

# Commission Services and EEAS contribution to the 4 sessions of the Regional Review in the Europe and North America Region of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

11 March 2024, Geneva

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## SESSION 1

### GCM Objectives reviewed:



- The COM/EEAS consider the GCM as a positive international development that brings greater consensus to the international system, in line with the EU's comprehensive approach to migration, and therefore we support it.
- When it comes to the implementation of the GCM and regional cooperation, for the EU, this is a truly **historic moment as EU Member States reached an agreement on the New Pact on Migration and Asylum** proposed by the European Commission in September 2020.
- The **Pact** is a set of legislative and policy measures, which **will equip the 27 EU Member States** with a **sustainable migration and asylum system** that is gender-responsive and child sensitive, in full respect to fundamental rights of migrants and with due attention to specific vulnerabilities accompanied by appropriate safeguards.
- The **Pact reflects our commitment to manage migration in a fair and orderly way, in the spirit of the Global Compact**, and the recommendations of the IMRF Progress Declaration, allowing the EU to move from ad-hoc measures to long-term comprehensive responses.
- We are building the foundations for our common work on migration and asylum for the future, including more **efficient and faster procedures at the external borders**, safe and predictable arrival procedures promoting responsibility sharing and **screening of non-EU nationals who crossed the external borders in an unauthorised manner**. **At the same time, we aim at guaranteeing** a high-quality asylum space with more effective **asylum procedures, updated rules and tools for legal migration** and skills and support for more effective **integration policies**. Moreover, we want to ensure an efficient EU return system and a strengthened framework to combat human trafficking, as well as to promote a Global Alliance against migrant smuggling. The new rules can be **adapted in situations of crisis, including instrumentalisation of migrants**.

- The European Commission will have the task to guide, support and finance the implementation of the new rules and ensure homogeneity in their interpretation across the EU. This is a huge task to which we are preparing for as we gather in Geneva.
- **Implementing the Pact requires robust resources** and therefore our leaders decided to reinforce the EU's 2021-2027 budget with an additional EUR 2 billion aimed at supporting Member States in the implementation and in managing urgent challenges and needs.
- **Much like the GCM, the New Pact adopts a comprehensive view of migration**, recognising that every dimension is interlinked, and that policymaking on migration should reflect this fact. In doing this, it addresses all objectives of the GCM.
- Our work in the past two years, and looking forward, encompasses the **recommendations of the Progress Declaration** of the May 2022 International Migration Review Forum.

- *Regarding the GCM objectives discussed in this session:*

#### *On screening and referral*

- When it comes to screening and referrals, the Pact contains a new legislation, the "Screening regulation". Once adopted it will provide for mandatory health, vulnerability, identity and security checks to be applied to all non-EU nationals who have crossed the external borders in an unauthorised manner. Independent monitoring mechanisms will scrutinise how Member States actions are implemented in full respect of human rights.

#### *On minimizing adverse drivers*

- The Pact recognises the need to enhanced international cooperation to better manage migration including by addressing the adverse drivers of migration. The EU and its Member States ("Team Europe") remain, collectively, **the largest provider of official development assistance** in the world. "Team Europe's" Official Development Assistance to all Developing Countries amounted to 82 billion EUR in 2021.
- In addition, through the EU's investment strategy, **Global Gateway**, support to economic development is targeting adverse drivers of migration, with over half of the total EUR 300 billion invested in Africa.
- This objective is also in line with the EU's Development policy. Under our new fund for development cooperation covering 2021-2027, the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument - Global Europe (NDICI-GE), indicatively 10% of the overall funding (EUR 79.5 billion for 2021-2027) is dedicated to actions related to migration and forced displacement. These support our sustained cooperation with partners towards the SDGs, including through migration partnerships.
- Funding for migration and forced displacement in the EU's immediate neighbourhood, the Western Balkans, is foreseen through other EU instruments, such as the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA).
- Concerning the implementation of the GCM in partner countries, EU support also includes the programme "Building Migration Partnerships", which aims, through the UN Network on Migration, to support countries to improve their migration policies,

and to develop and implement national migration action plans that are in line with those policies.

