

# EUROPE MONTHLY REPORT



Anh Lê, the owner of the popular LêLê restaurants in Copenhagen, was resettled in Denmark from a refugee camp in 1979.

## TRENDS AND KEY FIGURES

Between 1 January 2017 and 31 October 2017, 157,400 refugees and migrants arrived by sea and land to Europe (Greece, Italy, Spain and Cyprus only, including arrivals to the Canary Islands and by land to Spain). As a result of the reduced numbers of refugees and migrants crossing from Libya, the 5,800 sea arrivals in October was 79% lower than arrivals in October 2016. This October, sea arrivals from Tunisia comprised approximately 46% of sea arrivals in Italy and for the third successive month more refugees and migrants arrived in Greece by sea than those who crossed from Libya.

As of 31 October, over 111,400 refugees and migrants arrived in Italy by sea in 2017, including over 13,500 unaccompanied and separated children (UASC), 13% of sea arrivals. With reduced arrivals since July, arrivals by sea in Italy so far in 2017 have dropped below those from the same period in 2016 by 30%. While just over 2,500 refugees and migrants crossed to Italy from Libya in October, a further 2,700 people crossed from Tunisia, almost all of whom were Tunisian nationals. The primary nationalities that had arrived by sea in Italy in 2017 as of the end of October were Nigerians, Guineans, Ivorians, Bangladeshis, and Malians.

By the end of October almost 21,300 refugees and migrants have arrived in Spain by land and sea, a 92% increase compared to the same period last year, but modest numbers compared to arrivals at other entry points in recent years. Most arrivals in Spain this year (75%) have arrived by sea, but the number of arrivals via the land borders has also increased 15% compared to the same period last year. The majority of arrivals by sea in October continued to be Moroccans and Algerians while the largest group entering via the land borders was Syrians. The number of sea arrivals to Spain (16,000), is 144% higher than the same period last year.

Mediterranean

**157,400**  
arrivals in 2017 <sup>1</sup>

**2,800**  
estimated dead/missing in 2017 <sup>1</sup>

Greece			Italy		
<b>24,100</b>			<b>111,400</b>		
3,584 Aug	4,886 Sep	4,134 Oct	3,914 Aug	5,961 Sep	5,756 Oct
Spain <sup>2</sup>			Cyprus		
<b>21,300</b>			<b>930</b>		
3,213 Aug	2,053 Sep	4,072 Oct	12 Aug	318 Sep	72 Oct

New asylum applications in EU+ countries <sup>3</sup>

**473,600** applications in 2017  
**1,236,400** applications in 2016  
**1,325,800** applications in 2015

# 31,502

Relocated in total <sup>4</sup>
<sup>4</sup> Source: [European Commission](#) as of 14 November 2017.

from  
**Greece**  
**21,237**  
(32% of 66,400)

from  
**Italy**  
**10,265**  
(26% of 39,600)

# 1,424

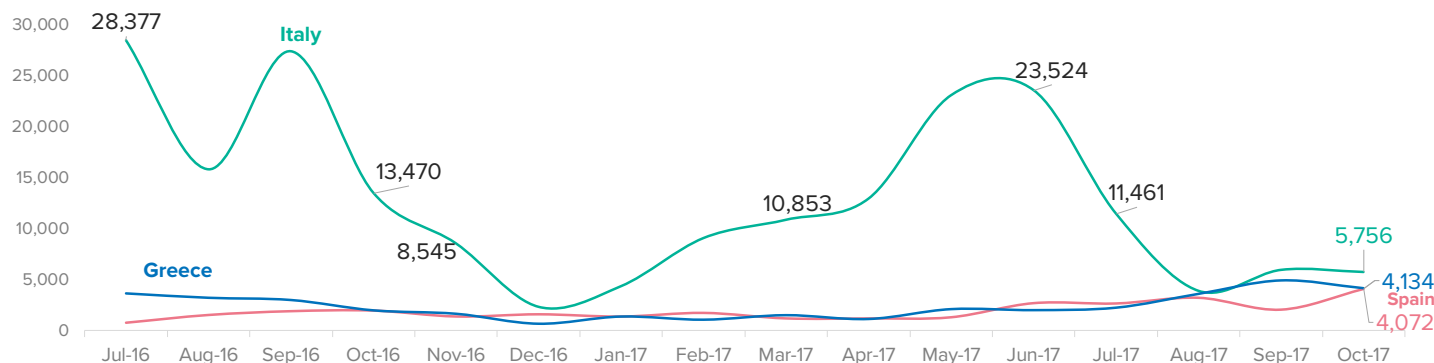
Returns EU-Turkey statement <sup>11</sup>
<sup>11</sup> Source: [Ministry of Citizen Protection](#), Greece as of 14 November 2017.

