

INFO FLASH 31/03

EU INSTITUTIONS

European Commission

(24/03) Commission launches open access publishing platform for scientific papers. Today, the European Commission launched Open Research Europe, a publishing platform for scientific papers that will be accessible to everyone. The platform will present the results of research funded by Horizon Europe, the EU research and innovation programme for 2021-2027, and its predecessor, Horizon 2020. Open Research Europe will give everyone, researchers and citizens alike, free-of-charge access to the latest scientific discoveries. It directly addresses major difficulties often associated with publishing scientific results, including delays and barriers to the re-use of results and high costs. The platform is an optional service for Horizon Europe and Horizon 2020 beneficiaries so that they can comply with their funding requirements for immediate open access, at no cost to them. Full press release [here](#).

(24/03) Commission proposes action to uphold child rights and support children in need. The Commission has today adopted the first comprehensive EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child, as well as a proposal for a Council Recommendation establishing a European Child Guarantee, to promote equal opportunities for children at risk of poverty or social exclusion. In preparation of both initiatives, the Commission, in association with leading global child rights organisations, collected the views of over 10,000 children. Full press release [here](#).

(19/03) European Commission welcomes the endorsement of the new €79.5 billion NDICI-Global Europe instrument to support EU's external action. The European Commission welcomes the endorsement by the European Parliament and the Council this week of the political agreement on the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) – 'Global Europe' for the next MFF period (2021-2027). This instrument will support the EU's external action with an overall budget of €79.5 billion in current prices. Full press release [here](#).

(15/03) Horizon Europe's first strategic plan 2021-2024: Commission sets research and innovation priorities for a sustainable future. Today, the European Commission adopted the first strategic plan for Horizon Europe, the new EU research and innovation programme worth €95.5 billion in current prices. The strategic plan is a novelty in Horizon Europe and sets the strategic orientations for the targeting of investments in the programme's first four years. It ensures that EU research and innovation actions contribute to EU priorities, including a climate-neutral and green Europe, a Europe fit for the digital age, and an economy that works for people. Full press release [here](#).

(10/03) Humanitarian action: New outlook for EU's global aid delivery challenged by COVID-19. Today, the Commission has proposed to strengthen the European Union's global humanitarian impact in order to meet the substantially rising humanitarian needs exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Communication proposes a series of key actions to expedite the provision of humanitarian aid by expanding the resource base, supporting a

better enabling environment for humanitarian partners and addressing the root causes of crises through a 'Team Europe' approach. It highlights a renewed focus on international humanitarian law (IHL) and also sets out to tackle the dramatic humanitarian impact of climate change. Full press release [here](#).

(4/03) The European Pillar of Social Rights: turning principles into actions. Today the Commission sets out its ambition for a strong Social Europe that focuses on jobs and skills for the future and paves the way for a fair, inclusive and resilient socio-economic recovery. The European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan outlines concrete actions to further implement the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights as a joint effort by the Member States and the EU, with an active involvement of social partners and civil society. It also proposes employment, skills and social protection headline targets for the EU to be achieved by 2030. Full press release [here](#).

(24/02) Protecting people working through platforms: Commission launches a first-stage consultation of the social partners. Today, the Commission launches the first-stage consultation of European social partners on how to improve the working conditions for people working through digital labour platforms. Platform work is developing rapidly in the EU across a growing number of business sectors. It can offer increased flexibility, job opportunities and additional revenue, including for people who might find it more difficult to enter the traditional labour market. However, certain types of platform work are also associated with precarious working conditions, reflected in the lack of transparency and predictability of contractual arrangements, health and safety challenges, and insufficient access to social protection. Additional challenges related to platform work include its cross-border dimension and the issue of algorithmic management. Full press release [here](#).

(22/02) First calls under Horizon Europe to be launched by the European Research Council. The European Commission today presented the Work Programme 2021 for the [European Research Council](#). This is the first work programme under [Horizon Europe](#), Europe's new Framework Programme for Research and Innovation for 2021-2027. It includes three main calls for proposals for frontier research actions for a total amount of €1.9 billion. The European Research Council (ERC) offers grants to top researchers from anywhere in the world who are ready to come or to stay in Europe to pursue their breakthrough scientific and technological discoveries that can form the basis of new industries, markets, and social innovations of the future. Full press release [here](#).

