

EU Migration & Asylum policy updates

June/July 2023

Council of the EU / European Council

- The Spanish Presidency of the Council started on 1 July, and it will last until the end of December 2023. One of the [priorities for this semester](#) will be to **finalise the New Pact on Migration and Asylum**, in order for it to be ready by the 2024 European Parliament's elections next June. The first steps towards this direction will be taken with an [informal meeting of EU Justice and Home Affairs ministers](#) that will happen in Spain on 20 and 21 July. **A calendar of the Council's meetings** from July to December under the Spanish presidency can be also found [here](#).
- The latest [Justice and Home Affairs Council](#) (JHA) was held on 8 and 9 June. An agreement was reached on the **asylum and migration management regulation and the asylum procedure regulation**. Two main points in this agreement are: 1. broadening the list of safe third countries, with the possibility for each Member State to determine its own list; and 2. a new solidarity mechanism where Member States can decide whether to relocate people seeking international protection or provide a financial contribution.
- June was also the month where the European Commission (EC) made a **100 million euro deal with Tunisia for border management, search and rescue (SAR), and migrant returns**. This deal followed a [visit](#) by PMs Rutte (Netherlands) and Meloni (Italy), and EC President Von der Leyen with the aim of strengthening the EU-Tunisia partnership to curb migratory flows. There are more details on this in June's edition of Inter Alia's monthly bulletin "[Our Eye on the EU](#)".
- On 30 June, the European Council reunited and Heads of States discussed the [external dimension of migration](#). The main line chosen was to keep progressing with the implementation of the Conclusions of 9 February and of the JHA Council on 8 and 9 June. In particular, **mandatory relocation** of migrants has been introduced, with countries unwilling to host them being required to pay a fee of €20,000 for each migrant. The second main line followed by EU leaders is to keep investing in bilateral agreements and "**strategic partnerships**" with **third countries** (in this specific case, Tunisia).

Since Poland and Hungary did not accept the final agreement, and therefore [unanimity was not reached](#), an alternative procedure was chosen: to adopt Conclusions by the President of the European Council - and not Conclusions of the European Council. **Poland and Hungary**, in fact, are openly against the content and approval process of the New Pact on Migration and Asylum, [breaking the traditional alliance with the Visegrad Group](#), since Czechia and Slovakia have backed the Council's position.

Focus on New Pact on Migration and Asylum: useful resources

As we are getting closer to new developments in interinstitutional negotiations on the New Pact, here are two **useful resources to consult to better follow trilogues**:

- [One step closer to getting the EU Migration Pact done. One step closer to ambitious change?](#) (European Policy Centre)
- [Editorial: European Pact on Migration and Asylum - Latest Developments](#) (ECRE)

European Parliament & European Commission

LIBE Committee meeting (6 July)

- The Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) in the EP held an [exchange of views](#) with Margaritis Schinas, Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life, Ylva Johansson, Commissioner for Home Affairs and Hans Leijtens, Frontex's Executive Director on the **Pylos shipwreck**.

[Here](#) is the full meeting.

[Here](#) are the key takeaways from the meeting (both in video and transcript).

- A second exchange of views with Commission representatives, UN Fact Finding Mission to Libya, and Giorgia Jana Pintus from Associazione Ricreativa e Culturale Italiana (ARCI), was held on **migration cooperation with Libya**, jointly with the EP's Subcommittee on human rights.

EP Plenary Session (10-13 July):

On the second day of the Strasbourg plenary session, MEPs put forward a [motion for resolution](#), asking for an EU action on SAR in the Mediterranean. The text was supported by a broad

coalition, including the three biggest parties in the EP (EPP, S&D and Renew). The final document was voted and approved on 13 July. The text:

- calls for the establishment of a comprehensive EU SAR mission implemented by the Member States' competent authorities and Frontex. According to Politico Europe, "[the ambiguous wording appears to be a nod to Operation Sophia, the EU-led naval mission to break up smuggling routes in the Mediterranean, which ended in 2020](#)";
- calls on Member States to maintain their nearest safe ports open to NGO vessels and not to criminalise those who provide assistance to migrants in distress;
- asks the EC to assess current Member States' practices regarding SAR operations and ensure they comply with European and international law;
- accuses Libyan authorities of failing to meet their obligations under international maritime law during SAR operations, of detaining and torturing migrants and of violating their fundamental rights.

And while ECRE [reported](#) abuses by the Libyan coastguard, including [against NGOs](#) during SAR operations, [the EU just delivered two new patrol boats to Libya](#) in the presence of EC officials, the Italian authorities, and the Libyan coastguard.

Legal Updates from Europe

- ECRE's weekly legal update: [30 June](#) & [7 July](#) 2023.