

INFO FLASH 8/07

EU INSTITUTIONS

European Commission

(6/07) EU Trust Fund for Africa: additional €90.5 million to strengthen border management and protection of migrants in North Africa. The European Commission today has approved 3 new migration-related programmes in Northern Africa totalling more than €90 million. This follows last week's European Council's conclusions in which Leaders committed to stepping up support along the Central Mediterranean route. The new programmes under the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa will increase EU assistance to refugees and vulnerable migrants and improve partner countries' ability to better manage their borders. Full press release [here](#).

(2/07) Migration: Commission steps up emergency assistance to Spain and Greece. The European Commission has awarded an additional €45.6 million in emergency assistance to support Spain and Greece respond to the migratory challenges they face. In view of increased arrivals, Spain will receive €25.6 million to improve the reception capacity for arrivals at its southern coast and in Ceuta and Melilla as well as to help increase returns. Another €20 million has been awarded to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to improve reception conditions in Greece, notably on the island of Lesbos. With the new funding decisions an important milestone has been reached: In total, the Commission has now mobilised over €1 billion in emergency assistance to help manage migration under the current financial framework (2014-2020) – support that has gone to the Member States most affected such as Italy, Greece, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Sweden and now also Spain. Full press release [here](#).

(22/06) A Europe that protects: Commission calls for stronger national equality bodies to fight discrimination. Today, the Commission is recommending a set of measures for Member States to ensure that the equality bodies effectively protect citizens and fight discrimination. Equality bodies are independent organisations assisting victims of discrimination, monitoring and reporting on discrimination issues, and promoting equality throughout the EU. Member States should ensure their independence and that they have the necessary resources to cover all types of grounds for discrimination such as sex, race, ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. They should also ensure better awareness-raising about the role of national equality bodies and how citizens can access equality bodies and exercise their rights in case of discrimination. Full press release [here](#).

(21/06) EU announces €34 million in humanitarian aid to Uganda and Kenya. The Commission has released today €34 million in humanitarian assistance for the most vulnerable populations in Uganda and Kenya, with a special focus on displaced populations in both countries. Out of the funding announced today, €24 million will go to Uganda, the largest refugee-hosting country in Africa. The assistance will prioritise emergency situations and new arrivals among displaced populations, with a special focus on the many refugees from South Sudan and the increasing influx of Congolese refugees. EU aid will provide emergency health and food assistance, water and sanitation, as well as protection and education in emergencies

through accelerated learning programmes for children whose education has been disrupted by conflict and displacement. €10 million in emergency assistance will go to Kenya to support refugees living in Dadaab and Kakuma camps, providing protection to the most vulnerable, as well as granting access to quality primary education. EU assistance will also support programmes to tackle the consequences of the prolonged drought in parts of the country. The assistance in Kenya comes on top of the €1.5 million released in May to assist the victims of the flooding that wreaked havoc in the country. Full press release [here](#).

(20/06) EU Syria Trust Fund adopts largest ever aid package of €165 million for Lebanon to support refugees and local communities. Today, on World Refugee Day, the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis has approved new projects to support refugees and local communities in Lebanon and Jordan. The new projects include the public schooling of refugee children in Lebanon and social assistance for vulnerable refugees and local communities affected by the Syrian crisis in Lebanon and Jordan. The new aid package brings the overall value of projects under the Trust Fund to over €1.4 billion. EU Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes Hahn commented: "The EU is continuing to deliver on its pledge to help Lebanon and Jordan, which host the largest per capita refugee population in the world. The new projects will substantially boost social protection and access to education for both Syrian and Palestine refugees from Syria, as well as for local communities." Full press release [here](#).