(9/02) Southern Neighbourhood: EU proposes new Agenda for the Mediterranean. To relaunch and strengthen the strategic partnership between the European Union and its Southern Neighbourhood partners, the European Commission and the High Representative today adopted a joint communication proposing an ambitious and innovative [new Agenda for the Mediterranean](#). The new Agenda is based on the conviction that by working together and in a spirit of partnership, common challenges can be turned into opportunities, in the mutual interest of the EU and its Southern neighbours. It includes a dedicated Economic and Investment Plan to spur the long-term socio-economic recovery in the Southern Neighbourhood. Under the new EU's Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), up to €7 billion for the period 2021-2027 would be allocated to its implementation, which could mobilise up to €30 billion in private and public investment in the region in the next decade. Full press release [here](#).

(10/02) Return and readmission: improving cooperation within the EU and with external partners. Today, the Commission is presenting its first factual assessment to the Council on cooperation with partner countries on readmission, as required under the revised Visa Code and as part of the comprehensive approach to migration policy outlined in the New Pact on Migration and Asylum. Effective return and readmission as well as sustainable reintegration are essential elements of comprehensive, balanced, tailor-made and mutually beneficial migration partnerships with countries outside the EU. The New Pact, presented last September, underlines that effective returns also require improved procedures inside the EU that reduce the fragmentation of national approaches and bring closer cooperation and reinforced solidarity between all Member States. Full press release [here](#).

(29/01) Migration statistics update: the impact of COVID-19. Newly available [EU data](#) on asylum and irregular border crossings in the first 10 months of 2020 shows the impact of the pandemic on migration to the EU. The EU as a whole registered a 33% year-on-year decrease in asylum applications and a 6-year low in irregular border crossings. However, the impact was not a uniform decrease: several local communities received unexpected large numbers of arrivals, and the overall number of arrivals has continued recovering after a large drop around April. Full press release [here](#).

(27/01) COVID-19: Team Europe supports African, Caribbean and Pacific countries to access finance through digital technology. The European Commission, together with the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), has signed today a new initiative of €14.5 million with the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) to unlock the potential of digital finance to benefit more than 600,000 women, youth and entrepreneurs across African, Caribbean and Pacific countries. Full press release [here](#).

European Parliament

(25/03) Empowering Africa: Parliament defines strategy for a new EU-Africa partnership. Europe and Africa must move away from a donor-recipient relationship, Parliament says, as MEPs vision for a deeper relationship between the two continents. Full press release [here](#).

(29/01) Agreement reached on the European Social Fund+ for 2021-2027. On Thursday, Parliament and Council reached a provisional agreement on the EU Social Fund+ that contributes to social inclusion, job opportunities and fighting poverty. Full press release [here](#).

(21/01) Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025: Parliament's reaction and input. Parliament welcomes the positive measures included in the EU's new Gender Equality Strategy but calls for additional actions and specific and binding targets. Full press release [here](#).

European Council / Council of the EU

(26/03) Council extends the mandate of Operation IRINI until 2023. The Council today extended the mandate of the EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) military operation in the Mediterranean - EUNAVFOR MED IRINI - until 31 March 2023. The decision was taken in the wake of the Strategic Review of the operation carried out by the Political and Security Committee. In this context, the Council has defined more precisely the practical arrangements for the disposal of items seized by the operation when implementing the UN arms embargo on Libya. Full press release [here](#).

(17/03) InvestEU programme adopted by Council. The Council today adopted InvestEU, the EU's new investment programme. The programme brings together various financial instruments currently available to support investment in the EU. Building on the success of the European fund for strategic investments, it aims at mobilising public and private investment in the EU through an EU budget guarantee of €26.2 billion that will back investment projects of financial partners, such as the European Investment Bank Group (EIB), national promotional banks and international financial institutions. Full press release [here](#).

(12/03) Council reaffirms commitment to combat discrimination against Roma. Today the Council adopted a recommendation on Roma equality, inclusion and participation, stepping up the member states' commitment to effectively fight discrimination against Roma people and to promote their inclusion in the key areas of education, employment, health and housing. The Recommendation also reflects the needs of specific groups and the diversity of the Roma population. It replaces the December 2013 Council recommendation on effective Roma integration measures and has an expanded scope. Full press release [here](#).