As of 31 October 2017, over 24,100 refugees and migrants had reached Greek shores in 2017, compared to 169,790 arriving in the same period last year (85% reduction). Arrivals mainly originate from the Syrian Arab Republic (40%) and Iraq (20%). Most arrivals in October have been to Lesbos (55%), followed by Chios (26%), Kos (5%), and Samos (5%). In addition to the sea arrivals, an estimated 4,300 people have arrived this year at the Evros Greek-Turkish land border, based on provisional data as of 31 October 2017 with over 800 crossing via this route in October, including a number of Syrian families. These figures are 20% fewer in comparison to the 1,000 who arrived in September 2017 but nearly double when compared with recorded arrivals in October 2016 (477). Arrivals via the Turkey-Greece land border are not subject to the provisions of the EU-Turkey Statement.

According to Turkish authorities, the Turkish Coast Guard (TCG) intercepted or rescued 2,931 people during October, contributing to a total of 18,400 in 2017 of persons mostly headed to Greece. The largest group intercepted or rescued at sea in 2017 continues to be Syrians. Since the beginning of the year, some 24,131 persons were intercepted by Land Forces at the Greek and Bulgarian land borders, with over 22,171 (or 91%) intercepted at the Greek land border since the beginning of 2017. Apprehensions at Bulgaria-Turkey and Greece-Turkey borders in October were a total of 3,436.

**Dead and missing:** As of 31 October, an estimated 2,811 people have died or gone missing while trying to reach Europe by sea

## MEDITERRANEAN ARRIVALS - JANUARY to OCTOBER 2017



## OTHER SITUATIONS IN EUROPE

Turkey **3.6 million**

Refugees and asylum seekers <sup>5</sup>

Syrian Arab Republic	3,285,533
Afghanistan	151,440
Iraq	146,489
Iran	32,839

<sup>5</sup> Source: UNHCR as of 2 november 2017

Ukraine **1.8 million**

Internally Displaced Persons <sup>6</sup> and Conflict Affected Persons <sup>7</sup>

Refugees: <sup>8</sup>	3,253
Asylum seekers: <sup>9</sup>	5,464
Stateless persons: <sup>10</sup>	35,463

<sup>6</sup> Residing more permanently in government-controlled areas (GCA).  
<sup>7</sup> Estimated number of conflict-affected people living along the line of contact in government-controlled areas (GCA) and non-government controlled areas (NGCA).

<sup>8</sup> UNHCR, State Migration Service of Ukraine as of 30/06/2017

<sup>9</sup> UNHCR as of 10/11/2017

<sup>10</sup> State Migration Service of Ukraine as of 30/06/2017

## KEY DEVELOPMENTS

**1** In **Greece**, the conditions on the islands have deteriorated further as a result of the increased arrivals since August 2017 and the limited reception capacity. The situation is most dire on Lesbos and Samos. On Lesbos, nearly 5,200 people are staying in a site with capacity for 1,400 at the Reception and Identification Centre (RIC) and the olive grove next to Moria (at 31 October) while on Samos there are 1,584 people at the Vathy RIC site with capacity for 700. Hygiene at the RICs is deplorable as sewage is overflowing and regular water cuts occur. In Moria on Lesbos, the poor living conditions and the ongoing arrivals have made response and prevention of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) very challenging. The increased arrivals and lack of sufficient medical staff result in delays in medical and vulnerability screenings. UNHCR issued a [press release](#) on 6 October urging the acceleration of preparations for winter on the islands, including measures to reduce overcrowding, improve shelter and provide the necessary aid items. In addition, nineteen human rights and aid organizations [issued a public letter](#) on 23 October requesting Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras to stop the confinement of asylum-seekers on the islands in a bid to ease overcrowded conditions in the State-run RICs. Meanwhile, on 27 October, the Greek Council for Refugees [submitted a request](#) to the Council of State for the annulment of the Asylum Service decision 10464/2017 of 7 June 2017 forbidding refugees and migrants from leaving the Eastern Aegean islands until their asylum applications have been processed.

