

INFO FLASH 11/04

The European Commission published assessment reports on the [European justice systems](#) and [EU cohesion policy](#) and registered a [European Citizens' Initiative on the protection of minorities](#). The Council of the agreed to [increase funding from the European Investment Bank to address migration issues](#) and [adopted conclusions on the promotion and protection of the rights of the child](#). The Court of Auditors issued two press releases on the examination of [anti-radicalisation measures](#) and the [EU Youth Guarantee](#).

Among civil society, ECRE reported on national development from Italy, that has arguably put in place [Europe's most elaborate system for protecting refugee children](#), and Germany, that is experiencing the so-called "[asylum-lottery](#)". PICUM released a report highlighting [how cities across Europe help provide access to health care for all migrants](#) in their communities who are shut out of the public health system.

On International Roma Day, the Council of Europe Secretary General released a statement, while [Regional and Local Representatives reaffirmed their commitment to the fight against anti-Gypsyism](#). FRA suggested [ways to improve local Roma inclusion](#), and the European Parliament Research Service published a [policy briefing document](#) on International Roma Day.

Good readings for the two weeks ahead include a publication by IFRI on [the foreign policy challenges for the next French president](#) (including migration), a blog article by VoteWatch.eu on [how the new French President will impact on EU's future](#) and the Council for the EU General Secretariat's [Think Tank Review of March 2017](#).

EU INSTITUTIONS

European Commission

(10/04) EU Justice Scoreboard 2017: justice systems becoming more effective, but challenges remain. The European Commission published the 2017 EU Justice Scoreboard which gives a comparative overview of the efficiency, quality and independence of justice systems in the EU Member States. Its aim is to assist national authorities to improve the effectiveness of their justice systems. Compared to previous editions, the [2017 Scoreboard](#) looks into new aspects of the functioning of justice systems, for example, how easily consumers can access justice and which channels they use to submit complaints against companies. For the first time, it also shows the length of criminal court proceedings relating to money laundering offences. The findings of the 2017 Scoreboard are being taken into account for the ongoing country-specific assessment carried out within the 2017 European Semester process. The country reports for Member States were published on 22 February 2017 and include findings on the justice systems of a number Member States (Belgium, Bulgaria, Spain, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia) (see [IP/17/308](#)). Full press release [here](#).

(31/03) New report highlights how EU Cohesion Policy improves the investment environment in Europe. One of the key elements of the Cohesion Policy reform for 2014-20 was the introduction of preconditions for Member States to receive money from the European Structural and Investment Funds. A [first assessment](#) published shows that this additional step has a high value, and that the preconditions proved to be a powerful incentive for Member States and regions to carry out reforms which would have otherwise been delayed or not necessarily implemented. The [preconditions](#) for successful investments (or "[ex-ante conditionalities](#)") cover a wide variety of sectors, including compliance with energy efficiency, innovation, digital plans, and education reforms. They were included in the reformed Cohesion Policy to ensure sound and effective spending. Full press release [here](#).

(31/03) EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey: steady progress and new projects for education and health launched. The European Commission reported at the Steering Committee meeting on implementation progress made to date. The sixth Steering Committee meeting of the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey took place in Brussels to report on the progress made to date. They discussed the latest projects to support refugees, in particular the recently launched €34 million [Conditional Cash Transfer for Education](#) project with UNICEF and a €5 million contract with the NGO Spark which will increase participation and equal access to higher education of vulnerable Syrian youth. Furthermore, seven new humanitarian projects worth €41.6 million* have also been launched focusing on protection and access to health. So far out of the overall €3 billion allocated to the Facility, more than half has already been contracted in less than a year. Contracts have been signed for 46 projects in total worth over €1.5 billion, out of which €777 million has been disbursed so far to support refugees. Full press release [here](#).

