INFO FLASH 14/03

The European institutions focused their activities around the future of Europe and the implementation of the Agenda on Migration agreed in Valletta in 2015. More specifically, the Commission presented its White Paper on the Future of Europe, suggested new measures for an efficient and credible EU return policy, called for accelerated delivery under the Migration Partnership Framework and further actions along the Central Mediterranean Route and presented new measures for an efficient and credible EU return policy. On the issue of partnerships with third countries, ECRE wondered if the EU is eyeing up Tunisia for the next migration deal. The European Parliament responded by holding discussions on the White Paper and proposing advantages and disadvantages for Member states deciding to host or not asylum seekers. The Council adopted a regulation to reinforce checks at external borders, agreed on its negotiating mandate regarding the entry-exit register and strengthened rules to prevent new forms of terrorism.

The Court of Justice of the EU ruled on two major cases involving migration. As ECRE reported, the EU has no jurisdiction to hear action for annulment of EU-Turkey Agreement, while Member States will still have the discretion to grant humanitarian visas.

In the field of children's rights, the Council adopted EU guidelines for the promotion and protection of the rights of the child in the external action of the EU, while MEPs called for better protection of missing refugee children. The Council of Europe issued a report on protecting refugee children from sexual abuse.

Many stakeholders issued press releases and analyses on the 3rd European Migration Forum, that took place on 2-3 March at the European Economic and Social Committee. The Fundamental Rights Agency summed up the message of its director and keynote speaker. Social Platform argued that investing in migrants and refugees bolsters the economy and social cohesion, and that more and safer passages to the EU are needed for all migrants and refugees

EU INSTITUTIONS

European Commission

(8/03) European Solidarity Corps: matching of young people with organisations begins. Three months after the European Solidarity Corps was launched and interested young Europeans could start to sign up, accredited organisations that will provide solidarity placements can now use the database to find potential employees, trainees or volunteers for their activities. Several hundred placements will be available as of this spring and thousands more will follow in the months ahead. A wide range of organisations can offer European Solidarity Corps placements: non-governmental organisations, civil society organisations,

national, regional and local authorities or social enterprises, for example. In this first phase, organisations interested in participating in the European Solidarity Corps can apply for funding through existing EU funding programmes. Currently, eight programmes support the European Solidarity Corps. More information is available in this fact sheet. The online system of the European Solidarity Corps allows for direct matching between organisations and young people interested in a solidarity placement. When registering, apart from their personal details, young people can indicate their skills, experiences, availabilities, preferences, and motivation, as well as upload their CVs. Full press release here.

(2/03) European Agenda on Migration: Commission presents new measures for an efficient and credible EU return policy. After the Malta Summit of 3 February 2017 highlighted the need for a review of EU return policy, the Commission is today following through with a renewed EU Action Plan on Return and a set of recommendations to Member States on how to make return procedures more effective. The measures proposed by the Commission consist of practical steps which can have an immediate impact. They focus on closing loopholes and applying the existing rules with the rigour and realism required to ensure they deliver in practice in line with fundamental rights requirements. Despite the progress on the implementation of the actions under the 2015 EU Action Plan on Return, more resolute action to substantially improve return rates is still needed. The current migratory challenges demand a thorough assessment of how Member States can use the EU's existing legal, operational and financial instruments on return better. Faster procedures, stronger measures against absconding, a multidisciplinary approach by national authorities and better cooperation and coordination between Member States can all help to ensure a more effective return policy without diminishing fundamental rights safeguards. Full press release here.

(2/03) Commission calls for accelerated delivery under the Migration Partnership Framework and further actions along the Central Mediterranean Route. Ahead of the European Council meeting, the Commission and the High Representative/Vice-President are reporting for the third time on the progress made under the Migration Partnership Framework and are presenting the first steps taken to implement actions along the Central Mediterranean Route, as laid out in the Malta Declaration of 3 February and the Joint Communication from 25 January. Tangible progress has been made with the five African priority countries, Ethiopia, Niger, Nigeria, Mali and Senegal but efforts need to be stepped up to deliver results. Along the Central Mediterranean route, work is taken forward to better manage migration, continue saving lives, step up the fight against smugglers and traffickers and offer protection to migrants in need and increase resettlement and assisted voluntary returns, fully abiding to the EU's humanitarian imperative and the respect of human rights. Full press release here. Fact sheet here.