(19/06) EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey: Steering Committee discusses strategic orientation for the second €3 billion tranche. Yesterday the tenth Steering Committee meeting of the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey met in Brussels. The Committee discussed the strategic orientation for the second tranche of €3 billion as part of the [EU-Turkey Statement](#) of March 2016, as well as the implementation progress of projects on the ground and their valuable impact on improving Syrian refugees' lives and host communities in Turkey. Chaired by the European Commission, the Steering Committee brings together representatives of EU Member States and Turkey in an advisory capacity. Priority areas of interest were discussed as well as the importance of finding a sustainable transition mechanism providing continuing support to the refugees in need in the future. An update on the results achieved so far was presented by the Commission to the Committee, highlighting findings in the areas of humanitarian assistance, education, health and socio-economic support. The Committee also discussed the updated needs assessment which will be finalised at the end June, and which will be used as a basis for programming of the second €3 billion tranche. Full press release [here](#).

(19/06) EU-Morocco partnership: first investments in Morocco under the European External Investment Plan to increase business opportunities, enhancing job creation, private sector development and inclusive growth. The European Union and Morocco have launched today the EU External Investment Plan (EIP) in the country to pave the way to a better business environment and foster economic development. The European Union is strongly committed to supporting Morocco in building a sound, inclusive and sustainable economy. Launched in September 2017 to help boost investment in partner countries in Africa and the European Neighbourhood, the EIP will now encourage investments promoting an inclusive growth, job creation and sustainable development also in Morocco. Full press release [here](#).

European Parliament

(5/07) Giving humanitarian help to migrants should not be a crime, according to the EP. The EU should ensure that helping migrants for humanitarian reasons is not punishable as a crime, the European Parliament stated on Thursday. In a non-legislative resolution, MEPs highlight concerns that EU laws on help to irregular migrants are having “unintended consequences” for citizens that provide humanitarian assistance to migrants. The text was passed with by show of hands. Under the [2002 “Facilitation” directive](#), EU member states are required to introduce laws listing criminal penalties for anyone who “facilitates” the irregular entry, transit or residence of migrants. However, the resolution stresses that the EU legislation also gives member states the power to exempt “humanitarian” action from the list of crimes and regrets that few member states have incorporated the “humanitarian assistance” exemption into their national laws. Full press release [here](#).

European Council / Council of the EU

(29/06) European Council conclusions, 28 June 2018. The European Council on 28 June adopted conclusions on: migration, security and defence, jobs, growth and competitiveness, innovation and digital, and on other issues. Full press release [here](#).

(29/06) Facility for refugees in Turkey: member states agree details of additional funding. On 29 June 2018, the 28 EU member states agreed on how to finance an additional €3 billion for the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey to support Syrian refugees. Following the political agreement reached in the European Council, member states confirmed at the meeting of the Permanent Representatives Committee (Coreper) that €2 billion of this amount will be financed from the EU budget and the remaining €1 billion by contributions from the member states according to their share of the EU's GNI. The agreement honours the commitment undertaken by the EU under the EU-Turkey statement of 18 March 2016 to provide a second instalment of €3 billion for the refugee facility before the €3 billion initially allocated has been fully used up. It allows the Commission to prepare concrete measures in order to make additional funds available for refugees. Full press release [here](#).

(26/06) Encouraging participation: Council ready to launch talks on a revised European Citizens' Initiative. The Council is ready to launch talks with the Parliament to make the European Citizens' Initiative more user-friendly and increase its impact. On 26 June 2018, the Council agreed its position on a proposal for a new regulation which includes a number of changes which will improve the Initiative and encourage participation. The Council's position will serve as a mandate for the Austrian presidency to enter negotiations with the European Parliament, once the Parliament has agreed its negotiating stance. Full press release [here](#).

(25/06) Mali and the Sahel: Council adopts conclusions. On 25 June 2018, the Council adopted conclusions on the Sahel/Mali. The Council reiterated the EU's strategic and comprehensive engagement towards the Sahel region. The Council reaffirmed that the EU will continue to support the stabilisation efforts of the G5 Sahel countries as a basis for the development of the Sahel. The Council also called for enhanced coordination with all international actors involved to tackle the root causes of the multiple challenges in the region and promote its sustainable and inclusive development. In relation to the situation in Mali, the Council underlined the need for consistent progress in the implementation of the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement. The Council reaffirmed the EU's commitment to support Mali in the

forthcoming electoral process and to accompany Mali in its efforts to improve the security and the development of the North and Centre of the country. Full press release [here](#).

