Policy Update April 2018

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Elections in Hungary & Italy   A German-Franco alliance?   Progress on CEAS

This EPIM policy update covers the elections in Italy and Hungary, which both highlighted the continued significance of immigration for European electorates. Attempts at forming a new government in Italy and Viktor Orbán's plans for his new term in Hungary will be closely watched in the weeks and months ahead.

In the closer look section, the Migration Policy Group presents a new Europe-wide campaign on migration with the objective of engaging the public and influencing EU migration policy.

The policy update's special focus deals with the coalition agreement in Germany and the proposal for a new immigration bill in France. It also considers to what extent a German-Franco

alliance on immigration policies could emerge at EU level and how this would impact on a number of ongoing discussions on EU migration policy reforms.

This issue also examines the findings of the Court of Justice in the 'A and S' and 'Pisciotti' cases. Further sections report on progress made on the drafts of the UN Global Compacts and reflect on the second anniversary of the EU-Turkey Statement.

This EPIM policy update looks at the latest developments in the negotiations of the legislative reforms of the Eurodac Regulation, the Dublin Regulation, the Reception Conditions Directive and the Asylum Procedures Directive. Finally, this policy update also includes a list of funding opportunities and calls.

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SPECIAL FOCUS

Paris
Freitag, 16. März 2018

Paris
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LUDOVIC MARIN / POOL / AFP

The German coalition agreement and the French immigration bill - new impulses for Europe?

`Asylum` `Inclusion` `Immigration Detention`

In the context of the ongoing and complex negotiations on the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), political developments in Germany and France have led to speculation about the possibility of an emerging alliance between the two countries. Such an alliance would be significant in the face of the Visegrád four's opposition to mandatory relocation quotas in the context of the Dublin reforms (see February EPIM Policy Update). It would also be relevant for the upcoming negotiations on the post-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) which are expected to have a significant focus on migration.

The German election and the subsequent negotiations on a coalition treaty were marked by difficult debates on migration and the integration of refugees. While the German

government had initially responded to the so-called "migration crisis" with a "welcome culture" spirit, opening its borders for refugees trying to reach Western Europe, the tone with which migration was discussed by the CDU and the SPD during the election campaign in 2017 had notably changed. Migration was the [main topic](#) in the run-up to the elections, yet took on a much more security-oriented [dimension](#) in the election manifestos of the main parties. This change in the political discourse is also mirrored in the [coalition agreement](#) which, although subscribing to the right to protection, aims to "manage and limit migratory movements" so that "a situation such as in 2015 will not occur again". To this end, a loose "upper limit" of 180,000-220,000 people a year has been installed for persons seeking international protection, although it is questionable whether this is [legally enforceable](#) given the non-binding nature of the agreement and the impractical application of such a limit in the Schengen area. This number would also include individuals coming to Germany by means of family reunification. However, this regular pathway is further curtailed as well, to 1000 persons a month starting from August 2018, for persons granted subsidiary protection rather than a refugee status. In a bid to provide more efficient and nation-wide asylum processing, the coalition agreement also introduces the new concept of so-called 'ANkER' centres where arrival and reception as well as decisions on asylum or return should take place. While the agreement mentions that stays in ANkER centres should not exceed a maximum of 18 months, [migration experts](#) have raised doubts about the actual time that asylum seekers would spend in such centres. They also question the integration opportunities available for individuals that stay in such centres and the education and schooling opportunities for children.

The [coalition agreement](#) also picks up on the reform of the CEAS and reaffirms the German government's commitment to a "fair distribution mechanism" according to the Dublin Regulation. The agreement additionally states that an "unlimited reliance on the country of first entry should be excluded". Although the agreement specifies that the first country of entry should remain responsible for an asylum procedure, as is the procedure under the Dublin Regulation, this concession is in line with Germany's stance of supporting and furthering solidarity with Greece and Italy including through refugee relocation. Overall, it remains to be seen which role the German government will take in the Council and whether the new coalition will succeed in pushing its agenda on the EU level. With the two ministries for the [interior](#) and [development](#) headed by CSU politicians, [policies](#) in the area are likely to have a conservative handwriting. Civil society actors have been critical of the coalition treaty. According to [Pro Asyl](#), ANkER centres will lead to permanent isolation, miserable living conditions and social stigmatisation. Similarly, [Diakonie Deutschland](#) called for an immediate stop to any curtailing of family reunification rights. [Arbeiterwohlfahrt](#) argued that the provisions on family reunification are incompatible with Germany's Basic Law and human rights provisions.

