

INFO FLASH 19/07

EU INSTITUTIONS

European Commission

(13/07) Completing the reform of the Common European Asylum System: towards an efficient, fair and humane asylum policy. The European Commission has presented proposals to complete the reform of the Common European Asylum System in order to move towards a fully efficient, fair and humane asylum policy – one which can function effectively both in times of normal and in times of high migratory pressure. To this end, and learning from experience, a more efficient and coherent asylum system requires a common and harmonised set of rules at EU level. The Commission is therefore proposing the creation of a common procedure for international protection, uniform standards for protection and rights granted to beneficiaries of international protection and the further harmonisation of reception conditions in the EU. Overall, these proposals will simplify and shorten the asylum procedure and the decision-making, discourage secondary movements of asylum seekers and increase integration prospects of those that are entitled to international protection. More info [here](#). The Q&A is available [here](#).

(13/07) Enhancing legal channels: Commission proposes to create common EU Resettlement Framework. The European Commission has propose an EU Resettlement Framework to establish a common European policy on resettlement to ensure orderly and safe pathways to Europe for persons in need of international protection. The proposal is part of the Commission's reform of the Common European Asylum System and the long-term policy on better migration management set out by the [European Agenda on Migration](#). It will also contribute to the implementation of the new results-oriented [Partnership Framework](#) for cooperation with key third countries of origin and transit presented by the Commission on 7 June. Read more [here](#). FAQs available [here](#).

(13/07) Relocation and Resettlement: Positive trend continues, but more efforts needed. The Commission adopted its latest progress report on the EU's emergency relocation and resettlement schemes, assessing actions taken over the past month. The positive trend observed in the last report has continued with Member States stepping up their efforts on both relocation and resettlement. Relocation has continued at the increased rate reached in the previous month with an additional 776 persons relocated since 14 June. The total number of relocations from Greece and Italy now stands at 3,056. Further important achievements have also been made as regards resettlement, with 8,268 people resettled so far of the agreed 22,504 under the July 2015 scheme and a total of 802 Syrian refugees resettled from Turkey under the EU-Turkey Statement. As arrivals in Greece remain low due to the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement and with seasonal arrivals having started in Italy, the Commission now calls on Member States to continue and strengthen their efforts, building on the encouraging results of the last months, as reiterated by the European Council on 28 June. Read the full press release [here](#).

(5/07) New Commission's proposals to improve the EU's support for security and development in partner countries. The European Commission and the High Representative Federica Mogherini [proposed](#) measures to enhance the European Union's effectiveness in

supporting stability, security and development in third countries. The measures, outlined in a Joint Communication on security sector reform in partner countries and a legislative proposal to extend the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace ([IcSP](#)), notably foresee more comprehensive assistance for security sector actors in partner countries, including the military under exceptional circumstances, in line with the objective of achieving sustainable development. The main aim of these new proposals is to use EU assistance more effectively and flexibly to help partners prevent or manage crises on their own. It should thus strengthen the link between security and sustainable development and contribute to ensuring the respect of the rule of law, good governance as well as enhanced civilian control and oversight over the military in third countries. For Q&A read [here](#).

European Parliament

(11/07) Human trafficking: "Few victims go to court because we don't protect them enough". Human trafficking is a highly profitable international crime in which people are traded for use in prostitution, forced labour or other forms of exploitation. In a resolution adopted in plenary recently, MEPs condemned it as a modern kind of slavery and one of the worst forms of human rights violations. Resolution author Barbara Lochbihler, a German member of the Greens/EFA group, told us victims needed more protection and that more needed to be done on forced labour and money laundering. Read the full interview [here](#).

(7/07) Civil liberties MEPs back plans to make it easier to suspend visa waivers. Plans to strengthen the EU's visa suspension mechanism, which enables it to temporarily reintroduce visa requirements for third-country nationals in the event of sudden surges in irregular immigration, unfounded asylum applications or a failure to cooperate with the EU on "readmissions" (i.e. returns), [were amended and approved](#) by Civil Liberties Committee MEPs. MEPs widened the range of grounds upon which a visa waiver may be suspended. The new rules will make it easier for member states to notify the EU Commission and each other of a situation in which a visa exemption may have to be suspended - for an initial period of six months - and the procedure for doing so will be faster. The Commission will also be able to trigger the suspension mechanism on its own initiative. The regulation on the visa suspension mechanism will not apply to the UK or Ireland. The Committee also backed on Thursday, by 42 votes to 9, with 1 abstention, a proposal to open negotiations with the Council, with a view to reaching an agreement at the first reading. The talks have begun last week.

