

INFO FLASH 11/06

EU INSTITUTIONS

European Commission

(11/06) Humanitarian Aid: over €152 million for Africa's Sahel region. As countries in the Sahel continue to suffer from armed conflicts, climate change, and a food and nutrition crisis, the EU is providing €152.05 million to bring relief to people in need in the region. Combined with last year's funding, humanitarian assistance to the Sahel has been supported with over €423 million in EU aid, making the EU a leading donor in the region. EU funding from this aid package provides humanitarian assistance in the following seven countries: Burkina Faso (€15.7 million), Cameroon (€17.8 million), Chad (€27.2 million), Mali (23.55 million), Mauritania (€11.15 million), Niger (€23.15 million) and Nigeria (€28 million). An additional €5.5 million is allocated to a regional project that fights malnutrition in Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger. Full press release [here](#).

(29/05) Emergency Trust Fund for Africa: almost €100 million to support the most vulnerable in the Horn of Africa. The European Commission has adopted seven new programmes and additional funds for two existing projects, worth €99.5 million. They will support ongoing efforts to help the most vulnerable people in the Horn of Africa. Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven Mimica, said: "The Horn of Africa has an unprecedented opportunity to shore up peace and stability throughout the region. The nearly €100 million we have approved will support vulnerable communities, contributing therefore directly to that peace and stability." Full press release [here](#).

(23/05) New ACP-EU Partnership: Chief negotiators assess progress made and move talks on to next stage. Following the recent consultations at regional level with African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, Chief Negotiators Commissioner Mimica and Togolese Minister Robert Dussey met in Brussels today to discuss the outline for the future ACP-EU agreement. Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development and EU's Chief Negotiator, Neven Mimica, said: "The agreement is taking shape. It is time to step up our efforts and speed up our progress to deliver as expected. Today's discussions on the regional partnerships bring us a step closer to this new and stronger cooperation we are aiming for". Togo's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Africa integration, also ACP Chief Negotiator and Chair of the Ministerial Central Negotiating Group, Robert Dussey, said: "We started this negotiation in September last year and have made steady progress since then. The consultations with the three regions were beneficial in so far as giving a good idea of the needs for each region. We look forward to concluding an Agreement which is focused on the current and future needs of our Member countries." Full press release [here](#).

(13/05) 21 May: European Border and Coast Guard launches first operation in a non-EU country. On 21 May, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, in cooperation with Albania, will launch its first joint operation on the territory of a non-EU country. This will be the first operation of its kind, marking a new phase for border cooperation between the EU and Western Balkan partners. The launch event will take place in Tirana, Albania, in the presence of Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos, Executive Director of the European

Border and Coast Guard Agency Fabrice Leggeri, alongside Prime Minister of Albania Edi Rama and Minister of Interior of Albania Sandër Lleshaj. Full press release [here](#).

(17/05) EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey: solid progress in supporting refugees. The Commission reported today good progress in the implementation and programming of €6 billion of the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey. More than 80 projects are currently up and running delivering tangible results to refugees and host communities in particular on education and health. Out of the €6 billion, some €4.2 billion has been allocated, of which €3.45 billion has been contracted and €2.22 billion disbursed to date. Full press release [here](#).

(15/05) EU and Tunisia work to strengthen their Privileged Partnership. There has been continued progress in the transition towards democracy in Tunisia in the last year, but this must be accompanied by equivalent economic and social progress to ensure that it can be sustained. Ahead of the [EU-Tunisia Association Council](#) due to be held on 17 May, the EU has today published its latest report on developments in relations with [Tunisia](#). The [report](#) describes the key aspects of the cooperation from the beginning of 2018 to March 2019. 'We attach particular importance to our cooperation with Tunisia, built as it is on the foundation of our common history, shared values and mutual respect. Significant progress has been made in the last year within the framework of our Privileged Partnership. We remain steadfast in our commitment to the Tunisian people, and specifically to the future of its young people, in order to help establish lasting democratic rule of law and a safe and prosperous country', stated Federica Mogherini, High Representative/ Vice-President for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. Full press release [here](#).

