

MIGRATION: KEY FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS CONCERNS

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QUARTERLY BULLETIN

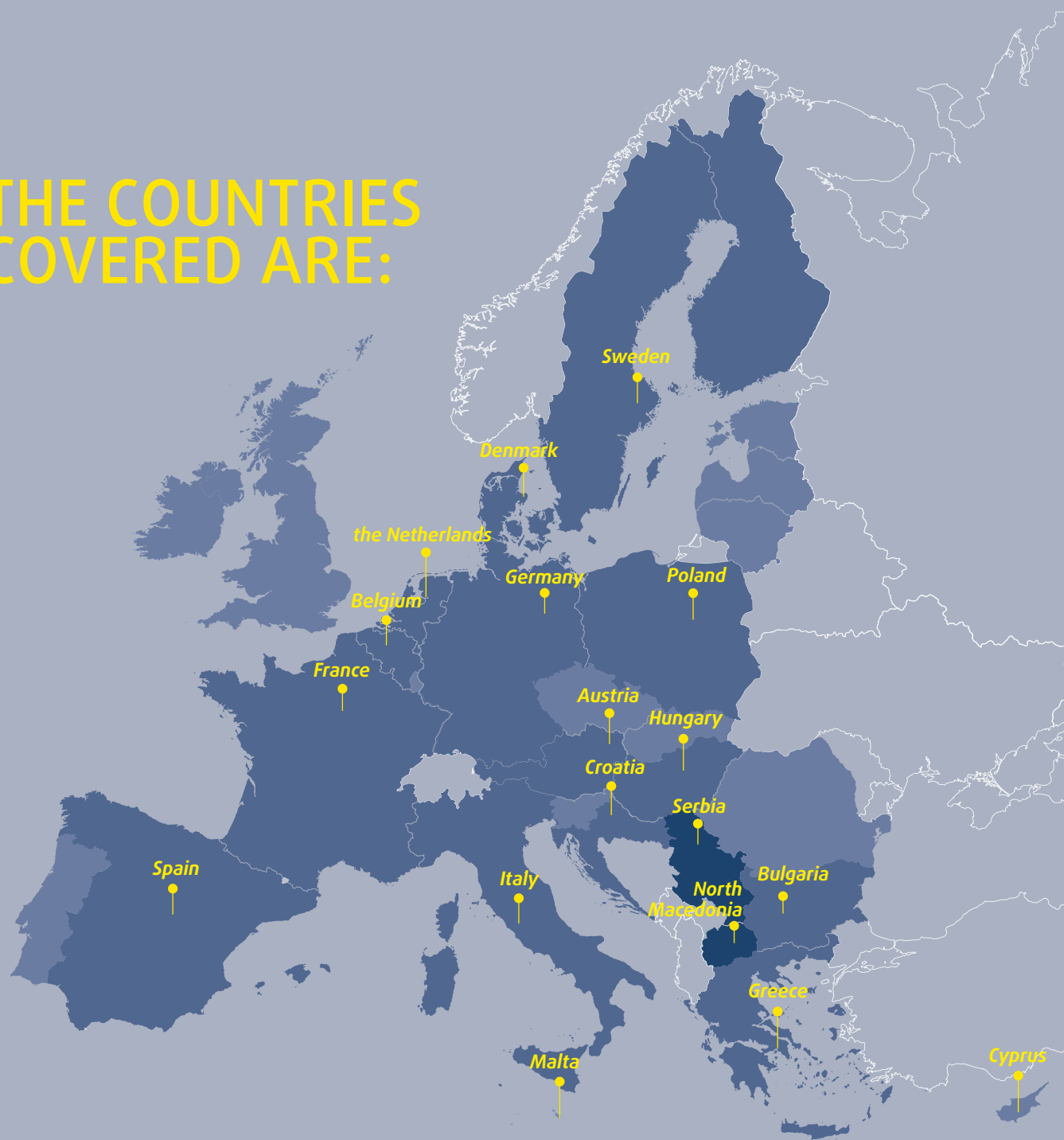
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The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights has been regularly collecting data on asylum and migration since September 2015. This report focuses on the fundamental rights situation of people arriving in Member States and EU candidate countries particularly affected by migration. It addresses fundamental rights concerns between 1 October and 31 December 2020.

THE COUNTRIES COVERED ARE:



Note on Quarterly Bulletins

This quarterly bulletin is the last edition of its kind. FRA is currently assessing in what format to provide future updates on this topic.

Key fundamental rights concerns

Key emerging fundamental rights concerns

ECRE noted that, in **Greece**, the new **regulation** for the operation of temporary reception and accommodation structures introduced controversial confidentiality clauses for all staff, including NGO staff and volunteers working in these structures. These require them not to disclose information they gather. Meanwhile, **media** reported that a three-year-old girl was raped in the Mavrovouni camp on Lesbos.

The **report of the United Nations Secretary General** on the UN operation in **Cyprus**, covering the second half of 2020, notes that 243 persons aboard six boats were either pushed back on the high seas by the Republic of Cyprus or, for those who had reached its shores, deported to Lebanon without having been granted access to asylum procedures.

UNHCR noted that measures to protect public health resulted in asylum applicants living in inadequate conditions in closed and overcrowded camps in Pournara and Kofinou. Requests for the release of vulnerable people, including seriously ill patients, required approval by the Interior Minister. The **Commissioner on Administration and the Protection of Human Rights** found the tent-based quarantine area in Pournara inadequate and exposing unaccompanied children or other vulnerable people to protection risks. The **Commissioner for the rights of the child** expressed concern about the transformation of both Pournara and Kofinou camps into closed centres and asked for clarification of the necessity and proportionality of the measures. Due to issues with the registration of new arrivals, as of November, people slept for several days on the pavement outside the immigration office, the NGO **KISA** reported.

In **Austria**, **UNHCR** warns of increased poverty among families eligible for subsidiary protection. When beneficiaries of subsidiary protection lose their jobs, they lose their entitlement to **family allowances** and **childcare benefits**, including special Covid-19 support of 360 Euros per child. They only receive basic-care support if they are in need.

In **Spain**, despite **significant** measures taken – including the creation of the new first-reception facility Barranco Seco – and others **planned**, reception conditions on the Canary Islands remain inadequate. The Ombudsperson said that conditions at the Arguineguin camp in Gran Canaria jeopardise physical integrity, and **called** for its immediate closure. More than 1,700 people had to sleep on the ground, were deprived of liberty for more than 72 hours waiting for their Covid-19 test results, and had no access to legal aid. The mayor of Mogán, where Arguineguin is located, filed a **complaint** against the Spanish government for failing to ensure reception conditions in line with human rights. In the meantime, the camp was **closed**. Some arrivals were accommodated on a **ship** before being relocated to centres run by the Red Cross.