(29/03) Commission registers 'Minority Safepack' European Citizens' Initiative. The European Commission [has decided to register](#) a European Citizens' Initiative inviting the Commission "to improve the protection of persons belonging to national and linguistic minorities and strengthen cultural and linguistic diversity in the Union". The registration of this Initiative on 3 April 2017 will start a one-year process of collection of signatures of support by its organisers. This registration follows an initial Commission Decision to refuse to register the 'Minority Safepack' Initiative on 13 September 2013, which was annulled by the General Court of the European Union on 3 February 2017. The Commission has reassessed the proposed Initiative, which requests proposals for 11 legal acts. Further details of the proposed acts can be found in the Annex. While 2 of the 11 acts manifestly fall outside the framework of the Commission's power to propose legislation, 9 of them do not. Statements of support may therefore be collected on the basis of these 9 proposals. The Commission's decision to register the Initiative concerns only the legal admissibility of the proposal. The Commission has not analysed the substance at this stage. Should the Initiative receive one million statements of support within one year, from at least seven different Member States, the Commission will have to react within three months. The Commission can decide either to follow the request or not, and in both instances would be required to explain its reasoning.

European Parliament

(5/04) MEPs back budget flexibility: €6bn more for jobs, growth and tackling migration. Plans to make it easier to move money around within the EU's long-run budget, to help tackle urgent challenges such as the migration crisis, strengthening security, boosting growth and creating jobs, were backed by Parliament. MEPs have long fought for greater flexibility within the Multi-annual Financial Framework (MFF), which would apply for the

remainder of the 2014-2020 MFF. “Parliament rightly advocated a revision of the multiannual financial framework to meet the new challenges the European Union is facing. Although our ambition for the extent of the changes was not fully met, we can be pleased with the result. We won the first-ever revision of the MFF, which will guarantee a better budgetary system for the remainder of the current period. We created more space for manoeuvre to respond to new challenges. We also ensured extra budgetary means for some EU programmes and policies: €6 bn will provide additional support for SMEs, research, Erasmus +, to create jobs for young people and to enhance the security of our citizens”, said co-rapporteur Jan Olbrycht (EPP, PL). Full press release [here](#).

(3/04) Interview: working together to tackle migration and refugee flows. Some 244 million people were living abroad in 2015, including more than 20 million refugees forced to leave their country due to conflicts or human rights violations. On 5 April MEPs voted on a report regarding migration movements. According to report authors Agustín Díaz de Mera and Elena Valenciano, migration flows are a global responsibility requiring a global response. Read on for an overview of the current situation and how Díaz de Mera and Valenciano believe it should be tackled. The influx of large numbers of migrants and refugees creates different sorts of challenges. Valenciano, a Spanish member of the S&D group, said: “In the short term we need to fully accept our responsibilities and provide the humanitarian answer that this [refugee] crisis demands. However, we need to address the complex and numerous root causes behind them related to conflicts, extreme poverty, climate change in order to achieve a real solution.” Díaz de Mera, a Spanish member of the EPP group, added: “The answer needs to be global; we need to work together.” Their report on [refugee and migrant movements](#) calls on the Parliament to help reach and implement agreements on migration with non-EU countries and also stresses the need for a common European policy based on solidarity and human rights, and not just focused on security. Full press release [here](#).

European Council / Council of the EU

(5/04) EIB: Council agrees to increase funding to address migration issues. The Council [has agreed](#) to additional funding by the European Investment Bank for projects outside the EU that address migration issues. Up to €3.7 billion would be earmarked for projects that address the root causes of migration and the needs of transit and host communities. On 5 April 2017, EU ambassadors asked the presidency to start negotiations with the European Parliament. They approved a mandate for the negotiations, on behalf of the Council. A first 'trilogue' meeting with the Parliament and the Commission is scheduled for 12 April 2017. "I have no doubt that on this issue we can come to a swift agreement with the European Parliament", said Edward Scicluna, minister for finance of Malta, which currently holds the Council presidency. “We both agree that the needs are great and urgent. We also hope we can do more through other EU programmes. This week's informal Ecofin in Malta will explore these possibilities.

