

# INFO FLASH 23/04

## EU INSTITUTIONS

### European Commission

**(16/04) Von der Leyen outlines a path to European recovery.** “The coronavirus crisis will likely redefine our politics, our geopolitics and possibly globalisation itself. And in this new world Europe will need to stick together through thick and thin”, President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen [said at the European Parliament session](#) that on 16 April discussed EU's coordinated response to the coronavirus and its consequences. Full press release [here](#).

**(8/04) Coronavirus: EU global response to fight the pandemic.** Today, the European Commission and the High Representative set out plans for a robust and targeted EU response to support partner countries' efforts in tackling the coronavirus pandemic. The EU's collective action will focus on addressing the immediate health crisis and resulting humanitarian needs, strengthening partner countries' health, water and sanitation systems and their research and preparedness capacities to deal with the pandemic, as well as mitigating the socioeconomic impact. To underpin these actions, the EU will secure financial support to partner countries amounting to more than €15.6 billion from existing external action resources. Together with our partners, we are making sure that the substantial EU funding already allocated to them is targeted to help them deal with the impact of coronavirus. Full press release [here](#).

### European Parliament

**(23/04) EU aid: the impact of coronavirus in Africa could be devastating.** Coronavirus in Africa could be devastating, which is why Europe's response should go beyond our borders, said development committee chair Tomas Tobé. Given the vulnerability of healthcare systems in many developing countries, the coronavirus could have devastating effects, [warn members](#) of Parliament's development committee. The EU is working to support its member states and [cushion the economic impact in Europe](#), but the coronavirus is a pandemic and knows no borders. In a [resolution from 17 April](#) Parliament underlined the need for international cooperation and solidarity and a strengthening of the UN system, and the World Health Organization in particular. Full press release [here](#).

### European Council / Council of the EU

**(15/04) Only victory in Africa can end the pandemic everywhere - World leaders call for an urgent debt moratorium and unprecedented health and economic aid packages.** The outbreak and rapid spread of Covid-19 have stretched global public health systems beyond their limits and caused widespread economic, social and humanitarian damage. This virus knows no borders. Tackling it therefore requires strong international leadership, guided by a sense of shared responsibility and solidarity. In fact, only a global victory that fully includes Africa can bring this pandemic to an end. Full press release [here](#).

**(31/03) EU launches Operation IRINI to enforce Libya arms embargo.** The European Union is stepping up its efforts to enforce the UN arms embargo on Libya, thereby contributing to the peace process in the country, through the launch of a new CSDP (Common Security and Defence Policy) military operation in the Mediterranean. IRINI, (Greek for "peace"), will have as its core task the implementation of the UN arms embargo through the use of aerial, satellite and maritime assets. In particular the mission will be able to carry out inspections of vessels on the high seas off the coast of Libya suspected to be carrying arms or related material to and from Libya in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 2292 (2016). Full press release [here](#).

**(25/03) Council conclusions on enlargement and stabilisation and association process - Albania and the Republic of North Macedonia.** Full conclusions [here](#).

**(23/03) EUTM Mali: Council extends training mission with broadened mandate and increased budget.** The Council today decided to expand the scope of the mandate of the European Union military mission contributing to the training of the Malian Armed Forces (EUTM Mali). The mission will be able to provide military assistance to the G5 Sahel Joint Force and to national armed forces in the G5 Sahel countries through military advice, training and mentoring. The Council also prolonged the mission's mandate until 18 May 2024. Full press release [here](#).

## Others

**(15/04) ILO - Young workers will be hit hard by COVID-19's economic fallout.** The COVID-19 emergency is affecting almost everyone in the world, regardless of age, income or country. However, young people are likely to be particularly hard hit by the economic fallout of the crisis. Find out five reasons why. Crises fall hardest on the most vulnerable. Young people make up one such group, particularly when it comes to the social and economic impact of the virus pandemic. Full article [here](#).

**(9/04) IOM - Libya Considers Its Ports Unsafe for the Disembarkation of Migrants.** Approximately 280 migrants who were intercepted today and returned to Libya, remain on the overcrowded coast guard vessel, as Libyan authorities refuse to let them disembark. Relevant officials have indicated that due to the intensity in shelling, some of which previously targeted the Tripoli main port, Libya is not considered a safe port. This comes at a time when Italy has declared its ports unsafe due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Full press release [here](#).