In response to the difficult conditions and the continued arrivals, the Ministry of Migration Policy (MoMP) decided on a one-time emergency measure as of 15 October to alleviate the overcrowded conditions at the RICs of Lesbos and Samos by planning the transfer of 2,000 asylum-seekers with specific needs to the mainland. Their asylum applications will be processed on the mainland. UNHCR in coordination with the MoMP, supported the local Regional Asylum Offices (RAO) and Reception and Identification Service (RIS) in the identification, referral and transfer of persons without geographical restrictions from Lesbos and Samos to sites on the mainland. However, the increase in the number of asylum-seekers transferred from the islands to the mainland has highlighted gaps in shelter allocation in sites on the mainland, particularly in allocating places according to needs, profiles and vulnerabilities, thus leading to an increase in insecurity.

The Greek Government continues to close temporary sites that had been opened as an emergency measure in 2016. On mainland Greece, sites Trikala, Thessaly, Elefsina and Attika closed in October. In addition to the sites in the mainland, the Municipality of Chios Island this month evacuated the site of Souda. In preparation for the closure of sites Oinofyta in Central Greece, Volos in Thessaly and Derveni in Northern Greece by mid-November, vulnerable residents were accommodated in apartments under UNHCR's accommodation programme, while people without vulnerabilities were transferred to other sites. The situation at Fylakio, the Reception and Identification Centre in Evros remains challenging due to its limited capacity for 240 people, and the increasing number of arrivals through the Greek-Turkish land border. A particular challenge is the large number of unaccompanied children (between 70 and 90 on a daily basis) whom are awaiting for months at the RIC to be referred to shelters for unaccompanied children.

With respect to Italy, in early October, the office of the Council of Europe (CoE) Commissioner for Human Rights published a [letter](#) sent to the Italian Minister of Interior requesting information on Italy's maritime operations in Libyan territorial waters, urging the Italian government to clarify the kind of support they expect to provide to the Libyan authorities and what safeguards Italy has put in place to ensure that people intercepted or rescued by Ital-


ian vessels in Libyan territorial waters do not subsequently face a situation contrary to Article 3 ECHR (prohibition of torture). The Commissioner also requested information on the measures ensuring that search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean, including those by NGOs, can continue to be carried out effectively and safely. In response, the Italian Minister of Interior [replied](#) that, in close cooperation with the European Commission and Member States, Italy aims at stopping deaths at sea by reducing departures, providing training, equipment and logistical support to the Libyan Coast Guard, with a view to build their capacity. He added that Italy also aims at ensuring that international standards are respected in Libya's migrant centres, also by way of strengthening UNHCR's and IOM's operational presence in the country.

On 08 October, a 13-year-old Iraqi asylum-seeker with a disability died in Bolzano, **Italy**, near the Austria border. While liability with respect to the child's case are clarified, UNHCR has reiterated its [call](#) on authorities to ensure access to adequate reception for persons with specific needs, abolishing a local regulation introducing limitations which are in breach of the domestic legal framework. UNHCR has also successfully called for the child's family members to be immediately granted access to adequate reception and psychological support.

On 24 October, the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) held a workshop for hotspots operators. The workshop was held in Messina, **Italy**, in cooperation with the European Commission and the Italian Ministry of Interior. The workshop focused on best practices in hotspots and at fundamental rights issues relating to the identification, treatment and referral of persons with specific needs, including unaccompanied children. UNHCR attended, together with representatives from the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), the European Commission, Europol, FRA, FRONTEX, Ministry of Interior, Prefectures, Police, Ministry of Health, Offices for Maritime, Aerial and Border Health (USMAF), local and regional health authorities, the National Institute for Health, Migration and Poverty, hotspot managing entities, IOM and Save the Children.