(3/04) Council adopts conclusions on the promotion and protection of the rights of the child. The Council [adopted conclusions](#) on the promotion and protection of the rights of the child. These conclusions follow the 'Guidelines for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child (2017) - Leave No Child Behind' adopted by the Council on 6 March 2017. With these guidelines, the EU reaffirmed its commitment to comprehensively protect and promote the rights of the child in its external human rights policy. In line with the guidelines, the conclusions focus on promoting gender equality, ensuring the empowerment of girls, mainstreaming the rights of the child in all sectors and in all programming, and encouraging

partner countries to adopt a national strategy on the rights of the child. The Council reaffirms the EU's support for the work of relevant international and regional actors in the field of children's rights, in particular within the United Nations framework. The Council reaffirms the EU's active engagement in the processes protecting the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all refugee and migrant children.

Others

(6/04) Court of Auditors - EU Auditors examine anti-radicalisation measures. The European Court of Auditors [is to audit EU measures against radicalisation](#) later this year. The audit focuses on the Commission's support for Member States in addressing radicalisation since 2013, when foreign terrorist fighters became the EU's top counter-terrorism priority. It will examine measures to prevent radicalisation and measures aimed at those who have been radicalised (such as de-radicalisation and disengagement). The audit will assess whether the Commission contributes effectively to helping Member States address radicalisation that may lead to terrorism. Member States have front-line responsibility for fighting terrorism; the EU's role is to support them. It aims to add value by improving information exchange, facilitating cooperation and providing funding.

(6/04) Frontex - Frontex publishes Africa-Frontex Intelligence Community (AFIC) Report. The Africa-Frontex Intelligence Community (AFIC) Joint Report 2016 analyses the irregular migratory movements affecting AFIC countries and EU Member States, cross-border criminality and provides an overview of the main regional security threats affecting the countries in the community. The report also presents a picture of the smuggling networks in Africa. The AFIC was set up in 2010 to provide a framework for regular knowledge and intelligence sharing in the field of border security between Frontex and African countries. Full press release [here](#).

(6/04) FRA - Funding challenges and reaching out to deprived groups. The 5th Network Meeting of the [Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived](#) (FEAD) in Berlin from 6 to 7 April focused on challenges in European funds reaching the most deprived beneficiary groups, such as the homeless, Roma, and EU mobile citizens. Full press release [here](#).

(6/04) FRA - Anti-trafficking alliance conference focuses on children. The Agency took part in the [Alliance against Trafficking in Human Beings](#) conference in Vienna on 4 April. The event, convened by the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, discussed human trafficking threats for children in crises, the path towards effective child protection systems to prevent and combat human trafficking, and guidelines for policy development and implementation. The Agency joined discussions on effective child protection systems to prevent and combat human trafficking, paying particular attention to the role of guardians. Full press-release [here](#).

(6/04) FRA - Helping integration - policy support for learners and educators. The European Commission held a seminar on 28 March in Brussels to explore ways of implementing the Paris Declaration 2015. The meeting brought together representatives from Member States under the Working Group on promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination. The meeting highlighted the key role of education in the process of integrating migrants and called for further support of EU institutions in exchanging practices and facilitating peer-to-peer learning across EU Member States. The outcomes of the Working group will feed into the upcoming proposal for a [Council](#)

[Recommendation on promoting social inclusion and common EU values through formal and non-formal learning](#) that is expected towards the end of 2017. The Agency drew on findings on integration of migrants in education from its migration monthly overviews as well as its recent report '[Together in the EU. Promoting the participation of migrants and their descendants](#)'. It also moderated a session on supporting successful access and completion in school higher education, adult learning and vocational education and training. Full press release [here](#).