Migration and asylum are also high on the agenda in France where debates on the introduction of a [new immigration bill](#), proposed by French president Emmanuel Macron, are currently ongoing. The bill is being [debated](#) in the French Parliament in April. It is designed to shorten the processing time for asylum applications to six months and to facilitate returns to countries of origin, yet it also doubles the period during which migrants without documents can be held in detention to 90 days and shortens the deadlines for applying for asylum after arriving in France. The proposal for the immigration bill was met with [pronounced opposition](#) from civil society and [political actors](#) and led to [divisions](#) in the French political landscape. The [European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)](#) has stated that the proposed bill was "neither fair nor efficient and seriously risks weakening the right to asylum". Similarly, a group of [NGOs working in Northern France](#) expressed their concern over the proposed bill, saying that it will lead to a deterioration of the human rights

standards. The director of France Terre d'asile, Pierre Henry, condemned the prolonged detention periods as a "mesure d'affichage" aimed at placating anti-immigration sentiments, prompting the organisation to issue a number of recommendations. Forum réfugiés-Cosi also called on the government to make adjustments and limit the use of detention. More generally, Macron was criticised for departing from his earlier, more liberal position on migration as for instance advanced in a more balanced speech delivered at the Sorbonne in September 2017.

It seems France and Germany are moving towards parallel positions, with an increased focus on border management and, more generally, on the external dimension of EU migration policy. A common element is the aim to set up faster and "more effective" asylum procedures. Additionally, the German coalition agreement calls for the European Border and Coast Guard (Frontex) to be turned into a "real European border protection police", echoing Macron's request made in last year's speech for a European border police. A further avenue for cooperation could turn around Germany's proposal to link the distribution of cohesion funds to integrating more refugees. The proposal initially met with mixed reactions. During his speech before the European Parliament in mid-April, Macron similarly called for a European programme that would directly offer financial support to local communities that receive and integrate refugees.

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

EU cooperation with African countries on migration

Asylum   Immigration Detention .

A conference against migrant smuggling and human trafficking was held in March in Niamey (Niger) to discuss better coordination between countries of origin, transit and destination. Attendees included ministers from Burkina Faso, Chad, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauritania, Libya, Senegal and Niger, with representatives from Germany, Italy, Spain, France, the EU and the UN. The meeting followed on from an initiative for more cooperation on security and migration launched in Paris in August last year. The Niamey conference concluded with a joint declaration in which participants agreed to strengthen national legal frameworks and make further investments to combat smuggling and trafficking. Conclusions also included enhancing the capacity of security forces, increasing judicial cooperation and border control, protecting migrants and trafficking victims and ensuring sustainable development as well as the promotion of an alternative economy to address root causes of migration. In a reaction to the meeting, ECRE stated that security in this context should be approached more comprehensively instead of solely focusing on migration, and that more attention should be paid to long-term economic opportunities for

migrants in the region. In addition, Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris Avramopoulos called on EU member states to step up their resettlement efforts, in particular with regards to resettlement from Niger in the context of the Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM) put in place by UNHCR. As of March 2018, UNHCR has evacuated a total of 1,342 refugees from Libya to third countries, out of which 312 individuals were brought directly to Italy, 10 to Romania and 1,020 to the ETM in Niger. In the context of the ETM, refugees are being hosted in Niger while UNHCR searches for durable solutions such as resettlement or voluntary return. Niger agreed to temporarily host people evacuated from Libya under the condition that they would be transferred elsewhere. However, of the people evacuated to Niger (1,020), only 55 have been resettled in Europe so far, with another 430 pledges made by six states. The slow pace of resettlements could jeopardise cooperation in this field with Niger on further evacuations from Libya. The UNHCR has urged EU member states to increase their efforts to resettle refugees along the Central Mediterranean route. Speaking at the European Policy Centre on 15 March, Vincent Cochetel, UNHCR's Special Envoy for the Central Mediterranean Situation, praised the resettlement countries for pledging 2,400 places out of Niger, yet cautioned that most of these places were not operational yet. Official figures estimate that around 6,500 people remain detained in official prisons in Libya, with thousands more being held in other detention facilities.

