

Periodic data collection on the migration situation in the EU

March Highlights

1–28 February 2018

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In view of the increasing numbers of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants entering the EU, the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights has been collecting relevant data since November 2015. This report focuses on the fundamental rights situation of people arriving in Member States particularly affected by large migration movements. The countries covered are: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain and Sweden. This report addresses fundamental rights concerns between 1-28 February 2018.

Note on sources of information

The evidence presented in this report is based on interviews with institutions and other organisations as indicated in the annex. In addition, where sources of information are available in the public domain, hyperlinks are embedded to these sources of information throughout the text.

Key fundamental rights concerns

Key emerging fundamental rights concerns

The Greek Council of Refugees [reported](#) an increasing number of incidents of *refoulement* in the Evros region, at the border of **Greece** with Turkey, involving families, pregnant women, and victims of torture.

In the **Netherlands**, the number of (mostly LGBTI) asylum seekers from Cuba applying for international protection while in transit at Schiphol Airport [increased](#) significantly. [Therefore](#), the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs imposed a [visa requirement](#) for Cubans who travel through the Netherlands to destinations outside the Schengen area. Furthermore, in its [answers to questions submitted by a member of parliament](#), the State Secretary for Justice and Security considered the general situation in Cuba as safe for LGBTI persons, which was criticised by the civil society organisation [COC Nederland](#).

Key persisting fundamental rights concerns

In **Greece**, despite the decreasing number of arrivals, the Reception and Identification Centres in Lesbos, Samos and Chios remained [overcrowded](#).

In **Hungary**, denials of entry continued at the border with Serbia, including the use of force by police, UNHCR reported. The daily cap on the number of people admitted to the transit zones remained [one person per day](#) in each facility. [Xenophobic](#) attitudes also persisted.

The Ombudsperson confirmed that the allegations of pushbacks at the border of **Croatia** continued, as stated in his [letter](#) to the State Attorney in January. The Rehabilitation Centre for Stress and Trauma emphasised that the recognition and treatment of victims of torture remained problematic. In an interview, Doctors of the World identified access to health care for beneficiaries of international protection as a key persisting fundamental rights concern. Other issues still related to the complex procedure for family reunification and gaps in the guardianship system for unaccompanied children.

The **Bulgarian** Ombudsperson indicated in an interview that the most persistent fundamental rights concerns remained the reluctance of municipalities to integrate beneficiaries of international protection, inadequate representation of unaccompanied children, a lack of training for overburdened representatives of unaccompanied children, as well as the accommodation of beneficiaries of international protection in reception centres, which is not in line with national law.

Refusing entry to asylum seekers at the Terespol and Medyka land border crossing points remained a major issue of concern in **Poland**. For instance, UNHCR and [NGOs](#) reported cases when persons tried to apply for asylum at the border multiple times without success. Furthermore, due to poorly functioning procedures to identify and refer asylum seekers and other migrants who had been victims of violence, many of them continued to end up in detention. This, despite the fact that their detention is prohibited by [Polish law](#), reported UNHCR, the Ombudspersons and NGOs.

Challenges to family reunification in **Germany** were amplified, as the two-year suspension for family members of persons entitled to subsidiary protection [was prolonged](#), from March 2018 until July 2018. As of 1 August, per month, a total of 1,000 family members of beneficiaries of subsidiary protection will be granted residence permits for humanitarian reasons. Some 30,000 people signed a [petition](#) organised by the NGO Pro Asyl against further limitations on the right to family reunification.

Reception conditions remained critical for the increasing numbers of newly arriving migrants in **Spain**. The [Spanish Ombudsperson](#) urged the authorities to improve the deteriorating situation. According to the Ombudsperson, unaccompanied children and mothers with babies were held in prison-like cells and men were sleeping on the floor with no heating. Problems relating to delays in the asylum procedure persisted, according to various stakeholders, including UNHCR.

The law in **Sweden** imposing temporary restrictions on granting residence permits to refugees and limiting family reunification until the end of 2019 remained a major issue of concern, according to the National Board of Health and Welfare and several NGOs. The Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe also [recommended](#) lifting these restrictions when the temporary law would be subject to mid-term review in 2018. However, the [government communicated](#) that the mid-term review will not be carried out.

Also in Sweden, the Ombudsman for Children and NGOs pointed out that authorities continued to return to Afghanistan young adults who have had their age re-registered or who turned 18 before receiving their negative asylum decision.

Deportations to Afghanistan were the most persistent fundamental rights concern in the **Netherlands**, according to interviews with representatives of the Dutch Refugee Council and Amnesty International. [Demonstrations](#) against the deportations were held in four cities. As a symbolic gesture, the municipal councils of [Leeuwarden](#) and [Coevorden](#) adopted a motion to stop the deportations.

According to the Danish Institute for Human Rights, in **Denmark**, parts of the administrative practice on issuing humanitarian residence permits remained a key fundamental rights concern. In particular, decisions do not take into account returnees' access to medical treatment upon return. Danish practice departed from the ECtHR's requirements in [Paposhvili v. Belgium](#), which concerned the expulsion of seriously ill migrants.

In **Finland**, the Finnish Human Rights Centre raised concerns over the poor quality of legal aid offered to asylum seekers. The Finnish Section of Amnesty International pointed out that returns to Afghanistan continued. They do not consider it a safe country. As part of a European-wide campaign, [demonstrations](#) against such returns were organised across four Finnish cities.

Situation at the border

In an attempt to cross the **Greek**-Turkish land border via the Evros river, three people died and four went missing after a boat carrying eight asylum seekers [capsized](#).

According to [a report](#) by several NGOs, at least 10 people - including small children - were pushed back from **Croatia** to Serbia and Bosnia Herzegovina. This indicates that the practice highlighted by the [Croatian Ombudsperson](#) in January still continues.

The police prevented 191 people from crossing the border into **Hungary**, the National Headquarters of the Police reported. This included people who attempted to enter Hungary irregularly, most frequently through the border fence alongside the Hungarian-Serbian border, and who were apprehended either by the police or the army. These figures continued to drop significantly in the past months (e.g. 504 people were prevented from entering in January 2018 and 1,114 people in November 2017). Migrant smuggling remained on the rise in Hungary, in particular along the Romanian and Serbian borders, UNHCR and NGOs reported during interviews.

The situation along the French-Italian border (especially in the Department Alpes-Maritimes) continued to raise concern. Authorities in **France** continued to send migrants back to Italy without a formal decision and denied them the possibility to apply for asylum, the NGO ANAFÉ reported. This practice has pushed migrants seeking safety to take risks, despite the harsh weather conditions. For example, emergency services [rescued](#) an injured Liberian man found on a mountain cliff near Menton.