(1/03) Commission presents White Paper on the future of Europe: Avenues for unity for the EU at 27. As announced in President Juncker's 2016 State of the Union speech, the European Commission presented a White Paper on the Future of Europe, which forms the Commission's contribution to the Rome Summit of 25 March 2017. As we prepare to mark the 60th anniversary of the EU, we look back on a peace spanning seven decades and on an enlarged Union of 500 million citizens living in freedom in one of the world's most prosperous economies. At the same time, the EU has to look forward at how it will carve a vision for its own future at 27. The White Paper sets out the main challenges and opportunities for Europe in the coming decade. It presents five scenarios for how the Union could evolve by 2025 depending on how it chooses to respond. The White Paper looks at how Europe will change in

the next decade, from the impact of new technologies on society and jobs, to doubts about globalisation, security concerns and the rise of populism. It spells out the choice we face: being swept along by those trends, or embracing them and seizing the new opportunities they bring. Europe's population and economic weight is falling as other parts of the world grow. By 2060, none of our Member States will account for even 1% of the world's population – a compelling reason for sticking together to achieve more. A positive global force, Europe's prosperity will continue to depend on its openness and strong links with its partners. The White Paper sets out five scenarios, each offering a glimpse into the potential state of the Union by 2025 depending on the choices Europe will make (see Annex). The scenarios cover a range of possibilities and are illustrative in nature. They are neither mutually exclusive, nor exhaustive. More information here.

European Parliament

(8/03) EU countries that do not host asylum seekers should not get EU solidarity funding, says lead MEP. All EU countries must share responsibility for hosting asylum seekers arriving in Europe. So it follows those that refuse to do so should not get solidarity funding from other EU member states, Cecilia Wikström (ALDE, SE), lead MEP on the reform the Dublin asylum system told the Civil Liberties. Ms Wikström presented her draft report on the proposal to review the Dublin III Regulation, which determines the member state responsible for processing an asylum application. She proposed making several amendments to the Commission´s proposal: no option for member states refusing to accept asylum seekers to pay a "solidarity contribution" of €250,000 per person instead. If an EU country refuses to participate in the relocation system, then it should not be eligible for solidarity payments from other member states, through the European Structural and Investment Funds; transfers of asylum-seekers to other EU countries should be automatically triggered when the first country has reached 100% of its allocated share (not 150%, as proposed by the European Commission); no "admissibility checks" ahead of relocation; faster family reunification and special focus on children; applicants for international protection should have the option to register as a group (maximum 30 people) upon arrival in Europe. They would then be transferred together. Full press release here.

(1/03) Missing refugee children: MEPs call for better protection. MEPs called for safe environments for unaccompanied refugee children, including immediate appointment of guardians, hotlines and increased cross-border cooperation, in Wednesday's debate with Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos on the disappearance of migrant children in Europe. Members also debated how to make it easier to trace the children, by taking photos or fingerprints, and underlined that the fight against criminals exploiting them should be stepped up. It is feared that some of these children are being sexually exploited by criminal gangs or forced to beg or commit crimes. Others may have disappeared while searching for their families in other EU countries or out of desperation over cumbersome asylum procedures or detention in reception centres. Around 10,000 unaccompanied refugee children have gone missing after arriving in Europe, Europol estimated in 2016.

(1/03) Future of the EU: MEPs discuss five scenarios set out by Jean-Claude Juncker. Lead MEPs from Parliament's political groups reacted on Wednesday to the Commission's Future of Europe White Paper, presented by its President Jean-Claude Juncker to the full House. Some MEPs welcomed the Commission's decision to outline five possible paths for the EU to take in the coming years, while others criticized it for not picking a clear preferred path

or providing concrete examples. For the comments by all party group representatives access the full press release.