(14/05) Commission appoints Mauro Ferrari as next President of the European Research Council. The European Commission has today appointed Professor Mauro Ferrari as the next President of the European Research Council (ERC), responsible for funding investigator-driven frontier scientific research in Europe. Professor Ferrari will take up his new role as of 1 January 2020, when the mandate of current President Professor Jean-Pierre Bourguignon ends. The new President joins the ERC at an important moment for its development. For the next long-term EU budget, the Commission has proposed Horizon Europe, the most ambitious EU research and innovation programme ever. A political agreement on the new programme was reached in April. Horizon Europe will safeguard the independence of the ERC under the Scientific Council and maintain its sole focus on scientific excellence. The Commission has proposed a significant budget increase for the ERC from €13.1 billion in 2014-2020 to €16.6 billion for 2021-2027. Full press release [here](#).

European Parliament

European Council / Council of the EU

(7/06) Funding for migration, border and security policies: Council agrees its position. The EU is increasing the scope of its support for measures in the fields of migration, border management and security in order to help address growing challenges. The Council today reached partial general approaches on three sectoral home affairs proposals in the context of the multiannual financial framework (MFF) for the period 2021-2027. Budget-related and horizontal issues which are currently being discussed as part of the negotiations on the EU's next MFF, as well as issues clearly linked to the common European asylum system reform package, fall outside the scope of the agreements. Full press release [here](#).

(6/06) Council gives mandate to Commission to negotiate international agreements on e-evidence in criminal matters. The Council adopted today two mandates authorising the Commission to negotiate on behalf of EU an agreement with the US facilitating access to e-evidence for the purpose of judicial cooperation in criminal matters and to participate in the negotiations in the Council of Europe on a second additional protocol to the Cybercrime Convention, respectively. Both would aim to facilitate the access to e-evidence, such as e-mails or documents located on the Cloud, to be used in criminal proceedings. If later concluded, they will complement the EU framework on access to e-evidence currently being discussed by the EU institutions and on which the Council has adopted its position in December 2018 and March 2019. Full press release [here](#).

(6/06) Radicalisation in prisons: Council adopts conclusions. The Council today adopted conclusions on preventing and combatting radicalisation in prisons, and on dealing with terrorist and violent extremist offenders after release. The Council highlighted the importance and urgency of effective measures in this area, given the risk posed by the growing number of terrorist offenders and offenders radicalised while in prison, and the fact that a number of them will be released in the next two years. The Council invited member states to do more to develop specialised interventions for dealing with terrorist and violent extremist offenders, as well as with those in risk of being radicalised while in prison. Full press release [here](#).

(6/06) Visa policy: EU updates rules to facilitate legitimate travel and fight illegal migration. The Council today adopted amendments to the visa code regulation which will improve conditions for legitimate travellers, as well as increase the tools available to respond to the challenges posed by illegal migration. Full press release [here](#).

(13/05) Human rights and democracy in the world: 2018 EU annual report adopted. The report noted that in 2018 the EU remained at the forefront of the protection and promotion of human rights in a rapidly changing geopolitical landscape. The EU engaged in activities across the globe in line with the objectives set out in the EU action plan on human rights and democracy (2015-2019). The Council recognised that in a volatile and unpredictable world, the Action Plan has been instrumental in taking forward the human rights agenda. 2018 was the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), and during this year the EU continued to strongly support the promotion and protection of human rights at the heart of multilateralism - particularly important at a time when there have been serious negative trends in human rights and democracy around the world. Full press release [here](#).

(13/05) Libya: Foreign Affairs Council statement. Full statement [here](#).

(13/05) EU-Latin America and Caribbean relations: Council adopts conclusions. On 13 May 2019, the Council adopted conclusions on EU relations with Latin America and the Caribbean, following the joint communication by the High Representative and the Commission on the "European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean: joining forces for a common future" of 16 April 2019. Relations between the EU and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) have strengthened significantly over the last decade. Together, the EU and LAC account for 25% of the world's GDP, a third of UN members and almost half the members of the G20. Joint action by the two regions has been instrumental in the achievement of landmark multilateral agreements such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement. Full press release [here](#).

Others

(11/06) EIGE - Gender Equality Index 2019 focuses on work-life balance. Is gender equality in the EU still moving at a snail's pace? What can we do better? Where does your country stand? Find out this October when EIGE gives an update on the state of gender equality in the EU. Full article [here](#).