***On enhancing availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration:***

- EU employers are facing **structural labour and skills shortages**, and the EU faces demographic challenges linked to population ageing and a shrinking working-age population. The **European Year of Skills**, which started on 9 May 2023 and runs for 12 months, underlines that a strategic approach to solving labour and skills shortages is and will remain indispensable. This work starts at home, in the EU, with labour market measures to reskill and upskill the domestic workforce, activate groups with lower labour market participation with targeted support to regions facing depopulation and skills shortages, and intra-EU mobility.
- **On legal pathways, they will remain essential for the EU to help facing these challenges and this is one of the key objectives of the Pact.** In the spirit of paragraph 59. of the IMRF Progress Declaration, we remain committed to improving EU rules, in full respect of national competences of our MS, to make things easier for migrants wishing to come regularly to the EU.
- Legal migration is a shared competence, meaning that Member States retain the full right to determine volumes of admission. However, they face common challenges and needs and EU cooperation helps Member States and employers to address shared practical challenges for example assessing the skills of non-EU nationals, matching them with employers and structuring cooperation with partner countries.
- Work is underway to **address shortcomings in the EU’s legislative framework** and streamline legal migration procedures, as proposed by the European Commission in its “Attracting Skills and Talent to the EU” Package in April 2022 (Single Permit and Long-term Residents Directives proposed).
- We are also committed to **work with partner countries, international organisations**, like IOM and ILO, the private sector and civil society to promote labour mobility schemes, recognition of skills and qualifications, job-matching and fair and ethical recruitment.
- As per our pledge made at the IMRF, in the past two years to launch mobility and skills partnerships, the **EU launched Talent Partnerships** with Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Pakistan and Bangladesh, a new tool to provide comprehensive policy and funding framework to better match skills and needs between the EU, its Member States and targeted partners countries. The Partnerships now moved towards implementation, with objectives defined in the form of roadmaps and concrete programmes launched or finalised.
- For example, the EU has recently launched a new phase of the programme ‘**Towards an Holistic Approach to Migration and Mobility**’ (THAMM) in North of Africa building on its collaboration with ILO, IOM and a number of EU Member states. Under the umbrella of the Talent Partnerships, the new phase of THAMM will support mobility schemes from Morocco and Tunisia towards Italy, as well as a new Italian centre for employment and development in Egypt. This adds to the skills development and mobility schemes towards France, Germany and Belgium already supported by previous phases of THAMM. The Commission is also finalising new programmes to support the Talent Partnerships with Bangladesh and Pakistan.

*On investing in skills development and facilitate mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competences:*

- In November last year, the European Commission proposed a new **Skills and Talent Mobility Package**. It aims to address barriers to international recruitment (such as lack of information, lack of clarity on the applicable procedures, difficulties in matching employers and jobseekers) and help ensure that non-EU nationals can make full use of their skills and qualifications in Europe.
- International job matching remains overly complex and costly for both non-EU nationals and employers, particularly for SMEs. Beyond the financial costs, the complexity and length of procedures for international recruitment are dissuasive, as well as the difficulties in accessing clear information on rules and procedures.
- New EU tools proposed, such as the **EU Talent Pool**, which was another pledge we made at the IMRF, would help job-matching between EU employers and people seeking work in the EU, focusing on occupations for which there is EU-wide shortage and support the green and digital transition. The proposed Regulation on an EU Talent Pool is now being negotiated.
- Facilitating the **recognition of qualifications** and **validation of skills** gained in non-EU countries is a key enabler for employers seeking skilled workers, and for non-EU nationals seeking access to the EU jobs' market, as well as their integration into host societies. Recognition processes are expensive, complex and time consuming, often due to a lack of information on other countries qualifications systems, limited pooling of expertise and resources at EU level, and difficulties verifying the authenticity of documents. As a consequence, people often work below their qualification and skills.
- As part of the Skills and Talent Mobility Package, the Commission also published a **Recommendation on the recognition of qualifications of non-EU nationals**, in which it promotes a set of measures to simplify and speed up the recognition of skills and qualifications of non-EU nationals.
- EU Member States are already part of a regional cooperation framework on the recognition of higher education qualifications, the Lisbon Convention, but there is a lot of room for improvement when it comes to recognition of non-EU qualifications regionally and beyond. Therefore, the EU is investing further in boosting information on recognition procedures, and comparability of qualifications, for example by encouraging and supporting financially (Erasmus+) the development of **interoperable databases** on the recognition processes and decisions of non-EU qualifications. In a second phase, the Commission will explore the feasibility of developing an EU-level tool capable generating statements of comparability.
- As a further step and given the need for technical skills on the EU labour market, , we encourage Member States to consider extending the ENIC/NARIC's<sup>1</sup> competences to information provision on the **recognition of vocational education and training (VET)**

