

# Periodic data collection on the migration situation in the EU

## September Highlights

1 July–31 August 2018

### Contents

Key fundamental rights concerns .....	2
Situation at the border.....	5
Asylum procedure .....	7
Reception.....	9
Child protection.....	12
Immigration detention .....	14
Return .....	16
Legal responses .....	17
Policy responses.....	19
Responses by civil society, local and political actors.....	20
Hate speech and violent crime .....	20
ANNEX – Stakeholders interviewed in August 2018.....	23

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***The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights has been collecting relevant data since November 2015, in light of the increasing numbers of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants entering the EU. 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 July-31 August 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**

In two non-papers, the European Commission further elaborated on the concepts of "[controlled centres](#)" and "[regional disembarkation arrangements](#)", as suggested in the European Council's [conclusions](#) of 28-29 June. The International Organization for Migration (IOM), UNHCR, the International Maritime Organization, the European Commission and the most affected EU Member States, together with North African countries and the African Union [met](#) to further refine these concepts. However, many details remain unclear. The [European Council on Refugees and Exiles](#) (ECRE) raised concerns relating to the concepts, in particular regarding the right to asylum and the principle of *non-refoulement*.

In **Greece**, thousands of migrants and asylum seekers arriving via the land border with Turkey in the Evros region were subject to sub-standard reception and detention conditions. Vulnerable groups (e.g. pregnant women and mothers with babies) lacked necessary protection, the NGO [Human Rights Watch](#) reported. This situation is on top of the ongoing fundamental rights challenges that persist on the Greek islands – see the section on 'Key persisting fundamental rights concerns'.

In **Italy**, the media reported on a significant number of hate crime incidents, including numerous racist insults and violent attacks. For example, a national newspaper released a [video](#) showing police officers in Palermo (Sicily) deploying pepper spray in the face of a foreign national in handcuffs (More details below, under Hate speech and violent crime).

In mid-August 2018, the Hungarian Helsinki Committee [reported](#) that rejected asylum seekers in the transit zones in **Hungary** who had come from Serbia, no longer received any food if they appealed the inadmissibility decision in court. In order to have access to food, they had to leave the transit zone, returning to

Serbia. According to available information, this policy was not applied to children and breastfeeding mothers, but they were served their food in a separate part of the transit zone so that they would not be able to share it with the rest of the family. In the second half of August, after a series of interim measures [ordered](#) by the European Court of Human Rights, the practice was [discontinued](#) by the authorities, but it remains a possibility under current legislation.

Several cases of police violence against asylum seekers and refugees were reported in **Croatia**. The NGO 'Are You Syrious?' [released a testimony](#) of 12 Pakistani asylum seekers, including three children, who stated that they had been beaten and insulted by seven Croatian police officers near Karlovac and then pushed back at the Croatian border to Bosnia and Herzegovina. In an interview, the Welcome Initiative reported numerous cases of police officers confiscating asylum seekers' money, destroying their documents and phones before pushing them back to Serbia, Slovenia or Bosnia and Herzegovina. Some police officers allegedly took photos of themselves while humiliating people seeking protection. In the Bosnian border towns of Velika Kladuša and Bihać, migrants looking to head to Croatia were beaten with sticks, taunted or attacked by dogs handled by the Croatian police, according to [media reports](#).

In a [press statement](#), the federal government of **Austria** announced plans to abolish asylum seekers' rights to access apprenticeship schemes. [Opposition parties](#), [aid organisations](#) and [UNHCR](#) criticised these plans.

In Chemnitz, **Germany**, according to the [media](#), the homicide of a 35-year-old German man, allegedly at the hands of asylum seekers, led to the spontaneous protests of several far-right and neo-Nazi groups. Racist slogans were chanted amid illegal Hitler salutes.

The lack of independent legal and social counselling services has become one of the most pressing issues in **Germany**, as several interviewed stakeholders confirmed. This is particularly envisaged in the so-called anchor centres (AnKER Centres – *zentrale Aufnahme-, Entscheidungs- und Rückführungseinrichtungen*), given the accelerated procedure in such centres and the fact that government actors and state agencies increasingly take over legal and social counselling during asylum and return procedures. Seven former reception centres in Bavaria have been transformed into AnKER centres, according to [media reports](#). In these centres, asylum seekers are registered, have their cases assessed and, if rejected, can potentially be returned from there.

The Internal Security Agency in **Poland** unofficially called asylum applicants to meet them in public places and to persuade them to cooperate with the agency as informants, according to the information provided by the Ombudsman and several NGOs in interviews. The Ombudsman's Office reported a similar issue in relation to beneficiaries of international protection who were threatened by the secret services that they could lose their residence rights if they were unwilling to cooperate with them.

In **Sweden**, uncertainties around the legality of [new legislative amendments](#) on granting temporary residence permits to unaccompanied children and young adults under certain conditions (covering those who arrived in Sweden before the end of November 2015) caused problems for municipalities. Municipalities, responsible for providing education to children aged between six to 19 years, were unsure whether this group (approximately 9,000 young people) would end

up in their secondary schools by the time the school year started, the National Board of Health and Welfare [stated](#).

One in five Syrians who UNHCR proposed to relocate to **the Netherlands** under the EU-Turkey Statement is refused by the Dutch authorities for being too conservative or having extremist sympathies, according to a statement by a National Police employee reported in the [media](#). Since such persons arrive on invitation outside the normal asylum procedure, the government may set additional integration requirements, according to [media sources](#). The Director National Office at the Dutch Council for Refugees told a [newspaper](#) that the initial aim of the so-called integration criterion was to examine whether the Netherlands was a suitable country for refugees, which has now been reversed. By using the criterion in this way, very vulnerable individuals may be excluded from receiving the protection they need.

### **Key persisting fundamental rights concerns**

The Reception and Identification Centres on the Aegean islands in **Greece** ('hotspots') remained severely [overcrowded](#), with the exception of the hotspot in Leros. 16,068 people resided in accommodation facilities that have a total capacity of some 6,300. The hotspot on the island of Lesbos (Moria facility) nearly hosted three times as many asylum seekers (8,370) as its official capacity (3,100 places). In a [letter](#) sent to the European Commission, 12 NGOs highlighted the very poor material conditions in the hotspot in Chios, including the inadequate number of showers and sanitary facilities, a lack of electricity, no access to drinking water, sexual and gender-based violence and a lack of medical care. The NGO *Médecins Sans Frontières* continued [to urge](#) authorities to immediately transfer vulnerable people from Lesbos to mainland Greece and to scale up safety and access to healthcare for those on the island.

**Italy** maintained its policy of preventing rescue ships from docking and disembarking in Italy (please see details below under 'Situation at the border').

Human smuggling remained a concern in **Hungary**. According to the police, in July and August, the authorities placed 27 human smugglers in custody, which is a clear increase as compared to the previous reporting period (17 cases detected in May and June). In several cases, smuggled people were found in [cargo wagons](#) of international trains coming from Serbia.

One of the key persistent issues in **Croatia** was restricted access to asylum for people in need of international protection coming via Serbia or Bosnia and Herzegovina. Only 179 requests for international protection were submitted during the reporting period, compared to 591 requests during the same period the year before, according to the Ministry of the Interior. Violent pushbacks continued at the Croatian border to Serbia, Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, according to [media reports](#) and an interview with the Welcome Initiative.

The [acceptance of migration](#) and the protection of refugees within society in **Germany** has been continuously decreasing and UNHCR noted an increasing right-wing discourse in public debate.

In **Poland**, refusing entry to asylum seekers at the Terespol and Medyka land border crossing points remained a major concern, UNHCR, the Ombudsman for

Children and NGOs reported in interviews. At least two pushed-back asylum seekers at Terespol reported alleged crimes committed by border guards to the Prosecutor's Office in Poland, the Ombudsman stated in an interview. 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 immigration detention. This occurred, despite the fact that the detention of victims of violence is prohibited under Polish [immigration](#) and [asylum law](#), UNHCR, the Ombudsman and NGOs reported in interviews. Assistance in this area has been primarily provided by private entities and NGOs, given that there is no rehabilitation centre for foreigners in the country, according to the [National Prevention Mechanism](#) established under the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture.