(25/06) Horn of Africa and Red Sea: Council adopts conclusions. On 25 June 2018, the Council discussed and adopted conclusions on the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea. Developments in the Gulf region have triggered renewed geopolitical competition on both shores of the Red Sea. Combined with the absence of an adequate system of cooperation and conflict prevention and management mechanisms, these developments, not least the conflict in Yemen, are having a negative impact on security in and around the Red Sea. This could jeopardise EU interests by impacting freedom of navigation and further destabilising the Horn of Africa. Against this background, foreign ministers discussed how to strengthen EU engagement in order to encourage an inclusive regional dialogue on issues such as economic integration and peace and security, including maritime security. At stake are the preservation of the security of the Bab el Mandeb/Gulf of Aden maritime route - through which a significant proportion of trade to and from Europe passes - , the harnessing of irregular migration flows; the containment of terrorist threats and the prevention of instability in the EU's wider neighbourhood. Full press release [here](#).

(20/06) Strengthening the fight against crime and terrorism: Commission welcomes agreement on the confiscation of assets across borders. Today, the provisional political agreement reached by the European Parliament and Council on the Commission's proposal for an EU [regulation](#) on the freezing and confiscation of assets across borders was confirmed by Member States. The proposal was adopted as part of the [Action Plan](#) to strengthen the fight against terrorist financing and contributes to completing the [Security Union](#). The new regulation will set a deadline of 48 hours to recognise and execute freezing orders. It will widen the scope of current rules on cross-border recognition: criminals can be deprived of criminal assets, even when the assets belong to their relatives. Finally, in cases of cross-border execution of confiscation orders, the victim's right to compensation will have priority over States' claims. Following this political agreement, the text of the Directive will have to be formally approved by the European Parliament and the Council. Full press release [here](#).

(19/06) Schengen internal border controls: Council agrees negotiating mandate on the amendment of the Schengen borders code. On 19 June 2018, EU ambassadors endorsed, on behalf of the Council, a mandate for negotiations on a proposal amending the Schengen border code as regards temporary reintroduction of controls at internal borders. On the basis of this mandate, the Council Presidency will start negotiations with the European Parliament once the latter has adopted its position. This proposal aims to provide increased flexibility for member states to address serious threats to public policy or internal security and, on the other hand, to ensure that the reintroduction of internal border controls is only used as a last-resort. To address serious threats to public policy or internal security, the proposed amendment would allow to reintroduce internal border controls under the same reason for a total period of no longer than one year. It would also include a series of safeguards which should be met in order to ensure the proportionality and necessity of these measures, including a risk assessment and consultation mechanisms. When border controls at internal borders are carried out for more than six months, the Commission shall issue an opinion. Full press release [here](#).

Others

(2/07) EIB - The EIB reinforces its support to the Mediterranean region. The European Investment Bank (EIB) has today underlined its commitment to building economic resilience and supporting growth and job-creation in the EU Southern Neighbourhood. This was the key message of the Bank's 18th edition of the EIB-Med conference "Improving Lives and Creating New Opportunities" held today in Amman in partnership with the Jordanian Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation and the European Union Delegation to Jordan. The conference discussed key economic developments in the region and explored successful projects that help to tackle different challenges in the context of the EIB's [Economic Resilience Initiative](#) (ERI) including in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia. Government officials and key economists presented and evaluated the macroeconomic performance of the Southern Mediterranean Countries. Experts described the ongoing developments in the water sector with a focus on current projects to help tackle the water scarcity challenge. In addition, entrepreneurs and other business representatives highlighted the key role of the private sector development for job-creation and for reinvigorating the economy. Full press release [here](#).

(20/06) EIGE - Girls in Cyprus are at risk of female genital mutilation. Female genital mutilation is against the law in Cyprus but this does not mean that girls are safe. Between 12 % and 17 % of girls living in Cyprus from FGM-practising countries are at risk of female genital mutilation. These are the findings released today by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). Full press release [here](#).