(11/09) EUCAP Sahel Mali: mission extended until 31 January 2023 and mandate adjusted. The Council has decided to extend the mandate of EU civilian mission EUCAP Sahel Mali until 31 January 2023 and has allocated it a budget of over €89 million for the period from 15 January 2021 to 31 January 2023. The Council has also decided to adjust the mission's mandate to enhance its ability to assist and advise the Malian internal security forces by supporting a gradual redeployment of Mali's civilian administrative authorities to the centre of Mali. In addition, the objectives of the Regional Advisory and Coordination Cell have been adapted to improve the cooperation and coordination between G5 Sahel structures and G5 Sahel countries, and the regionalisation of CSDP action. The decision, adopted by written procedure, was taken as part of the strategic review of CSDP engagement in the region. Full press release [here](#).

Others

(30/03) EASO - EASO begins strengthening support for EU reception authorities. On 18 March 2021, the Management Board of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) adopted the [EASO Strategy on Reception](#). The document responds to the growing demand from EU+ countries for EASO's operational and technical support on the reception of asylum seekers. Full press release [here](#).

(26/03) EASO - EASO and Greece increase joint training activities for asylum officials. Increased deployment of EASO personnel in Greece matched by new training plan aimed at supporting the Greek authorities in sustaining long-term quality and efficiency in the national asylum system. The European Asylum Support Office (EASO) has begun implementing a new joint Training Plan together with the Greek Asylum Service (GAS) under the Agency's 2021 Greece [Operating Plan](#). Full press release [here](#).

(23/03) CoR - Protecting rights "must be given priority" in EU's migration pact. The European Union's institutions should revise proposals in its New Pact on Migration and Asylum in ways that provide greater support to regions on the EU's borders, ensure better protection for the vulnerable, and reduce the length of time spent at reception centres on the EU's borders, the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) says in a set of recommendations adopted on 19 March. Full press release [here](#).

(22/03) EASO - Repeated applications account for one in four asylum applications in the EU+ in January. Of the 40 000 applications for asylum lodged in the EU+ in January 2021, almost one quarter were repeated applications. Iraq and Nigeria replaced Venezuela and Colombia among the top five origin countries of applicants. Analysis released by the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) on asylum trends in January 2021 shows that 40 000 applications for international protection were lodged in the EU+, including close to 10 000 repeated applications. The share of repeated applications (24 %) was the highest in several years. Full press release [here](#).

(10/03) EASO support to Spain becomes fully operational. Personnel deployed by the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) have begun work to provide enhanced capacity to the reception services in the Canary Islands. This week, EASO has deployed a team of reception experts to the Canary Islands in order to begin work supporting the Spanish authorities to manage the reception centres in light of increased arrivals of migrants, including applicants for international protection, in the past months. This will include training and support for camp management, camp design, standardisation of vulnerability and information provision workflows, and data management. Full press release [here](#).

(3/03) FRA - FRA Management Board publishes opinion on future agency work areas. The Board favours revising the current founding regulation, as proposed by the European Commission in June 2020. This would do away with the need to adopt a Council decision defining the agency's work areas every five years (the Multiannual Framework). The Board's opinion follows the scenario that the Council still needs to adopt the Multiannual framework. The Board based its opinion on past and present FRA work, and its impact. It also draws on the views of a broad range of stakeholders, following a consultation. Overall, the opinion calls for continuity while pointing to a need to adapt the framework to legal and political developments over the last five years. The Board suggests to reword thematic areas to take into account these developments. Full press release [here](#).

(25/02) FRA - Migrants continue to face hardship. The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) identifies a number of persistent and emerging fundamental rights concerns in its latest migration bulletin. Full press release [here](#).

(23/02) CoR - Benefits of EU's new Mediterranean agenda "must reach beyond capitals". The European Union's new agenda for its partnership with its southern neighbours has won the support of local and regional politicians from across the Mediterranean region and the EU – but they have insisted that that the "cooperation benefits must reach beyond the capitals" and must reduce, not increase, the "existing huge territorial disparities within neighbouring countries". Full press release [here](#).

(18/02) EASO - EU asylum decisions exceed applications for first time since 2017 due to COVID-19. Applications for asylum in the EU+ in 2020 decreased by 31% compared to 2019, down to the lowest levels since 2013, largely as a result of emergency travel restrictions. Despite the pandemic, national asylum authorities showed resilience in sustaining many activities, resulting in a decrease in backlogs of pending applications. Full press release [here](#).