In its [Concluding Observations](#) on **Spain**, the Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed concern in relation to the practice of automatic pushbacks of children seeking international protection in the autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla.

Asylum procedure

Trends

In January 2018, over 7,200 persons reached Europe via the Mediterranean Sea – an approximate 5 % increase compared to the same month the year before, as

[UNHCR figures](#) show. However, the number of arrivals by sea decreased by over 40 % compared to the previous month (12,390 arrivals). In January 2018, arrivals in **Italy** increased to over 4,100 people, compared to some 2,300 in December, according to [UNHCR](#). In January 2018, arrivals in **Greece** increased by 17 % compared to January 2017. In **Spain**, land and sea arrivals increased by 58 % compared to January 2017.

According to [EASO](#), the number of asylum applications lodged in the EU+ countries (28 EU Member States plus Norway and Switzerland) increased by 8 % (to more than 53,000) in January 2018 compared to December 2017. However, the number of asylum applications decreased by 13 % compared to the same period last year. The main countries of origin remained Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan.

In January 2018, the number of first-time applications in the **Netherlands** [increased](#) by 23 % compared to December 2017, and by 22 % compared to the same period last year, according to [media reports](#). However, the total number of applications (first time, repeated and applications for family reunification) decreased by 4 % compared to the previous month and 11 % compared to the same period last year.

In **Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Finland** and **Germany**, the number of asylum applications in January and/or February 2018 remained low or dropped, in comparison to December. For the first time, the numbers in **Greece** and **Spain** also decreased, according to [UNHCR](#).

In **Spain**, despite the slight drop in numbers in January compared to December, the number of asylum applicants remained significant. According to data provided by the Ministry of the Interior, the number of asylum applications increased by 91 % in 2017 (31,714) compared with the previous year 2016 (16,542). Over 2,310 people have been rescued in Western Mediterranean waters on their way to Spain in 2018 – compared to almost 1,050 in the same period the year before, according to [IOM](#).

Relocation

The Ministry of the Interior [announced](#) that **Austria** would not make any new commitments regarding the EU Relocation programme, but will fulfil the commitment of the old government to accept the agreed 50 asylum seekers from Italy.

Access to asylum procedures

Asylum seekers continued to reach **Italy** through humanitarian channels, implemented by the Ministries of the Interior and of Foreign Affairs, UNHCR, Caritas, and the Italian Episcopal Conference. For example, more than 260 asylum seekers from Eritrea, Somalia, Ethiopia and South Sudan reached Rome via a chartered flight operated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Most of them were vulnerable, coming from detention centres in Libya. In total, 312 refugees have been evacuated directly from Tripoli to Italy, according to [UNHCR](#).

A group of NGOs in **Greece** [called on the government](#) to improve access to free legal aid, take measures to accommodate people in dignified conditions, publish

standard operating procedures for the Greek Reception and Identification Service, and ensure adequate interpretation services in all stages of the asylum procedure.

The authorities in **Hungary** continued to decide on the admission of asylum seekers stranded in Serbia to the transit zones on the basis of so called “waiting lists”, reported [NGOs](#) and the [Lanzarote Committee](#) set up by the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse. These lists are compiled by the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees, in cooperation with asylum seekers serving as volunteer community leaders. The daily cap on the number of people admitted to the transit zones remained [one person per day](#) in each facility, although the Immigration and Asylum Office justified this “temporary practice” in January, by referring to some technical failure in their case management IT systems.

The Croatian Law Centre highlighted the significant increase in the number of inquiries received via mobile text messages, relating to the asylum system in **Croatia**. In addition, the Jesuit Refugee Service criticised the quality of asylum decisions. For example, several asylum seekers who feared persecution for converting to Christianity were not granted international protection. For about seven months, no Afghan has been granted international protection, as Croatia considers Afghanistan to be a safe country.

The **Bulgarian** State Agency for Refugees was still facing difficulties in recruiting qualified interpreters for Kurdish, Arabic, Persian and Dari. After a recruitment procedure was closed in February, nine out of ten positions remained vacant due to a lack of candidates meeting the selection criteria.

In **Poland**, the lack of legal assistance available to asylum seekers in detention centres and open reception facilities remained an issue of grave concern, multiple NGOs and the Ombudsman for Children pointed out during interviews. This deficiency is due to funding gaps, since Polish authorities have not announced calls for some time, under their national programme of the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund.

The NGO Caritas Vienna and [media reports](#) in **Austria** noted that more than half of all first instance asylum decisions in Austria were negative, while the second instance court reversed more than one third of these negative decisions. A lack of systematic legal advice for asylum seekers in reception centres in **Germany** made access to asylum procedures difficult. For example, in Bavaria, a local government denied NGOs - such as Amnesty International and the Refugee Council Bavaria - access to reception centres, according to [media reports](#). Several organisations, such as [Pro Asyl](#), considered this policy an infringement on the right to legal assistance enshrined in the Asylum Procedures Directive (2013/32/EU) and the Reception Conditions Directive (2013/33/EU) and filed a lawsuit against this policy.

As in past months, authorities in **France** increasingly used accelerated asylum procedures, seeking to reduce the [average processing time of 11 months](#), NGOs *La Cimade* and *GISTI* pointed out.

Delays in the asylum procedure remained challenging in **Spain**. For example, more than 40% of asylum applications lodged between 2010 and 2016 were still pending, according to various [NGOs](#). Newcomers did not receive sufficient

information about their rights to ask for asylum, especially in Ceuta and Melilla, and the inappropriate use of accelerated procedures remained key concerns, according to an interview with the Spanish Refugee Aid Commission.

The long processing times for asylum claims (close to one and a half years [on average](#)) remained a major issue of concern in **Sweden**, in particular in cases of unaccompanied children and families with children. Priority has not been given to asylum seeking children, the Ombudsman for Children and the NGO Save the Children pointed out during interviews. The Ombudsman for Children was also concerned that children arriving with their families were not considered to be asylum seekers in their own right.

The **Finnish** Parliamentary Ombudsman reported that they received several complaints regarding the Immigration Service's decision-making procedures. UNHCR expressed concerns over the Finnish Immigration Service's increased application of the internal flight alternative, according to which asylum seekers could find protection in another area of their country of origin. For example, this was increasingly the case with Iraq and Afghanistan, according to [media reports](#).