(20/06) EULISA - Provisional agreement reached on update for Eurodac. Updated rules aiming to reinforce the [Eurodac system](#), designed to store and search data on asylum applicants and irregular migrants, were agreed upon on 19 June 2018 by Parliament and Council negotiators. The new system will help immigration and asylum authorities to better control irregular immigration to the EU, detect secondary movements (migrants moving from the country in which they first arrived to seek protection elsewhere) and facilitate their readmission and return to their countries of origin. Full press release [here](#).

(18/06) EU Court of Auditors - Youth unemployment and the integration of young people into the labour market: a focus theme for public auditors across the EU. An overview of the work of public auditors across the European Union on measures to combat youth unemployment and to promote the integration of young people into the labour market has been published today by the European Court of Auditors (ECA) on behalf of the Contact Committee of EU supreme audit institutions (SAIs). The audit compendium is based on audit reports by the supreme audit institutions (SAIs) of 13 EU Member States and the ECA between 2013 and 2017. Full press release [here](#).

(21/06) FRA - Better records to help support hate crime victims. Better recording of hate crime across the EU will help Member States continue to fight this persistent problem. The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights' latest report provides compelling evidence of what Member States are already doing with tips on how they can improve. Full press release [here](#).

(20/06) OIM - António Vitorino Elected as New Director General of UN Migration Agency. On Friday 29 June 2018, the member states of IOM, the United Nations Migration Agency, elected Portugal's António Manuel de Carvalho Ferreira Vitorino as the International Organization for Migration's next Director General. Mr. Vitorino, 61 (DOB 12 January 1957),

succeeds the United States' William Lacy Swing, who is leaving IOM after serving two five-year terms as Director General. Mr. Vitorino's directorship begins on 1 October 2018. Full press release [here](#).

(19/06) EUROJUST - EU lawmakers reach political agreement on a new Regulation for Eurojust. Today, lawmakers in Brussels took an important step towards improving Eurojust's role in serving justice across borders for a safer Europe. They reached a provisional agreement on a new legal framework for Eurojust that will enhance the Agency's operational capabilities and strengthen the cooperation with prosecution authorities of the Member States and partners in the area of Justice and Home Affairs cooperation, such as FRONTEX and Europol, in the fight against serious organised crime and terrorism. The new Regulation sets the objective to increase information exchange between Eurojust and Member States while ensuring an adequate level of data protection. It also brings governance reforms, including the creation of a new Executive Board, which will further improve Eurojust's efficiency and management structure. Democratic oversight will be guaranteed through regular reporting to the European Parliament and national parliaments. The Regulation also establishes institutional, operational and administrative relations with the new European Public Prosecutor's Office to ensure complementarity and synergies. Full press release [here](#).

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

(5/07) European states must put human rights at the centre of their migration policies. "European states' current approach to the arrivals of refugees and migrants has transformed a manageable issue into an extremely divisive topic, in particular within EU member states. And it has caused immense suffering and hardship to thousands of people who sought our protection. It is time that European states put the human rights of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, as well as the principle of responsibility sharing, at the centre of their migration and asylum policies." said the [Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Dunja Mijatović](#), in a statement she released today. Full press release [here](#).

(22/06) Unrelenting rise in xenophobic populism, resentment, hate speech in Europe in 2017. Xenophobic populism and hate speech have continued to be on the rise in 2017, with high levels of migration and challenges of integration, religious extremism, terrorist attacks and the austerity-driven socio-economic climate observed all over Europe, says the [annual report](#) of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance ([ECRI](#)) published today. The populist rhetoric has blended into a hatred of non-nationals or minorities; migration and multiculturalism have continued to be presented as a threat to social cohesion and security; traditional and social media have encouraged self-segregation and further deepened social divides. Existing security concerns have been exploited to justify huge trade-offs in fundamental rights of migrants and other vulnerable groups, the report stresses. Full press release [here](#).