As a further development, the EU has adopted three new programmes under the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa. Together they amount to EUR 150 million. The programmes follow the commitments made by the Joint African Union – European Union – United Nations Task Force to 'Address the Migrant Situation in Libya' set up in Abidjan in November 2017. EUR 115 million will be dedicated to the evacuation, return and resettlement of people stranded in Libya; EUR 20 million to improving assistance to vulnerable migrants in transit countries in the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin regions; and EUR 15 million to support the reintegration of Ethiopian returnees. In this context, the European NGO confederation for relief and development, CONCORD, released a report which highlights concerns over the diversion of the Trust Fund away from development objectives to migration management. Similarly, Global Health Advocates (GHA) had stated earlier that the Trust Fund was a political instrument shifting the focus of aid delivery to control migration patterns.

Progress on the Drafts of the Global Compacts

`Asylum` `Inclusion`

The widely anticipated Zero Draft for the UN Global Compact on Refugees was released at the beginning of 2018. In response, political institutions, academia and civil society organisations advanced a number of recommendations. The zero draft was described as being 'too cautious' and short on concrete proposals on how the global community can uphold a common responsibility vis-à-vis refugees. In response to the Zero Draft, the EU highlighted the importance of burden and responsibility sharing mechanisms and reaffirmed support for the UNHCR's Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). Volker Türk, UNHCR's Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, stated that going forward, the Global Compact would include a stronger language on responsibility sharing mechanisms, such as the introduction of a 'global platform' to support countries dealing with high numbers of refugee arrivals. Following this first round of discussions, the first draft for the Global Compact on Refugees was published in March and was welcomed by a number of NGOs. At the same time, civil society organisations have made it clear they expect

more detailed proposals on responsibility sharing, accountability, the strength of the protection framework itself and the inclusion of refugees.

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, currently in the [first draft revision](#) stage, is being negotiated in parallel. In reaction to this document, [the EU](#) demanded a clearer distinction between regular and irregular migrants to "avoid any language that might be interpreted as justification or even incentive for irregular migration", as well as a more prominent reflection of states' responsibilities, for instance with respect to facilitating returns and readmission. [Reactions](#) from NGOs were mixed: some [organisations](#) called for a better inclusion of migrants in the negotiations and for increasing efforts to counter anti-migration narratives. At the same time, a number of civil society organisations released a [vision document](#) offering human rights-based recommendations. [Intergovernmental negotiations](#) on the Global Migration Compact will continue until July and conclusions are scheduled to be adopted by September 2018. Stakeholders can [register](#) to attend the upcoming negotiations that will take place at the UN's headquarters in New York.

National Elections: Italy and Hungary

Asylum

Italy: The Italian parliamentary elections in early March saw the populist Five Star Movement win the largest share of [the vote](#), ahead of the centre-left Democratic Party and the far-right Lega. The Democratic Party, which led the previous government, lost a large share of its votes. Against a background of a high number of [refugee crossings](#) and [widespread dissatisfaction](#) with immigration from North Africa, the critical situation in [Italian reception centres](#), as well as the growing number of [homeless migrants](#), were at the centre of the election campaign. Migration was the topic of intense debates and used by some politicians [during the campaign](#) to attract right-wing voters. NGOs working on [migration](#) and [human rights](#) have strongly condemned the nature of the public discourse and the unprecedented [anti-migration rhetoric](#). [Coalition talks are still ongoing](#) and promise to be difficult due to the stark differences between the parties on a number of topics, including migration.