(7/07) Asylum: EU list of safe countries of origin to replace national lists in 3 years. The future EU common list of safe countries of origin, which should help member states to process certain asylum applications faster and more consistently, should replace today's national lists after a three-year transition period, [Civil Liberties Committee MEPs agreed](#). The EU Commission will assess which countries should be included, removed or temporarily suspended from the list. Parliament's rapporteur [Sylvie Guillaume \(S&D, FR\)](#) made it clear that "applying the concept of a safe country of origin in no way dispenses with the duty to carry out an appropriate individual examination of the relevant asylum applications", including offering applicants a personal interview and, following Parliament's amendments, an automatic suspensive effect of appeals. "The methodology for designating or reviewing a country as safe country of origin has also been greatly improved. A consultation process is now included to enable third parties, such as EASO, UNHCR or NGOs to take part in the Commission's task of monitoring the EU common list", Ms Guillaume added.

(6/07) Jobs, social rights and security must top the 2017 EU agenda, say MEPs. The European Parliament set out its recommendations for the European Commission's 2017 Work Programme in a non-legislative resolution. Before the vote, MEPs debated EU priorities with Commission First Vice-President Frans Timmermans. The need to reflect on what direction the EU should take in the aftermath of the UK's EU membership referendum was the leitmotiv of this debate. The EP's priorities include citizens' working and living conditions, migration and refugees, the state of fundamental rights, rule of law and democracy in the EU member states. Read more [here](#).

(5/07) Getting refugees to work: MEPs call for a win-win approach. Allowing refugees and asylum seekers to work in their host countries not only helps to restore their human dignity, but also reduces strain on public budgets by turning them into taxpayers, says a [non-binding resolution voted in the EP recently](#). Inclusion schemes should nonetheless emphasise language learning and pay attention to local unemployment rates, especially among young people, it adds. The text, drafted by [Brando Benifei](#) (S&D, IT), notes that procedures for granting asylum and labour market conditions differ markedly across the EU, and also that refugees have a wide variety of ages, education, skills and abilities to work. Social inclusion schemes should therefore aim to be a dynamic, two-way process between refugees and host communities, in which all partners have rights and duties, while the process itself adapts to the situation on the ground, says the text, which was approved by 486 votes to 189, with 28 abstentions.

(5/07) Planning terrorist attacks must be made a crime, say civil liberties MEPs. Travelling abroad for terrorist purposes, training or being trained, incitement to terrorism or financing of terrorist activities must be made a crime in all EU member states, urge Civil Liberties Committee MEPs in a resolution [voted recently](#). Ahead of upcoming talks with the Council on a draft new counter-terrorism directive, MEPs also stressed the need to protect and assist victims, especially across borders. The amendments, prepared by lead MEP Monika Hohlmeier (EPP, DE), were passed by 41 votes to 4, with 10 abstentions. "We have managed to strike a fair balance between ensuring security and respecting basic human rights, such as freedom of opinion, to travel and access education", said rapporteur Monika Hohlmeier (EPP, DE) after the vote. "This is the first time that the Parliament has taken decisions in the field of counter-terrorism, after the Lisbon Treaty granted it legislative powers in this area", she noted, stressing that a broad majority backed the common approach.

European Council

(18/07) EU priorities at the United Nations and the 71st UNGA. The Council adopted the EU priorities at the United Nations and the 71st United Nations General Assembly (September 2016 - September 2017). The coming year will be focused on consolidation and implementation of the agreements reached in the past year. These include the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, the Addis Ababa action agenda of the third international conference on financing for development and the Paris climate agreement. The priorities mention that the EU remains committed to strengthening the United Nations and continue playing an active role at the UN in all areas of relevant activities. The priorities also stresses the need for a truly global responsibility sharing on migration and refugees; solving crises and sustaining peace; tackling terrorism and violent extremism as some of the key challenges. As far as migration is concerned, the Council reiterated that the EU will promote development-oriented approaches, recognising the positive impact of planned and well-managed migration policies for both countries of origin, transit and host countries. The international community

should help host communities and governments to enhance the resilience and socio-economic integration of forcibly displaced people and to set up and implement policies that are conducive to self-reliance at a national level. They added the EU will work with all UN partners to step up international efforts in tackling the multi-dimensional root causes of the current refugee and irregular migration crisis and broader forced displacement, the smuggling of migrants and human trafficking, to address the specific challenges faced by women and by children in migration processes; protecting victims and saving lives should be utmost priorities for the entire international community. In addition, stronger efforts are needed to enhance channels for legal migration and ensuring the readmission of individuals not eligible for asylum in line with international law. See full text [here](#).

