Contribution by the EEAS / European Commission services to the International Migration Review Forum of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (17-20 May 2022)

- The global challenges we face in today’s world require effective multilateral approaches, based on solidarity, human rights and a rules-based international order. The EU is fully committed to the Agenda 2030 and the Strategic Developments Goals, including on migration. Building strong partnerships with countries of origin, transit and destination and working towards a comprehensive and balanced framework for engagement with partners, in the spirit of burden and responsibility sharing and a whole of route approach to address migration is a key element of the European Union's migration policy, as enshrined in the Pact on Migration and Asylum of 2020.

- With the Pact in September 2020, the European Commission proposed a fresh start, with a comprehensive package to ensure a strong and balanced migration and asylum system equal to the challenges of the future. It builds on a major stepping-up of work on migration by the EU in recent years. This has brought investment and operational support to Member States under pressure; new tools for a stronger external border and more effective EU agencies; and deeper cooperation with key external partners to address EU migration goals across routes as a whole, as well as new legislative developments.

- In line with the European Union’s acquis and established policy, the 2020 Pact on Migration and Asylum and the 2017 European Consensus on Development translating the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs in development cooperation, the work of the EEAS and the services of the European Commission has been contributing to the implementation of the objectives of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) specifying the SDGs’ objectives related to migration. This comprehensive approach led to support for actions in and outside Europe to: (i) protect the human rights of all migrants with particular attention to children and the most vulnerable groups; (ii) strengthen migration governance and border management; (iii) promote legal pathways; (iv) strengthen the transnational response against smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings; (v) promote safe and dignified return, readmission and sustainable reintegration; (vi) address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement; (vii) improve the development impact of migration.

- The need for a comprehensive framework for migration has been further underlined by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has particularly affected migrants and further deepened inequalities and vulnerabilities, while also highlighting the reliance of many states to migrants’ workforce and the contribution that this brings to our societies.

**Inside the EU:**

- The Commission has been actively supporting Member States to provide a safe haven for people fleeing war in Ukraine. The EU unanimously agreed to trigger the Temporary Protection Directive to offer immediate support to people fleeing the war in Ukraine. A Solidarity Platform to coordinate support to Member States in need – this includes offers of reception. The Commission has also put forward operational guidelines to help Member States’ border guards in managing arrivals at the borders with Ukraine efficiently, while maintaining a high level of security.
The Commission sought to help Member States to **minimise the impact of the pandemic**. This included guidance,¹ practical support from EU agencies and sharing of best practices in areas such as conducting interviews remotely and undertaking procedures online². Funding rules were also changed and funding was directed at particular needs in Member States.

The experience of the pandemic underlined once more the importance of building up a more **modern and coherent approach in migration management**. Timely information sharing proved essential, with the newly created EU Migration Preparedness and Crisis Blueprint³ shown to be a valuable platform to exchange about the response to the pandemic.

**Saving lives** remains the number one priority of the EU. The continued high number of deaths on migratory routes towards the EU calls us for further action. Cross-border operational cooperation and timely information sharing are crucial. Inside the EU, we created the **European Contact Group on Search and Rescue** for that purpose. While national authorities remain ultimately responsible, search and rescue is also a key element of the European integrated border management.

**Robust and fair management of external borders, including identity, health and security checks and individual assessment**, through human rights-based and vulnerability sensitive approaches is a key aspect of the EU’s work under the Pact. We have worked in the past months to adapt border procedures to new risks such as COVID-19 and technological developments, with new legislative proposals⁴ and by putting in place new smart solutions.

The entry into force of the **European Border and Coast Guard** Regulation in December 2019 marked a major step forward in border management and a true example of European integration in the area of external border management. The first teams of the European Border and Coast Guard (commonly known as “Frontex”) standing corps have been successfully deployed since 1 January 2021. In the framework of ongoing operational activities, large numbers of border guards, experts and equipment are deployed not only in EU Member States but also in partner countries in the Western Balkans.

