

Monthly data collection on the migration situation in the EU

May 2017 Highlights

1–30 April 2017

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For the May 2017 focus section on education, see:

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Since November 2016, FRA's monthly reports have highlighted key developments in 14 Member States: Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia, Spain and Sweden. This month's highlights are published alongside a focus section on education.

New arrivals

External land and sea borders

Arrivals in Italy further increased to more than 12,160 persons; one person [died](#) hiding in a freight train travelling from Serbia to Italy.

Arrivals in Greece continued in significant numbers, amounting to some 1,160 persons; at least 16 persons died on 23 April 2017. Some 1,210 persons were relocated from Greece in April, mainly to France, Germany, the Netherlands and Portugal.

Arrivals in Hungary continued to decrease significantly. There were 150 arrivals in total, compared with some 540 apprehended in March. This is because the police now escort all migrants apprehended anywhere in the country to the Serbian side of the border fences, where the migrants must wait until they can apply for international protection in one of the two transit zones. The police prevented around 30 persons from climbing over the fences, dramatically fewer than in March (around 650). The authorities relate this decrease to the fact that they have nearly completed installing speakers at intervals of 300 metres along the fences. These speakers are connected to motion sensors and automatically warn people, in several languages, of the consequences of crossing the border irregularly. According to non-governmental organisations (NGOs), however, the decrease is due to the continuous reports of violence instigated by the police and army at Hungary's southern borders. As a result of this, NGOs assert, asylum seekers increasingly try to reach the EU through Croatia and Romania.

Fewer than 210 persons were apprehended at Bulgaria's borders and inside the country, continuing the slight decrease.

Arrivals by small boat in Spain continued at a significant level, with some 390 persons arriving, including three pregnant women and three children. Arrivals landed primarily on the Andalusian coast. At least 13 persons travelling in small boats [are presumed to have died](#) during the journey, including a [child](#) and her mother. Moroccan coast guards intercepted more than 130 persons who were trying to reach Spain, according to the Jesuit Refugee Service. Some 250 persons trying to climb a border fence in Ceuta were detained by the Moroccan police and driven to southern Morocco, according to the same source. Spain received nine relocated and 60 resettled refugees.

The number of persons eligible for relocation in Italy is low, currently some 8,000, according to a [report](#) by the European Commission. Delays occur in responding to relocation requests partly because asylum seekers are scattered throughout Italy.

Internal borders and airports

Arrivals in Sweden decreased to some 1,580, compared with 1,940 in March. Arrivals were mainly from Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria; children continue to make up around a third of total arrivals (550).

In Finland, around 40 civil society organisations [called](#) for increasing resettlement to Finland.

Some 200 persons arrived in Denmark, according to estimates.

Slovakia apprehended some 170 people, mainly Ukrainians, at its borders and inside the country.

Migrants continued to arrive in Calais from Paris and the French–Italian border, according to the Service Centre for Migrants in Calais. The number of migrants in Calais is now estimated at 500–600, including some 200 Afghans who arrived following a fire at the Grande Synthe camp (see section below on ‘Safety and material conditions’). The migrants in Calais are mainly from Afghanistan, Eritrea and Ethiopia.

Arrivals in Austria further decreased to 2,000 persons, mainly from Nigeria, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Syria and Morocco.

Initial registration and asylum processing

At the border

Polish border guards registered some 110 applications for international asylum, covering 270 persons. Most were from Russia and Ukraine, and applied mainly at the border crossing point in Terespol. Persons seeking asylum are systematically refused entry at border crossing points with Belarus and Ukraine, [reports consistently suggest](#).

NGOs in Spain presented an audiovisual [report](#) on the legal situation and threats to basic rights at Spain’s southern border. Spain’s authorities share responsibility for the [reported](#) repressive treatment of migrants and refugees by the Moroccan authorities, the report suggests. This is because relevant bilateral [agreements](#) do not include references to respect for human rights ([FRA suggested](#) this preventive measure in its 2016 guidance note). The [report](#) also refers to persons being immediately returned to Morocco, including those who sustained serious injuries when trying to climb [border fences](#). The Red Cross provides health assistance only if authorised by the Civil Guard, and does not identify or issue a medical record for the persons concerned.

A local load carrier [died](#) and four women were hospitalised when many load carriers tried to enter Ceuta, as they do every day. This happened at the new border crossing point, Tarajal II. The porters carry heavy loads and enter and leave the city several times a day, as, under Moroccan law, any load that can be carried by a traveller is free of tax. The NGO [report](#) repeats descriptions of police brutality against the load carriers, including verbal and physical violence. FRA [reported](#) in 2015 on the treatment of third-country nationals during border checks in Ceuta.

Asylum

According to [Eurostat](#), EU Member States granted protection to more than 700,000 asylum seekers in 2016, primarily Syrian, Iraqi and Afghan citizens. More than 60 % of all positive decisions were granted in Germany.