According to the **Danish** Institute for Human Rights, the Danish Refugee Appeals Board decided to [re-examine](#) 28 cases of vulnerable foreigners who applied for asylum in Denmark after obtaining refugee status in Greece. In one case, it upheld the decision by the Danish Immigration Service to reject an application, since the applicant could receive adequate protection in Greece.

Reception

Reception capacity

Sufficient reception capacity was available in some countries, including **Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Poland, the Netherlands** and **Sweden**.

In **Greece**, the decrease of arrivals in January and the continuous transfers to the mainland reduced the population in the Reception and Identification Centres on the islands, according to [UNCHR](#). However, despite these developments, overcrowding and inadequate conditions continued in Lesbos, Samos and Chios.

The overall reception capacity in **France** remained insufficient, as tens of thousands of people among the 110,000 asylum applicants remained in need of accommodation, *La Cimade* reported.

In **Spain**, according to UNHCR, the reception system collapsed in several Spanish cities. One reason for this was a backlog in processed asylum applications due to long waiting times for asylum seekers to receive appointments for a first interview.

Reception conditions

Activists of the association 'Baobab Experience' in **Italy** publicly denounced the precarious conditions of the 120 migrants living near the Tiburtina railway station in Rome, including Eritrean, Sudanese, Gambian, and Nigerian citizens. Activists launched a campaign called '[Yes, we camp](#)' to encourage people to provide basic goods and to raise public awareness. Some 200 asylum seekers

barricaded a reception facility in Rome to protest against the fact that they were [no longer paid their daily allowance](#) since the beginning of January 2018.

The situation in some Italian hotspots remained tense, according to media reports. For example, in [Lampedusa](#), Tunisian migrants protested against the reception conditions by sewing their mouths shut, demanding to be transferred to the main land. In [Trapani](#), about 60 Tunisians tried to escape from the facility.

In **Greece**, the Ministry of Migration Policy, in cooperation with the International Organisation for Migration, started implementing a pilot project called "HELIOS" to explore the possibilities of a decentralised integration scheme for beneficiaries of international protection, first in two municipalities on the mainland (Livadeia and Thiva). The aim of the pilot project is to develop an integration model that could be implemented across the country.

On several floors of the reception centre in Zagreb, **Croatia**, there was no electricity for several days, according to the Centre for Peace Studies. In addition, volunteers' access to the reception centre was restricted.

The State Agency for Refugees announced new renovation works in the reception centre in Harmanli, **Bulgaria**. Some of the centre's premises will be transformed into rooms suitable for child activities and for accommodating vulnerable asylum seekers.

In some states in **Germany**, people remained in reception centres much longer than they were obliged to, as places in subsequent accommodation such as houses, private flats or refugee facilities operated by communes were not available. For example, out of the 4,000 people living in Hamburg's 13 reception centres, more than half had lived there for more than six months after being granted protection status and thus being permitted to live elsewhere, according to the [Zentraler Koordinierungsstab Flüchtlinge](#). Also in Germany, persons without residence status continued to face difficulties in accessing healthcare benefits: Although irregular migrants are entitled to such services, they often did not make use of their rights, as they feared deportation, the Jesuit Refugee Service stated.

In **France**, due to the cold winter, poor access to food and sanitation, living conditions have been deteriorating for migrants in informal camps, in particular in Calais, Grande-Synthe and Paris, various NGOs pointed out. This has contributed to the [resurgence of violence](#) in Calais, where clashes occurred between migrants, resulting in serious injuries. A group of NGOs, including *Médecins Sans Frontières*, [asked the authorities](#) to extend the winter reception regime until the end of March 2018, since "the systematic destruction of makeshift shelters for [asylum seekers], when it is cold, wet and windy, makes their survival conditions absolutely inhumane".

A [study](#) by the Research and Documentation Centre of the **Dutch** Ministry of Justice and Security found that reception centres had no statistically significant effect on neighbourhood safety, regardless of their type, size and demographic composition.

Vulnerable persons

In **Italy**, the President of the Territorial Commission for the Recognition of International Protection of Rome and the Councillor for Social Policies, Sport, and

Security of the Region of Lazio signed a [protocol](#) aimed at improving the identification and support of victims of human trafficking. According to a recent [UNHCR report](#), sexual and gender based violence remained an issue of grave concern in the **Greek** hotspots, notably in Samos.

In some cases, vulnerable people (e.g. persons with disabilities, pregnant women, and the elderly) initially admitted to the transit zones in **Hungary** continued to be transferred to the open reception centre in Vámoszabadi. However, authorities continued to seemingly randomly select those who may leave the transit zones to be placed in the open facility, NGOs reported.

The long waiting times for the asylum decision in **Croatia** has a negative effect on asylum seekers' mental health, Doctors of the World reported. There was at least one suicide attempt per month in one of the two reception centres.

In **Bulgaria**, there was still a lack of qualified psychologists, inaccessible infrastructure for persons with disabilities in some reception centres and limited specialised care facilities and support services for victims of torture or trauma, the Ombudsperson pointed out in an interview.

In **Poland**, the National Prevention Mechanism, established under the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture, [found out](#) that migrants who attempted to commit suicide were subsequently placed in a correctional facility for foreigners (in Przemyśl) where conditions were harsher than in high-security prisons. According to the same report, the psychologist working at the Krosno Odrzańskie detention centre [lacked](#) sufficient training and was only employed for four hours a week. Also in Poland, the Refugee Board, which is the second instance asylum authority, recurrently ignored private expert opinions on asylum applicants' mental health conditions, the NGO Association for Legal Intervention reported during interviews.

In parts of **Germany**, such as Mecklenburg Western Pomerania, medical care in reception centres had improved due to an increase in medical staff, according to the Refugee Council Mecklenburg Western Pomerania. However, problems remained, relating to identification, accommodation and access to specified health care or counselling in reception centres for vulnerable persons.

In **France**, psychological issues among migrants in informal camps were underestimated by the authorities, the NGOs *Médecins Sans Frontières* and *Le Comité pour la santé des exiles* pointed out. The mental healthcare provided to migrants, in particular in Calais, was inadequate.

Victims of torture and trauma

Some 50 per cent of asylum seekers in **Austria** suffered from trauma, an [expert for psychotherapy](#) estimated. About 300 people were waiting for psychotherapy at one organisation in Lower Austria alone, with waiting times of up to 12 months.

[Child protection](#)

Figures and trends

Until 27 February, 747 unaccompanied children had arrived in **Italy** in 2018, according to the [Ministry of the Interior](#).