The **Bulgarian** Ombudsperson indicated in an interview that there are persistent issues regarding the inadequate legal representation of unaccompanied children. Another concern was that some beneficiaries of international protection were still accommodated in reception centres, contrary to legal requirements. Moreover, their integration remained ineffective, mainly due to a lack of funding for municipalities.

Several interviewed stakeholders, including the Jesuit Refuge Service and UNHCR continued to raise concerns about the new [law regulating family reunifications](#) of persons under subsidiary protection in **Germany**, as they consider the practical implementation of the contingent of 1,000 people eligible for unification per month difficult.

**Spain** faced a continuous increase of new arrivals, especially via the Andalusian coasts. According to [UNHCR](#), during January-June 2018 arrivals have increased by 128% (some 27,600) in comparison with the same period in the previous year (some 12,100). Similarly, the number of deaths and missing persons on the route to Spain have increased exponentially in 2018: 181% (318 persons) over the past year (113 persons).

In **France**, persistent problems included the existence of informal camps in the North of France and in Paris, and the deterioration of their living conditions. This led to increased tensions between the police, migrants and NGOs supporting migrants. In interviews, the General Controller of Places for Deprivation of Liberty and several NGOs reported the widespread use of immigration detention, also in the case of children.

The **Finnish** Refugee Council raised concerns over the curtailed access to legal aid in an interview.

## Situation at the border

**Italy** continued to not allow rescue boats to dock in its ports or to significantly delay disembarkation, according to media reports. On [12 July](#), five days after having been rescued by a tugboat and transferred to the coast guard ship 'Diciotti', 67 migrants could disembark in the port of Trapani following the order of the president of Italy. On [30 July](#), the Italian tow boat 'Asso 28' rescued 108 people and they disembarked in Libya. Malta, Italy, and Spain refused to allow the *SOS Méditerranée* ship 'Aquarius' that had rescued about 140 migrants on [10 August](#) to dock. After several days of standby and allegedly only following the

commitment of Spain, Portugal, France, Germany and Luxembourg to eventually host the migrants, they could disembark in Malta. Some 150 migrants trapped on the coast guard ship 'Diciotti' for five days were only allowed to disembark in Catania (Sicily) on 20 August after Ireland and Albania agreed to take in some of them. According to the [media](#), the boat had docked at Catania in Sicily with about 190 migrants on board, but Italy's Interior Minister Matteo Salvini first allowed only 27 unaccompanied children and 12 women and men to leave the boat for medical reasons, refusing to let the rest disembark unless other EU countries agreed to take some of them in. Following this incident, the media reported that the public prosecutor initiated an [investigation](#) against Matteo Salvini and his Chief of Staff.

The situation at the border between **France** and **Italy** (in particular in the French Department of Alpes-Maritimes) remained challenging. A phenomenon in this region is the prostitution of young female irregular migrants, mainly from Sub-Saharan Africa. Many attempted to reach France and could not pay smugglers, the NGO 'Save the Children' found in their recent [report](#). The French-Spanish border was also under increased pressure, in particular around the Spanish border town of Irun, NGOs reported in interviews. Given that the daily number of arrivals grew significantly in August (approximately [80 people a day](#)), France signed an agreement with Spain allowing French authorities to return irregular migrants apprehended at the border or those who had been in the territory of France for under four hours, according to [media reports](#). In interviews, the NGOs 'ANAFÉ' and 'GISTI' voiced concerns about the legality of such cooperation, especially in light of the principle of *non-refoulement* and the prohibition of collective expulsion.

Also in **France**, the Office of the President of the Republic [announced](#) that France was going to host 20 of the 87 migrants who arrived in Spain aboard the humanitarian rescue vessel 'Open Arms'.

In **Greece**, pushbacks continued at the Greek-Turkish land border and via the Evros river. Those affected included women, children and ill persons, according to [NGO reports](#).

In **Hungary**, the police apprehended some 580 migrants in an irregular situation in the reporting period. According to the data of the National Headquarters of the Police, these persons were escorted back to the outer side of the fence at the Hungarian-Serbian border. In the same period, the police and the army prevented 164 people from crossing the border into Hungary via the border fence, the National Headquarters of the Police [reported](#). The numbers in August (112 people prevented from crossing the border fence) doubled compared to the previous months. According to NGOs, this increase is due to the [latest changes](#) in asylum legislation (see below), which entered into force in July, obliging the asylum authority to automatically reject the asylum claim of those applicants who travelled through countries where their lives were not directly exposed to threat (e.g. Serbia).

Asylum seekers travelling between Salzburg and Innsbruck by bus on the highway (which passes through Germany) were subject to border controls at the German border to **Austria**. In an interview, the Red Cross reported that German police arrested some migrants and brought them back to Austria.

According to the **Bulgarian Ministry of the Interior**, 667 persons were apprehended at the borders and within the territory, which is about three times more than in the previous two months (220 persons in May and June) and is comparable to the same period last year (673 persons). Almost two thirds of persons were apprehended within the country's territory.

## Asylum procedure

### Figures and trends

[IOM](#) records show that 1,549 persons lost their lives in the Mediterranean until the end of August 2018, compared to 3,139 in the entire year of 2017. Furthermore, until 30 July 2018, 72,200 persons arrived by sea to **Italy**, and by land and sea to **Greece** and **Spain**. These figures present a significant decrease compared to the same period last year (121,000 persons), as reported by [UNHCR](#). In July 2018, the number of refugees and migrants arriving via these routes increased in **Greece** (by about 15 %) and **Spain** (by about 31 %) and decreased in **Italy** (by about 38 %) compared to the previous month.

In the EU+ countries (EU Member States, Norway and Switzerland), approximately 9 % more applications for international protection (56,000 in total) were lodged in July 2018 than in the previous month and about 6 % fewer than in July 2017, according to [EASO](#). The main countries of origin were Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Turkey and Pakistan. The largest relative increase was observed for Turkish applicants (+724, +34 %). In the **Netherlands**, for example, first time applications from Turkey more than tripled in [July](#) (129) compared to June 2018 (36).

### Access to asylum procedures

Lawyers in **Greece** filed complaints against the Greek Asylum Service before the Ministry of Migration Policy, the General Inspector of Public Administration and the Ombudsman. This, mainly due to those seeking to apply for asylum being required to book an appointment via Skype for application submissions. In many cases, asylum applicants were unable to establish a connection due to problems with the system, and thus were unable to book an appointment with the asylum authority, according to [media reports](#).

In **Italy**, the Ministry of the Interior sent a [letter](#) to relevant authorities urging them to reduce the average duration of the asylum procedure and to assess applications more strictly, in order to reduce the number of persons granted protection on humanitarian grounds based on national law. Several NGOs, such as [ASGI](#) criticised the letter for attempting to limit the independence of the asylum authorities.

Access to asylum remained very restricted in **Hungary**. For the first ten days of August, no asylum seeker was allowed to enter the transit zones at the Hungarian-Serbian border, since authorities were preparing for the application of the [recent amendments](#) to the asylum legislation, the Hungarian Helsinki Committee [reported](#). Only 17 asylum applicants were admitted to the transit zones in August. According to the [Hungarian Helsinki Committee](#), asylum procedures have sped up since the new rules on asylum entered into force on 1 July 2018. This is due to the fact that authorities systematically deny

international protection to those who arrived via Serbia, declaring these applications inadmissible under the new rules.

A persistent concern in **Austria** is the increasing number of revisions and revocations of subsidiary protection, according to an interview with Caritas Vienna and a [radio interview](#) with the NGO *Verein Menschenrechte Österreich*. This especially concerns young persons from Afghanistan who were children at the time of their first application. The wording of a negative asylum decision for a homosexual asylum seeker raised [media attention](#) and drew criticism for using stereotypes. For example, the asylum seeker was said to not act or walk as a homosexual man supposedly would. Caritas Styria reported that the Court of Audit is currently examining the efficiency of the Austrian asylum procedure, as around 40 % of first instance decisions are overturned in the second instance.