In **Denmark**, the **Danish Parliamentary Ombudsperson** noted serious delays in processing cases on, for example, family reunification and permanent residence permits. Among applicants whose cases were decided on by the Immigration Appeals Board during the first six months of 2020, almost half had waited for over one year – and some for two years – for a decision.

Note on sources

The evidence presented in this report is based on information available in the public domain (with hyperlinks to the references embedded on the relevant text) or on information provided orally or via e-mail by institutions and other organisations, as indicated in the Annex.

Key persisting fundamental rights concerns

In **Greece**, reception conditions in the Mavrovouni camp on Lesbos remain dire as thousands of asylum applicants live in tents without heating, exposed to harsh weather conditions. In mid-December, heavy rainfalls flooded parts of the camp, according to **NGO** reports. The NGO **Human Rights Watch** expressed concerns over a risk of lead poisoning, as the camp was built on a former military firing range. The Greek authorities **announced** that the hotel scheme for asylum applicants came to an end. The closure of PIKPA in Lesbos, a facility offering dignified accommodation to vulnerable persons, led 27 humanitarian organisations to issue a **joint statement** calling on the Greek authorities to “respect humanity and dignity”.

In **Malta**, detention centres remain overcrowded with little access to clean water and sanitation, according to the **media** and the **UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights** (OHCHR). The **OHCHR** reported multiple incidents of self-harm and suicide attempts in the detention centres, showing that mental health among migrants is a persisting concern, as highlighted also by the NGOs KOPIN and the African Media Association.

In **Cyprus**, Caritas **reported** an increase in homelessness amongst asylum applicants. Finding accommodation outside the camps is difficult. Landlords do not want to rent apartments to applicants, including because they reportedly experience delays in receiving rental payments from the social welfare services.

Migrant smuggling remained a persisting concern in **Hungary**. Detected cases increased during the reporting period – despite the re-introduction of border restrictions triggered by the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic. According to the police, during the reporting period, the authorities placed into custody 166 human smugglers – a rise compared to the previous period (130 people). In most cases, people were smuggled in **cars**, the **cargo space of lorries**, as well as **cargo wagons of trains** crossing the border from Serbia and Romania and **small boats** crossing the river Tisza.

In **Croatia**, the Office of the Ombudsperson continues to receive complaints about the ill-treatment of migrants and refugees by the police. On Croatian television, the **EU Commissioner for Home Affairs**, Ylva Johansson, and, on Twitter, the **Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights**, Dunja Mijatović, underlined the importance of respecting human rights at EU borders and called for investigations and sanctions for those found guilty.

In **Poland**, according to the **NGO Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights**, access to asylum at border-crossing points remains a persisting concern, with a new case referred to the ECtHR (*J.S. v. Poland*).

In **France**, the Public Defender of Rights and several NGOs informed FRA of several persistent problems. These include: continued dangerous sea crossings over the Channel to the United Kingdom; summary returns and denial of access to the asylum procedure at the borders with Italy and Spain, also involving unaccompanied children; practical obstacles to lodging asylum applications at the prefectures; as well as further deteriorating living conditions for people staying in informal camps in the North of France, who also continue to face police violence.

North Macedonia has still not set up a fully-fledged protection-sensitive migration-management system, according to a European Commission 2020 report on the country. The arbitrary detention of migrants in the “Gazi Baba” centre to ensure their testimony as witnesses in court cases against smugglers continued. The European Commission noted progress in the implementation of standard operating procedures for unaccompanied and separated children and vulnerable persons.

Serbia needs to improve access to the asylum procedure and provision of information to applicants, according to the European Commission’s 2020 **report** on the country. At the Belgrade international airport Nikola Tesla, the special procedures envisaged by the law on asylum have not yet been implemented, and adequate accommodation is lacking. The report also notes that legal changes are needed on effective access to the asylum procedure, appeal bodies, legal aid and on the safe-third-country procedure.

In numbers

In **North Macedonia**, there has been only one positive asylum decision since December 2018. Specifically, in 2019, one person was granted subsidiary protection status.

Legal developments

Case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU)

In *European Commission v. Hungary (C-808/18)*, the CJEU found that **Hungary** failed to fulfil its obligations under EU law on four different grounds. First, Hungary violated the Asylum Procedures Directive (**Directive 2013/32**), insofar protection seekers arriving through Serbia were allowed to submit applications for international protection only in transit zones with a very limited access, rendering access to asylum virtually impossible. Second, Hungary violated the Asylum Procedures Directive and the Reception Conditions Directive (**Directive 2013/33**) for systematically detaining applicants for international protection, not issuing detention orders in writing, not providing adequate support to vulnerable individuals and not limiting detention of children to only a measure of last resort.

Third, Hungary was in breach of the Return Directive (**Directive 2008/115/EC**) for returning migrants in an irregular situation without issuing a return decision and not respecting the safeguards. Finally, Hungary violated the right to an effective remedy under the Asylum Procedures Directive by not allowing asylum applicants whose claims were rejected at first instance to remain on its territory until the expiry of the time limit to appeal or, when an appeal was brought, until a decision on it had been taken.

In a preliminary ruling requested by a court in **Germany** (*EZ v. Bundesrepublik Deutschland – C-238/19*), the CJEU clarified the meaning of ‘acts of persecution’ consisting of prosecution or punishment for refusal to perform military service under the Qualification Directive (**Directive 2011/95/EU**). The CJEU clarified that, in the context of civil wars where war crimes or crimes against humanity are systematically committed, it should be assumed that the performance of military service would entail the direct or indirect commission of said crimes.

In a preliminary ruling requested by a court in **Spain** (*MO v. Subdelegación del Gobierno en Toledo – C-233/19*), the CJEU ruled that national authorities cannot adopt and enforce a removal order relying directly on the Return Directive (**Directive 2008/115/EC**), when the application of national law would lead to a different outcome, namely the imposition of a fine, instead of removal.

In a preliminary ruling requested by a court in the **Netherlands** (*R.N.N.S. and K.A. v. Minister van Buitenlandse Zaken – joined cases C-225/19 and C-226/19*), the CJEU stated that when a Member State rejects a visa under the EU Visa Code (**Regulation (EC) No. 810/2009**) due to an objection of another Member State, the decision of refusal should indicate: i) the identity of the objecting State, ii) the ground for refusal and the essence of the objection, iii) the competent authorities to obtain information on available remedies. The CJEU specified that an appeal should be brought before the refusing Member State if it relates to procedural guarantees and before the objecting Member State if it relates to the substantive legality of the objection.

Case law of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR)

In *M.A. v. Belgium*, the ECtHR found that the **Belgian** authorities violated Article 3 of the ECHR by removing the applicant without assessing the risk of ill-treatment in the country of return. The assessment under Article 3 should take into account the general situation in the country of removal, as well as the practical obstacles in accessing asylum, such as being informed of the procedure in a familiar language and being granted access to a lawyer.