As of 28 February 2018, according to [the National Centre for Social Solidarity \(EKKA\)](#), some 3,030 unaccompanied children were estimated to be in **Greece**. A total of 2,104 were on waiting lists for appropriate shelter. Some 159 of them remained in Reception and Identification Centres (hotspots) and 58 in protective custody. The total number of available places for unaccompanied children in all of Greece was 1,118 at the end of the reporting period. These figures demonstrate a persistent protection gap over the past months.

Reception conditions

[Save the Children Italia Onlus](#) opened a centre for unaccompanied children in Catania, **Italy**, offering services and activities aimed at their integration and protection and tailored to their specific needs.

Following their visit to the transit zones in **Hungary** in July 2017, the Lanzarote Committee set up by the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse [recommended](#) the Hungarian authorities to not keep unaccompanied children in the transit zones. The Committee also called for establishing better cooperation with their Serbian counterparts in managing the “waiting lists” to enter the transit zones in order to prevent corruption through the sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children.

In its regular National Preventive Mechanism [report](#), the **Bulgarian** Ombudsperson pointed out that there was a lack of specialised reception facilities for unaccompanied children and recommended to establish a separate facility for them.

The reception system for migrants in **France** showed serious inadequacies in the protection of unaccompanied children. In Paris alone, around [400-500 unaccompanied children](#) lived in the streets, in winter temperatures. The Departmental Council of Seine-Maritime, which provides child welfare services, [called for foster families](#) to host unaccompanied children to ease its burden of taking care of these children (470 children were under their authority at the beginning of 2018).

In its [Concluding Observations](#) on **Spain**, the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) noted significant problems in the application of the best interests of the child for asylum-seeking and refugee children. In particular, the CRC referred to inadequate protection standards for unaccompanied children across autonomous communities, including the lack of legal assistance and information provided to children. According to the CRC, children were living in the streets in Melilla and experiencing violence. Professionals were not able to provide adequate treatment to children in reception centres and could not protect them from prostitution. Insufficient access to regular education and leisure activities were reported.

Although providing housing for beneficiaries of international protection lies with the [responsibility of municipalities](#) in **Sweden**, they usually only offered temporary solutions such as hotels, motels and camping sites instead of more permanent arrangements, Save the Children reported.

Guardianship for unaccompanied children

In **Hungary**, due to [legislative changes](#) at the end of March 2017, the authorities continued to assign guardians only to unaccompanied children under

the age of 14, who are placed in children's homes. As a follow up to the government's invitation to visit the transit zones, FRA observed that unaccompanied children over 14 were still placed in the Röszke transit zone until their asylum claims are decided upon. They are [considered](#) to have full legal capacity as soon as they are 14 years of age, so they are only assigned a formal legal representative for the asylum procedure, as FRA found during its visit to the transit zones.

There was still no well-functioning system to appoint guardians for unaccompanied children in **Poland** (e.g. due to the lack of funding for NGOs to represent children), the Ombudsman for Children reported. In response to a call by the Ombudsman for Children for the government to introduce a reformed guardianship system, the Ministry of Justice [stated](#) that the system would not be changed for the sake of a handful of cases per year.

In **Germany**, the Federal Association of Catholic institutions and educational services and the Institute for children and youth welfare [evaluated](#) more than 1,200 youth welfare services, including by means of interviews with children. Parts of the guardianship system in Germany were evaluated positively. For example, the study found that guardians accompanied 80 % of unaccompanied children to authorities and doctors. For 70 % of the children, youth services assessed their educational needs. The study found room for improvement regarding the identification of needs for therapy: authorities only checked 26 % of unaccompanied children for their needs for therapy.

In its [Concluding Observations](#) on **Spain**, the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child noted insufficient information sharing and coordination concerning police referral of unaccompanied children to child protection agencies.

Unaccompanied children in **Sweden** were assigned to different municipalities, without taking into account the specific needs of the individual child. As a result, unaccompanied children often ended up in municipalities which did not have the capacity to adequately care for their individual needs, the Ombudsman for Children pointed out. Save the Children and the Ombudsman for Children also highlighted that in most cases, individual guardians were responsible for too many children.

Safeguards and specific support measures

In **Greece**, the NGO *Médecins Sans Frontières*, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, [carried out an emergency vaccination campaign](#) against measles for children in the Moria Reception and Identification Centre (Lesvos) and elsewhere on the island. In total, 1,314 children were vaccinated during the vaccination campaign.

In **Italy**, the Prefect of Venice, the local Councillor for Social Policies and the Heads of the Regional and the Provincial School Departments signed a [protocol](#) aimed at fostering migrant students' inclusion and integration in local schools.

In **Hungary**, children placed in the transit zones have had access to basic education since mid-September 2017, according to the Office of Immigration and Asylum. However, education was centred on teaching the Hungarian language, and children were not divided into groups based on their age, NGOs reported.

Two new projects started in **Croatia**, aimed at training experts working with unaccompanied children to inform them about their rights, according to the Croatian Red Cross.

Education for children in immigration detention centres in **Poland** was inadequate (e.g. lessons were not diversified, children repeatedly learnt the same things), the Association for Legal Intervention reported.

A group of lawyers turned to the public prosecutor in **France** with the [case of 128 unaccompanied migrant children](#), mainly boys, aged between 13 and 17 years, who have been living in the streets of Paris, since they did not have access to emergency accommodation.

In **Sweden**, the methods used for medical age assessments, carried out by the National Board of Forensic Medicine, remained unchanged and thus problematic, the Ombudsman for Children and NGOs reported. For instance, if a medical age assessment shows with 75% certainty that a child is over 18 years, the person is considered to be an adult. The Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe published a report, based on his earlier country visit, which underscored several deficiencies in the reception of unaccompanied asylum seeking children in Sweden. The [recommendations](#) included to not rely on medical age assessment, but rather establish multidisciplinary procedures and to ensure that children are always given the benefit of the doubt when their age is uncertain; to investigate all unaccompanied children having gone missing; and not to return children to a country where they would be at real risk of irreparable harm.

Also in **Sweden**, suicidal behaviour among unaccompanied asylum-seeking children was high compared to other children, the National Board of Health and Welfare found in a recently published [report](#), which urged the government to implement effective preventive measures.

The **Danish** Refugee Appeals Board [decided](#) to not re-assess the return decision of a rejected asylum applicant and her underage daughter, since they went missing. The initial decision was previously criticised by the [UN Committee on the Rights of the Child](#), according to which Denmark failed to consider the best interests of the child when assessing the alleged risk of female genital mutilation upon the child's return to Somalia.