More than 41 % of all applicants in Germany have been children and, since the beginning of 2017, more than 20 % of applicants have been under the age of four. Total asylum applications [increased](#) to some 20,100 in March. The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees decided on some 80,600 applications in March, while some 278,000 proceedings were still pending.

Asylum hearings in Italy have attracted [criticism](#) for exposing applicants to secondary victimisation. This is because applicants must respond to intrusive questions concerning violent and traumatic experiences.

The Greek Asylum Service registered some 2,710 asylum applications, mainly from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq. A [report](#) by the NGO AITIMA refers to significant delays in the asylum procedure and arbitrary prioritisation of applicants from certain nationalities by the island-based authorities. There is insufficient consideration of individual vulnerabilities, the report also suggests. The report highlights that, on the mainland, most asylum seekers could not submit their application in person and were asked to make an appointment through skype for lodging an application. The pre-registration delayed their applications by up to 10 months.

Asylum applications in Hungary decreased significantly to some 200, compared with 324 in March. In line with the newly extended border-control policy, applications are possible only in one of the two transit zones. Access remains restricted to five persons per zone per working day, and applicants must remain in the zone until a decision is made. NGOs continually raise concerns about the opening hours of the transit zones, especially in light of the new law on extended border-control policy that reduces the possibility of applying for asylum to the transit zones.

The Immigration and Asylum Office in Hungary decided positively in 30 cases and negatively in some 110 cases. Most of the negative decisions are due to the safe third country rule, since the relevant applicants had arrived from Serbia. The authorities terminated procedures in more than 100 cases because the applicants had left the country. The Immigration and Asylum Office in Hungary detained eight asylum applicants to prevent them from leaving the country before their applications had been processed.

Asylum applications in Bulgaria halved to some 225, including nearly 70 children.

Some 7,420 persons applied for asylum in France, mainly from Albania, Afghanistan and Sudan, including more than 1,350 unaccompanied children.

Some 400 to 500 persons per week applied for asylum in Austria. Asylum procedures are now faster because the Federal Office for Asylum has opened new offices. The Antidiscrimination Office has started providing legal counselling to asylum seekers in the region of Styria.

Only five persons applied for asylum in Slovakia.

Asylum applications in Denmark have remained low, at some 236 applicants. These were mainly from Syria, Morocco and Eritrea, and included many unaccompanied children.

Some 200 academic and civil society experts in Finland [criticised](#) the country's asylum policies, for example, for allowing too little time for decision making, shortening the deadline for appeals, restricting legal aid and insufficiently justifying appeal decisions.

The number of [Venezuelan asylum seekers](#) in Spain increased seven-fold in 2016, with some 4,430 applications pending at the end of the year, but only 40 cases were decided. This included four positive decisions.

Asylum seekers from sub-Saharan Africa cannot reach the asylum offices outside Ceuta and Melilla, according to the Spanish [NGO report](#) referred to above. If they manage to enter the cities, they can apply for asylum only at a reception centre (*Centro de estancia temporal de inmigrantes*, CETI). Waiting times for a transfer to the peninsula are very long, however, and exceed those for persons who did not apply for asylum.

In the Netherlands, some 3,317 [new asylum applicants](#) arrived and applied for asylum in March 2017. They arrived mainly from Syria and Eritrea, and included 124 unaccompanied children. Monthly arrival figures have been stable at this level since the beginning of 2017; only family reunification requests have decreased slightly, by 200.

The Netherlands [published](#) a new list of safe countries, which re-evaluated Brazil and Trinidad and Tobago as safe, except for lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual and intersex (LGTBI) persons, and maintained the status of Colombia, Cuba and Honduras as unsafe.

Return

Italy returned some 40 Nigerian citizens. Police apprehended a Moroccan university student with intellectual disabilities and detained him at the Identification and Expulsion Centre in Caltanissetta prior to his return. NGOs have [criticised](#) this action because of the student's vulnerability and the health risks of returning him to Morocco.

The regions of [Basilicata](#) and [Veneto](#) expressed willingness to open regional repatriation centres envisaged by the recent amendments of the asylum legislation.

Some 810 persons were returned from Greece. Nearly 450 persons left Greece under Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration, including nearly 30 children, three of them unaccompanied.

Returns from Greece to Turkey between 1 January and 20 April 2017 have [amounted](#) to some 1,200 persons under the bilateral readmission protocol, some 60 based on The EU readmission agreement and some 1,070 under the EU–Turkey joint statement.

Hungary returned more than 40 persons, excluding persons returned from a transit zone. NGOs are concerned that persons who have never set foot in Serbia are being 'returned' there, and refer to a Somali national returned from Hungary

in April, in line with the extended border-control policy. The Somali national had been living in Sweden for several years and, according to him, had never been to Serbia before.

Returns to Afghanistan have been [questioned in the German parliament](#). Several [federal state authorities](#) in Germany, as well as political and [civil society](#) activists, continue to consider all regions of Afghanistan unsafe.