Hungary: In Hungary, general elections were held at the beginning of April, following an election campaign that was characterised by a fierce anti-migration rhetoric. Prime Minister [Viktor Orbán's right-wing Fidesz party](#), in an alliance with the Christian Democratic KDNP, won the elections with an apparent landslide, gaining more than [48% of the vote](#) and 66% of the seats. The party was followed in second place by the far-right [Jobbik party](#). These results give Orbán a [mandate](#) for a third term in office. Fidesz' election campaign was built on spreading highly contentious views on migration. At campaign events across the country, [Orbán](#) talked about how "ghettoes, no-go zones, parallel societies, difficulties of coexistence and the deterioration of public security" would emerge if more migrants would come to Hungary. Similarly, [Orbán accused the EU](#) of dismissing Hungarian culture and wanting to "dilute the population of Europe" by establishing a system of mandatory relocation quotas and distributing refugees across European member states. The [Hungarian government](#) and the [UN High Commissioner for Human Rights](#) were also involved in a public dispute over the country's rhetoric on migration during the election campaign. [Civil society organisation](#) and [media outlets](#) were [equally critical](#) of Orbán's anti-migration rhetoric. Following the election victory, the Hungarian government promised [swift progress](#) on a [bill](#) that would [restrict the activities of NGOs and civil society actors](#) working on asylum and migration issues (see the [February EPIM Policy Update](#)).

Two years after the EU-Turkey Statement

Two years since the conclusion of the EU-Turkey Statement, the situation of refugees and asylum seekers at the Greek borders and in Turkey is still high on the agenda of European institutions and civil society actors. The Statement is centred on the provision to return individuals to Turkey who crossed the Aegean sea from that country to the Greek islands. The statement also contains a so-called 'one-to-one mechanism': for every Syrian returned to Turkey, one Syrian is to be resettled in Europe from Turkey.

The Statement has been a source of human rights concerns since its inception. Chief among these concerns are obstructions to access asylum processes and limits to protection against non-refoulement (see also December 2017 EPIM Policy Update). Other concerns relate to proposals to replicate certain aspects of the statement in agreements with other third countries. Several civil society organisations have spoken out against ideas of this kind, calling it a 'breach of asylum seekers' rights'. Additionally, living conditions in the hotspots on the Greek islands have been strongly criticised by civil society actors. Amnesty International denounced the "severe overcrowding and inadequate facilities [that] are exposing men, women and children to unsanitary living conditions [...] putting their health, safety and security at risk every day". In this context, several civil society organisations have also accused the EU and member states of putting in place a 'containment policy' so as to dissuade further arrivals. Through the ongoing 'Open the Islands' campaign, organisations have urged the Greek government to relocate asylum seekers to the mainland. In April 2018, the Greek Council of State annulled the Asylum Service Director Decision concerning the geographical restriction of asylum seekers on the islands, based on an action brought by the Greek Council for Refugees. Meanwhile, demonstrators rallied in Athens to protest against the EU-Turkey Statement and the persisting dangerous conditions refugees and migrants face. Concerns have also been raised by Human Rights Watch with regards to the situation of Syrians in Turkey more generally and the dangers associated with crossing the border into Turkey.

In the meantime, and as stated in the European Commission's latest progress report on the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement, the EU is currently working on operationalising a large-scale Voluntary Humanitarian Admission Scheme for Syrians coming to the EU. Moreover, Dimitris Avramopoulos, Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, reported in mid-March that the EU would go ahead with an additional funding of EUR 3 billion for the Facility for Refugees in Turkey, adding to the EUR 3 billion already promised. Continued close cooperation between the EU and Turkey was also confirmed at a high-level joint meeting in Varna on 26 March, where "cooperation on the management of migration flows" was at the top of the agenda, and European Council President Donald Tusk voiced his appreciation of Turkish efforts in hosting refugees in Turkey. A number of NGOs and journalists have raised questions about how the EU will trace the way the funds are spent in Turkey. The European Court of Auditors, which in March found that general EU financial assistance to Turkey only had a limited effect, will conduct an audit of the Facility. A report is expected in late 2018.