In its [annual](#) report, the **Finnish** Ombudsman for Children underlined the need for a comprehensive child rights impact assessment of the numerous changes and tightening of the Aliens Act adopted over the last years.

In its [Concluding Observations](#) on **Spain**, the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) reported that children travelling with family members other than their parents were separated at the border, particularly in the autonomous city of Melilla. The Committee raised concerns about the use of intrusive age assessment methods, even in cases where the identification documents appeared to be authentic.

Missing children

In **Austria**, 161 non-EU children between the ages of 0-14 and 491 children between 14-18 were registered as missing in the SIS II system as of 1 March 2018, according to the Ministry of the Interior.

As reported by the **Danish** Immigration Service, 34 asylum-seeking children went missing between 1 and 20 February 2018.

In **Sweden**, 103 unaccompanied children went missing, according to the Swedish Migration Agency. Authorities continued to make few efforts to trace missing children, the Ombudsman for Children and Save the Children reported.

Family reunification

In **Greece**, the family reunification of refugees [remained problematic](#) due to the excessive processing time, the delays of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in issuing the required visa for admission and other reasons. Also in Greece, the Athens Administrative Court gave the green light to the family reunification request of a refugee from Eritrea (an orthodox priest) with his spouse and his three children, which took more than five years after two instances of rejection, the Greek Council of Refugees reported.

Immigration detention

In **Hungary**, pre-removal detention was ordered against 19 people, while asylum detention was ordered only against two single men (Dublin transferees), according to the Office of Immigration and Asylum and the National Headquarters of the Police.

In **Croatia**, the Centre for Peace Studies has unsuccessfully been trying to access the detention centre since the beginning of 2018, in order to conduct regular visits as previously informally agreed with the Head Officer of the Detention Centre. As the main building is under reconstruction, persons in detention cannot get out for fresh air, according to the Jesuit Refugee Service.

According to the **Bulgarian** Ministry of the Interior, 58 new detainees were placed in pre-removal detention. The occupancy rate of pre-removal facilities remained low (about 26 %), with the majority of detainees coming from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq and Syria. Caritas Bulgaria started offering educational and recreational activities to detainees in Lybimets.

The National Preventive Mechanism in **Poland** [reported](#) several shortcomings in the Przemysl and Krosno Odrzańskie immigration detention centres. These included border guards not respecting detainees' privacy in sanitary facilities, guards wearing electric rifles all the time and handcuffing detainees when escorting them to the doctor, very limited access to internet as well as restricted access to psychological assistance.

The main issues of concern in immigration detention remained unchanged in **France**, NGOs reported. These included the lack of alternatives to detention, the increased use of detention to ensure higher numbers of successful removals, the temporary detention of unaccompanied children apprehended at the French-Italian border before returning them back to Italy and the continued frequent [detention of families with children](#).

The Spanish Ombudsman [criticised](#) the inadequate conditions of the now closed prison in Archidona, **Spain**, which hosted more than 500 Algerians who had arrived irregularly in Murcia and Cartagena last year. The Ombudsman made ten suggestions to improve reception conditions and raised concerns about the lack

of control of an isolation cell in which an Algerian citizen had committed suicide in December last year.

According to a [report](#) by Amnesty International, authorities in the **Netherlands** did not always order immigration detention as a measure of last resort. Alternatives to detention were only considered if a migrant was willing to cooperate on their return. Personal circumstances and interests of vulnerable persons, including children, were insufficiently taken into account. In another [report](#), Amnesty International concluded that detention centres in Rotterdam, Schiphol and Zeist looked like prisons. The number of placements in solitary confinement has not decreased proportionally to the number of persons held in immigration detention. A [study](#) by the Radboud University Nijmegen found that there had been improvements regarding the application of immigration detention and legal protection of detainees. However, structural issues persisted, since the quality of legal assistance varied greatly, lawyers were not present in the majority of interviews where their presence was requested and judicial review was insufficient.

The **Finnish** Parliamentary Ombudsman, in its capacity as National Preventive Mechanism, published a [report](#) on their unannounced visit to the Metsälä detention unit in Helsinki. Although some improvements were observed, issues regarding the detainees' right to information persisted. The Ombudsman recommended to improve the availability of effective and good quality legal aid and certain provisions of health care.

Return

Returns to Afghanistan continued from several countries, including **Bulgaria, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland** and **Sweden**.

The Court of Palermo, **Italy**, [charged](#) an Italian woman with aiding and abetting irregular entry into Italian territory and sentenced her to eight months imprisonment and a fine of € 10,000. Police officers had found her Tunisian brother-in-law in her car on board of a ferry from Tunisia to Sicily and consequently returned him to Tunisia. The ferry company was also fined for not adequately checking all passengers to detect irregular migrants.

In **Hungary**, rejected asylum seekers subject to a return decision either remained in the transit zones or were transferred to detention centres pending their removal, the Ministry of the Interior stated.

Almost 36,600 persons in **Austria** signed a [petition](#) against the removal of persons in vocational training from the country. At least 100 out of the 727 asylum-seeking apprentices working in Austria faced removal. The Federal Ministry of the Interior confirmed the necessity to remove them.

In the case of the return of a well-integrated Chechen family, which had attracted significant [media attention](#) in Austria, the newspaper [Der Standard](#) reported that the Austrian authorities removed the family without handing back their passports and birth certificates. As a consequence, upon their return to Russia, the family encountered significant difficulties, such as finding work or an apartment.

In **Croatia**, the NGO “Are You Syrious” [reported](#) on the police driving migrants back to the Serbian border or forcing them to walk for eight hours back to Šid. According to their reports, at least one woman was physically assaulted by officers. Pushed back migrants had to sleep outside in harsh winter conditions without food or water.

The **Danish** Red Cross noted that the number of asylum seekers’ relocations from one facility to another increased with the Centre Avnstrup being converted into a transit centre for rejected asylum seekers. They warned that frequent relocations during the asylum procedure have a negative impact on the wellbeing of asylum seekers, especially children.

According to media reports, an [Iraqi asylum seeker was killed](#) shortly after **Finland** had returned him to his home country. Civil society organisations and politicians raised concerns over the Immigration Service’s return policies and the respect of the principle of *non-refoulement*. They criticised the Immigration Service’s decision-making procedures and renewed calls to assess the impact of the 2016 legislative reforms, which restricted the access to free legal aid and tightened the time frames for appeals. The Finnish Immigration Service [announced](#) that it would review the respective decision.