Decisions of United Nations (UN) human rights treaty bodies

M.B v. Spain (CRC/C/85/D/28/2017) concerned a child who was placed in a social residence for adults because the authorities considered his birth certificate to be false as it lacked biometric data. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) stated that documentation presented by children enjoys a presumption of authenticity. It further highlighted that age assessment procedures only relying on the physical features of children, without assessing their psychological maturity, fell short of standards of safety, child and gender sensitivity, as well as scientific reliability.

In *Denny Zhao v. The Netherlands* (CCPR/C/130/D/2918/2016), the UN Human Rights Committee found that **the Netherlands** violated Article 24 of the ICCPR (rights of the child) for registering “nationality unknown” in a child’s civil records. Under Dutch law, this left him unable to be registered as stateless and therefore be given international protection. The mother of the child was born in China but was not registered in the civil registry and was therefore unable to obtain proof of Chinese citizenship.

National legal developments

In **Italy**, **Law No. 173** of 18 December 2020 partially reformed the law governing the activities of NGO vessels undertaking search and rescue (SAR) operations in the Mediterranean Sea. It provides that disembarkation can be refused only on grounds of public order and safety or in case of violations of anti-smuggling legislation. The refusal can be avoided if the vessels promptly communicate their rescue operations to the responsible Rescue Coordination Centre and comply with the instructions of the competent authorities. A violation of the prohibition to disembark is punishable with a fine of EUR 10,000 - 50,000 and imprisonment of up to two years. Other administrative sanctions, including confiscation of the vessel, were abolished.

In **Bulgaria**, **major amendments** were introduced to the Asylum and Refugees Act. The representation of unaccompanied children shifts from the municipal representatives, who lacked capacity, to lawyers from the National Legal Aid Bureau. The State Agency for Child Protection is authorised to monitor reception and protection measures for children. The amendments bring a number of changes to the asylum procedure, including on “safe third countries”. Regarding the latter, the **European Commission** expressed some concern about effective remedies.

Policy developments

According to the media, **Greece, Italy, Malta** and **Spain** signed a **joint declaration** calling for more EU solidarity from the rest of the EU. The group also stressed the need to boost agreements with third countries to tackle irregular immigration.

In **Malta**, **Identity Malta**, a governmental agency in charge of residence permits, **updated** the requirements to obtain a Specific Residence Authorisation (SRA). Rejected asylum applicants who entered the country before 1 January 2016 are entitled to it, provided they lived in Malta for at least five years, worked for at least nine months per year, demonstrate 'good conduct', and prove their integration efforts through language certificates, integration course certificates or a formally submitted integration request. In a joint **statement**, 25 NGOs criticised the revised policy, as those wishing to obtain such status had only one month to apply. NGOs were further concerned over the lack of consultation on the policy change. Unsuccessful SRA applicants are offered a **voluntary return programme, according to the media**.

In **Poland**, a **coalition** of Polish NGOs sent **a letter** to the Ministry of Interior and Administration, accusing the Government of lack of transparency concerning plans for a new migration strategy; **the Polish Ombudsperson** urged the minister to consult with civil society and human rights actors.

France and Morocco signed a joint declaration on the protection of unaccompanied children, the **Ministry of Justice announced**. Multiple NGOs, including Amnesty International France, the League for Human Rights and GISTI, voiced criticism about the lack of consultation and transparency when drafting this document.

The government in **Belgium** adopted a **new strategy on migration and asylum**. It is based on respect for international and European law; the protection of vulnerable persons; quality reception arrangements; the fight against irregular stays; and tackling abuse. New actions envisaged include: support to the protection of EU external borders; external audits of all migration and asylum services; gradual digitalisation of the asylum procedure; increased use of voluntary departure; ending immigration detention of children; applying more alternatives to detention; building additional pre-removal detention capacity; and ensuring full respect of the prohibition of torture and other forms of ill-treatment, and the right to family life in return procedures.

Situation at the border

The EU Member States adopted a **Council Recommendation** on a coordinated approach to the restriction of free movement in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Figures and trends

According to **preliminary Frontex data**, some 124,000 people crossed the EU's external borders in an irregular manner in 2020, which is 13 % less than in 2019. This was the lowest number of irregular border crossings since 2013. Syrians remained the most frequently reported nationality. With over 22,600 people, the Canary Islands experienced a record number of arrivals in 2020.

According to IOM data provided to FRA, 515 people died or went missing while attempting to enter Europe through the Eastern, Central and Western Mediterranean routes between October and December 2020, a sharp increase compared to the previous reporting period (301 between July-September 2020). The Central Mediterranean route remains the **most dangerous** migration route in the world, claiming 367 out of 515 deaths. In addition, eight deaths were recorded in the English Channel. IOM also recorded five deaths on land routes in the EU territory (1 death in Greece, 2 deaths in Italy, 2 deaths in France); and six deaths on the Western Balkan route (five deaths in Bosnia and Herzegovina and one in Serbia).

Challenges at sea borders

In **Greece**, three women **died** in two different incidents involving migrant boats off the island of Lesbos, according to the **Hellenic Coastguard**.

In **Italy**, in a **meeting** with its Libyan counterpart, the Ministry of the Interior confirmed its commitment to a close partnership with Libya. The two authorities stressed the need to work out a comprehensive bilateral strategy of humanitarian evacuations from Libya to Italy and of voluntary returns from Libya to countries of origin.

In **Italy**, the associations *Association for Juridical Studies on Migration (ASGI)*, *Tunisian Forum for Economic and Social Right* and *Lawyers Without Borders* **submitted** a Freedom of Information request to the Italian and Tunisian governments after the non-publication of an agreement between the two countries. The agreement envisaged the Italian economic support of € 11 million for the strengthening of border control systems and training of security forces aimed at preventing the departure of migrants and intercepting vessels in Tunisian territorial waters, as reported by the **press**.

In **Malta**, humanitarian search-and-rescue vessels were unable to go to sea due to border restrictions and closures on grounds of Covid-19, as reported by the **UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights**.

France and the United Kingdom agreed to establish a **new joint operational plan** to stem irregular sea crossings via the Channel. Measures include increased law enforcement deployments to prevent and investigate irregular sea crossings; deployment of modern surveillance technology; helping migrants find appropriate accommodation to evade smugglers; and enhanced border security. The French Ministry of the Interior also **announced** that that the United Kingdom will financially support these efforts with € 31.4 million.

EU'S EXTERNAL BORDERS



In **the Netherlands**, the House of Representatives adopted a **motion** urging the government not to support the **European Commission's Guidance on the implementation of EU rules on the definition and prevention of the facilitation of unauthorised entry, transit and residence**, which is part of the new EU Pact on Migration and Asylum. The motion aims to allow the criminalisation of search-and-rescue operations by NGOs, a practice which the guidance deems to be in breach of international and EU law.