**(7/04) FRA - Persistent Roma inequality increases COVID-19 risk, human rights heads say.** Overcrowding and poor access to sanitation have long blighted Roma communities across Europe. On the eve of International Roma Day, the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) highlight the longstanding neglect of Roma that is now leaving them highly vulnerable as the COVID-19 pandemic spreads across the globe. Full press release [here](#).

**(3/04) EASO - EASO publishes a new COI report on Syria: "Internally displaced persons, returnees and internal mobility".** Today, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) published a Country of Origin Information (COI) report titled "[Syria - Internally displaced persons, returnees and internal mobility](#)". This report is part of a series of Syria reports produced in 2019-2020. These reports cover actors of protection, internal mobility, key socio-economic indicators, and targeting of individuals. The reports provide information relevant for

international protection status determination for Syrian applicants for international protection, and will be used in the development of a country guidance note on Syria. Full press release [here](#).

**(3/04) OHCHR - UN experts call on Governments to adopt urgent measures to protect migrants and trafficked persons in their response to COVID-19.** States worldwide must urgently adopt inclusive measures aimed at protecting migrants and trafficked persons in their national response to COVID-19, such as prevention measures, testing, medical treatment, health services and social assistance, two UN human rights experts said today. Full press release [here](#).

**(2/04) EASO - Over 35,000 EU asylum officials trained by EASO.** Despite the COVID-19 restrictions, EASO continues training Member States' asylum and reception officials through e-learning and virtual sessions. Over the past seven years, 35 575 participants<sup>1</sup> from asylum and reception authorities of EU Member States and key external partners have taken part in training provided by the European Asylum Support Office (EASO). From 1 235 participants in 2012, last year the training curriculum included 24 modules, with 6 622 participants. Full press release [here](#).

**(30/03) FRA - Migrant children continue to face serious risks across Europe.** In a year that marked 30 years of the United Nation's child rights convention, 2019 saw many migrant children in the EU with their rights under threat. The latest report from the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights draws attention to the plight of migrant children as they enter and stay in the EU or return to their home countries. Full press release [here](#).

**(27/03) FRA - In recent weeks, states in Europe have taken measures to protect their borders to address public order, public health, or national security challenges.** States also took these measures to contain the spread of the COVID-19 virus in Europe. All these measures can have an impact on people's rights, say FRA and the Council of Europe Special Representative on Migration and Refugees in a joint statement. Full press release [here](#).

**(24/03) Eurofound - Europe's pre-existing household debt condition likely to be exacerbated by virus crisis.** The coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis, and the economic and social challenges that it entails, comes at a time when many vulnerable groups in Europe were already exposed to debt and arrears, according to Eurofound's new research on household indebtedness. The pandemic could also exacerbate an already divergent situation in the EU, with some countries in southern and eastern Europe disproportionately affected by debt, arrears and risk of poverty. Full press release [here](#).

**(24/03) EU Committee of the Regions - COVID-19: the EU Committee of regions to launch an exchange platform to support regional and local communities across Europe.** An exchange platform will help sharing needs and solutions, will enhance mutual support and act as a feedback mechanism to enable a reality check of the EU measures from the local and regional angle. The CoR will provide local communities with regular and practical information about EU actions. Full press release [here](#).

**(20/03) FRA - Societies that stand together are more resilient in times of crisis, say human rights heads on International Anti-Racism Day.** While ever more countries introduce measures to counter the current health risks, it is important to remember that societies based on solidarity and inclusion are more resilient to fast-changing circumstances, said the heads of three European human rights institutions on the eve of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Full press release [here](#).

## [COUNCIL OF EUROPE](#)

**(20/04) COVID-19 and media freedom: human-rights compliant responses.** The COVID-19 pandemic that has spread across the world since the beginning of 2020 poses a serious threat to the health, lives and future of all of us. Governments, health authorities and countless professionals are working tirelessly to contain the outbreak and to mitigate its effects. As a result, nearly every aspect of daily life of billions of people world-wide has changed. Finding an effective response to the pandemic is a shared top priority for decisionmakers around the globe. In addition to urgent health-related measures, actions are taken to offset social, economic, labour, cultural, security and other impacts of the crisis. Full press release [here](#).