In **Sweden**, Save the Children and the Swedish Red Cross continued to voice concerns about the lack of post-return monitoring of the situation of individuals who have been returned, especially in the context of continued removals to Afghanistan.

Legal, social and policy responses

European Court of Human Rights case law

The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) upheld an [application](#) against the detention conditions of 14 unaccompanied children in the hotspot of Taranto, **Italy**, in July 2017. These children – coming from Bangladesh, Côte d’Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, and Senegal – were detained together with adults, in inadequate reception conditions, without any possibility to establish contact with the exterior, and without being provided with any information concerning their situation, their rights, and the possibility to apply for asylum.

National case law

The [Highest Administrative Court](#) in **Austria** clarified that women can be granted refugee status when they have adopted a “western”-oriented lifestyle that has become such an integral part of their identity that they could not be expected to suppress this behaviour in their country of origin in order to avoid persecution.

In another [case concerning the asylum application of an Afghan national](#), the same court established that in order to deny subsidiary protection based on the existence of an internal flight alternative in the country of origin, the person must be able to live there without undue hardship like fellow citizens in that region. The assessment must take into account the situation in the country of origin as well as the asylum seeker’s personal circumstances.

National legislation

In **Italy**, [legislative decree 2017/220](#), amending existing legislation implementing the Reception Conditions Directive (2013/33/EU), as well as the Asylum Procedures Directive (2013/32/EU) entered into force. This decree introduced provisions to speed up international protection procedures, as well as to combat irregular migration. It enhances the protection of unaccompanied children, clarifying, for example, that the youth court – and no longer the judge supervising guardianship cases (*giudice tutelare*) – is in charge of appointing the guardian for unaccompanied children, thus ensuring that all procedures concerning unaccompanied children fall under the competence of the same court.

The **Hungarian** government submitted [three bills](#) to the Parliament, together referred to as the “[Stop Soros](#)” legislative package. The draft laws aim to impose financial and other sanctions on NGOs who ‘support migration’ using ‘foreign funds’ (e.g. by introducing mandatory licences for them to operate, imposing special taxes). In addition, ‘restraining orders’ are envisaged against members of such organisations and other individuals supporting ‘illegal migration’ to ban their entry into the 8 km zone from Hungary’s borders – or, for non-nationals, to ban them from the entire Hungarian territory. The envisaged rules detail the range of activities covered by the concept of ‘supporting migration’. This includes advocacy, campaigning, monitoring borders, producing information material and recruiting volunteers, as well as using funds received from abroad. Further discussions on the bills are pending until the parliamentary elections, to be held in early April.

Austria [extended](#) the list of safe countries of origin, to also include Ukraine, Armenia and Benin.

The government in **France** presented a [new bill](#) “for a guaranteed right to asylum and managed immigration”, which will be discussed in the National Assembly in March and April 2018. The new legislation plans to introduce fines of up to € 3,750 or a 1-year imprisonment term for people who illegally crossed the borders within the EU; double the time asylum applicants can be held in detention to 90 days; halve the time for appeals in case of rejection of the asylum claim; and reduce the average length of the asylum procedures from 11 months to six. Also in France, the National Assembly adopted a [new legislative amendment](#) on facilitating the detention of asylum seekers for the purposes of Dublin transfers. However, its promulgation was pending, since the text was submitted to the *Conseil Constitutionnel* to check its conformity with the French Constitution.

A new [legislative proposal](#) in **Sweden** envisages longer residence permits for unaccompanied children under certain conditions. Both the Ombudsman for Children and NGOs ([Swedish Red Cross](#), Save the Children) expressed their concerns about the proposal, since it would only cover unaccompanied children who arrived in Sweden after the end of November 2015. The bill would also exclude a large number of children who, for other reasons, do not meet the eligibility criteria.

In **Denmark**, a [bill](#) on the expulsion of convicted foreigners was put forward in Parliament. The Danish Institute for Human Rights provided [recommendations](#) on it, including the need for more comprehensive guidelines.

Policy responses

The Ministry of Labour in **Greece** issued an [interpretative circular](#) on the issuance of a social security number to all asylum seekers, including those living at the Reception and Identification Centres. The simplified procedure does no longer require an employment contract, and one can apply with the document proving asylum applicant status alone.

Also in Greece, the [register of unemployed persons](#), operated by the National Employment Organization, became available for all migrants with a residence permit, applicants and beneficiaries of international protection as well as victims of violence housed in shelters.

Without justification, the Ministry of the Interior in **Hungary** [withdrew](#) several calls for application for NGOs under the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. The withdrawn calls for funds included projects for the accommodation of beneficiaries of international protection, integration of unaccompanied children, and providing legal assistance to asylum seekers and refugees.

In the **Netherlands**, the Advisory Committee on Migration Affairs published a [report](#) on asylum seekers coming from countries officially listed as 'safe countries of origin'. The report looks at their reasons to apply for international protection and how they can be discouraged from it. It includes case studies on Albania, Georgia and Morocco and formulates five recommendations to the Netherlands and the EU.

The **Finnish** Ministry of the Interior [started](#) preparing amendments to the Nationality Act, which should introduce the possibility to annul Finnish citizenship for those holding dual citizenship and convicted for participation in terrorist activities.

Responses by civil society, local and political actors

The [Amnesty International report 2017/18](#) pointed out that the practice of summary detentions, pushbacks and abuses at the border continued in **Bulgaria**. According to the report, migrants and refugees were not receiving necessary services and xenophobia and intolerance intensified. According to the updated [AIDA country report on Bulgaria](#), obstacles to access a fair asylum procedure persisted and the reception conditions remained inadequate, despite a significantly lower number of new arrivals.

According to the [coalition agreement](#) of the new **Dutch** government from October 2017, asylum seekers should be granted access to legal aid only once the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) notifies them of its intention to reject their application. In February, the Dutch Council for Refugees sent a [letter](#) to the Senate, underlining that this measure would seriously affect the legal protection of asylum seekers and likely increase the workload of IND and courts, due to an increased number of appeals.

The Essener Tafel, a charity distributing food past its sell-by-date to those in need, sparked a controversial [debate](#) about refugees and poverty in **Germany**.

The organisation refused to serve migrants and requested claimants to present a German passport to receive free food.

In **Sweden**, several NGOs arranged [demonstrations](#) in Stockholm against returns to Afghanistan, as part of an initiative which arranged similar events in ten European countries.