(6/06) FRA - Rising inequalities and harassment as fundamental rights protection falters. Many people across the EU risk being left behind, as growing intolerance and attacks on people's fundamental rights continue to erode the considerable progress achieved to date, finds FRA's Fundamental Rights Report 2019. Full press release [here](#).

(5/06) EASO - EASO publishes a Country of Origin Information (COI) report on Côte d'Ivoire. Today, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) published a [Country of Origin Information \(COI\) report, Country Focus on Côte d'Ivoire](#). The report provides information on selected topics, relevant for the international protection status determination of Ivorian applicants. Between December 2016 and April 2019, more than 27 000 Ivorian applications were registered in the EU+ countries. Full press release [here](#).

(16/05) FRA - Challenges and chances in the European Asylum System. On 14 May, FRA was the keynote speaker at an event in Vienna on the challenges and chances in the European Asylum System. It was organised by the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Human Rights. FRA presented the findings of its [beyond the Peak: Migration numbers drop, but challenges remain](#) paper, as well as preliminary findings from its [responding to the 2015 asylum emergency - assessing the long-term impact on fundamental rights](#) project. It also spoke about possible future scenarios of the Common European Asylum System. Full press release [here](#).

(8/05) New Professional Development Series chapter on detention of applicants for international protection in the context of the Common European Asylum System. Through its Network of Courts and Tribunals' Members, EASO is developing Professional Development Series (PDS) and Professional Development Workshops intended for members of EU+ courts and tribunals. The PDS are developed for judges by judges under the coordination of EASO, with full respect of judicial independence. The series aim to offer courts and tribunals members an overview of the full spectrum of EU international protection law and procedures and to that end they comprise a judicial analysis, a compilation of jurisprudence and a judicial trainers guidance note (restricted to judicial trainers) for each subject covered. Under the auspices of the PDS, EASO organises professional development workshops that aim to provide members of courts and tribunals, including judicial trainers, expertise in the topics covered by the PDS. Full press release [here](#).

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

CIVIL SOCIETY

(7/06) ECRE - Situation Worsens for Migrants on Western Mediterranean Route. The NGO Watch the Med Alarm Phone [warns](#) of police violence and unlawful arbitrary repression of migrants in Morocco and increasingly dangerous crossings to Spain. The organisation links the developments to Morocco's role as Spain's and the EUs "watchdog at the South-western EU border". Full press release [here](#).

(7/06) ECRE - ICC Submission Seeks to Hold the EU Accountable for Creation of "World's Deadliest Migration Route". A new [legal submission](#) to the International Criminal Court (ICC) accuses the EU and some of its Member States of "crimes against humanity" against refugees and migrants crossing the Mediterranean in. The submission by international lawyers seeks to hold the EU accountable for over 14,000 deaths in the Mediterranean and the creation of the "world's deadliest migration route." The communication [alleges](#) that EU migration policies of deterrence on the Central Mediterranean Route between 2014 and 2019 is responsible for: "(i) the deaths by drowning of thousands of migrants, (ii) the refoulement of tens of thousands of migrants attempting to flee Libya, and (iii) complicity in the subsequent crimes of deportation, murder, imprisonment, enslavement, torture, rape, persecution and other inhuman acts, taking place in Libyan detention camps and torture houses." Full press release [here](#).

(7/06) ECRE - Weekly Editorial: After the European Parliament Elections: What Now? The EP elections have come and gone, and assessing the results throws up qualified positives: turnout was up... but it is still low; the far right populists have not significantly improved their position... but are still too strong. Four key conclusions and accompanying opportunities for action can be highlighted for now... Full article [here](#).

(24/05) ECRE - Interview: Overlooked Challenges – Tackling Statelessness in Europe's Refugee Response. Nina Murry is Head of Policy and Research at the European Network on Statelessness (ENS). Laura van Waas is Co-director of the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion (ISI). In 2017, the two organisations started the #StatelessJourneys project to examine the relationship between statelessness and forced displacement in Europe. Full interview [here](#).