(9/02) EASO - EASO publishes updated 'Country Guidance: Iraq'. The European Asylum Support Office (EASO) has published an update of the 'Country Guidance: Iraq'. The January 2021 update replaces the first edition of the guidance of June 2019. In 2020, Iraq remained

one of the top five countries of origin of applicants for international protection in the EU+. According to EASO Early warning and Preparedness System (EPS) data, applicants from Iraq lodged some 18 200 applications for international protection in 2020. Similarly to other countries of origin, the number of applicants from Iraq declined significantly since March, when the COVID-19 pandemic reached Europe, resulting in a 40 % decrease. Full press release [here](#).

(5/02) CoR - Regions and Cities push for more ambition to combat Anti-Gypsyism in Europe. Ten years after the European Commission adopted its first Roma integration strategy, Europe's largest ethnic minority is still subject to severe and persistent racial discrimination across the EU. Full press release [here](#).

(4/02) EIGE - FGM study: More girls at risk but community opposition growing. To mark the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) on 6 February, the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) has released estimations of the number of girls at risk of FGM in Denmark, Spain, Luxembourg and Austria. Full press release [here](#).

(3/02) CoR - Financing local pilot projects would support the European Skills Agenda's objectives. The European Committee of the Regions (CoR) argues that the new European Skills Agenda should take better into account the major role cities and regions play in supporting and developing skills-related policies and infrastructure in most Member States. Rapporteur Csaba Borboly (RO/EPP), President of Hargita County Council, presented the CoR opinion at the plenary session on Wednesday. Full press release [here](#).

(2/02) CoR - Entrepreneurial societies make resilient regions – Webinar summary. This OECD and CoR's lunch-time webinar emphasised that developing entrepreneurial societies is a key factor to build long-term resilience across EU regions. Multiple aspects for action and consideration at local, regional and European level were explored to that end. Full press release [here](#).

(29/01) EASO - EASO publishes new country guidance note on Afghanistan. EASO has published the second update of the 'Country Guidance: Afghanistan' (December 2020), replacing its previous version from June 2019. The document reflects the common assessment of the situation in Afghanistan by EU Member States and has been endorsed by the EASO Management Board. It aims to support asylum decision-makers and policy-makers in the EU and beyond, by means of in-depth analysis and guidance on the main elements in the examination of applications for international protection by applicants from Afghanistan. Without replacing the individual assessment required in each case, this practical tool aims to foster convergence in the context of the Common European Asylum System, ensuring that similar cases are treated and decided on in a similar manner and in accordance with the applicable international and EU legislation. Full press release [here](#).

(21/01) CoR - Cities, villages and regions strengthen cooperation with the European Commission to bridge the digital divide in Europe. The European Committee of the Regions (CoR) and the European Commission pursue their common effort to help digital transformation and high-speed broadband reach all European territories, including rural and sparsely populated areas. Full press release [here](#).

(20/01) EIB - African Development Bank, EIB sign Joint Partnership Action Plan to fast-track development in Africa. The African Development Bank (AfDB) and the European

Investment Bank (EIB) today signed a joint partnership action plan highlighting their strengthened cooperation and mutual development priorities and a strong shared emphasis on boosting public and private sector investment in Africa. Full press release [here](#).

(13/01) EASO - EASO operations expand to all major EU countries of first arrival. In 2021, EASO's operational support to national asylum and reception authorities will cover all five Mediterranean EU Member States which receive the most asylum applications, accounting for 50% of the Agency's budget. The European Asylum Support Office (EASO) has begun operational support to the reception authorities in Spain, as was recently announced following the signature of the Operating Plan for the country. Spain is now EASO's fifth ongoing operation, building on, and adding to, the unprecedented levels of support and productivity reached in 2020 in Cyprus, Greece, Italy and Malta. Full press release [here](#).

[COUNCIL OF EUROPE](#)

(24/03) European Committee of Social Rights: 2020 Conclusions on employment, training and equal opportunities. The European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR) has published its Conclusions 2020 on the provisions of the European Social Charter relating to employment, training and equal opportunities. The following 33 countries were examined: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, the Netherlands, the Netherlands in respect of Curacao, the Netherlands in respect of Sint Maarten, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, the Russian Federation, Serbia, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom. Furthermore, the Committee made public its Findings 2020 in respect of Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy and Portugal concerning follow-up to decisions (in the framework of collective complaints). Full press release [here](#).