Hate speech and violent crime

In **Macerata, Italy**, a gunman, wearing an Italian flag around his neck and making a fascist salute, opened fire on African migrants from his car, wounding six people before being arrested. Tens of thousands of people gathered for a [demonstration](#) in Macerata to oppose the racist attack and to show support for the victims. Also in Italy, unknown perpetrators tossed a Molotov cocktail at a reception centre hosting 54 asylum seekers in **Sermoneta** (Lazio). In **Mestre** (Veneto), the headquarters of a cooperative society managing reception centres was defaced with racist and Nazi symbols.

In **Greece**, a farmer in Moria (Lesvos) opened fire on three asylum seekers he claimed were trying to steal his sheep, near the Reception and Identification Centre, according to [media reports](#). No injuries were reported. Police and prosecutor investigations followed, while locals and the mayor gathered at the police directorate to express their solidarity with the perpetrator.

Multiple NGOs speaking at a [conference on prejudice and education](#), organised by a Hungarian research and consultancy institute in Budapest (**Hungary**), stressed that the general population now feels stronger antipathy towards migrants than Roma or Jewish people. It was claimed to be the result of the Hungarian government's ever stronger anti-migrant propaganda since 2015.

Also in **Hungary**, in Sátoraljaújhely (a town in the North-East of Hungary), the paediatrics department of the local hospital was closed after the resignation of the last paediatrician, who was a migrant worker. The head of the hospital's pathology department claimed that the reason for this was the "[hysteria of a migrant](#)" (i.e. among several foreign doctors working there, the last one who left the paediatrics department after a series of resignations was also a foreigner).

In **Germany**, attacks against refugees have been on the increase again since July 2017. A response to a [parliamentary question](#) reported about at least 950 attacks on Muslims and mosques, with about 33 injured persons in 2017. Overall, in 2017, some 2,220 attacks against refugees and their accommodation with at least 300 injured persons took place – on average more than five a day. In the reporting period, [Pro Asyl and the Amadeu Antonio Foundation](#) recorded 19 violent attacks (e.g. with knives, electric Tasers, stones, fists, etc.) directed at asylum seekers and their accommodation, with at least 22 to 26 injured refugees. In **Heilbronn**, a man attacked three refugees with a knife. Several anti-migrant demonstrations took place, for example in **Cottbus**, **Hamburg**, **Berlin**. [Violent incidents](#) were reported in Cottbus during two demonstrations against migrants, attended by 1,500 to 3,000 protestors. Organised by a Syrian refugee, a [pro-refugee demonstration](#) with some 1,000 participants took place in parallel.

Stakeholders interviewed in February 2018

Country	Stakeholders interviewed
Austria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Austrian Ombudsman Board (<i>Volksanwaltschaft</i>); • Federal Ministry of the Interior, Department III/5 (<i>Bundesministerium für Inneres, Abteilung III/5 Asyl und Fremdenwesen</i>); • Federal Ministry of the Interior, Criminal Intelligence Service, Competence Centre for Missing Children (<i>Bundesministerium für Inneres, Bundeskriminalamt, Kompetenzzentrum für Abgängige Personen</i>); • Federal Agency for State Protection and Counter Terrorism (<i>Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz und Terrorismusbekämpfung, BVT</i>); • Antidiscrimination Office Styria (<i>Antidiskriminierungsstelle Steiermark</i>); • Caritas Vienna (<i>Caritas Wien</i>); • Caritas Styria (<i>Caritas Steiermark</i>); • Austrian Red Cross (<i>Österreichisches Rotes Kreuz</i>).
Bulgaria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of the Interior, Analysis and Policies Directorate, Borders and Migration Unit (MoI – APD – BMU) (<i>Министерство на вътрешните работи, Дирекция „Анализи и политики“, Отдел „Граници и миграция“, МВР – ДАП – ОГМ</i>); • State Agency for Refugees (SAR) (<i>Държавна агенция за бежанците, ДАБ</i>); • Ombudsman of the Republic of Bulgaria (<i>Омбудсман на Република България</i>); • State Agency for Child Protection (SACP) (<i>Държавна агенция за закрила на детето, ДАЗД</i>); • Prosecution Office of the Republic of Bulgaria (PORB) (<i>Прокуратура на Република България, ПРБ</i>); • Caritas Bulgaria (<i>Каритас България</i>); • Council of Refugee Women in Bulgaria (CRWB) (<i>Съвет на жените бежанки в България, СЖББ</i>).
Croatia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ministry of the Interior (<i>Ministarstvo unutarnjih poslova</i>); • Rehabilitation Centre for Stress and Trauma (<i>Rehabilitacijski centar za stres i traum</i>); • The Croatian Law Center (<i>Hrvatski pravni centar</i>); • Croatian Red Cross (<i>Hrvatski crveni križ</i>); • Ombudsperson's Office (<i>Pučka pravobraniteljica</i>); • Children's Attorney (<i>Pravobraniteljica za djecu</i>); • The Governmental Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities (<i>Ured za ljudska prava i prava nacionalnih manjina Vlade RH</i>); • Centre for Peace Studies (<i>Centar za mirovne studije</i>); • Jesuit Refugee Service (<i>Isusovačka služba za izbjeglice</i>); • Welcome Initiative (<i>Inicijativa Dobrodošli</i>); • Croatian Red Cross (<i>Hrvatski crveni križ</i>); • Rehabilitation Centre for Stress and Trauma (<i>Rehabilitacijski centar za stres i traum</i>); • Doctors of the World (<i>Médecins du Monde</i>).
Denmark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Danish Ministry of Justice (<i>Justitsministeriet</i>), including the Danish National Police (<i>Rigspolitiet</i>);