(15/07) FRANCE - European Court of Human Rights condemns France for the administrative detention of children (via ECRE) On 12 July 2016, the [European Court of Human Rights](#) ruled against France in the cases of [A.B. and Others v France](#), [R.M. and M.M. v France](#), [A.M. and Others v France](#), [R.K. v France](#). The cases concerned the issue of administrative detention of children who are accompanying their parents in the context of a deportation procedure. The Court considered that, given the children's age and the duration and conditions of their administrative detention, the French authorities had subjected these children to inhuman and degrading treatment, violating article 3 of the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) (ECHR).

(5/07) HUNGARY - European court strikes against Hungary's arbitrary detention of LGBT asylum seekers (via ILGA Europe). The European Court of Human Rights has ruled that Hungary's two-month-long detention of an Iranian gay man applying for asylum is a violation of the European Convention on Human Rights. In judgment of [OM v Hungary](#), the Court, unanimously ruled that the applicant's detention was arbitrary and unjustified, in violation of Article 5 (Right to liberty and security) of the European Convention. In particular, the Court found that Hungarian authorities failed to make an individualised assessment and to take into account applicant's vulnerability in the detention facility based on his sexual orientation.

Others

(18/07) FRA - Local involvement key to tackling EU's migrant situation. Local communities are facing a number of challenges resulting from the large influx of refugees and asylum seekers, as FRA's latest summary report of migration-related fundamental rights concerns shows. It provides a snapshot of the impact the asylum crisis is having on some local communities, including the challenge of having to provide and finance housing and education. However, it also reveals good practices, strong goodwill and the potential boost to the local economy that are offsetting some of the problems. Access the [monthly data collection highlights](#) and [the focus section on the impact on local communities](#). Read full article [here](#).

(15/07) European Economic and Social Committee - 2016 EESC Civil Society Prize: Migrants (DEADLINE: 9 Sept). The 2016 prize organized by the EESC will reward initiatives carried out by civil society organisations and/or individuals and aimed at improving migrants' lives and fostering their integration in society. The aim of the Civil Society Prize, which is awarded annually, is to reward and encourage tangible initiatives and achievements by civil society organisations and/or individuals that have made a significant contribution to promoting European identity and integration. Its overall objective is to raise awareness of the contribution that civil society organisations and/or individuals can make to the creation of a

European identity and citizenship in a way that underpins the common values that shore up European integration. The prize, which has a total value of 50 000 € and will be awarded on 15 December 2016, is open to civil society organisations officially registered within the European Union and acting at European, national, regional or local level. It is furthermore open to individuals. Read more info [here](#).

(14/07) FRA's severe labour exploitation summary available in 23 EU languages. FRA's publication "Severe labour exploitation: workers moving within or into the European Union – Summary" is [now available on the FRA website](#) in 23 official EU languages. This summary identifies risk factors contributing to the severe labour exploitation of workers who move from one EU Member State to another or from a third country. It also discusses means of improving the situation and highlights the challenges that EU institutions and Member States face in fulfilling the right that workers who have moved within or into the EU have to decent working conditions.

(12/07) POLITICO.eu - Commission stays course on migration after Brexit. The European Commission's migration chief says there are no plans to rethink the bloc's migration policy after the British vote to leave the EU, despite claims from some countries that the issue is fueling Euroskepticism. Dimitris Avramopoulos, the EU's migration commissioner, said in an interview that while the British referendum's outcome "now calls for a period of reflection" on several key issues, the EU should stick to its refugee strategy. "Migration is one of our 10 priorities and this will not change," Avramopoulos told POLITICO, adding that the Commission would continue to push EU countries to do more to help deal with the flow of migration, including with measures to be introduced this week to reform asylum policies across the bloc. "I intend to propose further reform of the Common European Asylum System soon, to further complete our envisaged comprehensive overhaul." Full article [here](#).

(12/07) POLITICO.eu - Europeans link refugees and terrorism. A Pew Research Center survey finds "the refugee crisis and the threat of terrorism are very much related to one another in the minds of many Europeans." In eight out of the 10 nations surveyed, over half of people believed terrorism is more likely due to incoming refugees. Read the report [here](#).

(12/07) REUTERS - Frontex says migrant flows to EU eased after Turkey deal, 'front line' moved to Italy. The flow of refugees and migrants to Europe has slowed since April when the European Union sealed a deal with Turkey to halt illegal traffic across the Aegean Sea, the region's border agency chief [said](#). Since then, Italy has replaced Greece as the migration "front line", with hundreds crossing the Mediterranean from Libya every day, Fabrice Leggeri, head of Frontex, the agency in charge of protecting the EU's external borders, said.