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<sup>1</sup> The ENIC network (European Network of Information Centres) and NARIC network (National Academic Recognition Information Centres) cooperate closely. ENICs are recognition authorities of the state parties the Lisbon Recognition Convention, where the secretariat is provided by Council of Europe and UNESCO and the NARICs are recognition authorities of the Erasmus+ Programme countries. All NARICs are also ENICs (except the Greek recognition authority).

**qualifications.** Erasmus+ action ‘Capacity building in vocational education and training’ supports international cooperation projects based on multilateral partnerships between organisations active in the field of VET in EU Member States, partner countries associated to the Programme and countries not associated to the Programme. They aim to support the relevance, accessibility, and responsiveness of VET institutions and systems in third countries not associated to the Programme.

- Depending on identified needs, the Commission will work with Member States and non-EU countries to provide information and guidance on selected non-EU **qualifications frameworks** and the value of specific qualifications, comparing the **European Qualifications Framework** with national (and regional) qualification frameworks, and conducting targeted assessments of partner countries’ practice on accreditation and quality assurance to help better understand the qualifications and skills gained in partner countries.

*On facilitating fair and ethical recruitment and safeguard conditions that ensure decent work:*

- **On fair and ethical recruitment,** we are working on improving our rules based on a proposal from the Commission from February 2022 on a new legislation on **Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive**, which puts forward due diligence obligations for large companies and for certain sensitive sectors, to prevent, mitigate and account for adverse impacts on human rights, in accordance with international human and labour rights standards. The proposal also provides for an effective enforcement mechanism through a combination of administrative sanctions and civil liability.

## Session 2

### GCM Objectives reviewed:



#### *Regarding the GCM objectives discussed in this session:*

##### *On saving lives*

- Saving lives remains the number one priority of the EU.
- While national authorities remain responsible of **search and rescue** activities, it is also a key element of the European integrated border management. The continued high number of deaths on migratory routes towards the EU calls us for further action, as also put forward in paragraph 65 of the IMRF Progress Declaration. Cross-border operational cooperation and timely information sharing remain crucial. Inside the EU, we have created the **European Contact Group on Search and Rescue** for that purpose. We have also been **stepping up cooperation with partner countries** in this area, for example with Tunisia, Morocco, Libya, and more recently with Mauritania.
- To meet the challenges of irregular migration in an operational way and with a whole of route approach, the European Commission has presented **Action Plans for the key migratory routes** to the EU: the Central Mediterranean, the Atlantic/Western Mediterranean, the Eastern Mediterranean and the Western Balkans route. This is a part of the Team Europe strategy in order to improve migration management and save lives.

##### *On strengthening the transnational response to smuggling of migrants*

- Smugglers are responsible for over 90 percent of irregular migrants who reach EU territory and far too often risk innocent people's lives on treacherous roads and at sea. Fighting this common challenge requires our joint resolute action. To reinforce the international response to smuggling of migrants, on 28 November 2023, the European Commission launched a Call to Action for a **Global Alliance to Counter Migrant Smuggling**. It is call to partner countries, international organisations, and service providers for a new level of cooperation, including in the digital world, on the three main strands of prevention, response and alternatives to irregular migration. Thus far, over seventy partners have expressed their commitment to the Global Alliance. A Panel on the follow up of the Global Alliance will take place at the Copenhagen Migration Conference on 6 May 2024. Substantial cooperation is also underway with partner countries in the Western Balkans, Türkiye, and North Africa, supported by regional and

bilateral anti-smuggling partnerships, as well as dedicated EU-funded programmes in West Africa, South Asia and Central Asia.