## [CIVIL SOCIETY](#)

**(22/04) European Resettlement Network - Relocation of unaccompanied minors from Greece during the COVID-19 pandemic: no time to lose.** Conditions in the Greek islands camps have been overcrowded for a long time, with the camps currently at more than six times their capacity. Together with the longstanding lack of access to basic sanitary facilities, it is now impossible for camp residents to comply with guidelines to protect themselves against COVID-19. Full press release [here](#).

**(22/04) EURO CITIES - Public Statement from European Cities on Vulnerable Children in the refugee situation in Greece.** Full statement [here](#).

**(8/04) PICUM - partnership in practice: involving civil society in EU funds for the inclusion of migrants and refugees.** In the framework of its partnership with the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) on EU funding for inclusion, PICUM published the Policy Note [Partnership in practice: including civil society in EU funded actions for the inclusion of migrants and refugees](#). The partnership principle is a key feature of the 'European added value' in the EU funds which entails the involvement of stakeholders, in the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the funded actions. Such involvement should include civil society actors, social partners, local authorities, international organisations and the organisations representing beneficiaries, as – in the case of the European Social Fund + (ESF+) and the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) – migrant and refugee-led organisations. Full press release [here](#).

**(2/04) PICUM - Geneva: operation Papyrus regularised thousands of undocumented workers.** Operation Papyrus was a temporary regularisation scheme in the city-canton of Geneva that ran from February 2017 to December 2018, and was aimed at granting residence status to a large number of undocumented people and families who had been living and working in Geneva for many years. By January 2020, 2390 persons had obtained a one or two-year, renewable residence permit thanks to the project. With several hundred cases still

pending, the final tally of regularisations is likely to be close to 3000. People who were regularised in the framework of Operation Papyrus can now serenely build their future in Geneva, with the same rights and duties as their fellow residents in the canton. With a permit, they can get out of exploitative situations at work and find more stable jobs, start professional training, sign a lease in their name and thus avoid precarious subletting and prohibitive rents, or defend their rights when they are victims of a crime without fear of being reported and deported. Following the positive independent [evaluation](#) of the pilot project published late February, it is time to establish the procedure as a permanent mechanism in Geneva, and see how to roll it out in other cantons. Because we now know that the experience was a success, it also provides important food for thought and lessons learnt for other cities, regions and countries. Full article [here](#).

## [PUBLICATIONS](#)

Council of Europe - [Gender-based asylum claims and non-refoulement: articles 60 and 61 of the Istanbul Convention](#)

Council of Europe - [Statement of interpretation on the right to protection of health in times of pandemic](#)

Council of the EU General Secretariat - [Think Tank Review](#) (March 2020)

ECDPM - [Mapping private sector engagement along the migration cycle](#)

ECDPM - [Migration, mobility and COVID-19 – A tale of many tales](#)

ECRE - [COVID-19 Measures related to asylum and migration across Europe](#) (Infosheet)

EPRS - [Dublin Regulation on international protection applications: European Implementation Assessment](#)

EPRS - [Tackling the coronavirus outbreak: Impact on asylum-seekers in the EU](#)

FEPS - [Progressive Yearbook 2020](#)

ICMPD - [Expert Voice: ‘Too important to be neglected’: Refugees in Europe are now essential to keep societies afloat](#)

ICMPD - [Expert Voice: COVID-19 – Migration in the age of biosecurity](#)

MPI - [A Race Against the Clock: Meeting Seasonal Labor Needs in the Age of COVID-19](#)

MPI - [Immigrant Workers: Vital to the U.S. COVID-19 Response, Disproportionately Vulnerable](#)

Caritas Europa - [Caritas Europa EU Blended Finance for Development](#)

MPI - [Seasonal Worker Programs in Europe: Lessons Learned and Ways Forward](#) (Webinar)

Politico.eu - [Pandemics Close Borders—And Keep Them Closed](#)

TRAFIG - [Governing protracted displacement An analysis across global, regional and domestic contexts](#)

TRAFIG - [Migrant integration in times of the lockdown. Some reflections from Italy](#)