Two new information systems are on track to start operating in 2022-2023: The **Entry/Exit System (EES)**, which is an automated IT system for the registration of travellers from third-countries and the **European Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS)**, an IT system for the identification of security, irregular migration or high epidemic risks posed by visa-exempt visitors.

---

¹ Communication from the Commission COVID-19: Guidance on the implementation of relevant EU provisions in the area of asylum and return procedures and on resettlement (2020/C 126/02, 17 April 2020)
² For example, in the framework of the European Migration Network.
⁴ Schengen Strategy: A Strategy “Towards a fully functioning and resilient Schengen area” (02/06/2021, COM/2021/277 final); Proposal for Council Regulation on the establishment and operation of an evaluation and monitoring mechanism to verify the application of the Schengen acquis and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1053/2013 of 7 October 2013 (COM/2021/ final); Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation (EU) 2016/399 on a Union Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders (14/12/2021, COM/2021/891 final)
Expanding pathways for legal migration, including labour migration and the mobility of entrepreneurs, students and researchers is an important element of our comprehensive approach to migration. It offers significant benefits for countries of origin and destination alike. Around 3 million migrants come to the EU legally each year, and we have worked to improving EU rules, in full respect of national competences of our Member States, to make things easier for migrants wishing to come to the EU.

For instance, the EU modernised its rules establishing conditions for highly qualified workers coming to live and work in the EU (so called EU Blue Card Directive\(^5\)).

The Commission has also conducted an assessment on relevant EU rules\(^6\) and is currently working on a ‘Skills and Talent package’ to be adopted in April 2022 that will include: proposals to enhance the Single Permit directive, which aims to ensure a simplified and unique procedure for applying for the right to work and reside in the EU, while giving protection and ensuring fair treatment, as well as the Long-term Residents directive, to improve the rights of third-country nationals who are already integrated in the EU; and a Communication that will set out the next steps on the EU legal migration policy in the medium and longer term.

The Commission adopted on 24 November 2020 a new Action Plan on integration and inclusion (2021-2027). The action plan proposes targeted and tailored support that takes into account individual characteristics that may present specific challenges to people with a migrant background. 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.

The Pact on Migration and Asylum reaffirmed the commitment to providing protection to those in need through safe and legal pathways to the EU, set out in the dedicated 2020 Recommendation on legal pathways to protection in the EU. The Recommendation calls on the Member States to scale up resettlement and promote humanitarian admission and other complementary pathways for people in need of international protection. On 7 October 2021, the Commission organised a High-Level Forum for supporting Afghans. On 9 July 2021, the Commission invited the Member States to submit pledges for places for the next ad hoc EU resettlement programme (covering mainly 2022), to be supported with EU funds (Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, AMIF). Fifteen Member States submitted 60,000 pledges in total. In particular, as a follow up to the High-Level Forum, the Commission received more than 38,000 places pledged for Afghans, mostly for humanitarian admission of Afghan evacuees.

Even in the midst of an unprecedented pandemic, EU Member States have managed to ensure the respect of the right to seek and enjoy asylum, including through innovative and urgent solutions, such as remote interviewing and online registration/processing of asylum

---


6 Fitness check on EU legislation on legal migration, SWD(2019) 1055 final.
claims. Since 2015, EU Member States granted 2.5 million people protection and gave more than 85,000 people a new home through resettlement.

- In January 2022, the EU Regulation creating a new European Union Agency for Asylum on the basis of the European Asylum Support Office entered into force. This will enable the Agency to further contribute with operational support in respect of asylum and reception to Member States with an increased budget.

- Regarding financial support, the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) has provided the financial means to push forward the EU’s comprehensive agenda on migration throughout 2014-2020. It supported actions in relation to asylum, including resettlement and relocation, integration of third country nationals and return operations. AMIF provided support for asylum to over 2 million individuals. AMIF’ Emergency Assistance Instrument (EMAS) in 2015-2021 provided over €2 billion to support Member States’ asylum systems and reception capacities. The renewed AMIF, part of the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021-2027 will amount to €9.882 billion, dedicated to Member States’ programmes as well as to emergency assistance, resettlement and humanitarian admission from non-EU countries, and to relocating asylum-seekers and refugees inside the EU, as part of solidarity efforts.