Challenges at land borders

In **Italy**, the Ministry of Interior **reported** that the Italian and French police started a 6-month pilot project deploying joint border police teams to patrol the border between the two countries. In the first operation, two third-country nationals were arrested when attempting to irregularly cross the border from France to Italy.

In **Hungary**, the **police** prevented 8,291 people from crossing its southern fenced border (three times as many as in the previous reporting period, July to October 2020). **New underground tunnels** were also discovered along the border fence at the border with Serbia. In response, according to **media** reports, the Ministry of the Interior started building underground fences along the Hungarian-Serbian border, of which a 10-km-long section was completed in October. The **police reported** that a group of some 120 migrants violently attempted to cross the border fence from Serbia at the end of December.

In **Poland**, according to the Polish Border Guard, Belarusian citizens who meet specific requirements are permitted to enter the country, while entry for people with other nationalities is currently restricted due to Covid-19-related measures.

In **France**, there were more attempts by migrants to board vehicles heading to the United Kingdom, the NGO **the Migrant Service in Calais** reported. This also led to police using force, including beating people with truncheons, and using tear gas and police dogs, according to the same source. Representatives of the National Assembly and the **European Parliament visited the Franco-Italian internal border** in December, finding that border police systematically issue refusals of entry also to people who have expressed the wish to claim asylum in France. Several NGOs, including Amnesty International and *Médecins du Monde*, **submitted a joint report** to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child about the inappropriate treatment of unaccompanied children at the French borders. The **Administrative Court of Nice** found unlawful the refusal of access for NGOs to provide medical and legal assistance to migrants held in a police station at Menton (at the Italian border).

Risk of *refoulement* and police violence at borders

The NGO Border Violence Monitoring Network (BVMN) published the "**Black Book of Pushbacks**" documenting hundreds of pushbacks at the EU's external borders since 2017. The 1,500-page book presents 892 group testimonies, detailing the experiences of 12,654 people and the violence endured in **Italy, Greece, Croatia, Slovenia and Hungary**.

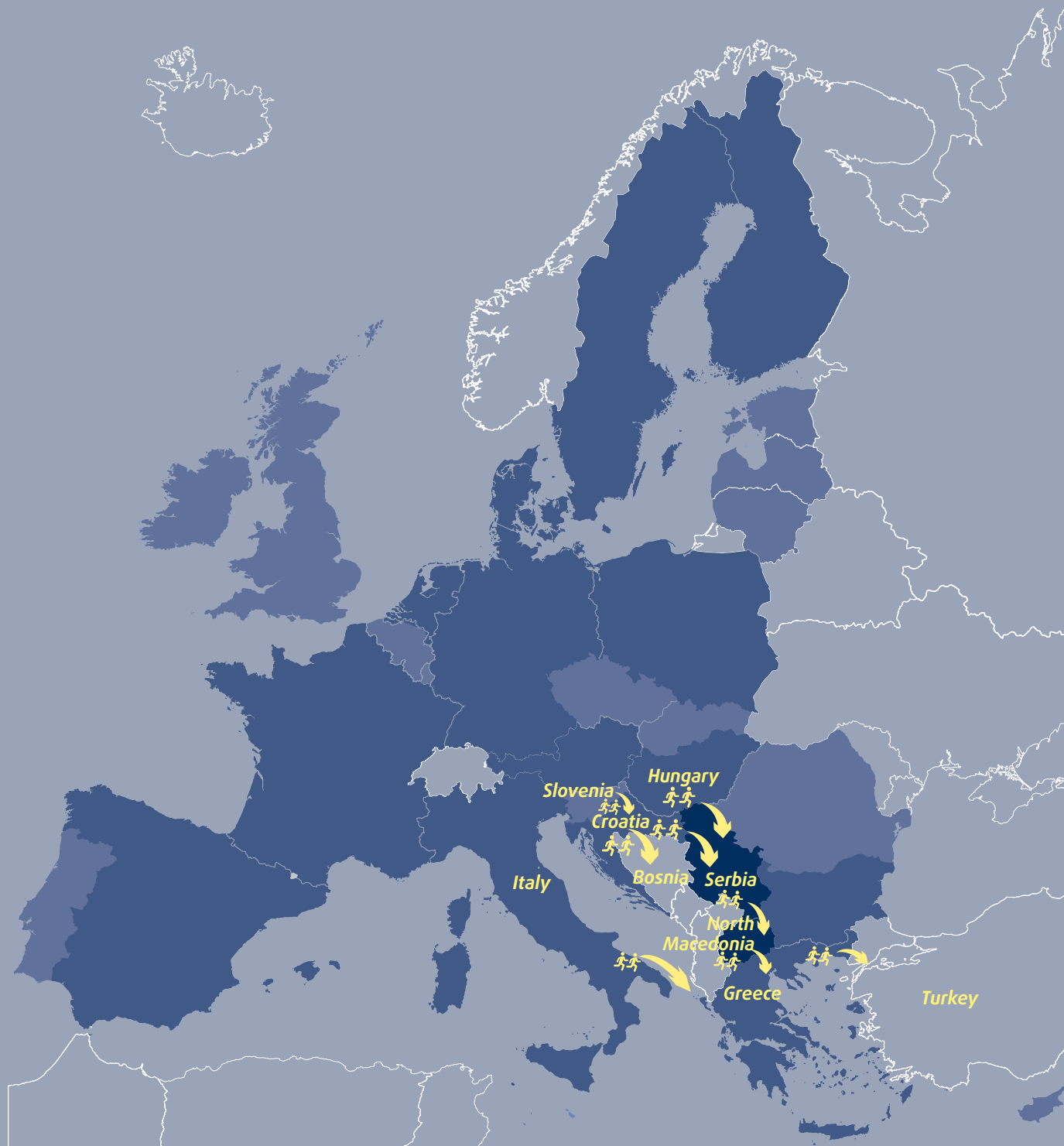
The Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) published a **report** on its ad hoc visit to **Greece**, which took place from 13 to 17 March 2020. The CPT reports consistent and credible allegations of migrants being pushed back across the Evros river to Turkey. The Committee also raised concerns over acts by the Hellenic Coast Guard to prevent boats carrying migrants from reaching Greek islands and questioned the role and engagement of Frontex in such operations.

Legal corner

The principle of *non-refoulement* is the core element of refugee protection and is enshrined in international and EU law. Article 33 (1) of the 1951 Refugee Convention and the authentic interpretation of Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) prohibit returning an individual to a risk of persecution, torture, inhuman or other degrading treatment or punishment. EU primary law reflects the prohibition of *refoulement* in Article 78 (1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU) and in Articles 18 and 19 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

The non-legal term *push-back* is used when a person seeking international protection is apprehended and returned back to a neighbouring country without being granted access to the territory and to a fair and efficient asylum procedure.

REPORTED ALLEGATIONS OF *REFOULEMENT*



Note: Unlawful refusals of entry at airports are not included.