On 24-25 October, the annual OSCE Mediterranean Conference took place in Palermo, **Italy**, entitled 'Large movements of migrants and refugees in the Mediterranean: challenges and opportunities.'



**vincent cochetel**   
 @cochetel

Following

Presenting our recommendations on combatting human trafficking & protecting victims at #OSCE conference in Palermo





# KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN EUROPE



The conference was attended by more than 30 foreign ministers and deputy foreign ministers and more than 200 high-level representatives of the OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia), OSCE participating States, OSCE institutions, international organizations, civil society, academia and media. UNHCR was represented by UNHCR's Liaison office in Vienna and the Special Envoy for the Central Mediterranean, Vincent Cochetel, who [presented](#) UNHCR's recommendations on countering trafficking and protecting victims along the Central Mediterranean route.<sup>13</sup>

2 On 3 October, the European Court of Human Rights issued [judgement](#) in the case of ND and NT vs **Spain** related to the immediate return of persons from Sub-Saharan Africa who had attempted to enter the enclave of Melilla by scaling the border fences. The court ruled that there had been a violation of the prohibition of collective expulsions and a violation of the right to an effective remedy. UNHCR welcomes the judgment, which is still not final, as the agency had [called](#) for an end to the [practice](#) of automatic returns many times in the [past](#).

3 On 10 October, the Spanish Parliament [passed a motion](#) to urge the Government to accept all refugees within the next year who were supposed to be relocated and resettled to **Spain** since 2015. Furthermore, the motion called on the Government to undertake a series of refugee-related commitments which are consistent with UNHCR positions, including the review of the criteria for relocation from Greece and Italy, and measures to speed up the relocation process particularly of vulnerable groups and to open safe complementary legal pathways such as humanitarian visas.

During the reporting period, the Beni Enzar border crossing be-

tween Nador, Morocco and Melilla, **Spain** underwent total and partial closures over several working days, preventing thousands of commuters from reaching the other side of the border and affecting access to Spain and asylum procedures.

Following UNHCR and partners' extensive advocacy, the Initial Reception Centre in **Malta** for newly-arrived asylum-seekers requesting accommodation in the open centres is no longer a place of detention as the gate locking the facility has been removed and residents are now free to go out of the centre and return.



**Céline Schmitt**  
@Ce\_Schmitt

Following

"Nous sommes avec vous dans l'effort de mener l'Europe à 1 approche plus commune & solidaire pour gestion flux migratoires"

@RefugeesChief

Translate from French



The Croatian Central State Office for Reconstruction and Housing Care on 4 October organized an event to celebrate the completion of apartments for 40 beneficiary families of the [Regional Housing Programme](#), refugees from neighboring countries, in Knin, **Croatia**. UNHCR has been supporting the four partner countries - Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro to select the most vulnerable beneficiaries and to try to ensure that the offered housing solutions are also genuinely sustainable.

On 26 October, UNHCR in **Serbia** signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs and “Amity”, under which UNHCR, through “Amity” will strengthen social welfare institutions’ response to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of unaccompanied and separated refugee and migrant children in Serbia. With the onset of winter, UNHCR completed systematic distribution of over 4,000 winter clothes for children age 13-18 in all centres. In coordination with authorities and UNICEF, who provided winter-clothes for younger children, each child received a pack of winter clothing items.

On 13 October, Ambassador Boček, the CoE’s Secretary General’s Special Representative (SRSG) on migration and refugees, published a report on his fact finding visit to **Serbia** and so-called “transit zones” of **Hungary** that took place in June 2017, which included a briefing and support from UNHCR and partners. The [report](#) addresses issues such as access to asylum in Serbia, push-backs from neighbouring countries, and observations relating to the Hungarian ‘transit zones’.

The Visegrad 4 (**Slovakia, Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic**) held a meeting in Bratislava on 4 October of the national coordinators of the Migration Crisis Response Mechanism Platform and a meeting of Ministers of Interior in Budapest [on 5 October](#). Afterwards, the Polish Minister of Interior issued a statement stressing their unity on migration issues and reiterated Poland’s position on strengthening security at external borders and opposition to the relocation programme. On 6 October, the Foreign Affairs State Secretaries met in Budapest to discuss the future of the European Union, the status of the Brexit negotiations and migration.