Germany returned 14 Afghan citizens from Munich airport. These included one person who had gone through a religious (Islamic) wedding with a German citizen, and whose civil marriage had been announced to the authorities but delayed because of a missing passport. According to the Bavarian Refugee Council, Bavaria has repeatedly [ignored](#) paternity or marriage links when implementing returns to Afghanistan.

NGOs in Austria also continued to criticise returns to Afghanistan, in light of the unchanged security situation and the inability of the Afghan state to protect its citizens.

A Danish newspaper [disclosed](#) an agreement between Denmark and a previous Somali government. This allows Denmark to return 12 Somali citizens per year, and was put in place in May 2016. The authorities are assessing whether or not to extend the temporary residence permits of some 800 Somalis.

A migrant who attempted [suicide](#) at the Aliens Detention Centre in Aluche, Madrid, Spain, was isolated and hospitalised at the Mental Health Service. The person was removed a few days later without having received follow-up psychological treatment.

Reception conditions

Hotspots

The European Court of Auditors published a [report](#) on the hotspot approach, stressing the need for further hotspots and improved reception conditions in Italy.

[Tunisian authorities](#) visited Trapani, Italy, to gain insights into identification, registration and reception procedures. A European Parliament delegation [visited](#) Pozzallo, Italy.

Twelve Syrian asylum seekers in Moria reception and identification centre in Lesbos, Greece, staged a [hunger strike](#) in protest against the slow pace of the asylum procedure. They claimed that they had to wait up to eight months for a decision on their appeal.

Facilities on the Greek islands continue to be overcrowded. Nearly 12,900 persons are in these facilities, exceeding the official capacity of 8,645. In the Souda camp on the island of Chios, a group of Afghans [attacked](#) an Iraqi asylum seeker and inflicted severe stab wounds. The person was hospitalised, but the police have not been able to apprehend the perpetrators.

Immigration detention

Some 2,700 persons, primarily Pakistani citizens, were in immigration detention in mainland Greece.

In the transit zones along the Hungarian–Serbian borders, asylum seekers, including children over 14 years of age, have lived in shipping containers surrounded by high razor-wire fences for the entire length of their asylum procedure. In several cases, the Hungarian Helsinki Committee has been denied access to meet persons held in the transit zones.

Hungary is reducing its detention capacity as it is now systematically holding asylum seekers at the transit zones. Upon closure of the Kiskunhalas asylum detention centre, some 30 asylum seekers were transported to the Nyírbátor asylum detention facility. NGOs reported humiliating treatment at the facility, including handcuffing asylum seekers and taking them on a leash to medical appointments. Detainees in Nyírbátor report armed security guards slapping and pushing them against walls in rooms without cameras. The management of the facility supported initiatives that NGOs proposed to resolve the situation.

In Poland, asylum applicants, including families with children and victims of torture, continue to be placed in detention. This frequently lasts for at least 60 days, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Caritas and other NGOs. The courts justify detention by referring to numerous refusals of entry, the need to gather additional information, the risk of absconding and the lack of a permanent address. The courts often ignore applicants' requests to be present at the hearing of their appeal against the detention decision. They also do not inform applicants about the extension of the detention decision, and the applicants must prepare their appeal in Polish. Courts do not conduct evidentiary proceedings on the best interests of children and on torture victims. NGOs also report inaccurate translations during interviews.

The Spanish Minister for the Interior [announced](#) the construction of three new Aliens Detention Centres, in Málaga, Algeciras and Madrid. The effectiveness of pre-removal detention continued to [decrease](#) in 2016, with only 2,200 of nearly 7,600 persons held in CIEs (*centros de internamiento de extranjeros*) being eventually returned, according to the [National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture](#).

Safety and material conditions

The standard of living varies significantly between Italian reception facilities, according to a [report](#) by ECRE and ASGI. More than 75 % of asylum seekers live at 'special reception centres', intended for initial reception, where conditions must satisfy only basic standards. Beneficiaries granted international protection may stay for up to several months in these facilities, depending on the decision of the prefecture. Only a few manage to secure a place at a municipal SPRAR (Protection System for Refugees and Asylum Seekers) facility, where more support services are available. Fewer than 24,000 of 176,560 asylum seekers were living in SPRAR facilities at the end of 2016, according to the Jesuit Refugee Service annual [report](#).

The municipality of Heraklion in Crete, Greece, and UNHCR [announced](#) plans to set up a housing programme in Crete for some 750 asylum seekers.

Only 40 refugees are staying in open asylum facilities in Hungary, although they have a capacity of more than 480 beds. The Kiskunhalas open refugee camp no longer provides [food](#). Beneficiaries of protection status and first-time asylum

applicants will be transferred to the Vámoszabadi refugee camp near the Slovak border, while some 10 persons, including a pregnant woman, will remain in Kiskunhalas without food or medical services as of May, according to the Hungarian Helsinki Committee. NGOs may be able to step in and provide food to remaining residents, many of whom have already left.