Source: FRA, 2020

FRA activity

Analysing the fundamental rights situation at the EU's external land borders

In December 2020, FRA published a report on *'Migration: Fundamental rights issues at land borders'*. The report describes the applicable EU law governing border controls and clarifies how EU countries' duty to protect their borders can affect fundamental rights. It reviews different aspects of border management, such as border surveillance, preventing irregular border crossings, and checks at border crossing points.

The report is available on [FRA's website](#).

The report also includes a number of ill-treatment allegations against the police and the coastguards, such as slaps to the head and kicks and truncheon blows to the body. A [joint investigation](#) by Bellingcat, Lighthouse Reports, Der Spiegel, ARD and TV Asahi claims that FRONTEX vessels were either directly or indirectly involved in pushbacks from Greece to Turkey. The NGO [Human Rights 360](#) highlighted that allegations also concerned registered asylum applicants, reporting that an Afghan applicant was apprehended 700 km away from the Evros border and subsequently brought back to Turkey.

A group of people brought back to Libya from Malta in April 2020 initiated constitutional proceedings in [Malta](#), the [media reported](#).

In [Hungary](#), the [police apprehended](#) 12,199 migrants in an irregular situation during the reporting period – twice as many as in the preceding period. The police escorted the migrants back to the outer side of the border fence. Authorities do not fingerprint or register these individuals before escorting them back to the border, nor do they record them as new arrivals or asylum applicants in the statistics. If they wish to ask for asylum, the [police direct them to the designated Hungarian diplomatic missions](#) located in Belgrade (Serbia) and Kiev (Ukraine). The [European Commission opened an infringement procedure](#) against Hungary by sending a letter of formal notice on the incorrect application of the EU asylum acquis.

In [Croatia](#), according to the [Centre for Peace Studies \(CPS\) and media reports](#), push-backs at the Croatian external borders continued. CPS submitted two criminal complaints concerning two incidents against unknown police officers, based on a reasonable suspicion that they held 13 migrants, including two children, in detention and then handed them over to ten armed men, dressed in black uniforms and balaclavas. The men allegedly tortured, humiliated and, in one case, sexually abused migrants before pushing them back to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The [Border Violence Monitoring Network \(BVMN\)](#) published a video of similar ill-treatment.

The Croatian Ministry of the Interior [denies](#) all accusations, pointing out that they are the first EU Member State which opened discussions with the European Commission, FRA and other stakeholders with a view to establishing an independent monitoring mechanism for actions taken at their border.

The [Slovenian](#) Asylum Working Group and the Workers' Counselling Association submitted a [complaint](#) regarding Slovenia's responsibility for the torture of migrants pushed back to Croatia [to the UN Committee against Torture](#).

In [Spain](#), on 22 December 2020, the [Constitutional Court](#) found constitutional the provisions in the Aliens Law that regulate the automatic return to Morocco of third-country nationals scaling the fence in Ceuta and Melilla. The court recalled the safeguards in the Aliens Law, whereby these provisions must be applied in conformity with national and international law. It also underlined the need to take account of peoples' vulnerabilities and that there must be real and effective legal entry procedures to access asylum.

In [North Macedonia](#), the practice of collective expulsions at the border with Greece continues, the Ombudsperson, the NGO Legis, the Jesuit Refugee Service and the NGO EUROTHINK reported to FRA.

[UNHCR](#) noted that 159 persons were reportedly pushed back from [Serbia](#) to North Macedonia in October 2020, and that 30 were pushed back in November. A [total of 10,900 pushbacks](#) from neighbouring countries into Serbia were reported for the months of October, November and December 2020.

Asylum procedure

Figures and trends

According to the **European Asylum Support Office (EASO)**, between January and November 2020, 422,000 applications for international protection were lodged in the EU+, a 31 % decrease compared to the same period in 2019. This indicates that reduced mobility and Covid-19 pandemic-related emergency measures are still affecting the number of applications lodged with national asylum authorities. The share of applications lodged by unaccompanied children in November was 5 %, remaining approximately the same as the previous month. In November 2020, Syrians (5,787 or 14 % of the total), Afghans (5,365 or 13 %), Pakistanis (2,068 or 5 %) lodged most applications. EASO notes that the EU+ recognition rate for EU-regulated types of protection at first instance was 35 % in November 2020, up one percentage point compared to October.

In **Croatia**, according to information provided by the Ministry of the Interior to FRA, between 1 October and 31 December 2020, 561 applications for international protection were submitted and eight applications for international protection were granted.

In **Austria**, the number of asylum applications has risen again, according to the **Austrian Asylum Statistics**. In November 2020, 1,453 asylum applications were filed, an increase of almost 38 % compared to November 2019.

In **Poland**, the **Office for Foreigners** registered in 2020 the lowest number of applications for international protection since 1999. However, the number of Belarusian citizens filing asylum applications increased (407 in 2020, of which 240 were filed between October and December).

In **Spain**, according to the **Ministry of the Interior**, in 2020, asylum authorities decided on 116,614 applications for international protection – nearly **double** the 2019 figure (62,592 decisions).

Access to asylum procedures

In **Greece**, **legal aid organisations** raised concerns regarding the implementation of remote asylum interviews in Lesbos. The issues raised include notifications at very short notice, technical issues during the interviews, facilities not ensuring confidentiality, lack of measures against Covid-19, and lack of access to transcripts of interviews for applicants without a lawyer.

In **Italy**, the **Law-Decree** No. 130 of 21 October 2020, converted with amendments into **Law No. 173** of 18 December 2020, introduced a two-year residence permit for “special protection” for third-country citizens whose removal would pose a risk of inhuman and degrading treatment, as well as of a violation of the right to life, family unity and health.

In **Malta**, a significant backlog of cases persists, with some applicants waiting up to two years for their case to be assessed, according to the NGO KOPIN.

In **Austria**, the **Federal Minister of the Interior** announced that, on 1 December 2020, the new Federal Agency for Care and Support Services became responsible for the reception of asylum applicants at federal level. In 2021, the work of the agency will also include legal counselling and representation for asylum applicants, return counselling and assistance, human rights monitoring as well as translation and interpreting services. **Media** outlets and **NGOs** voiced concern about the agency’s independence given that it is part of the federal government.



In numbers

In **Austria**, 60 % of all cases before the Constitutional Court in 2019 involved legislation relating to asylum and aliens.

See Federal Ministry of Finances, **Strategy Report 2021 to 2024**.

Bright spots

In **Malta**, the **International Protection Agency** developed guidance on the fast-tracking of vulnerable applicants in need of special procedural guarantees, as well as guidance on claims based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

In **France**, several NGOs, including the League of Human Rights and *La Cimade*, **initiated a class action** before the Council of State (*Conseil d'Etat*) to require prefectures to issue timely appointments to people seeking asylum. They criticised widespread practices, due to online appointment scheduling, which 'invisibly' block people from accessing asylum procedures, who are thus at risk of being arrested, detained and removed.