In **Poland**, the lack of legal assistance available to asylum seekers in detention centres and open reception facilities remained an issue of grave concern, the Ombudsman, UNHCR, and multiple NGOs pointed out in interviews. This deficiency is due to funding gaps, since the Ministry of the Interior and Administration has still not announced calls for almost a year, under their national programme of the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund.

In **Germany**, there is an increase in the use of accelerated procedures (so-called "[direct procedures](#)") and more staff at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees. UNHCR and *'Arbeiterwohlfahrt'* stressed that as a consequence to these measures, in arrival facilities, the time between registration of an asylum application and first hearing has been reduced to only a few days. While in principle this is a positive development, the down side is that asylum seekers often do not have enough time to adequately prepare for the hearings or ask for independent consultation services. Furthermore, special vulnerabilities are not reliably identified as part of the accelerated procedure, and asylum seekers cannot approach a physician or therapist.

Furthermore, in **Germany**, some 100,000 asylum procedures are to be re-examined. This is a consequence of the case concerning Franco A., a German soldier who was falsely recognised as a Syrian refugee, and the affair concerning wrongly granted positive asylum decisions in the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees branch in Bremen. Out of the 11,187 cases examined until the end of July, only 1.2% of the re-examined decisions had to be revoked, according to a [governmental reply](#) to a parliamentary request.

In **France**, the average length of the waiting time before lodging an asylum application at a prefecture significantly decreased (to 3 days), notably in Paris, mainly due to the recently established telephone system, the NGOs *'La Cimade'* and *'GISTI'* reported in interviews. Also in France, as in the previous months, authorities continued to expand the use of accelerated asylum procedures, with the intentions to reduce the delays in examining the asylum applications, the NGO *'GISTI'* reported.

According to a [policy letter](#) from the **Dutch** State Secretary for Justice and Security, the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) will no longer put emphasis on the awareness process and the method of self-acceptance when assessing asylum requests by LGBTI persons. New instructions for IND staff explain how more open questions, as well as those relating to personal experiences should be used when handling asylum request by [LGBTI](#) persons



and [converts](#). COC Nederland sent a letter to the State Secretary for Justice and Security, in which they criticise the fact that the IND is not working in line with new instructions on LGBTI asylum applications.

In an interview, the **Finnish** Refugee Advice Centre underlined that shortened appeal periods (particularly: 21 days in administrative courts and 14 days in the Supreme Administrative Court) put a lot of pressure on asylum seekers and their legal aid providers. Moreover, free legal aid was not available in the case of subsequent applications. As stated by the Finnish Immigration Service in an interview, subsequent applications presented about 40 % of all applications in July and August. The Minister of the Interior [tweeted](#) that the Ministry will commission an independent evaluation of the Finnish Immigration Service's handling of asylum applications.

## Reception

### Reception capacity

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

Reception centres remained overcrowded in parts of **France, Greece** and **Spain**. (No numbers about the reception capacity in Italy were available).

The reception system's capacity in **France** remained unable to provide accommodation for all asylum seekers in the country (the total number of asylum applicants remained close to 110.000 people), the NGO 'GISTI' reported in interviews. As a result, informal camps continued to reappear in the North of France (Calais) and in Paris (in the district of La Chapelle), despite regular evacuation operations carried out by authorities, the National Consultative Commission on Human Rights, the Public Defender of Rights and NGOs reported in interviews.

The Reception and Identification Centres on the Aegean islands in **Greece** ('hotspots') remained severely [overcrowded](#), with the exception of the hotspot in Leros.

In order to address the insufficient reception capacity in **Spain**, the government announced the creation of an [Emergency Plan](#) of € 29.7 million. The plan aims to strengthen the Beach Assistance Programme and the Humanitarian Attention Programme for the immediate care of irregular arrivals in Ceuta and Melilla. This plan also includes the creation of two new types of centers: Reception, Emergency and Referral Centres (*Centros de Acogida, Emergencia y Derivación*) and Aliens Temporary Care Centres (*Centro de Atención Temporal de Extranjeros*), according to the Spanish Refugee Aid Commission.

The [Minister of the Interior](#) in **Italy** announced plans to downsize the capacity of the reception centre in Mineo (Sicily) from 3,000 to 2,400 places with the ultimate goal to close the centre entirely. Daily costs for each person will be reduced from € 29 to € 15.

The number of asylum seekers in **Poland** to whom the asylum authority grants social assistance (e.g. housing and information on health care) continued to

decrease. Roughly 50 % of all asylum seekers received funds to live outside of open reception centres (in private accommodation), the Polish Office for Foreigners stated. However, the sum provided is too low, compared to living costs, and thus needs to be increased, NGOs pointed out in interviews.

### **Reception conditions**

At least 80 Police officers entered the Baobab informal camp in Rome, **Italy**, with the aim to find irregular migrants. 34 migrants were immediately transferred to the local police headquarters (*Questura*) due to their criminal records, or because they were found to be irregularly staying in Italy, [Romatoday](#) reported. Following the protest of some 40 asylum seekers against the conditions of a reception centre near Pisa (Tuscany), the local health authority inspected the reception facility, and reported appalling living conditions, including dead mice, mould on the walls and water leaks from the ceiling onto beds, according to the local [media](#). The local Prefect immediately closed down the facility and transferred the applicants to special reception centres (*centri di accoglienza straordinaria, CAS*) in the province of Pisa.

In **Greece**, besides the deteriorating material conditions in the hotspots, the conditions in mainland reception facilities in Attica and Viotia also remained substandard, due to overcrowding, a lack of privacy, rain-flooded tents and their exposure to heat, difficulties in accessing health care and bad hygiene conditions, the NGO 'Refugee Support Aegean' [reported](#).

In **Hungary**, the food given to asylum seekers in the transit zones is made in a nearby prison, thus the asylum seekers get the same food as prisoners. As the NGO 'Hungarian Association for Migrants' reported in an interview, many asylum seekers complained that the food was monotonous and not nutritious. Another issue of concern is that no interpretation is provided to most asylum applicants during their medical checks, since authorities do not consider the medical examination as part of the asylum procedure, the Hungarian Helsinki Committee reported in an interview.

Several NGOs, such as the Jesuit Refugee Service and '*Arbeiterwohlfahrt*' in **Germany** criticised the planned establishment of the first anchor centres (AnKER Centres – *zentrale Aufnahme-, Entscheidungs- und Rückführungseinrichtungen*). The organisations were concerned that privacy, access to health services and education opportunities will be limited in these centres. So far, Bavaria is the only state to have started operating seven facilities, according to [media reports](#).

Tensions rose in informal camps in **France** (in Calais and in Paris), due to worsening hygiene conditions and a lack of access to drinking water, according to NGOs. In Calais, ten migrant aid associations had filed a [petition](#) with the Administrative Court of Lille, with the UN special rapporteur on the human right to drinking water and sanitation [intervening](#), to instruct authorities to set up more water points and sanitary facilities in the Calais camp. The court only ordered the installation of "a new access point to the latrines [...] in the East sector", without finding fundamental rights violations of migrants living there. The persistence of such informal camps and their harsh living conditions created tensions and led to violence between migrants (in [Calais](#) and in Paris) and between the migrants and the police (in [Calais](#)). Increased tension also

contributed to police violence against volunteers helping migrants, according to a [report](#) published by several migrant aid associations, which denounced police violence and intimidation of their volunteers.

In **Finland**, the number of incidents or threats of violence at reception centres reported to the Immigration Service increased by 30 % in 2018 compared to 2017. Both violence against staff and violence between asylum seekers has intensified, according to [media sources](#). The Immigration Service explained in an interview that this can be largely explained by an increased number of reports as well as changes in the reporting system after the Turku terrorist attack. The changes introduced lower thresholds and a more user friendly procedure for reporting.