A tragic car accident was reported on 03 October near the **Hungary-Romania** border. It resulted in two deaths and several serious injuries among nineteen asylum-seekers including one unaccompanied child being smuggled in the back of a van en route to Germany.

On 13 October in **Germany**, UNHCR participated in preparatory coalition talks organized by the Green party on refugee policy, attended by top party representatives, NGOs and welfare organizations. The discussions covered individual access to protection in the EU and provisions in the context of Common European Asylum System (CEAS) reforms as well as responsibility-sharing, family reunification for subsidiary protection beneficiaries, public debate on integration, access to free legal counselling, and quality of asylum procedures.

4 On 10 October, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi met with French President Emmanuel Macron. During the meeting, Grandi [called](#) for the promotion of solidarity towards refugees in Europe and expressed UNHCR’s supports to **France** in its efforts to “lead Europe towards a more supportive approach to manage refugees who are at Europe’s external borders.” He also welcomed the French government’s plan to guarantee the right of asylum and better deal with refugees’ arrivals. In addition, president Macron pledged 10,000 resettlement places, for the next two years, for refugees emanating from Niger, Chad, Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan. The Office Français de Protection des Réfugiés et Apatrides (OFPRA) conducted a pilot resettlement selection mission to Ndjamena late October with the participation

of UNHCR France and the UNHCR regional office in Dakar.

The [European Resettlement Network](#) (ERN), a joint partnership between UNHCR, IOM and ICMC, organized two roundtable events in October on complementary pathways of admission to Europe for refugees under the framework of the [ERN+ Project Developing Innovative European Models for Refugee Protection and Providing Support to New Resettlement Countries](#). The project is co-funded by the European Union under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. On 18 October in **France**, the ERN in partnership with the French Institute of International Relations (IFRI) organised an event on private/community-based sponsorship programmes for refugees. Bringing together government actors from France and Canada with French civil society groups, UNHCR, IOM, and ICMC Europe, the roundtable provided a forum for an expert exchange of views on European approaches to private sponsorship that can be informed by Canadian experience while building on recent European practice.

On 26 October in **The Netherlands**, the ERN organized a roundtable discussion on the potential for the development of student scholarship programmes as a complementary pathway of admission to Europe for refugees.

On 18 October, the first instance tribunal of Liège, **Belgium** confirmed its decision regarding the Sudanese national detained in the nearby closed centre of Vottem. Deportation to Khartoum as well as transfer to another EU Member State were declared illegal on the grounds that they might lead to a violation of article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). At that time, 20 Sudanese nationals, including three who claim to be children, are thought to be held in detention. During the Sudanese identification mission in Belgium, UNHCR Belgium had [indicated](#) its concerns about this mission.

In **Ireland**, the Irish Refugee and Migration Coalition, an umbrella organization of NGOs, [published a report](#) on 24 October proposing a new framework for the Irish government to improve its response to refugees and migrants. Many of the recommendations in Pathways to Protection and Inclusion echo those recently published by UNHCR in its [‘Eight Priorities for the Irish Government’](#), including cutting waiting times for asylum-seekers and maintaining resettlement numbers.

**UNHCR Strasbourg**, jointly with **UNHCR Madrid** and the Council of Europe, organized on 16 October a seminar on Preventing, Combating and Responding to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and Trafficking in Human Beings in the Context of Migration and Asylum. The seminar, which was held in Madrid, was attended by more than 120 asylum decision-makers, lawyers, NGO representatives, authorities in charge of reception and staff working in reception centres, as well as representatives of the Office of the Ombudsperson.

Due to several alarming reports on increased mental illness and a number of reported suicides and hundreds of attempted suicides in the last year among Afghan UASCs in **Sweden**, the Swedish Child Ombudsman has called for municipalities and county councils to conduct an enquiry to provide a more comprehensive picture of the situation. Several political parties, including the governing Green Party and a number of influential academics, journalists and other public intellectuals are increasingly demanding to stop forced returns of Afghan UASCs to Afghanistan.