Update on CEAS reforms

Asylum   Immigration Detention

Eurodac Regulation: Trilogues on the new regulation continue with an agreement yet to be reached on a number of key issues. These issues include the time period for which data can be retained; the inclusion of fingerprints of resettled refugees; and the use of coercion to obtain relevant data. This latter point has been especially contentious. A Joint Statement by PICUM, UNHCR, the Danish Refugee Council and IOM, amongst others, urged the EU to exempt all children, no matter their age, from all forms of coercion. The meaning of 'coercion', and whether the new regulation should carry a definition of the word, is thought to be a particularly crucial point in the negotiations. A compromise text has been put forward by the Commission which is based on a proposal made by the European Parliament Rapporteur i. The compromise rules out coercion for minors under the age of 14 but provides for a minimum degree of coercion for minors who are aged 14 and over. However, there remains opposition to the proposal, including questions on coercion, within the European Parliament.

Dublin Regulation: Negotiations remain deadlocked, with the proposed redistribution of asylum seekers across EU states still being the primary stumbling block to an agreement. The Hungarian-led impasse has withstood fresh attempts by the Bulgarian Presidency to break the stalemate in Council. The Visegrád group remains opposed to any form of automatic and mandatory solidarity in the relocation scheme. The Bulgarian presidency's attempts to make progress have included the setting up of the Friends of the presidency format in an effort to bring an end to the impasse. This format is designed to provide states with more flexibility at a technical level. With the first round of discussions under that format over, the Bulgarian presidency is expected to bring forward an edited text of the Regulation in April. Meanwhile, the Parliament has reached an agreement under Rapporteur Cecilia Wikström MEP, which goes against the position of the Visegrád group.

Reception Conditions Directive: Negotiations on this file are progressing. Agreement on a number of issues has been secured, but other, more contentious subjects have yet to be fully dealt with. These issues include definitions of 'absconding', 'risk of absconding' and 'adequate standard of living'. The new Directive will also include a definition of a 'representative of an unaccompanied minor' to replace 'guardian'. There is some divergence

between Council and Parliament on how this definition should be framed. The two institutions are also at odds with regard to restrictions on free movement within a member state. Contentious in this regard is the proposal that a member state would be able to allocate an applicant to a specific geographical location, with any applicant found outside of their designated location considered as unlawfully staying in that other area. After much debate, a consensus is now emerging around the principle that an applicant cannot be detained simply by virtue of being an applicant or because of his/her nationality alone. The detention of children, and the procedural safeguards in such contexts, is also being discussed. Finally, the current proposal also provides for granting applicants access to the labour market within six months of the initial application.

Asylum Procedures Directive: Statewatch released **another Council document** which listed the presidency's compromise proposals. The amendments in this document are limited to Articles 44-62 and thus include particularly crucial concepts, such as the 'first country of asylum', 'safe third country' and 'safe country of origin' as well as procedures for the withdrawal of international protection and the procedure for appeals. Notably, with regard to the designation of a third country as being 'safe', a provision has now been added that sets out that exceptions can be made for specific parts of the territory of that country "or with exceptions for clearly identifiable categories of persons". In general, the Union-wide list of safe third countries is believed at this stage to be acceptable to member states as long as the ability of national authorities and courts to carry out individual assessments is maintained. The file is now finished at the level of the Asylum Working Party and is moving to consideration by JHA Counsellors. In the Parliament, discussions on the draft report by MEP Laura Ferrara are in the final stage. A vote at LIBE is expected in April but this still depends on reaching agreement on issues such as the provision on an EU list of safe third countries and the inclusion of Turkey on such a list.