CIVIL SOCIETY

(2/07) Social Platform - A not so Happy Birthday for the proposed Equal Treatment Directive. Today marks 10 years since the European Commission proposed the Equal Treatment Directive, aimed at extending the protection from discrimination on the grounds of religion and belief, disability, age and sexual orientation beyond the field of employment and to more areas of life – specifically social protection, healthcare, education, housing and access

to goods and services. Discrimination on the grounds of sex and racial and ethnic origin on the other hand is already extended beyond the field of employment, thereby clearly establishing a hierarchy of protected grounds of discrimination – ultimately showing that certain inherent characteristics of people deserve more protection than others. The proposed Directive, which has been endorsed by the European Parliament in 2009, is blocked in the Council of the European Union ever since because the required unanimity of all EU Member States has not been reached so far. Full press release [here](#).

(29/06) ECRE - Editorial: The Story of the Summit: European solutions not EU solutions.

At the Summit on 28 June the EU's Member States have managed to discuss and reach some agreements on migration without the whole of the EU blowing up. Although the first verdicts are that nothing much has been decided reading between the lines of the European Council Conclusions there are some interesting developments – and not all negative. Full press release [here](#).

(20/06) ECRE - European Council: regional disembarkation platforms a key objective.

The European Council agreed to explore the idea of “regional disembarkation platforms” with the aim to “break the business model of smugglers” by safely disembarking people rescued at sea in relevant third countries to be processed to distinguish between irregular migrants and those in need of international protection. One version of the idea has been [proposed](#) by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). IOM and UNHCR state this approach should involve further collaboration between the EU, UN and the African Union, and any measure should be accompanied by increasing legal pathways such as resettlement places and family reunification. The European Council [outlines](#) that responsibility for those who are saved will be shared on a voluntary basis by member states. Full press release [here](#).

(29/06) ECRE - Algeria: growing number of migrants expelled into the Sahara desert to face death by exposure.

A [report](#) published by the Associated Press on Monday contains testimonies from individuals from sub-Saharan countries, who were expelled from Algeria to Niger. It describes how pregnant women and children were among those abandoned at the border, with others being threatened at gunpoint to walk through the desert without food or water in temperatures reaching 48 degrees Celsius. Full press release [here](#).

(29/06) ECRE - Global resettlement needs on the rise, while opportunities decline.

UNHCR has recently [published](#) its “Projected Global Resettlement Needs in 2019”, which reveals a widening gap between the number of refugees in need of resettlement and the places made available by governments around the world. According to the report, 1.4 million people are expected to be in need of resettlement in 2019, a 17% increase from 2018 levels, while the number of resettlement places dropped to 75,000 in 2017. Full press release [here](#).

(22/06) ECRE - Forced displacement at record high of 68.5 million, UNHCR Global Trends report reveals.

UNHCR released its [Global Trends report](#) this week to coincide with World Refugee Day, detailing the latest statistics on forced displacement across the world. According to the report, over 68.5 million people are currently displaced from their homes for reasons of conflict, violence and other forms of persecution. This figure represents a [record high](#) for the fifth consecutive year. Full press release [here](#).

(22/06) ECRE - Hungarian Parliament adopts bills to criminalize assistance of migrants.

On World Refugee Day, June 20 the Hungarian Parliament adopted bill [T/333](#) a

new version of the [2018 Anti-NGO package](#) criminalizing lawyers and activists providing assistance for asylum seekers who could face years of imprisonment. In a [statement](#) the Hungarian Helsinki Committee defines the measures as “breaching human rights and EU law” and “undermining the rule of law” but also vows to continue their work and “seize all available legal and advocacy opportunities to challenge this law.” The law package has been met with an international outcry from [UN](#) and [civil society](#). Full press release [here](#).

PUBLICATIONS

Migration Data Portal – [Global Compact for Migration](#) (Briefing)

JRC - [Migration Data using Social Media](#)

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

MPI - [After the Storm: Learning from the EU Response to the Migration Crisis](#)

MPI - [Mind the Gap: Bringing Migration into Development Partnerships and Vice Versa](#)

ECRE - [ECRE/ELENA Legal Note on Ageing Out and Family Reunification](#)

EPC - [EU Resettlement: From humanitarian pathway to migration tool?](#)

Austrian Presidency of the EU – [Programme](#)