- Together with launching the Call to Action, we have also proposed to upgrade the EU's own legislative framework in this field, by presenting a Directive laying down minimum rules to prevent and counter the facilitation of unauthorised entry, transit and stay in the EU.

### ***On preventing, combatting and eradicating trafficking in persons in the context of international migration***

- In line with the relevant recommendation of the Progress Declaration, we are continuing the implementation of our comprehensive response set out in the EU Strategy on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings (2021-2025), which covers i) prevention and demand reduction; ii) law enforcement and judicial response; iii) protection, support and empowerment of victims; iv) international cooperation.
- I am pleased to announce that in April 2024, we will adopt the revised **EU Anti-trafficking Directive**, which will enhance the EU legal framework to prevent and counter this crime, as well as to protect, assist and support victims. The revised legislation criminalises the knowing use of exploited services; establishes mandatory mechanisms to improve early identification and referral of victims; expands the principle of non-prosecution and non-punishment for victims; and establishes an EU-wide data collection.

### ***On managing borders***

- Robust and fair management of external borders, including identity, health and security checks and individual assessments, through human rights-based and vulnerability sensitive approaches is a key aspect of the EU's work under the Pact. A significant new and forward-looking policy development in the EU is that in March 2023, the Commission has established the first multiannual strategic policy cycle for European integrated border management (**EIBM**), which covers the period 2023-2027, and includes policy priorities and strategic guidelines for the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (commonly referred to as Frontex) and national authorities of Member States responsible for border management.
- In the recent years, the EU has developed an important new framework for managing the external borders, which is progressively entering into operation. At the heart of this new framework lies the Entry/Exit System, which will modernise and digitalise the EU border management. By replacing the passport stamping and current checks with a state-of-the-art solution for short-stay visits, this system promises, in time, faster processing, improved efficiency, and enhanced experience for travellers. As with any new system, there is a risk that we will face problems. Awareness-raising will be a top priority. The Commission has developed informational material in all EU languages to assist Member States in this endeavour.
- Building upon this advancement, the forthcoming launch of **ETIAS** (European Travel Information and Authorisation System) in 2025, will mark another milestone. It will introduce a prior travel authorisation requirement for visa-free country nationals

traveling to Europe for a short stay. ETIAS is designed to enhance prior identification of risks and facilitate border crossings for most travellers.

- The governance of the internal EU free-movement area called “Schengen area” has been strengthened and it has continued to grow, with Croatia joining on 1 January 2023, and Romania and Bulgaria as of 31 March 2024. An **enlarged Schengen area** is an asset to the EU as a Union, internally and on the global stage.

### *On safe and dignified return and reintegration*

- Safe, dignified and effective returns, readmission and sustainable reintegration are important elements of the comprehensive EU approach to migration and of a credible migration policy, in line with the recommendation of the Progress Declaration. Internally, we are taking actions towards improving our legislative, practical and operational tools. Externally, dialogue and engagement on readmission cooperation with partner countries is continuous and intense. We continue to monitor cooperation and to regularly address with our partners the shortcomings identified, looking for effective solutions for efficient procedures ensuring dignified and effective returns.
- When developing a common EU system on returns, particular attention is paid to **voluntary return and reintegration**. As per our pledge made at the IMRF, we continue to implement and have made considerable progress on the EU strategy on voluntary return and reintegration adopted in April 2021 to improve the quality and impact of EU and national programmes in this field and establish better links with development initiatives to ensure sustainable reintegration. An effective and ambitious policy on reintegration can help overcome the socio-economic and psychosocial difficulties migrants face when returning to their community.
- Returns from the EU are supported with national programs and with the **Frontex** Joint Reintegration Services which is by now operational in over 35 countries. We also support returns from transit countries to countries of origin, as we have done through the **EU-IOM Joint Initiative** (2017-2022), whose efforts are now continued through the **Migrants’ Protection, Return and Reintegration project (MPRR)** which started in 2022. Building on the achievements of the Joint Initiative, in the first thirteen months of the implementation of MPRR, a total of 6,401 persons benefitted from protection assistance in the framework of the programme in North Africa, while 14,280 migrants were safely and voluntarily returned to their countries of origin from North African countries. From August 2022 to January 2024, 17,488 migrants were assisted with voluntary returns from Sub-Saharan African countries, while 23,762 returnees received at least one form of reintegration assistance.
- Regarding further pledges made by COM/EEAS at the IMRF on (1) the development of a **return counselling curriculum**, the framework has been developed and is in use by Frontex which is training Member States on the curriculum; on (2) developing a **quality framework for reintegration service providers**, the work has been completed and will be further discussed at the end of March 2024 during an expert conference on voluntary return and reintegration; (3) on the **Return and Reintegration Facility**, financed under Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund of DG HOME and implemented by ICMPD, the RRF has allowed to work on mapping locally available services for reintegration and identifying possibilities for national referral mechanisms.