European Council / Council of the EU

(7/03) Schengen borders code: Council adopts regulation to reinforce checks at external borders. On 7 March 2017, the Council adopted a regulation amending the Schengen borders code to reinforce checks against relevant databases at the external borders. The amendment obliges member states to carry out systematic checks against relevant databases on all persons, including those enjoying the right of free movement under EU law (i.e. EU citizens and members of their families who are not EU citizens) when they cross the external borders. The databases against which checks will be carried out include the Schengen Information System (SIS) and Interpol's database on stolen and lost travel documents (SLTD). The checks will also enable member states to verify that those persons do not represent a threat to public policy, internal security or public health. This obligation shall apply at all external borders (air, sea and land borders), both at entry and exit. However, where systematic consultation of databases could lead to a disproportionate impact on traffic flows at a sea or land border, member states are permitted to carry out only targeted checks against databases, provided that this will not lead to risks related to internal security, public policy, or the international relations of the member states, or pose a threat to public health. With regard to air borders, member states may only carry out targeted checks against databases for a transitional period of 6 months from the entry into force of the regulation. This period may be extended by up to 18 months in exceptional and specific cases, where there are infrastructural difficulties requiring a longer period of time to make the necessary changes.

(7/03) EU strengthens rules to prevent new forms of terrorism. To respond to the evolving terrorist threat, the EU is updating and extending the tools available to it. New rules adopted by the Council on 7 March 2017 will help prevent terrorist attacks by criminalising acts such as undertaking training or travelling for terrorist purposes, as well as organising or facilitating such travel. They also strengthen the rights of the victims of terrorism. The new rules, in the form of a Directive, strengthen and widen the scope of the existing legislation (Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA in particular). The directive criminalises: 1) Travelling within, outside or to the EU for terrorist purposes, e.g. to join the activities of a terrorist group or with the purpose of committing a terrorist attack; 2) The organisation and facilitation of such travel, including through logistical and material support, such as the purchase of tickets or planning itineraries; 3) Training and being trained for terrorist purposes, e.g. in the making or use of explosives, firearms, noxious or hazardous substances mirroring the existing provision of knowingly providing such training; 4) Providing or collecting funds with the intention or the knowledge that they are to be used to commit terrorist offences and offences related to terrorist groups or terrorist activities. The Directive will also complement the current legislation on the rights for victims of terrorism. It includes a catalogue of services to meet the specific needs of victims of terrorism, such as the right to receive immediate access to professional support services providing medical and psycho-social treatments, or to receive legal or practical advice, as well as assistance with compensation claims. The emergency response mechanisms immediately after an attack will be also strengthened.

(6/03) Leave No Child Behind: Council adopts EU guidelines for the promotion and protection of the rights of the child. The Council adopted EU Guidelines for the promotion and protection of the rights of the child. This 2017 version is a revision of the 2007 EU guidelines. The guidelines recall international standards on the rights of the child and provide

comprehensive guidance as well as concrete ways to promote effectively and protect the rights of the child. With these guidelines, the EU reaffirms its commitment to the comprehensive protection and promotion of the rights of the child in its external human rights policy. Full press release and documents [here](#).

(2/03) Entry-exit system: Council agrees on its negotiating mandate. On 2 March 2017, the Permanent Representatives Committee (Coreper) agreed on a negotiating mandate to start negotiations with the European Parliament on a proposal for an entry-exit system. This system will register entry, exit and refusal of entry information of third country nationals crossing the external borders of the Schengen area. The entry-exit system will help: 1) reduce border check delays and improve the quality of border checks by automatically calculating the authorised stay of each traveller; 2) ensure systematic and reliable identification of overstayers and those who no longer fulfil the conditions for entry; 3) strengthen internal security and the fight against terrorism by allowing law enforcement authorities access to a travel history records. Full press release [here](#).

Others

(9/03) FRA - Maltese Presidency child rights meeting on asylum reform. The Agency [presented](#) its Opinions on the proposals for the revised Dublin and Eurodac Regulations during a policy roundtable on 1 March in Brussels. The discussions focused on operationalising the best interests of the child principle in reforming the Common European Asylum System. UNICEF, UNHCR, ECRE, Save the Children and the International Rescue Committee were also part of the Roundtable. The event was organised by the Maltese Presidency of the EU Council for Member States' delegates involved in the asylum working party.