(4/04) European Agency for Safety and Health at Work - New study reveals challenges for effective worker representation in occupational safety and health management. In a new report, EU-OSHA details the findings of its qualitative study on worker participation and consultation in occupational safety and health (OSH). The study — a follow-up to EU-OSHA's second European Survey of Enterprises on New and Emerging Risks (ESENER-2) — suggests that worker representation on OSH is declining across Europe, while management-led arrangements for OSH participation are on the increase. The determinants and possible consequences of these changes are explored. Full press release [here](#).

(4/04) Court of Auditors - EU Youth Guarantee falls short of initial expectations, say Auditors. The EU Youth Guarantee, which aims to help young people without jobs, training or education, has made limited progress, and its results fall short of initial expectations, [according to a new report from the European Court of Auditors](#) (ECA). Under the Youth Guarantee, Member States should ensure that all young people receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within four months of leaving school or becoming unemployed. In addition, the European Council established the Youth Employment Initiative to increase support for those regions and individuals struggling the most, with a budget of €6.4 billion.

(3/04) European Economic and Social Committee - European youth call on EU to tackle food waste and poverty. Better scrutiny and management of food waste, an internationally agreed European history curriculum to combat nationalism, and better knowledge of the EU via the creation of a European day for schools. These were the main recommendations made to policy-makers by the students who took part in [Your Europe, Your Say!](#) (YEYS) to overcome the challenges the EU is facing. Full press release [here](#).

(29/03) FRA - How to improve local Roma inclusion. General trends on what works and what doesn't when it comes to boosting Roma inclusion was outlined during a stocktaking event on Roma integration efforts on 28 March in Brussels. The trends were drawn from the [Agency's research](#) in 21 localities across 11 EU Member States. The research involved engaging with Roma and local authorities to understand why many Roma inclusion efforts fail to produce tangible results. It also sought to identify successful practices for creating social inclusion at the local level. Some of the key points that emerged include: building trust; meaningful participation; empowering people; learning from the past. The research has captured a wealth of information about social inclusion and Roma integration measures on the ground. Already it reveals the importance of a more targeted case-by-case approach taking into account the needs of each community rather than using a blanket solution for everyone. The Agency will publish the case studies and accompanying videos from the 21 localities on 26 April. They will reveal the different local contexts, including their particular needs and challenges, the efforts that have been made to promote inclusion, as well as the various successes. The findings will help feed a wider analysis that will be published in 2018. Full press release [here](#).

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

(7/04) International Roma Day: Statement by the Secretary General Thorbjørn Jagland.

We are glad to see that over the last few years the 8th of April, the International Roma Day, has become an occasion for heads of states and intergovernmental institutions to make official speeches about Roma and acknowledge the important role Roma communities play in our societies. However, the overall situation of Roma today is far from what I wish it to be. Far too many Roma are born without access to an identity, far too many Roma toddlers are left outside of the social and educational facilities available to the majorities, far too many Roma children are affected by abject poverty, do not attend kindergartens, and drop out too early from school. Segregation, low quality education, and special schools continue to be problems that disproportionately affect Roma. Together with the [Special Representative for Roma Issues](#) we decided for this year to make some clear commitments for the future, to reach, together with our Member States 10 goals for the next 10 years. These very concrete goals concern Roma and Traveller children (identity papers, infant mortality, vaccination, schooling, child marriages), living conditions, employment and political participation of Roma. Full press release [here](#).

(30/04) Trafficking of children: experts highlight widespread problems. In its latest [annual report](#), published today, the Council of Europe's Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings ([GRETA](#)), has highlighted important shortcomings in a number of European countries related to the trafficking of children. The report shows that 4,361 children were identified as victims of trafficking in just 12 European countries between 2012 and 2015. Many others have failed to be detected and protected, due to gaps in the identification procedures, a failure to appoint legal guardians and the lack of appropriate and secure accommodation. GRETA's report shows that, on average, children represent a third of the identified victims of human trafficking, but there are important variations between countries. Children are being trafficked transnationally, as well as internally, for different forms of exploitation including sexual exploitation, forced labour, domestic servitude, forced begging, forced criminal activities and forced marriage. GRETA highlights widespread problems with identifying child victims of trafficking and providing them with safe accommodation. Many children are not being given the support they are legally entitled to, says GRETA, and some are still being punished for crimes they are forced to commit. The report also underlines that unaccompanied and separated children are particularly vulnerable to trafficking, but the authorities often have little or no information on the identification of victims of trafficking among such children. GRETA is responsible for assessing countries' compliance with the 2005 Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. Full press release [here](#).