In Mayotte – a French overseas department in the Indian Ocean – when the prefecture registers asylum applications, applicants do not get appointments until over four months later. This practice deprives asylum applicants of documents proving the legality of their stay and exposes them to a risk of arrest and removal at any time, the NGOs *La Cimade* and **GISTI** stated. According to the same NGOs, the prefecture of Mayotte even conducted apprehensions near NGOs and other places receiving vulnerable persons in an irregular situation.

In **Belgium**, the **Council of State suspended the practice** of the Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons to conduct asylum interviews via videoconference, as this would require a royal decree.

In **Spain**, UNCHR reports long waiting times for first appointments to apply for asylum. In Girona or Lugo, for example, appointments are scheduled only for 2022. Applicants also face difficulties to renew their documentation due to Covid-19 restrictions. They are generally unaware of the rights they may be entitled to in line with **Order 9/2020 of the Directorate-General of the Police**, especially concerning work authorizations. A new form of documentation when formalising the application with a validity of three months has been issued throughout Spain since the end of 2020; however, there is no public reference to this new practice.

A **Supreme Court judgment** recognised the right to apply for asylum at Spanish embassies abroad in certain circumstances in line with the **Law on Asylum** (Article 38), but also noted the lack of regulatory development concerning this option. The case concerned a Kurdish-Iraqi family who arrived in Greece in 2016. The mother and daughters were relocated to Spain. The father applied for asylum at the Spanish Embassy in Greece in 2017, but had not received a response.

The **Swedish** Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex Rights **reported** that the migration authorities base their assessments of asylum applicants' sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression on requirements contravening the Swedish Migration Agency's judicial guidelines, UNHCR guidelines, and the CJEU's case law.

In **the Netherlands**, the **District Court of The Hague** and the **Administrative Jurisdiction Division of the Council of State** ruled in two different cases that it is possible to be granted asylum in the Netherlands even if a person already enjoys protection status in Bulgaria.

Bright spots

In **Sweden**, to accelerate asylum procedures, the government allocated additional funding to migration courts in 2021.

Family reunification

In **Austria**, the Red Cross reported to FRA that procedures for family reunifications are taking longer than usual, because the laboratories that usually perform DNA tests to establish family relationships are currently busy with Covid-19 tests.

In **France**, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, hundreds of foreign families remained unable to join their relatives in France, even though they have been authorised to do so. Nine NGOs, including the League of Human Rights, Amnesty International France and ANAFÉ, **filed a class action** before the Council of State (*Conseil d'Etat*) to challenge the non-issuing of family reunification visas.

In **Germany**, family reunification remains limited, due to corona-related delays in visa processing. According to **the German Foreign Ministry**, the waiting time for an appointment is between 18 weeks to over one year. In addition, corona-related unemployment lowers the chances of earning sufficient income to secure one's livelihood, a precondition for family reunification. Family reunification with persons entitled to subsidiary protection is limited to **1,000 people per month**. If the quota is not exhausted, it expires.

Bright spots

In **Italy**, the **Tribunal of Rome** recognised that the right to family reunification also applies to adopted offspring, when a stable household can be demonstrated. A different interpretation would violate the right to family unity and not be in the best interests of the child.

The court also stressed that DNA testing must be considered as a measure of last resort, when official documents or other evidence proving a family relationship is missing or unavailable.

Bright spots

In **Austria**, according to the Federal Ministry of the Interior, as a Covid-19-related safety measure, the maximum occupancy rate at reception centres is 75 %.

Caritas Styria also reports to FRA that persons who receive a negative asylum decision may currently remain in the reception centres due to the Covid-19 crisis.

In **Malta**, the **Agency for the Welfare of Asylum Seekers (AWAS)** reported having improved the conditions in AWAS centres throughout 2020. Among others, they set up a quality assurance department, introduced internet access in all AWAS centres, and initiated two pilot community projects.

In addition, AWAS formed a new Information and Guidance Service, as well as a new service called UAMs (Unaccompanied Minors) Protection Service, which follows unaccompanied children more closely in the specialised reception centres.

Reception

Reception capacity

Sufficient reception capacity was available in **Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Sweden** and **North Macedonia**.

In the reporting period or parts thereof, reception facilities in **France, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Spain**, and **Serbia** were (almost) full or overcrowded. In **Greece** and in **Cyprus**, some facilities remained severely overcrowded.

Reception conditions

In **Greece**, the **European Commission** agreed on a detailed plan with Greek authorities and EU agencies to establish a new, up-to-standard reception centre on the island of Lesbos by September 2021. The memorandum sets out the respective responsibilities and areas of cooperation between the Commission, the Greek authorities and EU agencies. The areas of cooperation include the development and construction of a reception centre; improved management of arrivals; seamless asylum and return procedures and integration measures; reception conditions in line with EU law; and staff training, capacity and planning.

In **Italy**, the **Law-Decree** No. 130 of 21 October 2020, converted with amendments into **Law No. 173** of 18 December 2020, reintroduced the right of asylum applicants to stay in second-level reception centres. These will be divided into two types: one hosting asylum applicants and another hosting beneficiaries of international protection. While basic services – such as legal and health assistance and language courses – will be provided to all people accommodated in reception facilities, access to professional training, labour-market orientation and housing services will be available only to protection-status holders. The Italian Refugee Council (CRI) **criticised** the reform, stating that asylum applicants should access qualified services facilitating their inclusion and integration as soon as they arrive on the Italian territory.

In **Italy**, the Authority for the Protection of People who are Detained or Deprived of their Personal Freedom **noted** that some 1,195 people were kept on five quarantine vessels, as of 27 November 2020. Some 150 civil-society organisations, experts and academics **expressed concern** over the use of quarantine vessels.

In **Malta**, homelessness continues to increase due to evictions from open centres as well as job losses and difficulties in finding stable work, according to the **media**.

In **Cyprus**, the food coupons system phased out. Asylum applicants are now entitled to cash deposited to bank accounts or sent by post. The Cyprus Refugee Council told FRA that applicants faced practical difficulties in opening bank accounts, with banks asking for excessive documentation. Following interventions by NGOs, the Central Bank issued detailed instructions to resolve the issue.

In **Cyprus**, the Interior Minister **issued an order** prohibiting new asylum applicants from settling in the village of Chloraka in Paphos, on grounds of public order and public interest. The **president of the ruling party** as well as **media reports** had objected to a larger presence of third-country nationals in the area, with **some media outlets** linking them to increased criminality.

In **France**, the **Police Prefecture of the Île-de-France region** ordered the evacuation of informal camps in Paris. Following these operations, some 3,400 people were accommodated elsewhere in the country, the **Ministry of the Interior** stated. The **Public Defender of Rights** and the **General Inspectorate of the National Police** carried out investigations about excessive use of force by police, following witness testimonies and **NGO statements**.