(8/03) European Economic and Social Committee - Migration needs fair responsibility sharing based on EU-wide solidarity. We need to change the narrative and disseminate the many good stories as an antidote to the fears and worries spread by right-wing populists. Efforts towards integration need to be accelerated - the city of Mechelen could be a role model of what successful integration can look like. Family reunification is key to proper integration, and so is access to work and basic services. Therefore it is indispensable for Member States to stick to the relocation programme they themselves agreed upon in September 2015. It is unacceptable that 9 Member States did not relocate any refugees. Europe needs solidarity in order to handle this challenge. The 3rd Migration Forum, an event jointly organised by the European Commission (EC) and the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), brought together over 200 experts from civil society organisations of the 28 Members States to debate burning issues related to migration, such as access to basic needs, resettlement, relocation, family unification, the protection of children, etc. Full press release [here](#).

(8/03) Frontex - Frontex introduces new set-up for Partnership Academies Network. Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, [presented plans](#) to significantly expand its Partnership Academies Network by adding more than 10 national border and coast guard academies to the current 17 members. The main objective of the Partnership Academies is to facilitate cooperation with border and coast guard training institutions in the European Union, to create common educational standards and to modernise education and training systems in the field of border and coast guarding. Frontex will also deliver training activities preparing border guards for deployment in Frontex Joint Operations. Some of the courses organised last year included workshops on detection of falsified documents,

protection of human rights in operational activities, training for border guards at land, air and sea borders, as well as training of return experts.

(8/03) FRA - Help Roma women break the cycle of deprivation. Roma women have long been held back by inequalities, poverty, dire living conditions and a lack of opportunities, says the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) on International Women's Day on 8 March. The Roma of Europe have never had meaningful access to their socio-economic rights. For women in particular, the picture is especially bleak. They remain trapped in a vicious cycle of poverty, social exclusion and unemployment. Exclusion from education impedes their access to meaningful employment which condemns them to a life of poverty and poor housing conditions. Roma women then remain in poverty, with low education without employment opportunities, limiting their choices in later life. A good education is the path to better jobs and better wages. But this road is closed to many young Roma women, who often drop out of secondary school without further training. Nearly three quarters of young Roma women aged 16-24 are not employed, in education or training, compared with over a half of young Roma men in the same age group, according to findings from the Agency's second EU Minorities and Discrimination survey in nine EU Member States. In countries like Greece, Portugal and Hungary the gender gap was even more marked. This gap translates to poorer job prospects: For example, only 20% of Roma women are in paid work compared with 41% of men. Often this is compounded by traditional gender roles where women do most of the domestic work in poor conditions without tap water, indoor bath, shower or toilet. Unsurprisingly, the health of Roma women also suffers. Clearly, Member States need to protect Roma girls and women from discrimination and give them a real chance to break free from the cycle of deprivation. This means ensuring they stay longer in school, receive training and learning support. Businesses and local authorities need to create training schemes and work opportunities for Roma women. And Roma communities should enjoy a decent standard of living free of poverty. Local efforts to empower Roma women should also be used to boost inclusion, as FRA research has found. Full press release here.

(8/03) EIGE - Gender equality boosts economic growth. If the EU stepped up its efforts to improve gender equality, more jobs would be created, GDP per capita would increase and society would be able to adjust better to the challenges related to the ageing population. These are the main results of a new study by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), launched on the occasion of international women's day on 8 March 2017. Full press release here.

(6/03) Eurostat - General government expenditure in the EU in 2015 - Government expenditure on social protection accounted for almost one fifth of GDP - Representing about 40% of total public expenditure. Among the main functions of general government expenditure in the European Union (EU), 'social protection' was by far the most important in 2015, equivalent to 19.2% of GDP. The next most important areas were 'health' (7.2%), 'general public services' such as external affairs and public debt transactions (6.2%), 'education' (4.9%) and 'economic affairs' (4.3%). The functions 'public order and safety' (1.8%), 'defence' (1.4%), 'recreation, culture and religion' (1.0%), 'environmental protection' (0.8%) and 'housing and community amenities' (0.6%) had more limited weights. These data at EU level mask however significant differences between the Member States in the share of GDP devoted to each function of general government expenditure. Full report here.