- European Social Fund has supported actions for benefit of migrants in the field of education, training, employment and social inclusion. By the end of 2019, around 5.2 million people belonging to the group of ‘migrants, participants with foreign background, minorities’ has received ESF support. In addition, the EU programme for employment and social innovation (EaSI) supported five projects testing innovative solutions for fast-track integration of refugees and their families (2017-2021). The mutual learning conference on integration of migrants with focus on skills intelligence and learning, housing, women and children was organised in November 2021 for benefit on policy makers and stakeholders in the EU and contributed to dissemination of good practices in these areas.

- In order to reinforce the transnational response to smuggling of migrants, the European Commission adopted last year a renewed EU action plan against migrant smuggling for 2021-2025. It strengthens our actions to counter smuggling, by setting up operational partnerships with partner countries, by protecting the fundamental rights of migrants, by improving EU rules on sanctioning smugglers and employers, and by addressing new challenges, such as the instrumentalisation of migrants for political purposes.

- The prospect of employment, even illegal employment, is a key factor that incentivises irregular migration. Under the Pact, the Commission announced that it would assess how to strengthen the effectiveness of the Employers Sanctions Directive and a Communication adopted in September 2021 proposes a way forward to strengthen implementation, focusing on sanctions against employers, measures to protect the rights of irregular migrants, and inspections.

- To strengthen the transnational response to trafficking in human beings, we have also adopted last year a new Strategy on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings for 2021-2025, which sets out a comprehensive response to trafficking in human beings. The four key priorities are reducing the demand; breaking the criminal model; protecting and empowering victims and cooperating with partners internationally.
Safe, dignified and effective returns, readmission and sustainable reintegration are important elements of the comprehensive EU approach to migration. The Commission has worked to improve both the EU’s internal rules, procedures and capacities (setting up of a High-level Network on Return and the upcoming appointment of a Return Coordinator, reinforced mandate of Frontex), reinforcing cooperation with partners, which COVID-19 has rendered often difficult. Our work addresses returns from the EU, but also support for returns from transit countries to countries of origin. An important example of the latter is the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration. We believe that agreed procedures are an effective tool for enhancing readmission cooperation.

In April 2021, the Commission adopted an EU strategy on voluntary return and reintegration aiming at promoting the voluntary returns and improving the quality and impact of EU and national programmes in this field, so to contribute to building an effective system of returns from the EU. The Strategy also calls for stronger partnerships with partner countries, for their gradual increase of ownership on the reintegration process and establish better links with development initiatives to ensure sustainable reintegration.

Externally:

- As regards the unfolding conflict in Ukraine, on 1 March, the Commission announced at least €500 million of additional EU funding for response activities dealing with the humanitarian consequences of the crisis. This includes €93 million for emergency aid programmes to help civilians affected by the war in Ukraine, as part of an urgent aid appeal by the United Nations, and €330 million for EU Emergency Support Programme in favour of Ukraine.

- In line with the guiding principles of the GCM specifying and implementing the Agenda 2030, the European Commission and the EEAS have been engaged in building genuine and tailor-made partnerships, to support partner countries to strengthen their capacities on all aspects of migration and migration management. Bilateral, regional and multilateral dialogues have intensified and encompass issues such as saving lives at sea, protecting the human rights of migrants, developing evidence-based migration governance systems, tackling migrant smuggling and human trafficking, enhancing border management, visa facilitation, promoting legal and circular migration and mobility, return, readmission and sustainable reintegration, as well as addressing the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement.

- The EU aims to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on migration, including on migrants themselves, as part of its external responses to the pandemic. In that context, the EU is committed to international cooperation and multilateral solutions, and rallied behind the UN Secretary General’s efforts to coordinate a UN-wide response. As part of the EU’s global response, amounting to € 46 billion and implemented through the Team Europe approach (combining resources from the EU, its Member States, and financial institutions, in particular the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development), the EU focuses on already vulnerable populations such as migrants and their host communities.

