where young people contribute to EU youth policy). In order to enhance a continuous dialogue between policy-makers and young people, the three EU Youth Conferences of the cycle of the current trio Presidency (Dutch, Slovakian, Maltese) will focus on the common theme “Enabling all young people to engage in a diverse, connected and inclusive Europe”.

Over four days, youth delegates and policy-makers sat at the same table to identify the main challenges faced by young people to be fully engaged in an inclusive society. They issued a guiding [framework](#), which was presented today during the closing ceremony. An interactive debate on violent radicalisation with Commissioner Navracsics, the Deputy Minister Martin Van Rijn and the delegates concluded the conference. The guiding framework will support the forthcoming consultations: “Young people need space and opportunity to develop their personal, social and civic competences. Without access to proper information and competences, young people can be misled and negatively influenced in their life options, opinion formulation, access to rights and the ability to exercise their active citizenship”. (Read the full version of the guiding framework [here](#).)

Joint declaration of the prime ministers of Greece and Portugal - 11 April 2016

In a [joint statement](#) on several EU topics, Greece's Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras and Portugal's Prime Minister António Costa expressed their common position on the migration crisis.

They pledged for a comprehensive approach that addresses its root causes, including war, violent conflicts and poverty and where the migration flow is collectively and fairly managed by all Member States. In this context, Greece and Portugal will cooperate to ensure that the EU steps up its efforts in its broader neighbourhood to effectively support the external dimension of European Migration Policy. They said that building walls and fences, unilaterally implementing measures or refusing to participate in common resettlement and relocation schemes undermines European solidarity as well as the humane and effective management of migrant flows.

They called on Europe to remain open to hosting people in need of international protection, by replacing dangerous, irregular migration routes with legal processes of resettlement of refugees from countries neighbouring Syria and by accelerating the relocation processes of refugees already in Greece and Italy. At the same time, the EU must enhance efforts to establish readmission agreements with the countries of origin of economic immigrants. In this context, Greece and Portugal commit to enhance joint efforts for the reform of the Dublin process so that refugee flows are distributed in a fair way throughout the EU.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

[In times of crisis, Europe cannot afford to disregard children's rights](#)

[Democracy through education: European ministers back new tool](#)

[New European Roma Institute to promote Roma and Travellers' cultural heritage](#)

CIVIL SOCIETY

[SOCIAL PLATFORM: Impressions from the European Migration Forum](#). Social Platform's Policy and Advocacy Advisor Annica Ryngebeck shares her impressions on the 2nd Meeting of the European Migration Forum, that took place in Brussels on 6-7 April.

[SOLIDAR - Together for Social Europe European Migration Forum](#): civil society recommendations on migration and integration. The European network of NGOs working to advance social justice in Europe and worldwide shares its impressions on the European Migration Forum.

PUBLICATIONS

European Parliament Research Centre - [45 Years Of International Roma Day](#) (8 April)

European Policy Centre - [MIGRATION PANORAMA | Schengen in the spotlight: a Europe with or without borders?](#)

European University Institute - [Trafficking in domestic work: Looking at the demand-side](#)

OTHERS

[EU asylum applications from lone children quadruple](#). A recent enquire of the Bureau of Investigative Journalism indicated that at least 95,000 unaccompanied children applied for asylum in the EU (+ Norway and Switzerland) in 2015, four times the numbers for 2014. It also highlighted the stark inconsistencies in the way unaccompanied children are treated.

[FRA - More action needed to support Roma inclusion and combat anti-Gypsyism](#)

On International Roma Day, FRA calls for greater efforts to combat discrimination and anti-Gypsyism and further the inclusion of Roma, Sinti, Traveller and other similar communities.