### **Vulnerable persons**

The authorities in **Greece** decided to terminate the operation of the Patriotic Foundation for Social Rehabilitation and Perception in Lesvos, which dealt with the rehabilitation and care of vulnerable migrants and asylum seekers, including families with children. After the decision, it was unclear where residents would be transferred, since returning them to the Reception and Identification Centre in Moria (Lesvos) could endanger their physical and mental health, according to a [number of NGOs](#).

In Bologna, **Italy**, the first [reception centre](#) specifically for transgender asylum applicants and refugees will be opened. The location of the centre will not be disclosed, in order to protect the safety of its future guests.

In their report "[Hidden \(human\) faces of European Union's Dublin regulation from a health perspective](#)", Doctors of the World claimed that mental health support is especially lacking for asylum seekers returned to **Croatia** under the Dublin Regulation.

The **Bulgarian** Ombudsperson stated in an interview that there was still a lack of accessible infrastructure for persons with disabilities in some reception centres, insufficient specialised care facilities and support services for victims of torture or trauma, and a shortage of qualified personnel (social workers, psychologists and interpreters) in reception centres.

UNHCR and several NGOs in **Germany** criticised the fact that in the asylum procedures, there are still no standardised measures to identify vulnerable asylum-seekers. According to a [report by the Federal Working Group on Psycho-Social Centres for Refugees and Victims of Torture](#), the 37 specialised facilities for vulnerable asylum-seekers currently in place are not sufficient to cover demand, thus only a small number of trauma patients benefit from psychological support.

UNHCR and the [Spanish Refugee Aid Commission](#) (CEAR) have strengthened their presence at the south coast of **Spain** in the Andalusian region to support the Spanish authorities in identifying protection needs of new arrivals.

## Child protection

### Figures and trends

As of 31 August, according to the [National Centre for Social Solidarity](#) (EKKA), some 3,280 unaccompanied children were estimated to be in **Greece**, of which 93.9 % were boys aged between 14 and 18 years. A total of 2,241 unaccompanied children were on waiting lists for appropriate shelter. 306 of them remained in Reception and Identification Centres; 159 were in open accommodation centres; and 138 in protective custody, mainly at police stations. The total number of available places for unaccompanied children in all of Greece has continued to increase slightly (1,191 places, compared to 1,141 places previously). These figures continue to demonstrate a persisting protection gap over the past year.

According to the [Ministry of the Interior](#), as of 27 August 2018, 3,092 unaccompanied children had arrived in **Italy** since the beginning of the year. 6,042 unaccompanied children disembarked at Italian ports during the period from 1 August 2017 to 31 July 2018, compared to 24,797 during the same period of the previous year (from 1 August 2016 to 31 July 2017).

According to recently published [statistics](#) of the Federal Statistical Office, youth welfare services in **Germany** had to assume custodial care of 22,500 unaccompanied young migrants in 2017, compared to 45,000 cases in 2016.

### Reception conditions for children

In the hotspots on the Eastern Aegean islands in **Greece**, children – including hundreds of unaccompanied boys and girls – newborn babies, pregnant women, survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, and other extremely vulnerable people were particularly at risk due to the extremely poor reception conditions, UNHCR [reported](#).

In **Italy**, the [Independent Authority for Children and Adolescents](#) and UNHCR found severe shortages in 15 first and second-level reception centres hosting overall 135 unaccompanied children. Critical issues concerned the lack of adequate information and social activities for children, the length of children staying in emergency or first-level reception centres as well as delayed appointments of guardians and shortcomings in the age assessment procedure.

Civil society organisations continued to support asylum-seeking children in **Bulgaria**. For example, the Council of Refugee Women stated in an interview that they collected donations for the 100 refugee children who will be enrolled in Bulgarian schools in the upcoming school year.

In the **Netherlands**, due to a backlog in the first phase of the asylum procedure, unaccompanied children over 14 stayed in regular process reception centres for several months, where they are not separated from adult asylum seekers. In the past, unaccompanied children stayed for a few weeks, as UNICEF Nederland pointed out in an interview.

### Guardianship for unaccompanied children

The [Region of Lazio](#), **Italy**, trained 700 voluntary guardians, who can now be appointed by the competent judicial authorities. The [Region of Apulia](#) issued an

official notice for the selection and training of potential future voluntary guardians for children hosted in the regional territory.

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 a children's home close to Budapest (in Fót). Unaccompanied children over 14 years of age were still placed in the Rösztke transit zone until their asylum claims are decided upon. Under [Hungarian law](#), they are considered to have full legal capacity as soon as they are 14 years of age, so they are assigned a formal legal representative only for the asylum procedure (an "ad hoc guardian"). Given their low numbers, such ad hoc guardians are only able to meet the children sporadically, and their consent [is not required](#) if a child decides to leave the transit zone through the one-way exit to Serbia.

In an interview, the Ombudsman for Children in **Poland** highlighted a number of shortcomings in the functioning of the guardianship system. For instance, the guardian's powers only last for the duration of the asylum procedure, and there are no criteria set out in law to appoint guardians for unaccompanied children. In practice, the guardianship system is still based on the voluntary work of NGO staff, who are often appointed as ad hoc guardians.

### **Safeguards and specific support measures**

According to a [report](#) published by Human Rights Watch, less than 15% of some 3,000 school-age asylum-seeking children in the hotspots on the Aegean islands, **Greece**, were enrolled in public schools at the end of the 2017-2018 school year. Information about public school enrollment, transportation to schools, and other support were not made available to them either.

The Municipality of Monfalcone (Friuli Venezia Giulia), **Italy**, signed an agreement with the local primary school that no more than 45 % of students will be foreign, preventing some 60 potential students from enrolling in local schools and forcing them to attend primary schools in nearby towns.

The child and youth ombudspersons in **Austria** wrote an [open letter](#) to members of Parliament and the government, asking them to take the best interests of the child into account when deciding on asylum claims and return decisions.

In an interview, IOM in **Germany** expressed concerns as to the practice of returning unaccompanied young migrants to their countries of origin based on an inadequate assessment of their family situation.

The Minister of Labour, Migration and Social Security of **Spain** [announced](#) initiatives to eradicate violence against children, guarantee attention for unaccompanied children and fight child poverty.

In interviews, the Public Defender of Rights and NGOs in **France** reported a persistent problem in the growing number of homeless young Moroccans in the streets of Paris, sometimes violent and addicted to drugs. To remedy this, French authorities [sought the help](#) of their Moroccan counterparts. The latter sent police officers to Paris to help identify these children for possible repatriation.

## Age assessments

The Migration Commission of the German Bishops' Conference in **Germany** stated in an interview that practices of determining a young migrant's age were problematic due to the lack of reliable documentation.

## Missing children

In **Austria**, as of 1 September 2018, 522 missing children with non-EU citizenship were registered in SIS II (out of these, 128 children are between the age of 0 to 14, and 394 children are between the age of 14 and 18), according to the Ministry of the Interior.

In **Sweden**, 102 asylum-seeking and migrant children went missing, according to the Swedish Migration Agency.

## Family reunification

In **Greece**, a [joint ministerial decision](#) established the procedure for granting national long-stay visas for third-country nationals or stateless persons in the context of family reunification, including the list of necessary supporting documents.

Children coming to **Croatia** via a family reunification procedure do not immediately receive a personal identification number, which delays their opportunity to enrol into a school, according to an interview with the Jesuit Refugee Service.

The Federal Association for Unaccompanied Migrants in **Germany** criticised that the Court of Justice of the European Union's [judgment](#) of 12 April 2018 regarding access to family reunification for unaccompanied children has still not been implemented. The Court held that an unaccompanied child who attains the age of majority during the asylum procedure retains their right to family unification.