- The EU is committed to playing its role in achieving global vaccination. Team Europe has provided more than USD 3 billion (i.e. the equivalent of 400 million vaccine doses) to the Covax Facility, and the EU remains the main financial donor to COVAX, together with the US. We are also supporting the COVAX Humanitarian Buffer, which helps deliver vaccines...
to people in vulnerable situations who could not be reached through national vaccine deployment plans. During the recent EU-AU Summit, The EU reaffirmed its commitment to provide at least 450 million of vaccine doses to Africa, in coordination with the Africa Vaccine Acquisition Task Team (AVATT) platform, by mid-2022.

- In our development cooperation fund for 2021-2027, the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument- Global Europe, 10% of the funding is dedicated to actions related to migration and forced displacement. These will support our sustained cooperation with partners towards the SDGs, including through migration partnerships encompassing support to improved migration management, the fight against irregular migration, upholding the rights of migrants and forcibly displaced persons, sustainable solutions for refugees, as well as the direct root causes of migration.

- Concerning the implementation of the GCM in partner countries the EU support includes also the “EU-UN partnership for Migration Capacity Building” project, through which we have joined forces with IOM to support “GCM champion countries” to implement modern migration policies.

- Within this external work, we recognise the urgent need to consider the complexity of and address the adverse effects for human mobility of climate change and disasters, which are exacerbating already dire situations. The EU is looking forward to assuming for a period of 18 months the Chairmanship of the Geneva-based Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD) as of 1st July 2022, which will allow us to put the issue of disaster and climate-related displacement high on our agenda, and to strengthen our efforts for more coordinated action in this area.

- Partnership with African countries has been further strengthened, building also on the implementation of actions under the five pillars of the Joint Valletta Action Plan (2015), co-operation within the Khartoum and Rabat processes, and in the context of the cooperation with the African Union on migration, notably through the Continent-to-Continent Migration and Mobility Dialogue (C2CMMD). Migration and mobility are also part of the new 2020 EU Communication “Towards a Comprehensive Strategy with Africa” and of the next cycle of EU-ACP relations.

- Under the previous budget cycle, the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF), with over €5 billion, allowed to work faster and with more flexibility jointly with African partners in the Sahel and Lake Chad, the Horn of Africa and in the North of Africa regions. So far, 254 actions consisting of 676 individual projects have been implemented under the EUTF. Specifically in North Africa, €888 million have been committed for four strands of action: i) support to improved migration governance; ii) support to labour migration and mobility; iii) protection of vulnerable migrants, voluntary return and sustainable reintegration, as well as community stabilisation (including through support to municipalities along migration routes; iv) integrated border management.

- A close, strategic partnership has been put in place with UN agencies in the context of the trilateral African Union-European Union-United Nations (AU-EU-UN) Task Force to address the situation of migrants and refugees stranded in Libya. Thanks to the work of the Task Force and with support of the Trust Fund, around 53,000 voluntary humanitarian returns have taken place since 2017; assistance is being provided at disembarkation points,
at detention centres when access is possible, and to support host communities, as well as promoting alternatives to detention.

- The **EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration** has been designed to provide a coherent framework to save lives, protect and assist migrants along the Central Mediterranean Route. The Initiative contributed to assist more than 106,799 migrants to return to their country of origin, mainly from Libya (38,844); and more than 98,570 migrants were assisted after their return, of which more than 91,627 have engaged in reintegration support in their country of origin.

- A number of African countries have been partners in the first **legal migration pilot projects** managed by EU Member States and supported by the European Commission. Building on the experience with the pilot projects on legal migration, in June 2021 the EU launched the **Talent Partnerships**, as a new tool to provide comprehensive policy and funding framework to better match skills and needs between the EU, its Member States and a number of targeted partners countries. These actions will foresee extensive training for aspiring migrant workers, which will help in addressing challenges relating to difficulties in skill recognition across borders.