SELECTED ECJ CASE LAW & LEGAL ACTIONS

`Asylum` `Mobile EU citizens` `Children and Youth`

Case **C-191/16** Romano Pisciotti v Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 10 April 2018

The case concerned Mr Pisciotti, an Italian national, who was arrested in June 2013 during a stopover in Germany en route from Nigeria to Italy. The arrest was made pursuant to an outstanding warrant which had been issued against him in the United States, where he was accused of anti-competitive practices in the market for marine horses. Upon his arrest, Mr Pisciotti was extradited to the United States, where he was fined and imprisoned for two years. Mr Pisciotti challenged the German actions arguing that they breached EU law and,

in particular, the principle of non-discrimination. Mr Pisciotti claimed that this principle was breached as he had not been provided with the same protection against extradition that German nationals enjoy. The Court established, first, that Mr Pisciotti's situation fell within the scope of EU law since, by stopping over in Germany in his journey to Italy, Mr Pisciotti had made use of his free movement rights. The fact that he was only in transit in Germany was considered irrelevant in this regard. Additionally, the Court established that Germany was not precluded from drawing a distinction between its own nationals and the nationals of other member states in the context of extradition requests, provided that Germany afforded Italy the opportunity to seek the surrender of that citizen pursuant to a European arrest warrant and that Italy had not taken any action in that regard. As these conditions were fulfilled, Mr Pisciotti's extradition was found to not have breached EU law.

Case [C-550/16](#) A and S v Staatssecretaris van Veiligheid en Justitie, 12 April 2018

The case concerned an Eritrean national who was granted asylum in the Netherlands and requested family reunification with her parents and three minor brothers. The request was refused by the Dutch authorities on the grounds that her situation no longer concerned that of an unaccompanied minor. While the Eritrean national had been a minor upon arrival in the Netherlands and upon submitting her asylum application, she had turned 18 before submitting the request for family reunification. This refusal was challenged by the parents with whom reunification was sought, A. and S. They argued that, when considering whether a person qualifies as an unaccompanied minor under the EU Family Reunification Directive (2003/86/EC), the person's age upon his/her entry into the member state should be decisive. The Court followed this argument. As it established, because the Directive does not explicitly determine the moment until which a refugee must be a minor in order to benefit from the relevant provisions, these provisions must be interpreted as meaning that they apply to persons under the age of 18 at the time of their arrival and at the time of the introduction of their asylum application.

Joined Cases [C-316/16 and C-424/16](#) B v Land Baden-Württemberg and Secretary of State for the Home Department v Franco Vomero, 17 April 2018

These joined cases raised questions on expulsion decisions taken against two EU citizens. The case of B, first, concerned a Greek national who came to Germany as a child and who, as an adult, attempted an armed robbery. The case of Franco Vomero, second, concerned an Italian national who moved to the UK and later committed manslaughter. Both men had lived in their respective host countries for a period of over 10 years which raised questions on whether they would be entitled to an enhanced protection against expulsion under [Directive 2004/38/EC](#). The Directive's Article 28 prohibits Member States from taking an expulsion decision against persons who acquire a permanent residence in their host State (after five years of residence) unless that decision is based on 'serious grounds of public policy or public security'. According to the same article, persons who have resided in a host State for ten years enjoy a higher level of protection and can only be subject to an expulsion decision when there are 'imperative grounds of public security'. The Court was invited to clarify the exact scope and meaning of the latter clause in light of the situations of B. and Franco Romero. It established that the enhanced protection linked to a 10-year period of residence is only available to an EU citizen if he first enjoys a right of permanent residence after residing legally in the host Member State for five years. The Court also considered the method of calculating the ten year period which provides enhanced protection. It found that an overall assessment of the EU citizen's situation must be undertaken at the precise time when the question of expulsion arises. In addition, it found that the fact that the person was placed in custody does not automatically break the integrative links previously forged and, accordingly, does not automatically deprive him of the enhanced protection.

The Welcome in Europe Campaign

Asylum **Inclusion**

By Hind Sharif, [Migration Policy Group](#)

Europeans' number one issue is no longer the economy, but migration. It has never been so high on the political agenda. While the far-right is mobilising, most civil society organisations have not yet turned to the public to gain support for their proposals on migration, particularly not at EU level. Since late 2015, the Migration Policy Group on behalf of the EU NGO Platform on Asylum and Migration (EPAM) and the pro-European organisations - Stand Up for Europe and the Union of European Federalists (UEF) - have been preparing a Europe-wide campaign on migration led by a large range of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) across Europe. The migration sector and mainstream NGOs are finally coming together around a common campaign goal to engage the public and transform EU migration policy.