## Immigration detention

The total number of people held in immigration-related detention in **Greece**, islands included, was 5,258 in July, out of which 3,415 were asylum applicants and 135 were unaccompanied children, according to the data of the Hellenic Police Headquarters. The majority of detainees originated from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

According to the [Ministry of the Interior](#) of **Italy**, four new repatriation centres were in the process of being opened in Nuoro (Sardinia), Modena (Emilia-Romagna), Gorizia (Friuli Venezia Giulia), and Milan, with an overall capacity of 400 places. This, in addition to the established six centres in Turin (Piedmont), Rome, Bari (Apulia), Brindisi (Apulia), Potenza (Basilicata), and Caltanissetta (Sicily), with an overall capacity of 880 places. Detained migrants started a fire in a repatriation facility in Turin in protest against the living conditions in the centre. A group of activists demonstrated outside the centre in solidarity with the migrants, according to [media reports](#).

In **Hungary**, 49 people were placed in pre-removal detention in the reporting period (almost the same number as in the previous period). Meanwhile, asylum

detention (in facilities other than the transit zones) was applied to only one Dublin transferee, according to the data of the Office of Immigration and Asylum and the National Headquarters of the Police. Given that the transit zones at the border with Serbia became the only location to lodge an asylum application and all migrants in an irregular situation who have been apprehended on Hungarian soil are escorted back to the other side of the border fence, the designated pre-removal and asylum detention centres remained almost empty, according to the Office of Immigration and Asylum.

In **Bulgaria**, the number of persons placed in immigration detention (242 persons) increased by around 55% compared to May and June (156 persons), according to the [Ministry of the Interior](#). At the end of August, the total number of persons in immigration detention (so-called "special homes for temporary accommodation of foreigners") was 362, with the majority coming from Iraq (approx. 36 %) and Afghanistan (approx. 36 %). The Ministry of the Interior explained in an interview that a construction and renovation project, funded by the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, was launched in the detention facility in Busmantsi, Sofia.

Detention Centres in **Spain** continued to have significant shortcomings, according to the 2017 [Annual Report](#) of the Spanish National Mechanism for Preventing and Combating Torture. The main weaknesses concern the lack of medical, psychological and psychiatric assistance and measures for preventing contagious diseases. In addition, most detention centres do not guarantee the separation of migrants from inmates with criminal records. Legal aid was only available at the Madrid and Barcelona centres.

Immigration detention remained widespread in **France**, including for families with children, the Public Defender of Rights, the National Consultative Commission on Human Rights and several NGOs reported in interviews. The lack of real alternatives to immigration detention remained a persistent problem, according to the NGOs '*La Cimade*' and '*GISTI*'. NGOs voiced serious concerns regarding the effectiveness and proportionality of the latest legislative changes, which increase the maximum period of pre-removal detention from 45 days to 90 days as of January 2019, arguing that in 2017 [80% of all removals](#) from detention facilities took place during the first 25 days of immigration detention.

Immigration-related detention of families with children and unaccompanied children aged 15-18 years, also for prolonged periods, persisted in **Poland**, the Ombudsman for Children and UNHCR reported in interviews.

Immigration detention centres were filling up in **Sweden** and tensions were growing among detainees, Amnesty International Sweden pointed out in an interview. As a response, authorities started placing rejected asylum seekers awaiting their removal in police cells and pre-trial detention facilities. As reported in interviews, NGOs continued to urge authorities to use more alternatives to detention, such as supervision, combined with regular reporting and the deposit of travel documents.

The Inspectorate of Justice and Security published a [plan](#) for the investigation of an Algerian asylum seeker's unnatural death in Hoogeveen, the **Netherlands**, in a reception centre with additional guidance and supervision. In particular, the investigation will look at the extent of care provided to the asylum seeker by

employees and whether such centres are adequately equipped to carry out their task properly. The results will be published later in autumn 2018.

## Return

UNHCR published a position paper on [Returns to Libya](#), describing the current situation as characterised by political and military fragmentation, hostilities between competing military factions, the proliferation of armed groups and a general climate of lawlessness, as well as a deteriorating human rights situation.

The police in **Greece** carried out some 390 removals in July, in application of readmission agreements. The main countries of destination were Albania and Turkey. As reported in interviews, IOM Greece conducted more than 360 assisted voluntary returns in July, including 44 children (the majority of the returnees originated from Pakistan and Georgia).

In **Hungary**, rejected asylum seekers subject to a return decision (the latter is combined with the negative asylum decision) either remained in the transit zones or were transferred to closed detention centres (at the Budapest International Airport, in Nyírbátor or in Békéscsaba) pending their removal, the Ministry of the Interior stated.

**Austria** announced a new [campaign](#) offering persons in open procedures, or persons who received a positive or negative decision up to € 1000 if they voluntarily return to Syria, Afghanistan, Iran, the Russian Federation, Nigeria or Iraq.

In many cases, administrative courts in **Poland** reviewing return decisions did not grant suspensive effect to the appeals, although Polish [administrative law](#) allows for the temporary suspension of their enforcement in case of judicial review, the Ombudsman for Children and NGOs reported in interviews.

Following the unauthorised and in some parts violent border crossing of some 600 undocumented migrants from Morocco, **Spain** reactivated an [agreement with Morocco](#) from 1992 on the immediate readmission of foreigners who entered Spanish territory unauthorised. In an interview, the Spanish Refugee Aid Commission (CEAR) expressed great concern about the new approach, as it would not allow sufficient time for the identification of people under particularly vulnerable circumstances or in need of international protection, as well as for the Ceuta Bar Association to provide information. Several NGOs signed a [memorandum](#) against the return of migrants and refugees to Morocco.

In **Sweden**, the return of unaccompanied children raised serious concerns according to the NGO 'Children's Rights Agency', since adequate reception conditions in the destination countries were rarely met in practice (e.g. the authorities did not establish whether someone actually met these children at the airport upon arrival; or if accommodation and schooling were arranged). The uncertainties about the reception conditions and real circumstances in the home country made these children reluctant to return, and many of those whose asylum claims were rejected went into hiding instead, the same NGO reported in interviews.



## Legal responses

### Case law

#### ***Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU)***

In a preliminary ruling requested by a **Dutch** court, the CJEU [ruled](#) that if no timely take back request is made under the Dublin Regulation, the Member State in which a new application for international protection has been lodged is responsible for examining it. The CJEU also clarified the application of take back requests when an applicant for international protection is surrendered from one Member State to another under the European Arrest Warrant.

After a preliminary ruling request by the Administrative Jurisdiction Division of the Council of State, the **Netherlands**, the CJEU [explained](#) that applicants for international protection, whose application was rejected at the first instance as manifestly unfounded, must not be detained for return purpose until it is not established whether they can stay in the Member State while their appeal against the first instance negative asylum decision is pending.

The European Commission [referred to the CJEU](#) the infringement procedure against **Hungary** for non-compliance of its asylum and return legislation with EU law.

In a preliminary ruling initiated by a **Swedish** court, the CJEU [ruled](#) that a Member State cannot rely on the safe third country concept when examining an application for international protection if it has not designated such countries in line with the procedures laid down in the Asylum Procedures Directive ([Directive 2012/32/EU](#)).

In a preliminary ruling initiated by the Sofia Administrative Court, **Bulgaria**, the CJEU [held](#) that applicants for international protection registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) are in principle excluded from refugee status in the European Union, except if they no longer receive effective protection or assistance from UNRWA.

#### ***National case law***

After two consecutive postponements, the Regional Court of Harmanli, **Bulgaria**, started the trial against 21 asylum seekers accused of causing a riot in the local reception centre on 24 November 2016 during which a fire broke out, according to [media sources](#).

The Supreme Administrative Court in **Poland** [ruled](#) that to avoid violations of the child's rights under the return procedure, children must always be interviewed where any form of humanitarian protection may be granted to them.