(18/03) ECRI annual report: Covid-19 deepened inequalities, LGBTI backlash, growing religious intolerance and BLM. The Council of Europe's anti-racism commission (ECRI) in its 2020 annual report published ahead of the International Day against Racial Discrimination on 21 March, identified four key challenges Europe was facing last year. These are: mitigating the disproportional impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on vulnerable groups, tackling deep-rooted racism in public life, combating anti-Muslim racism and antisemitism in the face of terrorism, and addressing the backlash against the protection of human rights of LGBTI people. Full press release [here](#).

(9/03) European countries must urgently change migration policies which are endangering refugees and migrants crossing the Mediterranean. "European countries are failing to protect refugees and migrants trying to reach Europe via the Mediterranean. Backsliding in the protection of the lives and rights of refugees and migrants is worsening and causing thousands of avoidable deaths each year", says Dunja Mijatović, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, who has released a report entitled "A distress call for human rights. The widening gap in migrant protection in the Mediterranean". Full press release [here](#).

(10/02) Implementing ECHR judgments: New thematic factsheet on children's rights. The Department for the Execution of Judgments of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) has published a new factsheet focusing on cases related to children. The

factsheet summarises measures reported by 29 member states to safeguard and protect children's rights in response to 62 different judgments from the Strasbourg court. It includes sections on protecting children from ill-treatment, detention, access to a court, children's rights in family law matters and their protection from discrimination. Full press release [here](#).

(12/01) Key indicators to combat human trafficking for labour exploitation.

Trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation is increasingly on the rise. That's the observation of the Group of Experts tasked with monitoring states' obligations under the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA). Indeed, trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation has emerged as the predominant form of trafficking in some European countries. It occurs in both the formal and informal economies, and concerns women, men and children. Full press release [here](#).

CIVIL SOCIETY

(31/03) PICUM - Labour migration policies in Europe: challenges and ways forward.

Coming to work in Europe is no easy task. In many sectors, such as hospitality, retail, construction, and domestic and care work, it's extremely difficult for people from outside the EU to work regularly and retain decent employment. In our new report, we start to unpack why. Full press release [here](#).

(26/03) ECRE - Atlantic Route: Distress Cases, Deaths, and Transfers to Camps.

More than 100 people who left West African shores are currently in distress and searched by the Spanish coast guard, Salvamento Marítimo. A two-year-old child did not recover from her perilous journey to the Canary Islands and died on Sunday after days in intensive medical care. The government announces the end of emergency accommodation in hotels. Full press release [here](#).

(19/03) ECRE - Editorial: EU-Turkey Deal 5 Years on: Fundamentals Remain Unchanged.

Five years after publication of the EU-Turkey statement, ECRE maintains its position that the Deal that lies behind it was unethical, illegal and unnecessary. There were alternatives at the time, such as rapid installation of a temporary protection regime, expanded relocation, and a scaled up, European operational crisis response. By opting for an approach based on denying access to protection in the EU to refugees, the Deal set the direction of travel for the next few years. Nonetheless, the attempts to codify in EU law and to replicate elsewhere the agreements with Turkey have encountered resistance from within and outside Europe, and have not progressed at the speed that proponents of externalisation in all its forms would like. Full press release [here](#).

(18/03) PICUM - the EU's migration and anti-racism policies: are we ready for a racism-free Europe? This blog is the second in a [two-part series](#) looking at the intersection between racism and migration policy, and was authored by Abigail Cárdenas Mena, former Advocacy Trainee at PICUM. Full article [here](#).

(18/03) Caritas Europa - End policies to 'contain' migrants at EU borders. Caritas Europa joins seven leading organisations in calling for an end to containment and deterrence at the EU's external borders, which would mean recognising the failures of the policy and moving forward to ensure the same mistakes are never repeated. Full press release [here](#).

(17/03) PICUM - The impact of growing up undocumented in Europe. Undocumented children are part of our communities and share the hopes and dreams of any other child. But their lives and the lives of their families are characterized by uncertainty and instability due to their irregular residence status. PICUM's new report, [Navigating Irregularity: The Impact of Growing up Undocumented in Europe](#), looks at how their residence status affects six areas of their lives: housing, access to services, income and socio-economic status, residence procedures and immigration enforcement (including detention), school life, and family life. Full press release [here](#).