'We Are a Welcoming Europe' is a European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) which aims to unite the millions of European whose voices are overlooked in the EU's migration policies. The ECI is the most visible and legally binding tool for direct democracy in Europe. ECIs can generate significant media coverage and enhance informal political pressure in specific countries. If one million signatures are obtained within a year, from EU citizens in at least seven states, we can ensure our voices reach policymakers as our demands will be presented at a public hearing in the European Parliament and the Commission will be obliged to respond to our proposal. We see this as our chance to foster citizen action and pressure to change the EU's migration policy in advance of the European Parliament elections in 2019. The campaign's focus is on the empowerment of European citizens' right to help those in need. It revolves around people helping people seek justice, solidarity and safety.

Offer solidarity to those in need
The first demand is that the Commission stops the criminalisation of solidarity across Europe – represented by the volunteers and organisations facing legal sanctions for offering help to those in need – by amending the EU Facilitations Directive which does not clearly distinguish between trafficking, smuggling and humanitarian assistance.

<u>Offer safety to people fleeing persecution</u>

The second demand is that the EC shows direct support to European citizens and NGOs that want to save lives and provide legal and safe ways for those fleeing persecution. This would be achieved by providing a new budget to community sponsorship, where EU citizens can act as visa sponsors to those in need.

<u>Offer justice to victims of exploitation and abuses</u>

The third demand calls for supporting non-EU citizens' access to justice. Most third country nationals do not get justice. They don't file complaints when they are victims of labour exploitation or human rights abuses because they fear they will be deported by the authorities. To ensure the EU justice system works for all, we call the EC to guarantee more effective ways and rules to defend victims through efficient monitoring, complaints and redress mechanisms.

What are the challenges to coordinating an EU-wide campaign? One key challenge is to root the communications and framings in different local and national contexts. The messaging you use in France will not work in Germany, and vice versa. In this sense, coalition-building with the right partners across EU member states is critical to the success of an EU-wide campaign. With our partners across Europe, the campaign will be launched throughout April and May 2018 in different EU member states. For further information about the campaign, please go to the website and/or email hsharif@migpolgroup.com.

FACTS & FIGURES

Numbers of arrivals in Greece during the first 3 months of 2018 are 33% higher than those of 2017.

Source: **UNHCR, April 2018.**

UNHCR statistics on arrivals

Asylum

Recent data by the UNHCR reveal the following trends:

- 18,032 sea arrivals have been recorded since the beginning of the year. 7,490 have arrived in Italy, while 7,145 have arrived in Greece and 3,385 have arrived in Spain;

- So far, an estimated 517 people have been reported dead or missing in 2018;

- In Italy, the majority of refugees come from Nigeria, Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire, while more than a third of refugees arriving in Greece originate from Syria (41,1%). In Spain, the majority of refugees come from Morocco, Algeria and Guinea.

Relevant reports

UNHCR: Desperate Journeys - January 2017 to March 2018

This [report](#) provides an overview of migration patterns to and through Europe in 2017. It highlights key protection challenges along the routes. These include overcrowded conditions in Europe, interception at sea by the Libyan Coast Guard and detention after disembarkation. Push-backs and collective expulsions on the Balkan Route and a general denial of access to asylum procedures also feature prominently.

FRA: Under watchful eyes – biometrics, EU IT-systems and fundamental rights

This [report](#) by the FRA analyses the role of multiple large-scale information technology systems that the EU is applying in the area of migration and security. The report focuses in particular on respect for human dignity when taking fingerprints, the access to stored personal data, the right to information and the best interest of the child. It highlights the challenges to fundamental rights that accompany IT-assisted border management efforts.

Frontex Risk Analysis for 2018

This risk analysis [report](#) describes the situation in the context of irregular border crossings at the EU's external border in 2017, including the shift in border crossing attempts to the Western Mediterranean Route. The agency expects irregular migration by sea, and more specifically along the Mediterranean routes, to continue to be the main channel of entering the EU. It also predicts a diversification of migration channels and displacements between routes or border types as a response to increased surveillance of migration routes.