(11/07) The American Interest - Refugee Crossings to Greece Down 97%. In a year when nearly 3,000 people have drowned crossing the Mediterranean, mostly heading to Italy, we'll (the American Interest, Editor's note) [take this as good news](#). The Washington Post reports: The unimpeded flow of humanity, dominated by Syrians, Iraqis and Afghans, to Europe is over, at least for now. Arrivals in the Greek islands are down 97 percent.

(8/07) EASO - EASO releases Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the EU and latest asylum figures. The European Asylum Support Office (EASO) released its yearly reference report: The [Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the European Union 2015](#).

The report aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the situation of asylum in the EU+ (EU Member States plus Norway and Switzerland) by examining requests for international protection to the EU, analysing application and decision data, and focusing on some of the most important countries of origin of applicants for international protection.

(8/07) A fresh start for Europe: Regions and cities launch investment plan for a citizen-centred EU. The EU must address an alarming fall in public investment in order to tackle growing regional disparity, support sustainable growth and restore faith among citizens, politicians across Europe [said](#) during a two-day Summit of Regions and Cities in Bratislava. "If we are to restore faith in the EU, we must demonstrate how joint EU operations benefit citizens' daily lives. Citizens demand results, which is why investment – in people, places and ideas – must start locally. Around 60% of public investments within the EU are made by local and regional authorities. Policymakers need to redirect all their efforts to increasing public and private investment in all the European regions. It is no longer business as usual. We must spread a new and innovative entrepreneurial mind-set across Europe," said Markku Markkula, President of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR). The recommendations adopted by the CoR – the EU's assembly of local and regional governments – come during its mid-term review of both the EU's 2014-20 budget and its Cohesion Policy beyond 2020, a policy intended to even out regional differences. A report recently published by the OECD found that many of Europe's regions and cities have seen public investment drop substantially since 2008.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

(11/07) Conflict and violence: young people share their stories. Last week the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg [hosted](#) two events for young people whose lives have been changed by the conflict and violence. The [Youth Peace Camp](#) brought together young people from conflict-affected regions: South Caucasus, the Russian Federation, Ukraine (Luhansk, Donetsk and border regions), as well as from Kosovo. They shared personal experiences of conflict and violence and discuss strategies to cope with the trauma within oneself, and also within one's community. The participants engaged in the activities aimed at conflict transformation, intercultural learning and dialogue, human rights education; they prepared dialogue-based peace-building projects with other young people. Refugee students and their social inclusion and the role in intercultural dialogue were the focus of the other event. This joint initiative by the [Youth Department](#) of the Council of Europe and the [Global Platform for Syrian Students](#) gathered participants from youth and refugees organisations across Europe to discuss the challenges that refugee students face in Europe and elsewhere, and ways of addressing them.

CIVIL SOCIETY

(18/07) Social Platform - The Sustainable Development Goals: time for policy coherence. On 7/07 the European Economic and Social Committee organised an event on the ["Next steps for a sustainable European future"](#) focusing on the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the European Union. The universal character of the SDGs is of primary importance to us, since it means that they will require concrete actions from all countries, including EU Member States. In this context, it is crucial to insist on some key elements that should be kept in mind when designing and implementing a sustainable development strategy at European level. Full article [here](#).

(15/07) ECRE raises strong concerns about the Eurodac recast regulation proposal. ECRE published [comments](#) this week on the European Commission's [proposal](#) to recast the [Eurodac Regulation](#), which governs the establishment and operation of a database containing fingerprints of asylum seekers and irregular migrants. The comments raise a number of issues regarding the proposal, especially on the tension between several of the provisions and fundamental rights. Full press release [here](#).

(14/07) Eurochild - Models of Child Health Appraised (MOCHA) project. Eurochild holds advisory role in [MOCHA – Models of Child Health Appraised](#), a European project aiming to map the gaps in primary health care services for children in 30 countries. MOCHA is one of the largest and most ambitious projects to look at primary health care services for children in Europe. Focusing on prevention and wellness, its results will demonstrate the optimal model(s) of child primary care. Alongside the results, the MOCHA project will analyse the factors (including cultural factors) which might facilitate the adoption of recommendations, and indications for policy makers of both the health and economic gains possible. The project, funded by the European Commission through the Horizon 2020 Framework, began in June 2015 and will continue until November 2018. Read full description [here](#).

(11/07) How to influence EC Vice-President Timmermans. Social Platform Policy and Advocacy Advisor Annica Ryngebeck [reports](#) on a meeting of small group of civil society representatives working on human rights and asylum and migration with European Commission First Vice-President Frans Timmermans. The agenda was to address the EU-Turkey deal, the asylum package and EU's integration action plan ([read Annica's blog](#) from the previous meeting in February on migration integration).