(29/03) Regional and Local Representatives reaffirmed their commitment to the fight against anti-Gypsyism. In the framework of the debate on the fight against anti-Gypsyism, the [Congress for Local and Regional Authorities](#) adopted a [Declaration](#) of Mayors and Elected Local and Regional Representatives of Council of Europe Member States against anti-Gypsyism. The declaration was presented by John Warmisham, Congress Spokesperson for Roma Issues, and Valeriu Nicolae, the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe (SRSG) for Roma Issues. In the adopted Declaration, the Mayors commit themselves to defending human rights and democratic principles and to reject all forms of discrimination, violence, harassment, incitement to hatred and hate speech against Roma and Travellers and any other form of anti-Gypsyism. They also commit to refraining from any forms of political alliance or co-operation at all levels with any political parties or local and

regional authorities which incite or attempt to stir up racial or ethnic prejudices and racial hatred. Full press release [here](#).

CIVIL SOCIETY

(10/04) Social Platform - The cost of migrant integration pays off. Social Platform's Annica Ryngebeck reports on "a refreshing one hour debate held by Friends of Europe focusing on the benefits of migrant integration, with a diverse panel of two refugees, a local politician, an EU official and a business sector representative". Full article [here](#).

(7/04) ECRE - France opens its first humanitarian corridor to Syrian and Iraqi refugees. The French government [launched a program](#) in March to open its first humanitarian corridors to Middle Eastern refugees. Five Christian charity organisations have signed an agreement to transfer 500 Syrian and Iraqi refugees from Lebanon to France over the next 18 months in cooperation with the French government. ECRE has [consistently](#) pointed out the grave consequences of the lack of safe and legal channels for people in need of protection and welcomes the program that has many advantages – allowing refugees to safely travel to France by plane and thereby avoiding the dangerous and often fatal Mediterranean Sea route. At the same time the program will reduce the profits of the human traffickers taking advantage of migrants with no legal alternatives. One month ago, the Court of Justice of the European Union has [ruled](#) that Member States are not required, under EU law, to grant a humanitarian visas to persons who wish to enter their territory with an intend to apply for asylum, but they remain free to do so on the basis of their national law. France is the second European country, after Italy, to open humanitarian corridors. Full press release [here](#).

(7/04) ECRE - Italy: Developing Europe's most elaborate system for protecting refugee children. Last Wednesday Italy's parliament passed a new law with a broad majority, which introduces stricter safeguards for refugee children in the country. The reform was welcomed by humanitarian groups, including Save the Children who [stated](#) that it introduces the most elaborate system for child protection in Europe. The new [law](#) introduces a series of measures including the insurance that unaccompanied and separate refugee children will not be subjected to "refoulements" and returns, a reduction of the time they spend in first-line reception centres, the establishment of a structured and streamlined national reception system with minimum standards as well as the promotion of guardianship for children, foster care and host families for children and the harmonization and improvement of age assessment in a child-sensitive manner. The new positive measures does not however reflect a new broader consensus of migrant protection. They are introduced at a time where media [reports](#) that the Italian Senate has passed a decree which expands the number of immigration removal centres and cuts the time limit for appeals of negative asylum decisions. The law is now [under review](#) by the parliament's lower chamber. Full press release [here](#).