(24/05) ECRE - Growing Trend of Criminalising Support for Migrants Across Europe. An [account](#) from Open Democracy documents how hundreds of Europeans have been criminalised by offering support to migrants. The findings confirm a growing trend of criminalisation across Europe also revealed in a recent [report](#) of The Institute of Race Relations (IRR). Full press release [here](#).

(17/05) ECRE - Rights at Risk: The Implications of a Closer Asylum-Return Nexus. The strong linkage between asylum and return procedures in the hotspot approach puts fundamental rights at risk, according to a [policy brief](#) published by the Danish Refugee Council. Whereas hotspots in Italy and Greece were set up with a view to ensuring greater effectiveness and efficiency in migration management, experience from practice has demonstrated critical gaps in registration, access to procedures and identification of vulnerabilities, as well as violations of the right to liberty through systematic detention. Full press [here](#).

(17/05) ECRE - CJEU: Refugees who Committed Crimes Cannot Be Automatically Returned. The Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) has [ruled](#) that EU Member States cannot deport refugees who have committed crimes if they will face inhuman or degrading treatment upon return. Instead, Member States must allow them to remain in the country. The judgment in the cases of M, X and X concern applicants who had been convicted of serious crimes in Belgium and the Czech Republic. The asylum application of one of the applicants was refused and the refugee statuses of the two other applicants were revoked. National courts in Belgium and the Czech Republic submitted preliminary ruling requests to the CJEU due to a lack of clarity on how to rule. Full press release [here](#).

(17/05) ECRE - Interview: Ready to Rescue – Caught Up in Politics. Interview with Marina Gomez Corral, crew member of the rescue vessel Aita Mari, operated by the Basque NGO Salvamento Marítimo Humanitario, which currently provides humanitarian aid to refugee camps in Lesbos. Full interview [here](#).

(15/05) Social Platform - The road to Sibiu had ended, but the journey must continue. The future of Europe is socially and environmentally sustainable – and it is within reach. This was the [message](#) delivered to EU Heads of State and Government meeting at the [Sibiu Summit](#) on 9 May by Social Platform and the Green 10, a coalition of environmental organisations and networks active at European level. We are living in a period of deep social and environmental crises. Increasing levels of inequality, persistent social exclusion and challenges to fundamental rights and democracy, alongside environmental degradation, climate change and a dramatic loss of biodiversity have led to rising social tensions, evident in the street protests sweeping the continent. To successfully resolve these issues, social and environmental challenges need to stop being addressed in isolation from one another. The coming together of social and environmental civil society organisations in the form of Social Platform and the Green 10 presents us with an even greater prospect of finding lasting solutions to bring about change. Full article [here](#).

(10/05) ECRE - Interview on the European Summit of Refugees and Migrants: “We Thought that Europeans Should Hear from Us”. An Interview with Ula Al-Khateeb from Syria, an Education specialist and member of Diaspora Network Alliances (DNA) who migrated to Spain. She participated in the European Summit of Refugees and Migrants as a co-facilitator of the education group. On 4-6 May, over 60 refugee and migrant representatives from the 28 EU Member States gathered in Brussels for the first European Summit of Refugees and Migrants. After two days of working together to develop policy proposals, they were joined by over 40 delegates from INGOs, private sector, academia, EU institutions, UNHCR and foundations to discuss and exchange views on key issues including civic engagement, health & wellbeing, education, protection, agency & participation. Full press release [here](#).

PUBLICATIONS

ECRE - [Refugee-Led Organisations \(Rlos\) In Europe: Policy Contributions, Opportunities And Challenges](#)

ECRE - [Outspending on Migration](#)

ECRE - [Asylum seekers in the EU labour market](#)

ECRE - [Housing out of reach? The reception of refugees and asylum seekers in Europe](#)

EPRS - [Living in the EU: Demography](#)

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

IOM - [Migrant Arrivals](#)

MPI - [After Deportation, Some Congolese Returnees Face Detention and Extortion](#)

INED - [Population decline in the post-communist countries of the European Union](#)

OECD - OECD - [Global trends in migration towards OECD countries between 2000/01 and 2015/16](#)

EPRS - [Area of freedom, security and justice: Cost of Non-Europe](#)

EPRS - [Demographic outlook for the European Union 2019](#)