Country	Stakeholders interviewed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Danish Immigration Service (<i>Udlændingestyrelsen</i>), including the Statistical Unit, the Office for Finances and Accommodation, the Centre for Asylum and the Office for Accommodation Conditions; • Danish Refugee Council (<i>Dansk Flygtningehjælp</i>); • Danish Red Cross (<i>Røde Kors</i>).
Finland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amnesty International Finnish Section; • Equality Ombudsman; • Finnish Human Rights Centre; • Finnish Immigration Service; • Finnish Refugee Advice Centre; • IOM Finland; • National Police Board; • Ombudsman for Children; • Parliamentary Ombudsman.
France	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of the Interior (<i>Ministère de l'Intérieur</i>); • Public Defender of Rights (<i>Le Défenseur des droits - DDD</i>); • Amnesty International France; • National Association of Border Assistance for Foreigners (<i>ANAFÉ</i>); • La Cimade (<i>Inter-Movement Committee for evacuees - Comité inter mouvements auprès des évacués</i>); • Doctors of the world - France (<i>Médecins du Monde</i>); • Service centre for migrants in Calais (<i>Plateforme de service aux migrants à Calais</i>); • The Immigrant Information and Support Group (<i>Groupe d'information et de soutien des immigrés - GISTI</i>); • Le Comede (Committee for the health of exiles - <i>Comité pour la santé des exiles</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>); • Jesuit Refugee Service (<i>Jesuiten Flüchtlingsdienst, JRS</i>); • German Red Cross (<i>Deutsches Rotes Kreuz</i>); • Refugee Council Mecklenburg-West Pommern (<i>Flüchtlingsrat Mecklenburg-Vorpommern</i>); • National Agency for the Prevention of Torture (<i>Nationale Stelle zur Verhütung von Folter</i>); • German Caritas Association (<i>Deutscher Caritasverband</i>); • National working group psychosocial centres for refugees and victims of torture (<i>Bundesweite Arbeitsgemeinschaft Psychosozialer Zentren für Flüchtlinge und Folteropfer, BAFF</i>); • Ministry of the Interior and Sport of Lower Saxony (<i>Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Inneres und Sport</i>); • Thuringian Ministry of Migration, Justice and Consumer Protection (<i>Thüringer Ministerium für Migration, Justiz und Verbraucherschutz</i>).
Greece	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry for Migration Policy (<i>Υπουργείο Μεταναστευτικής Πολιτικής</i>); • Greek Asylum Service (<i>Υπηρεσία Ασύλου</i>); • The Greek Ombudsman (<i>Συνήγορος του Πολίτη</i>); • Hellenic Police Headquarters (<i>Αρχηγείο Ελληνικής Αστυνομίας</i>); • National Centre for Social Solidarity (<i>Εθνικό Κέντρο Κοινωνικής Αλληλεγγύης</i>);

Country	Stakeholders interviewed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racist Violence Recording Network (<i>Δίκτυο Καταγραφής Ρατσιστικής Βίας</i>); • United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Greece (<i>Υπατη Αρμοστεία του ΟΗΕ για τους Πρόσφυγες - Ελληνικό Τμήμα</i>); • Hellenic League for Human Rights (<i>Ελληνική Ένωση για τα Δικαιώματα του Ανθρώπου</i>); • Doctors Without Borders Greece (<i>Γιατροί Χωρίς Σύνορα - Ελληνικό Τμήμα</i>); • Doctors of the World Greece (<i>Γιατροί του Κόσμου - Ελληνικό Τμήμα</i>); • Greek Council for Refugees (<i>Ελληνικό Συμβούλιο για τους Πρόσφυγες</i>).
Hungary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of the Interior (<i>Belügyminisztérium</i>); • Ministry of Human Capacities (<i>Emberi Erőforrások Minisztériuma</i>); • National Police Headquarters (<i>Országos Rendőr-főkapitányság</i>); • Immigration and Asylum Office (<i>Bevándorlási és Menekültügyi Hivatal</i>); • Office of the Commissioner for Fundamental Rights (<i>Alapvető Jogok Biztosának Hivatala</i>); • UNHCR Hungary; • MigSzol; • Hungarian Association for Migrants (<i>Menedék Migránsokat Segítő Egyesület</i>).
Italy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of the Interior; • Authority for the Protection of People who are Detained or Deprived of their Personal Freedom (<i>Garante nazionale per i diritti delle persone detenute o private della libertà personale</i>); • Association for Legal Studies on Immigration (<i>Associazione per gli studi giuridici sull'immigrazione, ASGI</i>); • Italian Refugees Council (<i>Consiglio Italiano per i Rifugiati, CIR</i>); • NGO 'Doctors for Human Rights' (<i>Medici per i diritti umani, MEDU</i>); • United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); • Jesuit Refugee Service 'Centro Astalli'; • Community of Sant'Egidio (<i>Comunità di Sant'Egidio</i>); • 'Melting Pot Europa' project; • NGO 'Borderline Sicilia'; • NGO 'Naga'.
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 so-called 'Alien Chain'); • Defence for Children the Netherlands; • Dutch Council for Refugees (<i>Vluchtelingenwerk Nederland</i>); • Amnesty International the Netherlands; • NIDOS; • Stichting LOS; • UNICEF the Netherlands; • Pharos, Dutch Centre of Expertise on Health Disparities; • MiND-the Dutch Reporting Point for Discrimination.
Poland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association for Legal Intervention (<i>Stowarzyszenie Interwencji Prawnej, SIP</i>);

Country	Stakeholders interviewed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights (<i>Helsińska Fundacja Praw Człowieka, HFPC</i>); • UNHCR Poland; • Ombudsman (<i>Rzecznik Praw Obywatelskich, RPO</i>); • Head of the Office for Foreigners (<i>Szef Urzędu do spraw Cudzoziemców, UDSC</i>); • Border Guard (<i>Straż Graniczna, SG</i>); • The Rule of Law Institute Foundation (<i>Instytut na rzecz Państwa I Prawa, FIPP</i>); • Ombudsman for Children (<i>Rzecznik Praw Dziecka, RPD</i>).
Spain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sub-directorate for Immigrant Integration of the Spanish Ministry of Employment and Social Security (<i>Subdirección General de Integración de los Inmigrantes del Ministerio de Empleo y Seguridad Social</i>); • Asylum and Refugee Office of the Spanish Ministry of the Interior (<i>Oficina de Asilo y Refugio del Ministerio del Interior, OAR</i>); • Spanish Ombudsman (<i>Defensor del Pueblo</i>); • Spanish Committee of UNHCR (<i>Comité español de la Agencia de la ONU para los Refugiados, ACNUR</i>); • Spanish Committee of UNICEF (<i>Comité español de UNICEF</i>); • Jesuit Migrant Service (<i>Servicio Jesuita Migrantes, SJM</i>); • Spanish Refugee Aid Commission (<i>Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado, CEAR</i>); • Rights International Spain (<i>RIS</i>); • Chair of Refugees and Forced Migrants at Comillas ICAI-ICADE, INDITEX (<i>Cátedra de Refugiados y Migrantes Forzados de Comillas ICAI-ICADE, INDITEX</i>).
Sweden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Board of Health and Welfare (<i>Socialstyrelsen</i>); • Swedish Migration Agency (<i>Migrationsverket</i>); • Swedish Police Authority (<i>Polismyndigheten</i>); • Ombudsman for Children in Sweden (<i>Barnombudsmannen</i>); • Save the Children Sweden (<i>Rädda Barnen</i>); • Swedish Red Cross (<i>Röda Korset</i>).