Fire broke out at a migrant camp in the town of Grande Synthe, France, following a dispute between Iraqi Kurds and Afghans. This affected some 1,500 migrants, including many unaccompanied children. Some of them were transferred to other facilities in France, while hundreds seem to have disappeared immediately. Some 200 Afghans went to Calais, according to the Service Centre for Migrants in Calais, but the camp's Kurdish population, including children, presumably remained in the surrounding areas, where they set up small 'wild' camps. According to the NGO [Cimade](#), the incident underlines how urgent it is to set up several reception facilities in a region where many people continue to arrive in the hope of crossing the Channel.

According to NGOs in France, Paris has become the main centre for new arrivals seeking asylum. This follows the closure of camps in the north of France and the fire at the Grande Synthe camp. As registering an asylum application remains difficult, many asylum seekers have been living in informal camps in precarious conditions. More than 800 persons have settled around the humanitarian camp in northeastern Paris (XVIIIth district, boulevard Ney), and their numbers are increasing. Without a registered application, asylum seekers remain undocumented and do not receive any allowances. Tensions among asylum seekers queuing for registration have escalated. NGOs reported a fight between Afghan and Sudanese asylum seekers, causing slight injuries to 20 migrants and one serious injury.

At the official end of the winter protection period in France, rejected asylum seekers are increasingly evicted from reception facilities. Fifteen Sudanese migrants were evicted from an accommodation centre in Boulogne-Billancourt for asking about the lack of follow-up to their request for support to seek housing. Several NGOs estimate that one in every two asylum seekers lacks access to reception facilities because there are persistent gaps in capacity. Additionally, the quality of social and legal support varies greatly, depending on the type of reception facility and the number of social workers available.

Reception centres (CETIs) in Ceuta and Melilla remain overcrowded and lack the necessary resources to address the physical and psychological needs of their inhabitants. NGOs [argue](#) for establishing rules for the functioning of CETIs, including in particular specific safety measures for victims of trafficking and gender-based violence. They point out that victims and perpetrators have sometimes been housed together in these facilities.

Asylum seekers in Spain have faced increasing [obstacles](#) to renting apartments because landlords often require an employment contract, salary slips and a guarantor. Landlords often also do not accept certification of the asylum seeker's financial support.

Healthcare and basic services

In Bavaria, Germany, the number of suicide attempts by asylum seekers, especially from Afghanistan, has [tripled](#), according to NGO reports. In Saxony, an asylum seeker from Pakistan committed [suicide](#) by jumping off a building.

Vulnerable persons

In Italy, staff from territorial commissions, cultural mediators and interpreters participated in [training](#) on identifying potential victims of trafficking. This was organised by the UNHCR and the National Commission for the Right to Asylum.

Amnesty International [urged](#) the authorities to close the Elliniko site in the Attica region because of the risk of sexual and gender-based violence. Women and girls report constant verbal harassment and fear of being attacked. Access to the camp is not effectively controlled and many showers and toilets for women lack locks.

The Danish Refugee Council has raised concerns over increasing disappearances of rejected asylum seekers, including families.

The Helsinki Deaconess Institute raised [concerns](#) that rejected asylum seekers, including children, who remain irregularly in Finland are vulnerable to exploitation and marginalisation.

About 70 % of the migrants arriving in the Netherlands from Africa are [estimated](#) to be victims of human trafficking or smuggling of migrants. This includes an increasing number of registered child victims (almost 25 %).

MPs in the Netherlands [discussed](#) the risk of overlooking victims of human trafficking in asylum procedures, given the decrease in registered [reports](#) of human trafficking. The National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings [reported](#) that most victims choose to follow the regular asylum procedure and that signals of trafficking do not reach the police promptly, if at all. There are no indications of an actual decrease in human trafficking. Other [presumed](#) contributing factors are that the influx of asylum seekers had been so high and there are shortages of both civilian and military police officers.

Some [5,695](#) victims of human trafficking for [sexual](#) exploitation or forced labour have been identified in Spain in the past five years. The police also detected more than 100 victims of trafficking exploited in households, agriculture and factories, for whom [no specific support](#) resources are available.

Asylum applicants in France suffering from mental health disorders that might affect their capacity to explain the grounds of their claim for international protection may ask for a mental health professional to accompany them to their interview with the asylum authority Ofpra.

Teams of the French asylum authority Ofpra have been sent to the prefectures to carry out interviews on the spot. This may facilitate interviewing applicants whose medical conditions make it difficult for them to go to the authority's headquarters in Paris.

Child protection

Identification

Many unaccompanied children arrived in Italy, twice as many as in the first quarter. More than 5,550 reached Italian shores by 26 April.

Authorities in Taranto, Italy, signed a [memorandum of understanding](#) to improve the identification of unaccompanied children and the appointment of voluntary guardians during the children's stay at first reception centres.

The concerns of the [Public Defender of Rights](#) in France about the lack of social protection for unaccompanied children remain unresolved. In the Department of Haute-Garonne, children are [reportedly](#) not given the benefit of the doubt concerning their age and several have been provisionally detained although the border police authenticated their birth certificates. It is reported that these children are then rapidly [tried](#) for "defrauding the child welfare system by claiming to be an unaccompanied minor when they are actually adults".