(3/03) FRA - Facing the challenges of migrant integration. "Often [migrants] live and work in the shadows, denied their rights and vulnerable to discrimination, exploitation and

marginalisation," said FRA Director Michael O'Flaherty during the 3rd European Migration Forum in Brussels on 3 March. He outlined some of the shortcomings of existing integration policies across the EU, to guide the EU and its Member States as they refocus their integration efforts. While he recognised the national debates that are currently taking place, often sceptical about the feasibility of living together, he underlined its importance and how it can contribute to the sustainable growth Europe needs to be strong and prosperous. He referred to adhering to the EU's 'Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration'. They speak of integration as a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States. However, drawing on a report the Agency will publish on 15 March, he outlined some of the problems with existing integration approaches. For example, across the EU, different Member States have approached integration in different ways. As a result deficiencies in one or another Member State may impact others. In addition, often these approaches do not explicitly address people with a migrant background, even though they are often disadvantaged. They also tend to be "blind to the situation of women" which underlines the need for a gendered approach. Then there is the question of education and language learning, two elements vital for successful integration. Language learning is often of poor quality and rarely linked to on-the-job-training. There is also strong evidence of some form of segregation in schools revealing migrants and non-migrants living separate, divided lives.

(1/03) Committee of the Regions - European Semester: Better output with local and regional input. A Code of Conduct for a structured and ongoing involvement of local and regional authorities in the European Semester is the aim of a draft opinion by Rob Jonkmann (NL/ECR) adopted by the commission for economic policy (ECON) of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR). The European Semester is the main tool for economic and fiscal policy coordination at EU level, during which Member States align their budgetary and economic policies with the recommendations agreed at EU level. While publishing the 2017 Country Reports, the European Commission calls Members States to explain how regional and local authorities were involved in the elaboration and implementation of reforms, recognising the need of more ownership on the local and regional level. Full press release here.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

(8/03) Italy should improve its asylum reception-capacity, prevent human trafficking and strengthen its child-protection system. "Italy should improve its asylum reception-capacity and integration policies, prevent human trafficking and combat corruption in the migration-related services sector" are the main recommendations in a report published by the Secretary General's Special Representative on migration and refugees, Ambassador Tomáš Boček. The Special Representative also stressed the need to strengthen the protection of refugee and migrant children; called upon the Italian authorities and the EU to expedite the examination of asylum claims and of relocation and family-reunification requests; and pointed to the risk that weaknesses in the system for voluntary and forced removals might be encouraging the arrival of more irregular economic migrants. Italy is facing enormous challenges, as 2016 saw a new record number of refugees and other migrants taking the central Mediterranean route. Efforts have been made to increase and improve the accommodation and services offered, but the high number of those arriving in Italy - over 180,000 in 2016, of whom around 25,000 were unaccompanied children - has meant that supply has not kept up with demand. More solidarity from other member States of the Council of Europe is needed to ensure a fairer distribution of asylum-seekers across the continent and alleviate the burden currently shouldered by Italy. The country should also be assisted in its cross-border efforts to fight people smuggling. Full press release here.

(6/03) New report on protecting refugee children from sexual abuse. A new report focusing on the protection of children affected by the refugee crisis from sexual exploitation and abuse was presented today. Non-comprehensive data collection, inadequate reception conditions, problems with age verification and with identification of victims are among the key challenges identified. While there is no aggregated data available on the total number of children affected by refugee crisis in Europe, the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC) assesses that in 2015 at least 337,000 children were registered as asylum seekers, 88,300 of which were unaccompanied. The states surveyed have much more difficulties to provide data or estimates on the number of children who did not seek asylum. Full press release and data here.