In Norway, in the proposed 2018 state budget, the Government announced plans to lower the current resettlement quota to 1,120. **Norway** has had the largest resettlement quota for Syrians in Europe (8,000 to be resettled during 2015-2017, while also committing to intra-European relocation of 1,500 persons in need of in-

ternational protection). The final budget will be adopted by the Parliament in mid-December 2017.

On 11 October, the Lithuanian Government approved amendments by the Social Affairs Ministry to provide additional compensation of funds to be allocated towards rent for refugees for a period of 12 months. When introducing the amendments, the Ministry emphasized that the amount of support is not sufficient to cover their basic needs. This is a first major step in addressing current housing challenges for refugees in **Lithuania**.

**5** **Estonia** ratified the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence on 26 October. The Convention will enter into force on 1 February 2018. Estonia has thus become the 26th state to ratify the convention. The Convention stipulates that gender-based violence is a violation of human rights, but also constitutes a form of persecution within the meaning of the 1951 Refugee Convention.

On UN Day, 24 October, the Government of **Georgia** convened a first meeting of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Council co-chaired by the Head of the Administration and the UN Resident Coordinator. The meeting, attended by all UN agencies and relevant Government departments and state agencies, covered topics such as the structure and set-up of the SDGs Council and the proposed nationalization process of SDGs in Georgia. In light of this, UNHCR looks forward to continuing its engagement with relevant counterparts to ensure that key recommendations on refugee matters are aligned with SDGs that will be embedded into national policies and practices.

The Russian Federation, UNHCR and partners conducted regular

participatory assessment exercises for refugees and asylum-seekers in Moscow, the Moscow region, Saint-Petersburg and the Leningrad region, with the participation of representatives of various refugee communities. The assessment found that asylum-seekers are primarily concerned with the lack of having a legal status in Russia as this hinders their access to basic services including medical care, financial support, legal assistance and integration programs regarding employment and education. . The exercise proved to be a good tool for asylum-seekers to share information and find peer support within the community.

In **Ukraine**, the Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) presented a strategy on the integration of IDPs and durable solutions for public consultation on 11 October. UNHCR along with other international organizations and civil society actors contributed to the development of the strategy. While UNHCR generally welcomes the strategy, there are still areas for improvement such as clearly defined durable solutions.

UNHCR participated in events to commemorate the [25th anniversary of the UN's presence](#) in Belarus. UNHCR's Representative briefed the audience on UNHCR's activities conducted over the past 22 years. Moreover, UNHCR produced human stories of refugees to be included in the [#UNBelarus25](#).

## Left in Limbo: UNHCR Study on the Implementation of the Dublin III Regulation



In October, UNHCR released its study [Left in Limbo: UNHCR Study on the Implementation of the Dublin III Regulation](#). The Dublin III Regulation is an EU instrument that determines which European Member State is responsible for examining an asylum-seeker's application, based on identified criteria. UNHCR's research, conducted between 2015 and 2016 in nine Member States

(Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Malta, Norway, Poland and the United Kingdom), aimed at evaluating the implementation of the Dublin III Regulation since its entry into force in January 2014. In light of the emphasis on family unity in determining responsibility for examining an application, UNHCR's research focused on assessing whether applicants for international protection are benefitting to the full extent possible from the Dublin Regulation to reunite with family in a Member State. It also looked at how the

procedural safeguards for applicants, such as the provision of information and a personal interview, the best interests of the child, and the safeguards surrounding detention, are applied in practice in the Dublin procedure.

The study aims to contribute to enhancing the Dublin system, for it to function effectively in the interests of applicants and Member States alike. In UNHCR's view, the Dublin III Regulation has the potential, in the immediate term pending its reform, to assist in reuniting families within the EU, provided that it is applied in a proactive and efficient manner, including through the use of its "discretionary clauses", and that sufficient resources are allocated for its functioning, including through further support by EASO. The findings and recommendations of the study provide also recommendations for the ongoing reform of the Dublin Regulation, such as the need for timely provision of information to applicants, a broadening of the family definitions to support family unity and access to free quality legal advice at all stages of the Dublin procedure. The [executive summary](#) and [recommendations](#) are available as separate documents.