### *On legal identity and documentation*

- On legal identity and documentation, the EU continuously strives to improve EU rules, in full respect of national competences of our MS, to make things easier for migrants wishing to come to the EU legally, and this includes documentation. The EU has also been supporting partner countries in developing civil registry systems and facilitating solutions for their consular services in the EU.
- We support global efforts to provide for legal identity for all and call for further efforts to improve civil registry systems everywhere for that purpose.

### Session 3

#### GCM Objectives reviewed:



#### *Regarding the GCM objectives discussed in this session:*

#### *On inclusion and social cohesion and access to basic services*

- Migrants and EU citizens with a migrant background play a key role in the European economy and society. It is our moral duty, but also a social and economic imperative to promote their integration and inclusion. However, persisting challenges in relation to employment, education, access to basic services and to the social inclusion of migrants demonstrate that additional action is needed.
- As per our pledge made at the IMRF, we are in the process of implementing our **EU Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027** and we are now conducting a **mid-term review of it**. The action plan proposed targeted and tailored support that takes into account individual characteristics.
- Although national governments are primarily responsible for creating and implementing social policies, the EU plays a key role in supporting Member States through funding, developing guidance and fostering partnerships with all those involved: migrants, host communities, social and economic partners, civil society and the private sector.
- In addition to supporting our Member States financially, the Commission continues to also finance transnational projects in the EU on key integration aspects such labour market integration, education, capacity building of national, regional and local authorities, with 28 projects that are starting in 2024 . This is in addition to the support through other EU funding tools like European Social Fund+ (ESF+) that also support inclusion of migrants.
- **Empowering** both migrants and host communities to actively engage in the integration process is essential to achieve sustainable and successful integration. The Commission seeks to empower and enable all actors to contribute to this process, by building strong and long-term multi-stakeholder partnerships at various levels of governance.
- We are building on successful examples of cooperation such as the **Partnership on the inclusion of migrants and refugees under the Urban Agenda for the EU** and the **European Partnership for integration with social and economic partners**.
- Insufficient access to healthcare services can be a major obstacle to integration and inclusion, affecting virtually all areas of life. The European Commission is promoting access to health care services for migrants through funding and working with Member States to foster equal access to quality and affordable healthcare services, health

promotion programmes specifically targeting migrants, as well as access to mental health and rehabilitation services.

- **Including migrants and EU citizens with a migrant background** as well as **promoting their active participation** in consultative and decision-making processes can help empower them and ensure that integration and inclusion policies are more effective and reflect real needs. This is why the Commission regularly consults an **Expert Group on the views of migrants**, which is composed of migrants and organisations representing their interests, on the design and implementation of EU policies in the field of migration, asylum and integration.
- The Commission also collects **data** and indicators on inclusion of migrants. These efforts include a set of common indicators for monitoring the situation of migrants (for example employment, education, health, social inclusion). As a good example of broader regional cooperation, the EU cooperated with the OECD on a further edition of the joint EU-OECD report “Indicators of Immigrant Integration<sup>[1]</sup>, published in 2023”.