CIVIL SOCIETY

(10/03) ECRE - EU General Court has no jurisdiction to hear action for annulment of EU-Turkey Agreement. The EU General Court does not have jurisdiction to hear the action for annulment against the EU-Turkey deal – an order delivered by the EU General Court established on 28 February. The action had been brought by two Pakistani nationals and an Afghan national. The General Court stated that the deal cannot be challenged directly before EU courts, since it is not considered an act of an institution of the EU but rather an act of Member States during a meeting of Heads of State or Government with their Turkish counterpart, which the President of the European Council and President of the European Commission only attended informally. The finding of the General Court seems to contrast with the designation "EU-Turkey statement", figuring in EU policy documents, including the five implementation reports published by the European Commission thus far. The Commission has also appointed an EU Coordinator on the Implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement for that purpose. Full press release here.

(10/03) ECRE - Weekly Editorial: Short sighted regional policies undermine global solutions. As well as reducing standards of refugee protection, Europe is increasingly focusing on blocking access to protection on European territory. Measures already in place include border closures and inadmissibility procedures to prevent claims being lodged. Proposals now openly discussed include offshore processing of applications, offshore disembarkation of rescued asylum seekers, and mandatory return to "safe" third countries. At the most extreme end, the Austrian Foreign Minister has stated that the objective of EU policy should be zero asylum applications on EU territory. While some European politicians are ready to sell out human rights and abdicate responsibility, simple mathematics illustrates the short-sightedness of this approach. Full editorial here.

(10/03) ECRE - Lack of safe and legal routes results in ever more deadly journeys. UNHCR and MSF have released reports underlining the consequences of EU migration policies restricting access to the EU. Without safe and legal access to protection, migrants are at the mercy of smugglers and pushed to risk their lives on ever more dangerous routes. The UNHCR report 'Desperate Journeys' establishes that while an increasing number of people seeking protection entered the EU by crossing the Mediterranean from Libya to Italy, the number of crossings to Europe from Morocco and Turkey went down compared to 2015. UNHCR further highlights the fact that the proportion of children among people entering Italy has doubled in the last year. In Greece, 87 percent of migrants arriving are coming from the world's top ten refugee producing countries. The MSF report 'Dying to Reach Europe: Eritreans in search of safety' is based on testimonies of Eritreans who fled their country. The

report highlights the dire living situation of Eritrean neighbour states Sudan and Ethiopia leaving Eritreans with limited regional alternatives and making them the second largest nationality arriving in Italy in 2016 and largest in 2015. All Eritreans interviewed by MSF had suffered from or witnessed severe violence during their journey. Every single interviewee have been held captive at some point during their refuge, while half have seen fellow refugees die. Full press release [here](#).

(7/03) ECRE - EU Court leaves the granting of humanitarian visas with Member States. Against the recommendations of the Advocate General of the European Court of Justice, Paolo Mengozzi and based on a technicality the court left the responsibility for granting humanitarian visas with Member States. Despite the clear and immediate need of protection and against the opinion of the Advocate General of the European Court of Justice, Paolo Mengozzi, a Syrian family from Aleppo will not be granted humanitarian visas to Belgium under EU law. The European Court of Justice ruled that the intention to apply for asylum immediately upon arrival in Belgium means that the humanitarian visa application cannot be classified as a short term visa under the EU Visa Code. Moreover, so far no EU legal instrument has been adopted with regard to the issue by Member States of long-term visas and residence permits, although the Treaty provides a legal basis to do so. Therefore the case does not fall under the scope of EU law and remains a question to be decided by national authorities. Full press release [here](#).

(6/03) PICUM - What's needed to stop abuse of migrant workers? New brochure explains what makes a complaint mechanism effective. Undocumented workers across Europe can be exploited and abused with impunity. They usually cannot file a complaint without risking arrest or deportation. The Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants' (PICUM) new guidelines explain how to establish effective complaints mechanisms for labour rights violations, for all workers, including undocumented workers. Full press release [here](#).

(3/03) Social Platform - Investing in migrants and refugees bolsters the economy and social cohesion. Last week the [European Migration Forum](#) – the civil society dialogue platform on migration, asylum and migrant integration – met for the third time in Brussels. At the meeting our member Eurodiaconia held a workshop on integration services for migrants. Access to quality and affordable social, health, housing, employment and education services for all migrants and refugees is a pre-condition for their successful inclusion in our societies. Valentina Caimi (Social Platform) [takes the opportunity to briefly illustrate some good practices](#) of social, health and employment services for migrants and refugees that we gathered with the help Social Platform's members, their national members and partners.