Council of Europe: Promoting human rights at local and regional level

With this [resolution](#), the congress of local and regional authorities of the Council of Europe presents its Handbook on Human Rights which focuses on the rights of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, Roma and travellers, and LGBTI individuals. It also lists successful initiatives that facilitate integration into the community and the labour market such as providing adequate housing, protecting vulnerable groups, providing access to education and countering hate speech and acts of violent extremism.

ECRE: AIDA 2017 Country Updates

ECRE has published a number of updates to their country reports in the context of the [AIDA](#) project. The reports cover national developments related to the asylum procedure, reception conditions, detention of asylum seekers and content of international protection throughout 2017. An [overview report](#) provides links to the respective country files.

ECRE: The Dublin system in 2017. Overview of developments from selected European countries

With this [statistical update](#) by the Asylum Information Database (AIDA), ECRE provides a detailed overview of 2017 statistics and practice relating to the Dublin system on the national level. It gives details on the numbers of Dublin procedures initiated and the actual transfers carried out as well as the rates of outgoing Dublin transfers per requests. The report also dedicates a section on the suspension of transfers on human rights grounds.

EU Funding opportunities

Calls for proposals - EU funding

- **ISFP-2017-AG-SMUGG**: Smuggling

  o   call out on 05.12.2017 - Deadline: 25.04.2018

- **REC-RCIT-CITI-AG-2018**: Call for proposals to improve the inclusion of mobile EU citizens and their political, societal and democratic participation

  o   call out on 30.01.2018 – Deadline: 26.04.2018

- **REC-RRAC-HATE-AG-2018**: Restricted call for proposals for public authorities on preventing and combating racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance, in particular hate crime and hate speech

  o   call out on 25.04.2018 – Deadline: 27.09.2018

- **REC-RRAC-RACI-AG-2018:** Call for proposals to prevent and combat racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance

  o   call out on 25.04.2018 – Deadline: 04.10.2018

- **REC-RRAC-ONLINE-AG-2018**: Call for proposals to prevent and counter hate speech online

  o   call out on 25.04.2018 – Deadline: 11.10.2018

Other opportunities

Call for applications Migration Media Award 2018, EASO; Deadline: 15.05.2018

Global Pluralism Award, Global Centre for Pluralism; Deadline: 30.04.2018

EU CALENDAR: UPCOMING EVENTS

European Council and Council of the European Union

	4-5 June	JHA Council
	28-29 June	European Council

European Parliament

	25-26 April	LIBE Committee Meeting
	2-3 May	EP Plenary
	14-15 May	LIBE Committee Meeting
	24 May	LIBE Committee Meeting
	28-31 May	EP Plenary

	4 June	LIBE Committee Meeting
	7 June	LIBE Committee Meeting
	11-14 June	EP Plenary

Other events

	25 April	[Access to Justice for Migrant Children in the EU](#), European Parliament
	30 April	[Refugee Shelter: Design, building and engagement](#), RIBA
	2 May	[The New Arrivals: Is our asylum system broken?](#), The Guardian
	14 May	[Immigration into the UK post-Brexit: Taking Back Control?](#), EPC
	15 May	[EMN 10 Year Anniversary Event: "Understanding Migration in the EU: past, present, future"](#), European Migration Network
	21 May	[The UN's 'Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework': Actually a 'Contingent Refugee Assistance Project'](#), Refugee Law Initiative
	23 May	[Whither European asylum policy? A pendulum between universalisation and re-nationalisation](#), The Greens/European Free Alliance and University of Bergen
	25 May	[Supporting mental health needs of asylum seeking and refugee children](#), CARAS
	31 May	[Crossroads of Migration: Challenges and success factors in managing migration flows](#), Bulgarian Presidency
	5-6 June	[European Development Days](#), European Commission
	7 June	[Annual Conference 2018](#), Migration Policy Centre
	14-15 June	[International Conference on border deaths and migration policies: state and non-state approaches](#), Multiple Organisers