- Considering forced displacement, the support from the EU and Member States in relation to the **Syrian** crisis made it the biggest donor worldwide, with €24.9 billion mobilised since 2011. In June 2021, the European Council agreed to continue support to Syrian and other refugees and their host communities. The Commission has set out a four year package that will amount to over €5.7 billion, with over €3.5 billion targeted on refugees within Turkey, and €2.2 billion for beneficiaries in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq.

- Despite some challenges, the **EU-Turkey Statement** of March 2016 brought support to millions of refugees and migrants in Turkey, Syrians and others, as part of a broader package. The Statement has seen a significant decrease in the loss of human life making dangerous journeys to Europe, and a major reduction in irregular crossings from Turkey to the EU. The Facility for Refugees in Turkey (FRiT) is delivering €6 billion to support Syrian refugees and host communities. Tangible impacts include direct support to over 1.8 million vulnerable refugees to meet their basic needs, and allow over 680,000 children to attend school on a regular basis.

- The EU remains committed to supporting the people of Afghanistan. The seriousness of the humanitarian and economic crisis requires a strong and concerted response. President von der Leyen on 12 October 2021 announced an EU Afghan Support Package for the Afghan people and neighbouring countries worth €1 billion. This includes a five-fold increase of the EU’s humanitarian contribution now exceeding €300 million (€227 million of which is already committed in operational programmes), through which the EU will continue providing humanitarian assistance. Specific attention is being paid to the needs of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) within the country. The EU Afghan Support Package also includes assistance to provide for basic needs worth over €250 million, which refers to actions addressing directly (without government intermediation or interference) urgent needs and

---

7 Funding sources: the Humanitarian Instrument (HUMA) including the Solidarity and Emergency Aid Reserve (SEAR), the NDICI-Global Europe (NDICI-GE), the (ex-) Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) and AMIF.
livelihoods of the local populations. As chair of the Core Group of the SSAR Platform in 2021 and 2022, the EU is seeking to strengthen the international response to the Afghan refugee situation and to stimulate further political, financial and material commitments. In addition, EU funding supports the Member States that pledged resettlement and humanitarian admission places for Afghans most at risk.

- In striving to enhance the development outcomes of migration, the EU has supported **regional and national efforts** in the ASEAN region to promote fair recruitment and decent work with ILO and UNWOMEN.

- The **EU has also been at the forefront of the response to the Venezuelan migration crisis** providing humanitarian and development aid inside and outside Venezuela, including support to Venezuelan migrants and host communities in neighbouring countries. On 26 May 2020, the virtual International Donors Conference in Solidarity with Venezuelan Refugees and Migrants in the Countries of the Region raised €144.2 million in grants from EU funds and €400 million in loans from the European Investment Bank. Subsequently, at the International Donors’ Conference of 17 June 2021, the EU pledged a further €144 million in humanitarian and development aid.

- The EU has been providing protection and immediate relief to vulnerable populations in Central America and Mexico forced to leave their households as consequence of the poverty and widespread violence in the area.

- The EU is also committed to a number of global actions related to various aspect of a comprehensive migration as described in the GCM. For instance, with the **REFrame programme of ILO**, the EU has supported fair recruitment in several key migratory corridors. Through the **EU Global Diaspora Facility (EUDiF)** of ICMPD, the EU contributes to facilitate engagement and cooperation between countries of origin and their diaspora. Through the **Migration EU Expertise (MIEUX)** initiative with ICMPD and the support to the UN migration network with IOM, the EU supports capacity building on migration. Through the ‘**Lives in Dignity**’ Facility, the EU supports UNHCR and pilot actions on forced displacement. Through the **PRIME programme of IFAD**, the EU contributes to the productive use of remittances in Africa.

- Regarding **improving evidence based policymaking, knowledge and data gathering**: the EU supports the Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement of UNHCR and the World Bank. At the same time, the Knowledge Centre on Migration and Demography from the Commission Joint Research Centre (JRC) set-up the ‘Atlas of Migration’ available online, identifying forced displacement among the issues that should be followed. Eurostat is one of the organisations steering the Expert Group on Refugee and Internally Displaced Persons Statistics (EGRIS), developing a set of international recommendations and manuals. The EU’s Horizon Research framework programme has become the largest funding body of research on migration, with more than 40 international research projects on migration. The Pact on Migration and Asylum also included proposals aimed at better data and situational awareness (the amended Eurodac proposal and the Migration Preparedness and Crisis Blueprint). The amendment of the Migration Statistics Regulation (862/2007) was adopted in June 2020.