NGOs in Austria [report](#) consistently lengthy procedures for unaccompanied children, often taking more than a year. The Federal Office for Asylum in Austria addressed concerns that provincial authorities' legal counsellors did not always file appeals that unaccompanied children requested, and did not always deliver the decision documents to them. NGOs confirm an improvement but stress the need to follow the issue closely.

Accommodation and family reunification

Some 2,000 [unaccompanied children](#) have been staying in Greece but specialised reception facilities are available for only 1,272.

The Greek Ombudsman [reported](#) on obstacles to education for asylum-seeking children on the islands, including frequent relocation. The Ombudsman cited the specific educational needs of 15- to 17-year-olds, and recommended more informal education, language programmes and evening high-school courses.

In its first six-month review, the Greek Ombudsman [reported](#) on the situation of asylum-seeking children, highlighting substandard living conditions at accommodation facilities and obstacles to accessing asylum.

In Hungary, children over the age of 14 can apply for asylum only at one of the two transit zones, and are held there without an appointed guardian for the duration of their asylum procedure.

Youth welfare offices in Germany are responsible for taking care of some [43,840](#) unaccompanied children.

In Poland, refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection may apply for facilitated family reunification only within six months of the decision on their status. Other parts of the procedure, such as visa applications, generate such high costs that family reunification is impossible in most cases, according to NGOs.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in Denmark no longer receive temporary residence permits but stay in the asylum centres until they are

sufficiently mature to undergo an asylum procedure. As of 27 April 2017, this change in practice had affected 26 children, according to the Danish Red Cross.

The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions found that the long asylum procedures and the temporary [restrictions](#) on obtaining a residence permit severely affect the health and well-being of young persons. When unaccompanied children turn 18 or are reregistered as adults during the asylum procedure, they transfer to adult facilities and the Migration Agency takes over the cost of housing, food and education from the municipality. The asylum processing in these cases is increasingly slow, according to Save the Children.

Several politicians, members of the Education Board (*Utbildningsnämnden*) in the municipality of Mölndal, Sweden, [point out](#) that, in practice, upon turning 18, children have to choose between housing and education. Children may stay at the school of their choice but the municipality no longer has to support them; in the politicians' experience, the children decide to stay at their school without housing and are therefore often found sleeping in cars, at friends' houses and even in the forest. According to Amnesty International, when children turn 18 or are reregistered as 18-year-olds they depend on the good will of the municipalities, which may allow them to remain in the housing provided but usually do not.

Some 540 unaccompanied children are presumed to live in Melilla, Spain, including at least 100 sleeping on the streets. The 'La Purisima' facility for boys has been overcrowded, and [92 %](#) of the children there experience violence daily. Because of this, many leave the facility to live on the streets or cross irregularly to the peninsula. A recent NGO [report](#) confirms concerns expressed in the past, including unlawful returns, night raids, arrests and sexual abuse of children living on the street.

Legal, social and policy responses

Legal changes

Italy enacted laws on [speeding up](#) international protection procedures and combating irregular migration, and on measures protecting unaccompanied foreign [children](#).

The Ministry of Health in Italy published a [decree](#) on guidelines for planning support and rehabilitation interventions and treating psychiatric disorders of persons with refugee or subsidiary protection status who have suffered torture, rape or other serious forms of violence.

The Constitutional Court in Hungary [annulled](#) an ordinance by the city of Ásotthalom [prohibiting](#) muezzin activities and the wearing of a Muslim headscarf, chador or niqab. The court argued that any restrictions of fundamental rights need to be introduced by Parliament, not by local governments.

In Bulgaria, the government published a new [draft regulation](#) for public consultation concerning integration agreements with beneficiaries of international protection. The proposed new rules reproduce most of the repealed [former regulation](#), according to [NGOs](#), except for the introduction of a central coordination unit and a set of integration evaluation indicators.

In France, the Douai Court of Appeal [confirmed](#) that a migrant camp in the Pas-de-Calais Department would not be closed in line with the first-instance [ruling](#), because the authorities had not presented sustainable or specific solutions for rehousing.

Austria proposed part II of the [Alien Law Amendment Act](#). NGOs criticise it for allowing coercive detention if persons obliged to return do not cooperate.

Policy responses

Italy has approved €4.3 million to be spent on the migration and asylum situation in 2017. Nearly 70 % is dedicated to reception measures.

The role of NGOs that contribute to search and rescue operations continued to be debated in Italy. The Chief Prosecutor in Catania (Sicily) [claimed](#) that NGOs were working directly with human smugglers in Libya. The Vice President of the Chamber of Deputies [endorsed](#) this accusation. Public prosecutors in Palermo and Cagliari also [investigated](#) the issue. At a [hearing](#) before a Parliamentary Inquiry Commission, the Chief of the EU military operation in the southern central Mediterranean (Eunavfor MED) stressed that there was no evidence of criminal acts by NGOs operating in the Mediterranean, and also the importance of cooperation among all stakeholders. Eunavfor MED has set up a forum including NGOs and other stakeholders, with the aim of developing common strategies. NGOs engaged in search and rescue issued a [statement](#) on the goal of their activities, calling for effective cooperation between them and the authorities.