### *On diaspora and remittances*

- The EU knows how important **diaspora** links between host and home countries are for development. In many low-income countries, remittance flows represent the largest source of external finance ahead of Official Development Assistance and Foreign Direct Investment. Diaspora links help to boost investment, create new business and foster trade. Remittances and diaspora investment can also be channelled into supporting green growth and sustainable development.
- We have recognised this in our EU Consensus on Development, the New Pact on Migration and Asylum and in our financial instrument for external cooperation for 2021-2027.
- On development matters, priorities of diaspora groups are being taken into account in the context of multi-stakeholder platforms. Since 2019, diaspora development organisations too are members of the Policy Forum on Development (PFD), the Commission’s permanent dialogue forum on development matters with civil society and local authorities.
- Through the EU funded “EU Global **Diaspora Facility**”, we assist diaspora organisations in Europe, countries of origin and the EU to engage and collaborate more effectively with each other on development issues. The second phase of this programme will start in 2024.
- The EU funds several initiatives on remittances, for example the “**PRIME Africa**” initiative (Platform for Remittances, Investments and Migrants’ Entrepreneurship in Africa), implemented by IFAD, which promotes cheaper, faster, and safer remittance transfers, digitalization and financial inclusion, by maximizing the impact of remittances for millions of families, by fostering local economic opportunities and supporting innovative business.
- Another example is the “Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development” (**KNOMAD**), a global hub of knowledge and policy expertise on migration and development issues implemented by the World Bank. It has several thematic working groups, included one on Remittances and Diaspora that has conducted research and produced several publications.

- We remain committed to the achievement of SDG 10 on **reducing remittances costs to 3% by 2030**. We estimate that reaching this goal would result, at EU level, in saving EUR 1.5 billion in transaction fees every year. And there is already some progress: the average costs of sending remittances from the EU to developing countries was 7,78% when the SDGs were approved and it is now at 5.86%, almost 2 points less!

## Session 4

### GCM Objectives reviewed:



### *Regarding the GCM objectives discussed in this session:*

#### *On international cooperation*

- A key priority under the New Pact remains working on our international partnerships on migration. At a bilateral, regional and global level, we work towards making migration safe, orderly and regular.
- In this work, we keep a **comprehensive approach**. This means intensifying international cooperation, building mutually beneficial partnerships based on shared priorities with our partners, that address all interlinked dimensions of migration.
- We recognise that depending on whether a country is mostly an origin, transit or destination country for migrants, interests may diverge, but recognising such differences to ensure that partnerships fully reflect different priorities, is our priority.
- Reflecting principles of the Global Compact for Migration, our partnerships are in fact grounded on a rights-based approach to global migration management.
- The EU also funds a variety of **migration-related programmes** in the **Western Balkans, in Eastern Europe** and in the **Middle East**, as well as in **North Africa**, in **Sub-Saharan Africa**, in the **Asia-Pacific**, in the **Americas** and the **Caribbean**, in support of migration management and governance, protection, return and reintegration, fight against the trafficking in human beings and against the smuggling of migrants, as well as legal migration and mobility.
- Furthermore, the **EU supports the sustainable reintegration and socio-economic inclusion of returnees** both from Europe and from transit country. While those migrants that don't have a legal right to stay in the EU will need to be returned to their countries of origin, the EU and its MS champion a model based on ensuring that upon return, migrants may have a package of support to help navigate the return, increasing the sustainability of going back home.
- The EU believes that **well-managed migration can enhance the development of both the countries of destination and origin**. The EU's approach is also anchored in the **SDGs**, specifically goal 10, on reducing inequality within and among countries, target 10.7, on facilitating orderly, safe, and responsible migration and mobility of people.
- One example of EU support to this objective is the programme "**Building Migration Partnerships**", which aims, through the UN Network on Migration, to support countries to improve their migration policies, and to develop and implement national migration action plans, as in the cases of El Salvador. Here the whole-of-UN expertise

is mobilized to support the government with GCM implementation, based on mapping, consultations and needs assessments to develop the national GCM implementation plan. In Ghana instead the project is focused on developing migration governance structures in terms of national coordination and human rights monitoring. In parallel to the project's support to governments to integrate the GCM into their national policy frameworks, it is also working within the UN system to do the same, establishing multi-agency and multi-stakeholder facilitation teams in IOM and UNDP. Through our projects we want to make sure that the implementation of the GCM is a reality on the ground.