## EU RELATED DEVELOPMENTS

On 12 October, Members of the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) Committee of the European Parliament (EP) adopted their [position](#) on the [proposal](#) for a Union Resettlement Framework. This position was later confirmed by the October plenary session in Strasbourg. The [position](#), in line with UNHCR's [views](#), emphasizes the role of resettlement as a protection tool and a durable solution.

On 12-13 October, a [Justice and Home Affairs Council](#) took place in Luxembourg City, Luxembourg. Migration was on the agenda. EU Ministers of the Interior took stock of progress made on the reform of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) on the basis of a [progress report](#) drafted by the Estonian Presidency. Ministers also informally discussed resettlement and its role in EU asylum and migration policies.

On 19 October, Members of the LIBE Committee of the EP adopt-

ed their [position](#) on the [proposal](#) for a recast Dublin Regulation. Although 88 Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) co-signed a request to vote again on the contents of the negotiating position, the position was ultimately confirmed in the November plenary session in Strasbourg. Aspects of the position are in line with UNHCR's [views](#), such as the prioritization of family reunion within the EU, the deletion of mandatory admissibility checks, the strengthening of procedural safeguards, and a modest recognition of asylum-seekers' preferences.

At the 19-20 October European Council, EU Heads of State and Government [discussed](#) digitalization, defence, external relations, Brexit and migration. On the latter, EU Leaders focused on the external dimension of asylum and migration policies, in particular on the Central Mediterranean situation, and only had a quick discussion on the CEAS reform.

## REFUGEE STORIES

### [From boat refugee to successful restaurant owner](#)

By: Elisabeth Arnsdorf Haslund - Copenhagen, Denmark - 31 October 2017



She is known as chef on a popular TV show, as a successful restaurant owner and as cookbook author. But forty years ago, Anh Lê and her family lived in a refugee camp after fleeing the communist regime in her native Viet Nam. They were later resettled in Denmark. Adjustment was not easy. Reflecting on her own experience, Anh Lê believes that it is important that Danes give a helping hand to the refugees arriving in Denmark, especially if they are expected to become part of society. "We can't say to people, that they have to learn and respect Danish culture, unless we show them what that is." According to Anh Lê, refugees also need to be active in the integration process: learning a language, getting an education or a job. Refugees need to have access to the labor market and work side by side with Danish colleagues in order to learn the work-culture and to find a purpose with their lives.

### [Ethiopian refugee shares her passion for dresses with Lithuanian women](#)

By: Helen Wright - Vilnius, Lithuania | 1 September 2017

Eskedar Maštavičienė was relocated to Lithuania from Malta in 2007 after fleeing her home nation of Ethiopia. She now lives in Vilnius with her family and considers the country her home. Eskedar strongly believes in giving something back to the society that welcomed her all those years ago. She co-founded a charity that helps local underprivileged women by organizing events called *Padovanok suknelę*, or in English, 'Donate a Dress'. Participants can freely select the dresses they desire from the many that have been donated, all free of charge. Additionally, local make-up artists and hairdressers volunteer their time to pamper them. During the rest of the year, Eskedar runs her own English teaching business, and works as an interpreter with the Lithuanian Migration Department. She also volunteers as a translator and mediator for the Red Cross and Caritas Vilnius. She says it was her love of education that helped her integrate into Lithuanian society. "People just need motivation – and for me that was my studies," said Eskedar who has already received her second degree in Lithuania.







# TIMELINE OVERVIEW

2016

**20 March 2016**

Start of the EU-Turkey Statement.

**03 April 2016**

Greece implemented a new [law](#) highlighting the creation of the Reception and Identification Service, restructuring of the Asylum Service, the creation of an Appeals' Authority, and the creation of new Regional Asylum Offices.

**04 April 2016**

First returns take place under the EU-Turkey Statement: 202 people returned to Turkey from Greece.

**06 April 2016**

The European [Commission \(EC\)](#) published [Communication on reforms to Common European Asylum System \(CEAS\)](#).