- The EU is committed to promote **gender equality**, which also applies in relation to people on the move. The EU adopted on 25 November 2020 a new Gender Action Plan for the EU
external action for 2021-2025, which sets out the EU’s political and operational roadmap towards a gender-equal world and calls for the EU to scale up its contribution to reach Sustainable Development Goal 5 (gender equality) in its external policy areas. Such engagement was confirmed in the NDICI-Global Europe, which specifies that at least 85% of new actions should have gender equality as a principal or a significant objective and that at least 5% of those actions should have gender equality and women’s empowerment as a principal objective. The first EU LGBTIQ Strategy was adopted on 12 November 2020, which strives to build a Union where diversity is celebrated as part of Europe’s collective richness, where all people can be themselves without risk of discrimination, exclusion or violence.

- **Child protection**: the new Strategy on the Rights of the Child adopted in March 2021 reaffirms the importance of the 2017 “Communication on the protection of children in migration”, the actions and recommendations of which continue to be implemented by the EU and the Member States, as the main framework for the EU policy in this area. The Pact on Migration and Asylum contains several proposals aimed at reinforcing the legal guarantees for children in migration proceedings. This approach has also been supported in the external action of the EU with several programmes with UNICEF on children in migration in South East Asia, Central America and Southern Africa.

- **Future**:

  - **Helping countries hosting large numbers of refugees and displaced people** will continue to be a priority. Providing protection to those in need and enabling a life in dignity are deeply rooted in the European values. Refugee hosting countries are encouraged to provide protection, access to basic services preferably through national systems and enable refugees to access self-reliance through access to the employment market. The EU has been supporting partner countries in this direction through its development assistance. At the same time, the EU humanitarian action continues to provide emergency assistance to persons in need.

  - **Building economic opportunities and addressing root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement** will continue to be a priority for the EU. The EU and its Member States are the world’s largest provider of development assistance, and this will remain a key feature in its engagement with partners. Work to build strong and cohesive societies, create economic opportunity, sustainable investment and jobs while pursuing green and digital agendas can help people feel that their future lies at home. Investment-boosting instruments, such as the EU’s External Investment Plan and the actions of the European Fund for Sustainable Development, can have a significant contribution to the creation of job opportunities, including for the youth. And many other policies can be harnessed to help build stability and prosperity in partner countries.

  - **Supporting our partners in developing effective migration management capacity and governance is an example of the mutually beneficial partnerships** we seek to develop. The EU stands ready to help with expertise and capacity building as well as funding for projects serving this common objective. **Depending on the specific situation and needs of a third country**, the support can include capacity building of the border and coast guards, including strengthening search and rescue capacities and respect for human rights, support in the elaboration of national migration and asylum legislation and strategies, creating
asylum and reception capacities, protecting migrants’ rights by combatting discrimination and labour exploitation, or stepping up the fight against migrant smuggling. For example, we aim at setting up targeted counter migrant smuggling partnerships, which will support countries of origin and transit in capacity-building, both in terms of law enforcement frameworks and operational capacity, encouraging effective action by police and judicial authorities.

- Well-managed legal migration and mobility of people can offer benefits for countries of destination as well as for countries of origin. Many countries depend on the contribution of remittances and labour migration (either as a sending or a receiving country) to their national economies and to poverty alleviation. As part of our comprehensive approach to migration, we are fully committed to work with our partners on harnessing and maximising these benefits and the developmental impact of migration. We will continue to promote cheaper, faster and safer transfer of remittances, as well as the involvement of diasporas in the countries of origin, including for developing productive investment and sharing expertise. We are committed to work with our partners on achieving decent and sustainable standards for recruitment and employment of labour migrants to ensure the protection of their rights and dignity.