- Our work on international partnerships includes also the impacts of **climate change**, natural disasters and environmental degradation. We are prioritising measures to enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen the resilience and reduce vulnerability to the effects of these phenomena. The EU also invests into further research to enhance our understanding of this complex phenomenon, so that we would be able to react, in close cooperation with our partners, with suitable and adequate measures.

### *On information provision*

- By scaling up the promotion of comprehensive partnerships with other origin, transit and destination countries, the Commission and EEAS aim at structuring a **whole-of-route** response to migratory movements, including through guaranteeing more informed migration decisions and safer journeys.
- The Commission is currently funding seven awareness raising campaigns under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund to provide information on the risks of irregular migration, migrant smuggling, as well as the availability of alternative legal migration opportunities to dissuade people from taking perilous journeys.
- The Commission has put a lot of efforts in providing adequate and adapted information to displaced persons from Ukraine in order to ensure a better access to their rights as beneficiaries of temporary protection.

### *On reducing vulnerabilities*

- Mindful of the importance of early action to detect vulnerabilities in migrant flows and provide appropriate referrals, services and solutions, the Commission and the EEAS keep developing and scaling up proper tools together with implementing partners and in the cooperation with third countries of transit or first asylum.
- In this regard, primary attention is given to the guarantee of **gender-responsive** migration management instruments, as well as to **child** protection, providing safe humanitarian settings, specialized care services and durable solutions for most vulnerable people on the move. Gender sensitive and adapted responses are indeed highlighted as major principles in the Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion.
- The EU continues indeed its work for more effective identification and support of **specific needs**. The topic has also been recently discussed with civil society in the European Migration Forum.
- The Commission has also developed a comprehensive **mental health** strategy in 2023 that takes into account the specific needs of migrant population.
- Moreover, particular importance is given to supporting **partner** countries in developing and improving their **asylum** and protection systems, in order to find protection earlier on the route and reduce the risks of victimization.

- In this regard, we welcome and support once again the policy pledges presented by host countries during the **Global Refugee Forum** in last December, renovating our commitment to support 15 crises and areas to offer complex solutions to mixed movements. This is proof of the strong interlinkages between the GCM and the GCR, especially as regards addressing vulnerabilities in mixed movements contexts.

### *On data*

- Regarding data and evidence collection to inform policy making and monitor migration management, including integration, **GCM** represents a significant push to improvement and comparability of national data, and we fully support these efforts.
- On improving data collection in the EU, we would like to report about the Migration Preparedness and Crisis Management Network, known as **Blueprint**, launched in 2020 by the Commission, that brings together Member States, EU Agencies, IOM, UNHCR and partner countries, such as the US, Canada and the UK. The Blueprint has proved useful to address emerging and current challenges, such as the displacement crisis triggered by Russia's war in Ukraine, the migratory situation on the Mediterranean routes, tensions at the EU's Eastern border, the developments in Afghanistan, Niger or Sudan, or the migration dynamics in the Western Balkans region.
- Furthermore, EU Member States report detailed migration statistics to **Eurostat**, the EU's statistical office, and in 2024 the new requirements on the range of data collected, amended in 2020, will enter into force, improving on the aspects of unaccompanied minors, disaggregation and frequency.
- Through its Knowledge Centre on Migration and Demography, based at its **Joint Research Centre**, the Commission also aims at providing independent scientific evidence for strengthening its policies.
- The EU, through HORIZON 2020 and HORIZON Europe funding for independent research, is also the largest funder of migration research, with more than EUR 100 million allocated to research on this topic since 2019.
- We also support the work of the UN Network on Migration on **GCM indicators**, as a useful tool to enable monitoring the implementation of the GCM in a harmonised and comparable manner. As pointed out in our comments on the draft indicators' framework, we call for more targeted and better disaggregated indicators, clearly targeting migrants rather than the entire population, and differentiating between regular and irregular migrants. We also call on UNNM to ensure that member states are able to implement the indicators framework.