(12/03) ECRE - Op-ed: A European Paradox - Humanitarian Actors with Increased Responsibilities and Shrinking Space to Exercise their Mandate. This week, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) [published](#) new research conducted by eight National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies across the globe. Drawing on their experience from the field, the report provides clear evidence of the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on migrants' already precarious access to essential services. With widening gaps in state support, humanitarian actors are left with a considerable challenge of providing assistance and protection to those in need – doing so in the context of a shrinking space to exercise their mandates. Full press release [here](#).

(12/03) ECRE - Editorial: Displaced Responsibilities: Finding a Wider Approach to Displacement in EU External Policies. When it comes to asylum in Europe, major implementation gaps remain, and violations remain unaddressed. At the same time, it is full steam ahead on the external dimension of asylum and migration policy, as ECRE's analysis published this week shows. The publication of the [AIDA country updates](#) analysing asylum systems in Europe up to end 2020 has started and demonstrates that rectifiable weaknesses persist; a [legal note](#) looks at UN avenues for addressing the violations that continue. Full press release [here](#).

(10/03) PICUM - Immigration detention in Europe: what safeguards for people with vulnerabilities? Every year, more than [100,000 people](#) are put in immigration detention in Europe. In [immigration detention](#), people are uprooted from their communities, and they often don't know whether and when they will be released or if they will be deported. Often, people in immigration detention don't have access to adequate information and interpreters, legal aid and medical care. This has a severe impact on mental health. Studies indicate [higher incidence of anxiety](#), depression and post-traumatic stress disorder than among the rest of the population, and an average of very high levels of depression in [four out of every five detainees](#). In 2020, [51% of the immigration detainees](#) in the Brook House centre (UK) were considered at risk of suicide. Full press release [here](#).

(12/02) ECRE - European Commission Publishes Findings of the First Annual Assessment of Third Countries' Cooperation on Readmission. Following changes to the Visa Code in 2019, the Commission assessed the level of readmission cooperation with third countries and submitted a report to the Council. While the report itself is not public, a [Communication](#) published this week summarises the main findings of this assessment and sets out next steps regarding the EU's own return policy and in relation to third countries. Full press release [here](#).

(5/02) ECRE - Agreement on the European Social Fund+ for Social inclusion, Including Integration of Third Country Nationals. Last week, on the 28 of January, the European Parliament and the Council have reached a [provisional agreement on the EU Social Fund](#)

Plus (ESF+), which will replace the current ESF by merging it with the existing Youth Employment Initiative (YEI), Fund for European Aid to the most Deprived (FEAD), the Employment and Social Innovation programme (EaSI). Full press release [here](#).

(29/01) EAPN - Poverty Watch 2020 launch. On 29 January 2021, we launched our EU Poverty Watch 2020. The Poverty Watches start from the reality of people experiencing poverty and the perspectives of NGOs who work with them. With poverty predicted to rise to at least levels seen in the 2008 crisis, and the EU Action Plan on the European Pillar of Social Rights and Recovery and Resilience Plans around the corner, the time is now to get poverty elimination right. Full press release [here](#).

(29/01) PICUM - PICUM is no longer part of the Frontex consultative forum. PICUM is no longer a member of the Frontex Consultative Forum, a body which is meant for non-governmental, international organisations and EU agencies to assist the European Border and Coast Agency (Frontex) by providing independent advice in fundamental rights matters. In May 2020, PICUM wrote a private letter to Frontex's Executive Director Fabrice Leggeri to raise our concerns in relation to both media reports on the agency's involvement in human rights violations, as well as concerning the Forum's working methods. After seven years of membership in the Consultative Forum (between 2012 and 2019), and after long discussions internally, PICUM came to the conclusion that the Consultative Forum's working methods did not allow for our meaningful participation. Full press release [here](#).

(27/01) Eurodiaconia - Roundtable: Private Sponsorship for Integration: building a European model. In December 2020, Eurodiaconia and its project partners Diaconia Valdese, Federation de l'Entraide Protestante, and the Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy held a virtual roundtable to discuss the outcome of their joint project "Private Sponsorship for Integration: building a European model", and present their new publication. Full press release [here](#).

(22/01) ECRE - EU-level Report on the status of refugee-led community organisations. In the framework of the project "[Training Kit for Empowering Refugee-led Community Organisations](#)", ECRE has released a [report](#) based on data from existing studies, interviews with Refugee-led Community Organisations (RCOs) and relevant research from other stakeholders. Full press release [here](#).