Police on the Greek islands have increasingly carried out operations to identify persons involved in criminal activities. In the site on [Chios](#), they arrested five persons, primarily for violating weapons legislation. At the Vathy site on [Samos](#), 28 persons were administratively detained while the police examined their identity documents. In [Mytilene](#) on Lesbos, 35 persons occupying a building were arrested for disturbing domestic peace and damaging property.

The Spanish government has [dedicated](#) €233.7 million to financing relocation and resettlement, as it did in 2016.

Responses by civil society, local and political actors

Staff at reception centres in Italy have [protested](#) against legislative changes requiring them to monitor the behaviour of asylum seekers in the centres, cooperate with the police and liaise with the territorial commissions concerning the applications that asylum seekers hosted in the centres file. A public [demonstration](#) against the reform took place in Palermo.

Civil society organisations in Italy submitted a [legislative proposal](#) introducing temporary residence permits, a sponsor system, consideration of education and working skills, labour market integration strategies and the decriminalisation of irregular entry.

A [demonstration](#) took place in Foggia (Apulia), Italy, in protest against labour exploitation and in support of regularisation of migrants in the farming industry.

The extreme right CasaPound Italia party in Italy [called](#) on municipal authorities to close the tent city in Rome's Monteverde district. Party members also [entered](#)

the town hall in Monza (Lombardy) to protest against the reception policies that local authorities implemented.

Migrants, refugees and local activists [demonstrated](#) in Mytilene, Lesbos, Greece, against restrictions on their movement to the island over many months.

UNHCR [launched](#) an [information platform](#) for refugees and asylum seekers in Greece. It lists support services and information on the asylum procedure. Doctors of the World launched the online platform 'Safe Refugees', which provides information in several languages on organisations offering free medical care, social counselling, psychological support, legal aid, food, housing, education and other services in Greece.

In Slovakia, the weekly magazine *Trend* gave the [award](#) 'Court decision of the year' to a Supreme Court ruling that the detention of an asylum-seeking woman and her three children was unlawful because no alternatives had been considered.

In Slovakia, the NGO [Human Rights League](#) launched a [campaign](#) against the detention of migrant children, explaining why detention cannot be appropriate for children.

Some 300 people protested at the Hungarian–Serbian border against the violence and aggression by police and army that asylum seekers report. The protestors called for investigations. The Minister for the Interior admitted that some violent incidents had occurred and categorised them as isolated. Oxfam International published a [report](#) listing multiple incidents.

A Hungarian mock party (Two-Tailed Dog Party) organised a [demonstration](#) caricaturing the country's anti-refugee policy, including the new law on the extended border-control policy.

The NGO MigSzol published a short [article](#) about the persons who were accused of participating in a riot and an act of terrorism because they had called pushed for permission to travel through Hungary in September 2015, and about similar cases of criminalisation in Greece and Luxembourg.

The Bishop of Esztergom, Hungary, invited 14 refugee children accommodated in the Children's Village in Fót to play soccer with the local Roma children. This enabled them to experience the similarities between the Punjabi and Roma languages.

The Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights in Poland reported that foreigners considered to be a threat to the defence or security of the state do not have access to classified information used as evidence against them.

In Stockholm, Sweden, a rejected asylum applicant from Uzbekistan carried out a terrorist attack. Leaders of several political parties have argued for increasing compulsory returns, internal ID checks and detention pending removal. NGOs expressed concern about the public debate, which tended to consider that asylum seekers who absconded after final negative decisions were generally likely to be terrorists. The Swedish Green Party, one of two governing parties, suggested that persons subject to expulsion decisions and considered a threat to society should be forced to wear electronic ankle monitors.

Hate speech and violent crime

The Vice President of the Chamber of Deputies in Italy [posted](#) on Facebook that Romania was exporting 40 % of its criminal offenders to Italy.

The political group Frontal Action put up [posters in Rome calling for boycotting](#) migrants' shops and trade activities in favour of those run by Italian citizens.

In Greece, the Racist Violence Recording Network referred to 95 incidents of racist violence in its [annual report](#). In 31 cases, migrants or refugees were targeted specifically, as were one humanitarian worker supporting refugees, a building intended to host refugees and a journalist covering the refugee situation.

Two presumed members of the far-right Golden Dawn party in Greece had attacked asylum seekers in the Souda camp on Chios. One was [sentenced](#) for assault under the anti-racism law. It is the first conviction of this kind on a Greek island hosting a hotspot.

Germany has recorded [47 attacks](#) specifically against asylum seekers since the beginning of 2017, including 19 violent attacks, 11 arson attacks and 17 other attacks against reception and accommodation centres. Six hostile demonstrations against refugees involved justiciable incidents.