Bright spots

In **Cyprus**, residents of closed facilities, and in **Germany**, residents of refugee accommodations, have been deemed priority groups for vaccination against the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2.

In **Spain**, in line with the July 2020 Supreme Court **judgment** confirming the right to free movement in Spain of asylum applicants in Ceuta and Melilla, the Ministry of the Interior **ordered** the State Attorney's Office to stop rejecting applicants' appeals against the restriction of movement to the enclaves, according to the Spanish Commission for Refugees.

In **Germany**, the **Berlin Senate Department for Education, Youth and Family** announced that, as of January 2021, it would lend tablets with a mobile learning tool to children and young people living in youth welfare facilities, including asylum-seeking children.

In **Belgium**, upon a class action initiated by a **group of NGOs**, the Francophone Tribunal of First instance of Brussels ruled that not allowing asylum seekers to get material support from the moment of expressing their intent to request asylum through the online registration system, put in place in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, was unlawful. Following the court's judgment, the Immigration Office **discontinued the online system and reinstated** the in-person registration of asylum applicants.

In **Germany**, according to information provided to FRA by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the German Red Cross, the Berlin Refugee Council and the Federal Workers' Welfare Association, measures to counter the spread of Covid-19 continue to affect asylum applicants particularly hard. Unreliable internet connections and lack of access to computers leads to children doing their schoolwork on cell phones and adults being unable to participate effectively in their online integration courses.

In **Sweden**, the **Supreme Administrative Court** found that persons who are not assigned to a municipality for settlement upon being granted a residence permit still have the right to assistance, including accommodation. Thus, persons granted temporary residence permits, for example due to temporary impediments to return, can remain in the reception centres and receive daily allowances.

In **North Macedonia**, due to the measures imposed against Covid-19, only basic services were provided in the reception facilities, and there was no additional support for vulnerable persons, the Jesuit Refugee Service and the NGO Legis reported to FRA. According to a **report** published by NGO Legis, persons in quarantine can leave their rooms only for hygiene purposes and accompanied by two police officers. They have no access to fresh air and outdoor exercise. Children in reception centers did not go to school during the reporting period, the Jesuit Refugee Service reported to FRA.

Vulnerable groups

In **Italy**, the NGO "Doctors for Human Rights" **published** a study on posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among refugees and asylum applicants. The study concludes that overcrowding, geographical isolation, prolonged stay, length of legal proceedings, as well as episodes of violence particularly in large reception centres, have detrimental effects on asylum seekers' and refugees' mental health. In a **public appeal**, 18 civil society organisations – including MEDU, ASGI, Action Aid, Oxfam, and Refugees Welcome Italia – call for a policy that avoids the use of large reception facilities.

In **Croatia**, the NGO *Médecins du Monde*-BE noted a rise in the number of asylum statuses granted to applicants who were victims of gender-based violence in their countries of origin.

In **Germany**, the **Federal Working Group of Psycho-Social Support Centres for Refugees and Victims of Torture** criticises the complicated bureaucratic requirements to access the German health system for asylum applicants. The rejection rate of psychotherapies for asylum applicants is almost seven times higher than for patients with statutory health insurance. The waiting time for psychotherapy for asylum applicants is on average seven months. In another **study**, the organisation shows that structured procedures with clear responsibilities for identifying special needs exist in only three out of 16 federal states (Berlin, Brandenburg and Lower Saxony).

In **Sweden**, traumatised applicants continue to face long waiting times to access specific care, according to the Red Cross.

In **Serbia**, migrant victims of sexual and gender-based violence are insufficiently protected, according to the Belgrade Centre for Human Rights. Assistance has been mainly provided by NGOs and remains affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Child protection

Figures and trends

In **Greece**, according to the **National Centre for Social Solidarity**, as of 31 December 2020, 4,027 unaccompanied children were estimated to be in the country, including 181 separated children (who are accompanied by an adult other than their parents or legal caregivers). Only 1,715 were in appropriate and long-term accommodation (shelters and semi-independent living apartments); 1,080 were in temporary accommodation ('safe zones', emergency accommodation for UAC and hotels); 127 stayed in Reception and Identification Centres; 30 were in 'protective custody', mainly at police stations; and 151 were in open temporary accommodation facilities. EKKA also reports that 924 live in informal or insecure housing conditions, such as temporarily in apartments with others, in squats, or being homeless and moving frequently between different types of accommodation.

In **Italy**, the Ministry of the Interior **reported** that 4,687 unaccompanied children disembarked in Italy in 2020 (compared to 1,680 in 2019).

After closing down the transit zones at the southern border of **Hungary** at the end of May, the police apprehended eight unaccompanied children in an irregular situation, who were transferred to the children's home in Fót near Budapest, the National Headquarters of the Police stated.

In **Croatia**, according to information provided by the Ministry of the Interior to FRA, between 1 October and 31 December 2020, out of 561 applications for international protection, 204 applicants were below the age of 13 and 83 were between 14 and 17. Meanwhile, 34 were unaccompanied.

In **Austria**, the **Federal Minister of the Interior** reported that, between 1 January and 30 September 2020, 888 unaccompanied children (44 of them girls) filed applications for international protection in the country. The same ministry reported to FRA that, as of 1 December 2020, 207 missing children who were third-country nationals were registered in the Schengen Information System. (These included 70 children between the age of 0 to 14, and 137 children between the age of 14 and 18).

In **Spain**, UNICEF reported the presence of about 2,200 unaccompanied migrant children in the Canary Islands protection system in November 2020 – a 300 % increase compared to the beginning of the year. The Canary government as a guardian of these children **urged** to have them transferred to the mainland in view of the overburdened child protection system on the islands, according to media reports.

Age assessment

In **Belgium**, four persons who claimed they were children were detained to determine their age. Due to delays in the age assessment caused by compulsory quarantine, two of them were subsequently recognised as children after spending 20 days in closed detention centres, the Jesuit Refugee Service reported to FRA.

The CRC Committee **found** in several **decisions** that **Spain's** age-assessment procedures violate migrant children's rights, in particular the right to identity, the right to be heard, and the right to special protection of children deprived of their family environment.

In **the Netherlands**, an Advisory Committee on Migration Affairs **report** urged the Immigration and Naturalisation Service to conduct further investigations when assessing the age of unaccompanied children, instead of relying on the

age assessment conducted by the country of first arrival, as mistakes in the registration procedure are common. Meanwhile, the Inspectorate for Justice and Security concluded in a **report** that the age-assessment procedure for asylum seekers, as carried out by the Immigration and Naturalisation Service, the Aliens Police and the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee, has overall improved.

Relocation

In **Croatia**, a project funded by the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, called “New Home”, intends to relocate 12 unaccompanied children from Greece to Croatia. The project’s purpose is to ensure early integration through reception, accommodation, care, psychosocial support, and the inclusion of unaccompanied children in the local community, as well as to provide the children with interpretation and translation services.