**07 April 2016**

Turkish government amended the Temporary Protection Regulation regarding access to temporary protection for Syrian nationals who irregularly travel to Europe and who are returned to Turkey from Greek islands.

**27 April 2016**

Turkey amended labour legislation to grant those holding subsidiary protection work permits.

**04 May 2016**

The EC released [Proposals to reform the CEAS](#), with proposals to reform the Dublin Regulation, the EURODAC system and to turn the European Asylum Support Office into an European Union Agency for Asylum.

**18 May 2016**

The Turkish President approved the legislative framework regarding the EU-Turkey Statement with regards to the readmission of people from Greece.

**13 July 2016**

The EC released:

- Its proposals to [recast](#) the Asylum Procedures Directive, [recast](#) the Qualification Directive and [amend](#) the Reception Conditions Directive.
- Its proposal on an EU [Resettlement](#) Framework.

**20 September 2016**

[Leader's Summit on Refugees](#) was held in New York bringing together countries and international organisations, and announced pledges to increase efforts in support of refugees.

**06 October 2016**

The EC officially [launched](#) the European Border and Coast Guard (EBCG) [Agency](#).

**05 December 2016**

[UNHCR presented a paper](#) to the EU to call for stronger EU action on refugees.

**08 December 2016**

The EC released a [recommendation](#) to Member States to gradually resume Dublin transfers to Greece under certain circumstances.

**31 December 2016**

362,376 refugees and migrants reached Europe in 2016 and 5,096 went dead or missing.

**19 January 2017**

UNHCR, IOM and 72 other partners launched the [Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan](#) to help respond to the situation of refugees and migrants in Europe in 2017.

**02 February 2017**

[UNHCR and IOM released a joint statement](#) on addressing migration and refugee movements along the Central Mediterranean route.

[Informal European Council meeting](#). EU Leaders adopt the [Malta Declaration](#) on "addressing the Central Mediterranean route".

**14 February 2017**

UNHCR calls for [concrete measures](#) to be adopted by the Greek authorities, the EU and its Member States to ensure wadequate care, support and solutions for the women, men and children seeking asylum in Greece.

**07 March 2017**

UNHCR is deeply concerned at a [new law which has been voted at the Hungarian Parliament](#) and which foresees the mandatory detention of all asylum seekers, including many children, for the entire length of the asylum procedure.

**09-10 March 2017**

European Council Migration on the [agenda](#).

**25 March 2017**

Informal European Council meeting. EU Leaders adopt the [Rome Declaration](#). Migration and asylum included in the "safe and secure Europe" overarching area of work.

**10 April 2017**

UNHCR urges suspension of [transfers of asylum-seekers to Hungary](#) under the Dublin Regulation.

2017

**12 April 2017**

The EC releases the communication on the protection of [children in migration](#).

UNICEF and UNHCR welcome [EU policy to protect migrant and refugee children](#).

**12 May 2017**

On 12 May, Frontex' [Consultative Forum](#) on Fundamental Rights, which UNHCR is co-chairing, published its Annual [Report](#)

**18 May 2017**

On 18 May, a Justice and Home Affairs Council took place in Brussels. Among other issues, EU Home Affairs Ministers [discussed](#) the reform of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), focusing on the issues of responsibility and solidarity.

**13 June 2017**

The European Commission (EC) released i) the 13th [Report](#) on Relocation and Resettlement; ii) the 6th [Report](#) on the EU-Turkey Statement; iii) the 4th [Report](#) on the Migration Partnership Framework and iv) the 4th [Report](#) on the European Border and Coast Guard.

**15 June 2017**

The EC launched [infringement procedures](#) regarding the relocation programme against Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic.

**01 July 2017**

Estonia took over the rotating Presidency of the Council of the EU for six months (July-December 2017). UNHCR released [updated recommendations](#) to the Estonian Presidency.

**04 July 2017**

the EC released an [Action Plan](#) on Measures to Support Italy, Reduce Pressure along the Central Mediterranean and Increase Solidarity.

**26 July 2017**

The EC [moved to the next step](#) of infringement procedures against Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic for non-compliance with the relocation decisions

**26 September 2017**

Marks the two-year plan of the EU Relocation scheme