Criminal proceedings against four men accused of having [cable-tied a young refugee](#) to a tree were [discontinued](#) in Saxony, Germany, after the victim was found dead before testifying. The judge concluded that there was neither a public interest in the prosecution, nor had the victim interest in prosecution because he had died.

A German soldier, who had been erroneously recognised as a Syrian refugee, was arrested for allegedly planning a 'false flag' shooting attack. The intention was to blame the crime on asylum seekers. In addition to the [right-wing motivation](#), the case indicates [deficiencies in asylum-processing standards](#) in Germany.

In the Netherlands, [22 %](#) of online hate speech incidents on the grounds of race reported in 2016 were registered as hate speech against asylum seekers or refugees in general (70 out of a total of 305 incidents). These incidents asserted the lack of room for refugees in the Netherlands, fear of ISIS or terrorist attacks, or the fear of 'Islamisation'.

Stakeholders interviewed in May 2017 (highlights and focus section)

Country	Stakeholders interviewed
Austria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal Ministry of the Interior/Department II/2, Operational Affairs (<i>Bundesministerium für Inneres/Abteilung II/2 Einsatzangelegenheiten</i>) • Federal Ministry of the Interior, Department III/9 (<i>Bundesministerium für Inneres, Abteilung III/9 Grundversorgung und Bundesbetreuung</i>) • Caritas Styria (<i>Caritas Steiermark</i>) • Caritas Vienna (<i>Caritas Wien</i>) • Austrian Red Cross (<i>Österreichisches Rotes Kreuz</i>)
Bulgaria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of the Interior, Directorate General Border Police (MoI – DGBP) (<i>Министерство на вътрешните работи, Главна дирекция „Гранична полиция“, МВР – ГДГП</i>) • State Agency for Refugees (SAR) (<i>Държавна агенция за бежанците – ДАБ</i>) • Bulgarian Red Cross (BRC) (<i>Български червен кръст – БЧК</i>) • Refugee Support Group (RSG)
Denmark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Danish Red Cross (<i>Røde Kors</i>) • Danish Refugee Council (<i>Dansk Flygtningehjælp</i>) • The Danish Ministry of Justice (<i>Justitsministeriet</i>) • The Danish Ministry for Children and Social Affairs (<i>Børne- og Socialministeriet</i>) • The Danish Union of Teachers (<i>Danmarks Lærereforening</i>) • Refugees Welcome
Finland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finnish Ombudsman for Children (<i>Lapsiasiavaltuutettu/Barnombudsmannen</i>) • Amnesty Finland • Central Union for Child Welfare (<i>Lastensuojelun Keskusliitto/Centralförbundet för Barnskydd</i>) • National Police Board (<i>Poliisihallitus/Polisstyrelsen</i>) • Finnish Immigration Service (<i>Maahanmuuttovirasto/Migrationsverket</i>) • Union of Education in Finland (<i>Opetusalan ammattijärjestö/Undervisningssektorns Fackorganisation</i>) • Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture (<i>Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö/Undervisnings- och kulturministeriet</i>) • Finnish National Agency for Education (<i>Opetushallitus/Utbildningsstyrelsen</i>) • Supporting Immigrants in Higher Education in Finland (SIMHE)

Country	Stakeholders interviewed
France	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French Office for Immigration and Integration (<i>Office français de l'immigration et de l'intégration – OFII</i>) • National Consultative Committee on Human Rights (<i>Commission nationale consultative des droits de l'homme – CNCDH</i>) • Association France Land of Asylum (<i>Association France Terre d'Asile – FTA</i>) • Service centre for migrants in Calais (<i>Plateforme de service aux migrants à Calais</i>) • Human Rights League – France (<i>La Ligue des droits de l'homme – LDH</i>) • Immigrant Information and Support Group (<i>Groupe d'information et de soutien des immigrés – GISTI</i>) • Cimade – Intermovement Committee for Evacuees (<i>Comité intermouvements auprès des évacués</i>)
Germany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (<i>Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend</i>) • Federal Association for Unaccompanied Minor Refugees (<i>Bundesfachverband Unbegleitete Minderjährige Flüchtlinge</i>) • Bavarian Refugee Council (<i>Bayerischer Flüchtlingsrat</i>)
Greece	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hellenic Police Headquarters (<i>Αρχηγείο Ελληνικής Αστυνομίας</i>) • Asylum Service Greece (<i>Υπηρεσία Ασύλου</i>) • United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Greece (<i>Υπατη Αρμοστεία του ΟΗΕ για τους Πρόσφυγες, γραφείο Ελλάδας</i>) • Racist Violence Recording Network (<i>Δίκτυο Καταγραφής Περιστατικών Ρατσιστικής Βίας</i>) • Medecins Du Monde – Doctors of the World (<i>Γιατροί του Κόσμου</i>) • International Organization for Migration (IOM) (<i>Διεθνής Οργανισμός Μετανάστευσης</i>) • National Centre for Social Solidarity (<i>Εθνικό Κέντρο Κοινωνικής Αλληλεγγύης</i>)
Hungary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Human Capacity (<i>Emberi Erőforrások Minisztériuma</i>) • Immigration and Asylum Office (<i>Bevándorlási és Menekültügyi Hivatal</i>) • City Mayor's Office in Bicske (<i>Bicskei Polgármesteri Hivatal</i>) • Than Károly Eco-school, Grammar School, Secondary and Vocational School Budapest (<i>Than Károly Ókoiskola, Gimnázium, Szaközéiskola és Szakiskola Budapest</i>) • Hungarian Association for Migrants (<i>Menedék Migránsokat Segítő Egyesület</i>) • SOS Children's Villages (<i>SOS Gyermekfaló</i>)