(7/04) ECRE - "Asylum Lottery" made in Germany. A [study](#) published last week by the University of Konstanz highlighted differential asylum recognition rates across German states and calls for monitoring of decisions taken by individual staff members and the regional branches of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF). The study illustrates widely differing asylum recognition rates among German states – a situation its co-author Gerald Schneider refers to as German "asylum lottery." While overall recognition rates have increased constantly from 2010 to 2015, the difference between the states has also grown. According to the study, the states with the highest recognition rates were Saarland (69 percent) and Bremen (55.7 percent). The states with the lowest rates are Berlin (24.6

percent) and Saxony (26.9 percent). Looking at specific nationalities, the study shows that while recognition rates of Syrians are relatively even among states, those of people from Iraq and Afghanistan vary. 75.5 percent of all asylum seekers from Iraq have been granted a positive asylum decision, but only 37.5 percent of Iraqis in Saxony – Anhalt were accepted. Similar gaps persist for Afghan asylum seekers; North-Rhine-Westphalia accepted 34.4 percent of all applications and Brandenburg only 10 percent. Full press release [here](#).

(6/04) POLITICO.eu - Tighter security checks could cause longer waits on Schengen borders. Worry about homegrown terrorists is prompting tighter controls starting Friday at airports, seaports and border crossings for those who enter or exit the 26-country Schengen passport-free area. Following an [amendment](#) to the Schengen Border Code approved last month, border officers now have to check the documents of all travelers against databases like the Schengen Information System, Interpol and registers of wanted persons. Previously, EU citizens leaving the zone were generally only checked for the expiration date of their passports and if the passport photo matched the traveler. For travelers from non-EU countries, systematic checks against the databases were already compulsory, but only when entering, not exiting the Schengen area. Full article [here](#).

(6/04) Eurodiaconia - The European Commission must increase its fight against Anti-Gypsyism. On the occasion of the International Romani Day on 8 April, Eurodiaconia calls on the European Commission to make the fight against Anti-Gypsyism a priority within its EU Framework on National Roma Integration Strategies. The current sociopolitical climate of rising nationalism and xenophobia provides fertile ground for Anti-Gypsyism to develop and spread. The term ‘Anti-Gypsyism’ refers to a specific form of racism against Roma and Sinti, which enjoys a relatively high degree of social acceptance. Anti-Gypsyism has an adverse effect on the image of Roma in public discourse, it prevents equal opportunities in society, and it undermines the political willingness of decision-makers to take positive action. In light of the prejudice and violence Roma people continue to face, Eurodiaconia, in partnership with its members, has developed [Guidelines](#) to outline concrete approaches to tackling discrimination and to set out key aspects of a strategy against Anti-Gypsyism. However, efforts by civil society actors should go hand in hand with effective institutional action. Full press release [here](#).

(6/04) PICUM – New report: European cities fill health care gap for migrants. Ahead of World Health Day, PICUM highlights in a new [report](#) how cities across Europe help provide access to health care for all migrants in their communities who are shut out of the public health system. Irregular migrants often have limited or no access to health care and fear going to the doctor because they might be reported to authorities. An increasing number of city governments recognise that denying migrants access to health care and other services if they have irregular migration status is detrimental to social policy goals, including social cohesion. Restricting health care access can have negative impacts on public health, and may counteract any progress made in reducing inequalities in health. It also results in higher costs, since migrants are forced to resort to emergency care rather than accessing more preventative care. Full press release [here](#).

(3/04) Euractiv - Italy brokers deal with Libyan tribes to curb migrant influx. The Italian government said that dozens of rival tribes in southern Libya had agreed to cooperate on securing the country’s borders in an effort to curb the influx of migrants trying to reach Europe. Italy’s interior ministry said the 60 tribal leaders, notably the Tuareg of the

southwest, the Toubou of the southeast, and the Arab tribe of Awlad Suleiman, had reached the 12-point deal after 72 hours of secret talks in Rome. Full article [here](#).