(3/03) Social Platform - More and safer passages to the EU, for all migrants and refugees. During the [European Migration Forum](#) (2-3 March), I had the opportunity to co-host a workshop together with the European Commission. This year the theme was "Migrants' access to the EU, to rights and to services". Organised with the European Economic and Social Committee, the forum gathers around 200 participants, mainly from civil society organisations from both national and European level. The topic of the workshop was "the EU legal migration framework" and the purpose was to feed into the European Commission's work to check whether EU legislation in this area is fit for its purpose. When asking civil society to identify the main gaps and challenges in current EU legal migration framework, the participants focused on ways for people in vulnerable situations to enter or stay in the EU. By the end of the workshop we had identified four key recommendations. Full blog article [here](#).

(2/03) ENAR - Migrant integration is no longer a linear process. In an area where much data is needed and where very little is reported, to prove that someone was discriminated against based on his/her migration status or nationality is a huge challenge. Beyond this aspect, people have different identities and any multi-dimensional representation defined by colour, religion, race and/or ethnic origin, can add an extra negative layer to the discrimination faced by any minority. Yet, the lack of support to victims of discrimination puts those suffering from different manifestations of racism in a situation of despair: a spiral effect in which structural mechanisms prevent the implementation of strong measures to ensure equal treatment and redress for discriminatory acts. This vicious cycle inhibits minorities and migrants from trusting and reporting racism to law enforcement authorities. Full blog article here.

(3/03) ECRE - EU eyeing up Tunisia for next migration deal? Planned visits by Germany and Italy as well as the EU Commission's Renewed Action Plan and Third Progression report of the Migration Partnership Framework identifying Tunisia as one of the priority countries reveal increasing interest from EU and Member States in cooperation with Tunisia on migration control. Germany and Italy are both mounting the pressure on the Tunisian authorities with planned visits in the near future where readmission of rejected asylum seekers will be discussed. The European Commission has identified Tunisia in its Renewed Action Plan on return policy as a priority country to conclude a readmission agreement in imitation of Belgium, which has done this in December 2016. EU talks with Tunisia include simplifying visa procedures in exchange for a readmission agreement that would make it easier for the EU to deport Tunisians staying illegally in Europe, or other nationals who arrived from Tunisia. For the EU to deport nationals who arrived from Tunisia, Tunisia would need to be recognised as a 'safe third country.' According to a joint statement from NGOs in Germany, Italy and, Tunisia does not qualify as safe given the lack of effective asylum legislation and adequate reception capacity. The statement also points out that there are no human rights safeguards in place in Tunisia. The NGOs call for increased EU support for Tunisia's fight against terrorism without linkages to migration control and readmission. Full press release here.

PUBLICATIONS

European Commission - European handbook on equality data

European Commission - Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (Work Programme 2017)

Labour Market Observatory (LMO) - Tackling long-term unemployment in the EU (conference material)

IW Köln - The Role of the Private Sector in Vocational and Educational Training : Developments and Success Factors in Selected Countries

MPI - Improving the Labour Market Integration of Migrants and Refugees: Empowering Cities through Better Use of EU Instruments

MPI - Strengthening Local Education Systems for Newly Arrived Adults and Children: Empowering Cities through Better Use of EU Instruments

EPRS - [Gender Equality: EU Challenges And Policies](#) (think tank review)

EPRS - [Euro-Area Reforms: Challenges And Policies](#) (think tank review)

OECD - [Interrelations between Public Policies, Migration and Development](#)
LSE - [Gender quotas and the crisis of the mediocre man](#)
LSE - [How mainstream parties react to the rise of radical right-wing parties](#)

LSE - [Is EU free movement a curse or a blessing? The case of Austria](#)

EPRS - [EU Research Policy: Tackling The Major Challenges Facing European Society](#)

KEA - [The Future of Europe – The Case for a Scenario 6!](#)