(11/07) The good and the bad in the Parliament's say on how the EU budget should look. Last week the European Parliament adopted an important resolution concerning the mid-term revision of the political priorities of the European Union's budget. When the 2014-2020 regulations were adopted, it was decided that the European Commission would conduct an interim review to assess if the framework decided in 2013 was still adequate to manage the EU's economic and social situation. The Commission is expected to have completed its review by the end of the year. The European Parliament expressed its views ahead of the Commission's assessment. We have been working with our members on this, in cooperation with Civil Society Europe. This resolution contains many positive aspects and others on which we have reservations. Below are some of my considerations. [What are the good and the bad aspects of the resolution?](#)

(8/07) ENSIE - European Network for Social Integration Enterprises: ENSIE grows again and again! (via Social Platform). Established 15 years ago, ENSIE represents today 28 national and regional networks of work integration social enterprises in 21 countries in Europe. From 8 members representing 6 European countries in 2001, ENSIE reached 14 members in 10 European countries in 2006 and 19 members and 15 European countries in 2011. During this year's general assembly, ENSIE members discussed over different key topics: the European semester, the integration of migrants, the social and economic impact measurement and the participation of disadvantaged people in the decision making processes. Read more [here](#).

(7/07) Eurochild - A children's rights passport for every child. The children's rights community in Europe gathered in Brussels this week to answer the question "Why Europe needs to invest in children". The children's rights community in Europe gathered in Brussels

this week to answer the question “Why Europe needs to invest in children”. Not only policy makers, professionals working with children and politicians, but children and young people themselves were actively involved in this event, which was held under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen of the Belgians. “Doers should start speaking, speakers should start doing” – This is the [message of the declaration](#) from the conference. Drafted by a team of young people with input from the conference participants, it demands European governments, Members of the European Parliament and individuals to invest in children through 4 specific ways. Read full article [here](#).

(7/07) ECRE - Greek Forum for Refugees reports on Greek asylum procedure through the eyes of refugees. The [Greek Forum for Refugees](#) (GFR) released a [report](#) describing the obstacles preventing asylum seekers in Greece from accessing the asylum procedure and from receiving international protection. The report is mainly based on testimonies provided by asylum seekers, refugees and communities throughout 2015 and focuses on both the old backlog procedure and the new asylum procedure which entered into force on 7 June 2013. The most important difference between these procedures is the shift from the police to the Greek Asylum Service as the responsible authority for handling asylum claims. Read more [here](#).

(5/07) CEMR - Diversity and integration: Brussels, Paris, Lesbos and 100+ mayors call on states to keep their promises. Mayors, local and regional leaders from all over Europe are uniting around the Council of European Municipalities and Regions’ (CEMR) [call](#) to urge member states to keep their promises on asylum and integration policy. To this day, the call is supported by the mayors of Athens, Bucharest, Brussels, Lesbos, Munich, Paris, Santander and Vienna, among others, as well as by the Presidents of 23 local and regional government associations and more than 120 local and regional elected representatives. This call was strengthened by an [online petition](#) that CEMR just launched to engage local and regional leaders, as well as the general public. Full press release [here](#).

(5/07) ERGO Network: Alliance against antigypsyism launches (via Social Platform). The Alliance against Antigypsyism is an occasional coalition of organisations that promote equality of rights for Roma, to advance a better understanding of antigypsyism. The Alliance counts more than seventy members from across Europe and more are still joining. An up-to-date members list, as well as the reference paper, can be found at www.antigypsyism.eu. The Alliance [published](#) a reference paper on antigypsyism, the specific racism against Roma, Sinti, Travellers and other groups who are stigmatised as ‘gypsies’ in the public domain. The reference paper proposes a working definition of antigypsyism.

PUBLICATIONS

Liberties – [With Britain Gone, Will It Be Easier for the EU to Protect Its Fundamental Values?](#)
(article)

CEDEFOP – [Mainstreaming VET policies addressing early leaving from education and training](#)
(briefing note)

CARITAS Europa – [10 Myths on migration and development](#)

MPI - [Understanding and Addressing Public Anxiety About Immigration](#)

ECDPM - [Culture in EU development policies and external action: Reframing the discussion](#)
(briefing note)

ECDPM - [Implementing the Agenda for Change: An independent analysis of the 11th EDF programming](#) (briefing note)

SOLIDAR - [The European Pillar of Social Rights – a basis for upward social convergence?](#)

OECD - [Development Co-operation Report 2016 - The Sustainable Development Goals as Business Opportunities](#)

European Commission - [EU Platform of Diversity Charters Newsletter \(July\)](#)