(31/03) PICUM – Court rules in favour of undocumented workers’ rights. The European Court of Human Rights ruled yesterday that Greece failed in its duty to protect migrant workers from labour exploitation, and to properly investigate their abuse and punish those responsible. Greece must now pay each applicant participating in the Court proceedings up to 16,000 euros in compensation for the damage they suffered. The case arose from an incident in April 2013 where 150 people were shot at, and 30 severely injured, after they demanded their wages as agricultural workers in the strawberry fields in Manolada, Greece. Working twelve-hour days under the watch of armed guards, the workers were not paid even the promised salary of 22 euros per day, for seven hours’ work, plus overtime. They lived in roughly built huts, without toilets or running water. While those that were seriously injured were granted temporary residence permits, the majority of the workers, received nothing. Some were detained and deported. Full article [here](#).

(30/03) ECRE - Refugee rights subsiding? New AIDA comparative report. An AIDA comparative [report](#) launched today discusses the impact of Europe’s two-tier protection regime, distinguishing between refugee status and subsidiary protection, on the rights of those granted protection. While the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) is premised on the existence of harmonised standards of protection and outcomes of asylum procedures, the assumption of a common protection space across the continent has never been realised and continues to be dispelled by the practice of asylum administrations to date. The “asylum lottery” results in asylum seekers having widely disparate chances of obtaining international protection, as well as different forms of protection granted, depending on the country where their claim is processed. Differences in the status granted have direct and far-reaching impact on the lives of beneficiaries of international protection, given that they entail a widely different set of rights between refugees and subsidiary protection holders in some countries. From an efficiency and integration perspective, the advantages of the full alignment of refugee status and subsidiary protection under EU law are clear. Full press release [here](#).

(29/03) Social Platform - The future of Europe needs more social investment. Social Platform, CESI and Eurodiaconia call on the European Union and Member States to honour their Rome pledge for a social Europe by reforming European Economic Governance and supporting social investment. The recent financial and economic crisis has resulted in a social crisis, with sharply rising socioeconomic inequalities in Member States across the European Union. The Rome Declaration commits Member States and institutions to a social Europe where addressing unemployment, poverty and social exclusion are priorities and where sustainable growth reduces inequalities. Social Platform, the European Confederation of Independent Trade Unions (CESI) and Eurodiaconia welcome this commitment to social Europe but warn Member States and the European institutions that this ambition can only be achieved if there is greater momentum and mechanisms for social investment in European Economic Governance. Continue reading the press release [here](#).

(27/03) POLITICO.eu - EU worried migrants will shop around for best return deal. Financial incentive. Reward for good behaviour. Gift. Bribe. Call it what you like, but payments to migrants to encourage them to return to their countries of origin are now key to Europe’s migration policy. They are also creating a problem. The amount offered in so-called assisted voluntary return payments varies considerably across the EU. Migrants in Germany, for example, can receive upwards of €5,000 in payments and in-kind assistance to leave, while

those in the Czech Republic receive nothing. That has created perverse incentives, with the European Commission warning about migrants “shopping” around for the best deal. Full article [here](#).

PUBLICATIONS

IFRI - [Foreign Policy Challenges for the Next French President](#)

FRA - [Together in the EU - Promoting the participation of migrants and their descendants](#)

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

MPI - [Improving the Labour Market Integration of Migrants and Refugees: Empowering Cities through Better Use of EU Instruments](#)

MPI - [Rebuilding after Crisis: Embedding Refugee Integration in Migration Management Systems](#)

EPRS - [‘Fake News’ And The EU’s Response](#)

EPRS - [International Roma Day](#)

EPRS - [Understanding ‘Development Effectiveness’: An Overview Of Concepts, Actors And Tools](#)

Open Society - [Strategic Litigation Impacts: Equal Access to Quality Education](#)

VoteWatch.eu - [How will the new French President impact on EU’s future?](#) (Report)

European Commission - [European Development Days 2017](#) (Event)