Country	Stakeholders interviewed
Italy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of the Interior • Association for Legal Studies on Immigration (<i>Associazione per gli studi giuridici sull'immigrazione</i> – ASGI) • Italian Refugees Council (<i>Consiglio Italiano per i Rifugiati</i> – CIR) • Doctors Without Borders Italy (<i>Medici Senza Frontiere Italia</i> – MSF Italia) • Save the Children Italia Onlus • United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) • Italian Red Cross (IRC) • Jesuit Refugee Service (<i>Centro Astalli</i>) • Community of Sant'Egidio (<i>Comunità di Sant'Egidio</i>) • 'Melting Pot Europa' project • 'Borderline Sicilia'
Netherlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry for Security and Justice: central information point, providing information on behalf of Immigration and Naturalisation Service, Aliens Police, Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (all members of the 'Alien Chain') • Dutch Reporting Point for Discrimination on the Internet (<i>Meldpunt Internet Discriminatie</i> – MIND) • Statistics Netherlands (<i>Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek</i>) • Defence for Children the Netherlands • NIDOS (family guardian organisation, fulfilling guardianship task for Unaccompanied Minor Asylum Seekers) • LOWAN (Educational Support Centre for Schools for Newcomers)
Poland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of the Office for Foreigners (<i>Szef urzędu do spraw Cudzoziemców</i> – UDSC) • Ministry of Science and Higher Education (<i>Ministerstwo Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego</i> – MEN) • Education Office in Warsaw (<i>Kuratorium Oświaty w Warszawie</i>) • Education Office in Białystok (<i>Kuratorium Oświaty w Białymstoku</i>) • Foundation for Social Diversity (<i>Fundację na rzecz Różnorodności Społecznej</i>) • Association for Legal Intervention (<i>Stowarzyszenie Interwencji Prawnej, SIP</i>) • Halina Nieć Legal Aid Center (<i>Centrum Pomocy Prawnej in Haliny Niećm, CPPHN</i>) • Caritas Poland (<i>Caritas Polska</i>) • Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights (<i>Helsińska Fundacja Praw Człowieka, HFHR</i>) • UNHCR

Country	Stakeholders interviewed
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| Slovakia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic • Office of Border and Alien Police of the Police Presidium • Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic • Human Rights League • <i>Pokoj a dobro</i> • Slovak Humanitarian Council |
| Spain | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asylum and Refugee Office of the Spanish Ministry of the Interior (<i>Oficina de Asilo y Refugio del Ministerio del Interior – OAR</i>) • Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport (<i>Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte</i>) • General Directorate of Education, Youth and Sport of the Autonomous Community of Madrid (<i>Consejería de Educación, Juventud y Deporte de la Comunidad Autónoma de Madrid</i>) • Office for Refugee Affairs of the Autonomous Community of Madrid (<i>Oficina de Atención al Refugiado de la Comunidad Autónoma de Madrid</i>) • Jesuit Migrant Service (<i>Servicio Jesuita Migrantes – SJM</i>) • Chair of Refugees and Forced Migrants of Comillas ICAI-ICADE, INDITEX • Spanish Refugee Aid Commission (<i>Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado – CEAR</i>) • Save the Children • Accem • Spanish Committee of UNICEF (<i>UNICEF, Comité Español</i>) |
| Sweden | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swedish Migration Agency (<i>Migrationsverket</i>) • National Board of Health and Welfare (<i>Socialstyrelsen</i>) • Swedish Police Authority (<i>Polismyndigheten</i>) • Pre-school Administration of Malmö (<i>Malmö Stads förskoleförvaltning</i>) • School Administration of Malmö (<i>Malmö Stads skolförvaltning</i>) • School Administration of Stockholm (<i>Stockholm Stads skolförvaltning</i>) • Social Administration of Stockholm (<i>Stockholm Stads socialförvaltning</i>) • Swedish Higher Education Authority (<i>Universitetskanslerämbetet – UKÄ</i>) • Swedish Council of Higher Education (<i>Universitets- och högskolerådet</i>) • Red Cross Sweden (<i>Svenska Röda Korset</i>) • Amnesty International • Save the Children (<i>Rädda Barnen</i>) • Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (<i>Sveriges Kommuner och landsting – SKL</i>) • Teacher Association (<i>Läraryrket</i>) |