In the **Netherlands**, the Administrative Jurisdiction Division of the Council of State [ruled](#) that two Armenian children, whose mother had been returned separately, can be returned to Armenia. According to the court, the State Secretary had made sufficient effort to ensure that the children will be taken care of upon arrival in Armenia, even if the mother is unwilling or unable to take care of them. In a [press release](#), Defence for Children underlined that the ruling undermines the rights of children who have no residence permit. On 8 September, the State Secretary for Justice and Security used his discretionary powers to grant the children residence permits, according to [media sources](#)

The District Court of The Hague, the **Netherlands** [ruled](#) that the State Secretary had failed to consider the effects a return to Iraq would have on the health of a six-year-old boy with Down's syndrome and returned the case to the State Secretary.

Two Migration Courts in **Sweden** [ruled](#) that they were unable to apply the new [legislative amendments](#) on granting temporary residence permits for unaccompanied children and young adults under certain conditions (covering those who arrived in Sweden as a child before the end of November 2015), since the provisions on the proof of the applicants' identity were considered too vague. Both rulings are now on appeal before the Migration Court of Appeal, while similar cases on granting temporary residence permits to this category of migrants have been suspended. Also in Sweden, the Migration Court in Gothenburg requested a [preliminary ruling](#) from the CJEU concerning the amendments' compatibility with EU law.

### **Cases on criminalisation of humanitarian assistance to migrants on the move**

In **Greece**, [the media](#) reported that 30 persons, among them NGO workers – including a Syrian refugee who had saved a sinking boat in the Mediterranean, later receiving a scholarship at the Bard College in Berlin – were arrested by the Greek authorities. They were allegedly charged with aiding to facilitate irregular entries of migrants.

In **France**, the Constitutional Council (*Conseil constitutionnel*) [ruled](#) that assisting irregular migrants transiting through the country is not necessarily unlawful, in contrast to assisting irregular entry into France, which remains a crime. The freedom to help others out of humanitarian considerations, regardless of the legality of their stay, can be inferred from the constitutional "principle of fraternity". It is up to the legislator to ensure that there is a fair balance between the principle of fraternity and the safeguarding of public order.

### **National legislation**

**Austria** reduced the number of places in German classes in Vienna from 10,000 to 5,000, as the federal government has stopped its financial contribution, according to the [media](#).

In **Hungary**, a new type of tax was introduced named "[special tax related to migration](#)" as of 25 August. According to the legislative amendments, civil society organisations supporting migration must pay a special tax that amounts to 25 % of the donations and financial support they receive for their activities, irrespective of the origin of the funds. The list of activities qualifying as 'migration supporting/promoting activities' includes programmes, actions and other measures that facilitate or promote migration, as well as media campaigns, seminars, training programmes and any other dissemination activity that shows migration to be a positive phenomenon. The money collected by this new tax will be used to finance border management activities.

The amendment of the asylum act in **Germany** and the amendment of the [list of safe countries of origin](#) including Algeria, Georgia, Morocco and Tunisia were negotiated in the [Bundesrat](#). The draft legislation adds more extensive duties of

cooperation on the responsibility of asylum seekers which may – if not sufficiently fulfilled – lead to the revocation of their protection status.

New [legislative changes](#) adopted in **France** include increasing the maximum length of immigration detention from 45 days to 90 days (including for families with children); reducing the time limit for submitting an asylum application from 120 to 90 days from the date of entering the country; and in an increased number of cases, granting no suspensive effect of the appeal against the negative asylum decision. The new law "for controlled immigration, an effective right to asylum and successful integration" will enter into force in January 2019, depending on the decision of the Constitutional Council. The new law [was challenged](#) by a group of members of parliament opposing the reform before the Constitutional Council.

The **Bulgarian** government adopted a set of amendments to the [Rules on the Implementation of the Foreigners in the Republic of Bulgaria Act](#), laying down a procedure for the identification and protection of unaccompanied children and repealed the possibility of placing them in so-called "short-term detention" intended to identify persons. The amendments introduced alternatives to detention of irregular migrants.

In **Sweden**, [new legislative amendments](#) entered into force on 1 July, granting temporary residence permits for rejected asylum-seeking unaccompanied children under certain conditions. It covers those who arrived in Sweden as a child before the end of November 2015, excluding a large number of children who, for various reasons, do not meet the eligibility criteria. The legal changes, both from procedural aspects and content-wise, received criticism from several actors, including the [Council on Legislation](#).

In **Finland**, [amendments to the Aliens Act](#) requiring asylum applications to be processed in six months [entered into force](#). A processing time checker has been made available on the Immigration Service's [website](#).

## Policy responses

The government in **Greece** approved a [new national integration strategy](#) for beneficiaries of international protection. It is based on five pillars: 1) transferring the implementation of integration policies from international organisations and NGOs to the authorities; 2) enhancing inter-ministerial coordination to better achieve integration-related policy goals; 3) promoting electronic governance, also to fight corruption and to reinforce transparency; 4) changing laws to promote access to the labour market and to basic services and goods; and 5) guaranteeing integration and not assimilation into the Greek society.

As **Austria** took over the [Presidency of the Council of the European Union](#) on 1 July, the [Minister of the Interior](#) reiterated the government's intention to create a more resilient and strict asylum and migration system and to avoid asylum applications on European soil.

The government in **Hungary** began to decrease its military presence along the southern border with Serbia and started establishing standby army units in case the migration situation gets worse. As a result, police will exclusively take over patrols along the border fence. In the future, authorities plan to use less staff to

guard the border fence, also due to the enhanced smart technology the fence is equipped with (e.g. heat sensors, cameras, loudspeakers), according to [media reports](#).

The **Bulgarian** parliament adopted a [decision](#) obliging the government to not sign any bilateral agreements for the readmission of migrants into Bulgaria.

The [Ministry of the Interior](#) in **Spain** has launched a comprehensive reform of the Asylum and Refugee Office including the recruitment of 92 additional staff members for the Secretary of State for Migration.

**Poland** used the Schengen Information System (SIS) to prevent the president of the NGO 'Open Dialog Foundation', a Ukrainian national, from entering the Schengen area. The president of Open Dialog Foundation [was issued a SIS alert](#) on account of posing a threat to national security and public order. The Foundation [called on](#) EU Member States, the OSCE and the Council of Europe to exercise pressure on the Polish authorities to stop such abuse of the SIS.

According to the State Secretary for Justice and Security's new [policy letter](#), in the **Netherlands**, the asylum applications of Afghan families with underage children should no longer be refused on the ground that they could settle in another, safer part of Afghanistan. According to another [policy letter](#), asylum seekers from areas in Iraq which are no longer threatened or under the control of "ISIL" will no longer be granted asylum only because they come from these areas. In the same letter, Palestinians living in Iraq were designated as a specific group at risk. According to a third [policy letter](#), the asylum and return procedure should become more flexible. Among others, so-called Combined Asylum Seekers' Centres will be created, where organisations working in the field will cooperate together under one roof, in order to improve the speed and manageability of procedures.

## Responses by civil society, local and political actors

Several associations supporting migrants in Calais, **France**, announced their intention to boycott future meetings organised by the prefecture, to protest against the deteriorating living conditions in the re-established informal camp, according to the NGO 'Migrant's Inn'.

NGOs in **Poland**, together with business representatives, [called](#) on the government to loosen rules on the employment of third-country nationals in the country.

## Hate speech and violent crime

In **Greece**, a local farmer on the island of Lesbos shot a teenage asylum seeker from Syria who was trespassing on his property, nearly killing him. The shooting occurred in the presence of the victim's brother and parents. The perpetrator was arrested; the criminal proceedings were still ongoing, media [reported](#).