(11/01) PICUM - An Inclusive and Gender-Responsive Approach to Migration. On 5 March 2020, the EU adopted its long-awaited [gender equality strategy 2020-2025](#). Less than one week later, the World Health Organisation declared COVID-19 a global pandemic. The pandemic has revealed in stark terms the gender-related dimensions of inequality. It has exposed and worsened systemic inequalities linked to: under-regulated and under-protected forms of work in our economy, where women are often overrepresented; porous social safety nets that fail to protect all those in need; and structural racism that is driving disparate health outcomes for people of colour. It has underscored the need for an inclusive and intersectional approach to gender equality that reaches across policy domains to ensure and protect women's safety, social and economic rights, while engaging with them as critical agents of change. Full press release [here](#).

PUBLICATIONS

Caritas Europa - Demystifying the regularisation of undocumented migrants

Council of the EU General Secretariat - Think Tank Review (February)

Council of the EU General Secretariat - Think Tank Review (January)

Council of the EU General Secretariat - Think Tank Review (March)

ECRE - Comments on the Commission Proposal for a Regulation Addressing Situations of Crisis and Force Majeure in the Field of Migration and Asylum COM (2020) 613

ECRE - Comments on the Commission Proposal for a Regulation on Asylum and Migration Management COM (2020) 610 2020/0279 (COD)

ECRE - Legal Note 7: Cessation of International Protection and Review of Protection Statuses in Europe, February 2021

ECRE - Legal Note 8: ECRE/ELENA Legal Note on Asylum and the UN Treaty System

ECRE - Policy Note: Alleviating or Exacerbating Crises? The Regulation on Crisis and Force Majeure

ECRE - Policy Note: Moving on with the EU Asylum Agency

ECRE - Policy Note: the JDMC: Deporting People to the World's Least Peaceful Country

ECRE - Policy Note: The Regulation on asylum and migration management: giving with one hand, taking back with the other

ECRE - Policy Note: Tightening the Screw: Use of EU External Policies and Funding for Asylum and Migration

ECRE - Working Paper: EU External Expenditure on Asylum, Forced Displacement and Migration 2014-2019

ECRE - Working Paper: Transforming Eurodac from 2016 to the New Pact: From the Dublin System's Sidekick to a Database in Support of EU Policies on Asylum, Resettlement and Irregular Migration

EMN - Children in migration

EPC - EU return sponsorships: High stakes, low gains?

EPC - The EU's legal migration acquis: Patching up the patchwork

EPRS - Demographic Outlook For The European Union 2021

EPRS - Pushbacks at the EU's external borders

EPRS - Search and rescue in the Mediterranean

EPRS - Understanding EU action against migrant smuggling

EPRS - Understanding EU financing for external action

Equinox - Towards Racial Justice How the EU can create lasting change for racialised people

Eurodiaconia - Ensuring Financial Inclusion for the Most Vulnerable: A Call for Action

EU Law Analysis - The implementation of the EU Return Directive: The European Parliament aligns the EU expulsion policy with recommendations of UN human rights expert mechanisms

European Parliament - Big data: definition, benefits, challenges (infographics)

European Parliament - Radicalisation in the EU: what is it? How can it be prevented?

Forced Migration Review - Mental health and psychosocial support

FRA - COVID-impact on civil society work Results of consultation with FRA's Fundamental Rights Platform

Hein de Haas - [A theory of migration: the aspirationscapabilities framework](#)

IAI - [Expanding Legal Labour Migration Pathways to the EU: Will This Time Be Different?](#)

JRS Europe - [From Bad to Worse: Covid-19 Aggravates Existing Gaps in the Reception of Asylum Seekers](#)

MPI - [A Bridge to Firmer Ground: Learning from International Experiences to Support Pathways to Solutions in the Syrian Refugee Context](#)

OECD - [Young People with Migrant Parents](#)

SHARE Network - [SHARE network survey: welcome & integration in the EU - Covid-19 impact & responses](#)

Social Platform - [A missed opportunity? Social Platform's initial reaction to the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan](#)

Strasbourg Observers - [In the Aftermath of a Judgment: Why Human Rights Organisations Should Harness the Potential of Rule 9](#)

UPF - [When North African emigration turns into diasporas: Migration dynamics, collective action and State responses](#)