In **Italy**, a significant number of hate crime incidents were reported to the police, according to media reports. On [9 July 2018](#), activists of the far-right political organisation New Force (*Forza Nuova*, FN) disseminated racist leaflets in the multicultural neighbourhood of Piazza Vittorio (Rome), asking migrants to go

back to their countries of origin. On [26 July 2018](#), four Italian men abused a 19-year-old Senegalese man with racist insults and violently attacked him. An employee of the national health service in Roseto degli Abruzzi told an Italian citizen of Senegalese origin on [30 July 2018](#) to leave the office as it was not the veterinary department. During a public speech in Apulia, the Minister of the Interior praised the conductor of a local train for protecting passengers' safety. On [7 August 2018](#), the conductor had addressed a group of Roma passengers in an offensive manner through the loudspeaker asking them to get off the train. In Rimini on [16 August 2018](#), an Italian couple robbed, insulted with racist language, and attacked a 39-year-old pregnant Senegalese woman. On 22 August 2018, a national newspaper released a [video](#) showing police officers in Palermo (Sicily) deploying pepper spray in the face of a handcuffed foreign national who had been brought in to the immigration office of the local Police Headquarters. On [28 August 2018](#), a group of people – including some members of the 'CasaPound Italia' (CPI) racist party – demonstrated in Rocca di Papa (Lazio) against the arrival of 100 asylum seekers in a local reception centre in Catania (Sicily). Another group of people gathered in front of the centre to express solidarity with the asylum applicants and to protest against the racist demonstration.

In an interview, the Federal Agency for State Protection and Counter Terrorism in **Austria** reported on several incidents from January 2018 to July 2018. For example, online hate speech against asylum seekers, refugees, migrants included insults such as "parasites", "invaders", "monkeys", and "rabble" "send them to Auschwitz", "send them to the concentration camp" "gasify". The Antidiscrimination Office Styria documented two hate crime cases (bodily attacks) for the period July and August in the region of Styria. In addition, three insults, two graffiti with Nazi content were reported in Styria. 62 online hate postings were documented in the reporting period, particularly with homophobe, racist, islamophobic content.

Several hate crime incidents of police officers against migrants took place in **Croatia**, according to a [report](#) of the Welcome Initiative. For example, an Iranian woman [reported](#) that she and her 14 year-old son were allegedly beaten up by the Croatian police while trying to reach Slovenia.

In **Germany**, 25 persons were injured in hate crimes motivated by xenophobia in June, according to the [government's reply](#) to a parliamentary question. According to [ProAsyl and Amadeu-Antonio-Stiftung](#), until 31 August, there have been 369 attacks on migrants and migrant reception centres in 2018, with 97 cases of bodily injury. However, the [Ministry of the Interior](#) lists over 700 attacks on migrant housing facilities and asylum seekers themselves in the first half of 2018, with 120 cases of bodily injuries.

Several racist and xenophobic events were reported in **Spain** during the reference period (July-August 2018). For example, [SOS racismo](#) reported a job offer published on the @Jobomas job portal stating: "Only Spanish persons, we do not accept blacks or rude Romanians" (*Solo españoles, no admitimos negros ni rumanos maleducados*). [Fundación Cepaim](#) reported that the Public Official's Independent Trade Union in Almeria put up a sign "no entry permitted to blacks" (*no pueden entrar negros*) at their stall at a traditional summer festival.

A warehouse filled with clothing and food for migrants was set on fire in Grand-Synthe, close to an informal camp in the North of **France**. Intrusions into the building had been discovered on two nights before the incident, but the perpetrators were unknown, according to NGOs interviewed and [media sources](#).

In **Poland**, the number of hate crime incidents against asylum seekers and refugees was growing. Public hate speech also contributed to discriminatory practices in the housing market. In an interview, the 'Ocalenie Foundation' reported that many beneficiaries of international protection were unsuccessful in their efforts to rent apartments.

The **Dutch** Reporting Point for Discrimination on the Internet (MiND) reported in an interview that they had handled 13 reports of discriminatory content on the internet or social media targeting refugees in the first half of 2018, which is a decrease compared to the previous years. For example, in the first half of 2016 they handled 40 reports and in the same time in 2017 22 reports.

Two large demonstrations were organised in Turku, **Finland**, marking the one-year anniversary of the terrorist attack. Over 300 people participated in the neo-Nazi Nordic resistance movement organised procession, whereas the counter demonstration 'Turku without Nazis' attracted over 1,000 people, as reported by the National Police Board in an interview. The National Police Board also reported continuing incidents of violence between different groups of asylum seekers and violence and/or threats of violence against asylum seekers who have converted to Christianity or engaged in non-marital relationships. A peak in hate speech on the internet was noted by the Police in July following the ongoing trial against the founder of the anti-immigration website 'MV-lehti' on charges of ethnic defamation and agitation.

## ANNEX – Stakeholders interviewed in August 2018

Country	Stakeholders interviewed
<b>Austria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal Ministry of the Interior, Department III/9 (<i>Bundesministerium für Inneres, Abteilung III/9 Grundversorgung und Bundesbetreuung</i>);</li> <li>• Austrian Ombudsman Board (<i>Volksanwaltschaft</i>);</li> <li>• Federal Ministry of the Interior, Department III/5 (<i>Bundesministerium für Inneres, Abteilung III/5 Asyl und Fremdenwesen</i>);</li> <li>• Federal Ministry of the Interior, Criminal Intelligence Service, Competence Centre for Missing Children (<i>Bundesministerium für Inneres, Bundeskriminalamt, Kompetenzzentrum für Abgängige Personen</i>);</li> <li>• Federal Agency for State Protection and Counter Terrorism (<i>Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz und Terrorismusbekämpfung, BVT</i>);</li> <li>• Antidiscrimination Office Styria (<i>Antidiskriminierungsstelle Steiermark</i>);</li> <li>• Caritas Vienna (<i>Caritas Wien</i>);</li> <li>• Caritas Styria (<i>Caritas Steiermark</i>);</li> <li>• Austrian Red Cross (<i>Österreichisches Rotes Kreuz</i>).</li> </ul>
<b>Bulgaria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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>);</li> <li>• State Agency for Refugees (SAR) (<i>Държавна агенция за бежанците, ДАБ</i>);</li> <li>• Ombudsman of the Republic of Bulgaria (<i>Омбудсман на Република България</i>);</li> <li>• State Agency for Child Protection (SACP) (<i>Държавна агенция за закрила на детето, ДАЗД</i>);</li> <li>• Prosecution Office of the Republic of Bulgaria (PORB) (<i>Прокуратура на Република България, ПРБ</i>);</li> <li>• Caritas Bulgaria (<i>Каритас България</i>);</li> <li>• Council of Refugee Women in Bulgaria (CRWB) (<i>Съвет на жените бежанки в България, СЖББ</i>).</li> </ul>
<b>Croatia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Interior (<i>Ministarstvo unutarnjih poslova</i>);</li> <li>• Children's Attorney (<i>Pravobraniteljica za djecu</i>);</li> <li>• Croatian Government's Office for Human Rights and the Rights of National Minorities (<i>Ured za ljudska prava i prava nacionalnih manjina Vlade RH</i>);</li> <li>• Croatian Law Centre (<i>Hrvatski pravni Centar</i>);</li> <li>• Croatian Red Cross (<i>Hrvatski Crveni križ</i>);</li> <li>• Centre for Peace Studies (<i>Centar za mirovne studije</i>);</li> <li>• Welcome Initiative (<i>Inicijativa Dobrodošli!</i>);</li> <li>• Jesuit Refugee Service (<i>Isusovačka služba za izbjeglice</i>);</li> <li>• Doctors of the World (<i>Médecins du monde</i>).</li> </ul>
<b>Denmark</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Danish Ministry of Justice (<i>Justitsministeriet</i>), including the Danish National Police (<i>Rigspolitiet</i>);</li> <li>• 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;</li> <li>• Danish Refugee Council (<i>Dansk Flygtningehjælp</i>);</li> <li>• Danish Red Cross (<i>Dansk Røde Kors</i>).</li> </ul>
<b>Finland</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central Union for Child Welfare (<i>Lastensuojelun keskusliitto/Centralförbundet för Barnskydd</i>);</li> <li>• Finnish Human Rights Centre (<i>Ihmisoikeuskeskus/Människorättscentret</i>);</li> </ul>

Country	Stakeholders interviewed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finnish Immigration Service (<i>Maahanmuuttovirasto/Immigrationsverket</i>);</li> <li>• Finnish Refugee Advice Centre (<i>Pakolaisneuvonta/Flyktingrådgivningen</i>);</li> <li>• IOM Finland;</li> <li>• National Police Board (<i>Poliisiylhallitus/Polisstyrelsen</i>);</li> <li>• Non-discrimination Ombudsman (<i>Yhdenvertaisuusvaltuutettu/Diskrimineringsombudsmannen</i>);</li> <li>• Ombudsman for Children (<i>Lapsiasiavaltuutettu/Barnombudsmannen</i>).</li> </ul>
<b>France</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of the Interior (<i>Ministère de l'Intérieur</i>);</li> <li>• Public Defender of Rights (<i>Le Défenseur des droits – DDD</i>);</li> <li>• Controller General of Places for Deprivation of Liberty;</li> <li>• National Consultative Commission on Human Rights (<i>Commission nationale consultative des droits de l'homme – CNCDH</i>);</li> <li>• National Association of Border Assistance for Foreigners (ANAFÉ) (<i>Association nationale d'assistance aux frontières pour les étrangers</i>);</li> <li>• La Cimade (<i>Inter-Movement Committee for evacuees – Comité inter mouvements auprès des évacués</i>);</li> <li>• Service centre for migrants in Calais (<i>Plateforme de service aux migrants à Calais</i>);</li> <li>• The Immigrant Information and Support Group (<i>Groupe d'information et de soutien des immigrés – GISTI</i>);</li> <li>• The Migrant's inn (<i>L'Auberge des migrants</i>).</li> </ul>
<b>Germany</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jesuit Refugee Service (<i>Jesuiten Flüchtlingsdienst – JRS</i>);</li> <li>• Federal Association for Unaccompanied Minor Refugees (<i>Bundesfachverband Unbegleitete Minderjährige Flüchtlinge e.V. – BumF</i>);</li> <li>• United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Berlin Office;</li> <li>• International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Berlin Office;</li> <li>• Migration Commission of the German Bishops Conference (<i>Migrationskommission, Deutsche Bischofskonferenz – DBK</i>);</li> <li>• Workers' Welfare Association (<i>Arbeiterwohlfahrt – AWO</i>);</li> <li>• German Institute for Human Rights.</li> </ul>
<b>Greece</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greek Asylum Service (<i>Υπηρεσία Ασύλου</i>);</li> <li>• The Greek Ombudsman (<i>Συνήγορος του Πολίτη</i>);</li> <li>• Hellenic Police Headquarters (<i>Αρχηγείο Ελληνικής Αστυνομίας</i>);</li> <li>• Racist Violence Recording Network (<i>Δίκτυο Καταγραφής Ρατσιστικής Βίας</i>);</li> <li>• International Organisation for Migration (<i>Διεθνής Οργανισμός Μετανάστευσης</i>);</li> <li>• Hellenic League for Human Rights (<i>Ελληνική Ένωση για τα Δικαιώματα του Ανθρώπου</i>);</li> <li>• Doctors Without Borders Greece (<i>Γιατροί Χωρίς Σύνορα-Ελληνικό Τμήμα</i>);</li> <li>• Greek Council for Refugees (<i>Ελληνικό Συμβούλιο για τους Πρόσφυγες</i>).</li> </ul>
<b>Hungary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of the Interior (<i>Belügyminisztérium</i>);</li> <li>• Ministry of Human Capacities (<i>Emberi Erőforrások Minisztériuma</i>);</li> <li>• National Headquarters of the Police (<i>Országos Rendőr-főkapitányság</i>);</li> <li>• Immigration and Asylum Office (<i>Bevándorlási és Menekültügyi Hivatal</i>);</li> <li>• Office of the Commissioner for Fundamental Rights (<i>Alapvető Jogok Biztosának Hivatala</i>);</li> <li>• UNHCR Hungary;</li> <li>• MigSzol;</li> <li>• Hungarian Association for Migrants (<i>Menedék Migránsokat Segítő Egyesület</i>).</li> </ul>



Country	Stakeholders interviewed
<b>Italy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of the Interior;</li> <li>• 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>);</li> <li>• Association for Legal Studies on Immigration (<i>Associazione per gli studi giuridici sull'immigrazione – ASGI</i>);</li> <li>• Italian Refugees Council (<i>Consiglio Italiano per i Rifugiati – CIR</i>);</li> <li>• NGO 'Doctors for Human Rights' (<i>Medici per i diritti umani – MEDU</i>);</li> <li>• United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR);</li> <li>• Jesuit Refugee Service 'Centro Astalli';</li> <li>• Community of Sant'Egidio (<i>Comunità di Sant'Egidio</i>);</li> <li>• 'Melting Pot Europa' project;</li> <li>• Freedom and Civil Rights Italian Coalition (<i>Coalizione Italiana Libertà e Diritti Civili – CILD</i>);</li> <li>• Recreational and Cultural Italian Association (<i>Associazione Ricreativa e Culturale Italiana – ARCI</i>).</li> </ul>
<b>Netherlands</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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');</li> <li>• Defence for Children the Netherlands;</li> <li>• Dutch Council for Refugees (<i>Vluchtelingenwerk Nederland</i>);</li> <li>• Amnesty International - Netherlands;</li> <li>• NIDOS;</li> <li>• Stichting LOS;</li> <li>• UNICEF the Netherlands;</li> <li>• Pharos, Dutch Centre of Expertise on Health Disparities;</li> <li>• MiND-the Dutch Reporting Point for Discrimination.</li> </ul>
<b>Poland</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Association for Legal Intervention (<i>Stowarzyszenie Interwencji Prawnej, SIP</i>);</li> <li>• Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights (<i>Helsińska Fundacja Praw Człowieka – HFPC</i>);</li> <li>• United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees, Office in Poland (UNHCR);</li> <li>• Ombudsman (<i>Rzecznik Praw Obywatelskich – RPO</i>);</li> <li>• Head of the Office for Foreigners (<i>Szef Urzędu do spraw Cudzoziemców – UDSC</i>);</li> <li>• Ocalenie Foundation (<i>Fundacja Ocalenie</i>);</li> <li>• Ombudsman for Children (<i>Rzecznik Praw Dziecka – RPD</i>);</li> <li>• Human Constanta.</li> </ul>
<b>Spain</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asylum and Refugee Office of the Spanish Ministry of the Interior (<i>Oficina de Asilo y Refugio del Ministerio del Interior – OAR</i>);</li> <li>• Directorate-General for Integration and Humanitarian Attention, Secretary of State for Migration, Minister of Labour, Migration and Social Security (<i>Dirección General de Integración y Atención Humanitaria, Secretaría de Estado de Migraciones, Ministerio de Trabajo, Migraciones y Seguridad Social</i>);</li> <li>• Spanish Ombudsman (<i>Defensor del Pueblo</i>);</li> <li>• UNHCR (<i>Oficina de la Agencia de la ONU para los Refugiados en España – ACNUR</i>);</li> <li>• Spanish Committee of UNICEF (<i>Comité español de UNICEF</i>);</li> <li>• Jesuit Migrant Service (<i>Servicio Jesuita Migrantes, SJM</i>);</li> </ul>

Country	Stakeholders interviewed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spanish Refugee Aid Commission (<i>Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado – CEAR</i>);</li> <li>• Chair of Refugees and Forced Migrants of Comillas ICAI-ICADE, INDITEX (<i>Cátedra de Refugiados y Migrantes Forzados de Comillas ICAI-ICADE, INDITEX</i>).</li> </ul>
<b>Sweden</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Board of Health and Welfare (<i>Socialstyrelsen</i>);</li> <li>• Swedish Police (<i>Polisen</i>);</li> <li>• Swedish Migration Agency (<i>Migrationsverket</i>);</li> <li>• Save the Children Sweden (<i>Rädda barnen</i>);</li> <li>• Swedish Red Cross (<i>Röda korset</i>);</li> <li>• Amnesty Sweden;</li> <li>• Children Rights' Agency (<i>Barnrättsbyrån</i>).</li> </ul>