Belgium relocated 11 unaccompanied children from Greece following the fires in the Moria camp (Lesvos).

In **Germany**, UNHCR **reported** that, by mid-December, over 2,000 refugees, asylum applicants and unaccompanied children had been relocated from Greece, three quarters of them (1,519) to Germany. The media reported about a “**Christmas-plea**” of 243 members of parliament from various parliamentary groups, calling on the federal government to accept more refugees from the Greek islands. In their **open letter**, they point out that more than 200 municipalities as well as some federal states have offered to take in more refugees and asylum applicants than the federal government intends to do.

In **the Netherlands**, the State Secretary for Justice and Security **informed** the House of Representatives about the arrival of approximately 50 refugees from Greece. This is part of the government’s **decision** to relocate 50 children and 50 vulnerable adults from the Greek island of Lesvos.

Reception conditions

The Public Defender of Rights in **France visited the informal camp near Calais** in September 2020 and noted the “shameful living conditions” of about 1,200 to 1,500 persons still living there. She raised special concerns about the situation of women and children, including unaccompanied children as young as 12 years old. She provided several recommendations for the protection of unaccompanied children and called for effective family reunification for children with relatives in the United Kingdom.

In **North Macedonia**, throughout 2020, some of the unaccompanied children in the Vinojug centre were placed in a room together with unrelated adults, the **Macedonian Young Lawyers Association** noted. According to the same source, guardians did not always have access to children held in Vinojug.

Guardianship

In **Malta**, the Agency for the Welfare of Asylum Seekers (AWAS) reports continued efforts to streamline the process of appointing guardians in cooperation with the Child Protection Services.

In **Croatia**, the NGO Croatian Law Centre reported to FRA that the measures for the prevention of the spread of Covid-19 have restricted, but not prevented, the guardians’ access to unaccompanied children under their supervision. The NGO Rehabilitation Centre for Stress and Trauma however mentioned that some children never get the opportunity to meet or talk to their guardian.

In **Sweden**, Save the Children remains concerned over the impact of transfers on children as accommodation centres are closed. Transfers involve the change of schools and loss of friends and networks without sufficiently considering the child's perspective. In 2020 Sweden closed four centres and plans to close another two in 2021, as the number of asylum applicants decrease.

Safeguards and specific support measures

In **Malta**, children in open and reception centres continue to face difficulties in participating in online schooling, according to the NGO **KOPIN**.

In **Austria**, **UNHCR** again stressed that unaccompanied children between the ages of 14 and 18 have to cope by themselves with all aspects of accessing the asylum procedure, such as interrogations by the police, medical examinations and age assessment. Only when children are admitted to the asylum procedure and are transferred to a local basic care quarter, which can take several weeks or months, do child and youth aid services provide support.

In **Poland**, in December 2020, **the Ombudsperson** urged the Polish Minister of National Education to report on measures taken to address the findings of the assessment by the **Supreme Audit Office (NIK)** on the situation of foreign children in Polish schools. Citing the findings of the NIK's report, the Ombudsperson stated that foreign children in Polish schools lack textbooks to learn Polish, struggle to integrate, and several incidents of discrimination against children due to national and ethnic origin have been reported.

In **France**, the **Court of Auditors** pointed out several deficiencies in the childcare system regarding unaccompanied migrant and asylum-seeking children, notably as concerns age-assessment practices in different regions and the lack of capacity to support children. It recommended external audits.

In **Denmark**, a **Committee** set up by the **Ministry of Justice** deemed illegal the Minister of Immigration and Integration's instruction of 2016 to accommodate all asylum-seeking couples separately if one of the couple was below the age of 18, even if the couple had children.

Bright spots

In **Bulgaria**, the Bulgarian Red Cross donated ninety laptops for students and ten laptops for school administrations to the State Agency for Refugees, to support the participation of children living in reception centres in remote schooling.

Immigration detention

Figures and trends

In **Greece**, the Hellenic Police reported to FRA that 2,932 persons, including 1,855 asylum applicants, were detained for administrative purposes in December 2020.

In **Italy**, the Authority for the Protection of People who are Detained or Deprived of their Personal Freedom **reported** that, as of 28 November, the number of detainees in Italian pre-removal centres (CPR) amounted to 450, less than the maximum capacity of 661. Among them, only two people tested positive for Covid-19.

In **Malta**, 1080 persons were held in detention centres as of November 2020, according to **UNHCR Malta**.

In **Cyprus**, as the Menoyia detention centre reached its full capacity, pre-removal detention in police stations resumed, the Cyprus Refugee Council reported to FRA. According to the Cypriot police, in November, out of the 169 detainees, 115 were held in the Menoyia and 54 in police stations. Many detainees in Menoyia have been held there for more than six months.

In **Hungary**, 122 people were placed in pre-removal detention during the reporting period, a slight increase compared to the previous period (90 people), according to data of the National Directorate-General for Aliens Policing and the National Headquarters of the Police provided to FRA.

In total, 141 people were held in pre-removal detention centres in **Belgium** at the beginning of November, while 126 people (43 of whom asked for asylum) were detained at airports upon entry between September and 30 November, according to data the Immigration Office provided to FRA.

In **Spain**, a judge **refused** the pre-removal detention of 31 newly arrived migrants before a removal decision was issued, noting their intention to apply for asylum, as the **ECTHR** had confirmed judges' competence to receive asylum applications in June 2020. The applicants were moved to an **open centre**.

In **Sweden**, 176 persons were released from detention during the reporting period. On 31 December 2020, 376 persons were placed in detention. None of them were children.

In **North Macedonia**, the number of detained persons between January and September 2020 (317) is higher compared to the same period in 2019 (225), the Macedonian Young Lawyers Association highlights in its report "**Immigration Detention in North Macedonia through numbers**". Ensuring the testimony of migrants in criminal proceedings against smugglers remains the main reason for their detention. The number of detained children between January and September 2020 (76) is more than double than that during the same period in 2019 (30). The length of their detention has also increased significantly (average 20 days, maximum 55 days) compared to the same period in 2019 (average 10 days, maximum 19 days).

Detention conditions

In its [report](#) on its visit to Greece in March 2020, the CPT found that detention conditions in certain facilities in the Evros region and on Samos could amount to inhuman and degrading treatment. Migrants continued to be held in detention centres composed of large barred cells crammed with beds, with poor lighting and ventilation, dilapidated and broken toilets and washrooms, insufficient personal hygiene products and cleaning materials, inadequate food, and limited access to outdoor exercise. Extreme overcrowding has aggravated the situation in several facilities. In addition, migrants are not provided with clear information about their situation. The CPT, once again, found that families with children, unaccompanied and separated children and other vulnerable persons were detained with no appropriate support.

In Italy, the [Law-Decree](#) No. 130 of 21 October 2020, converted with amendments into [Law No. 173](#) of 18 December 2020, reduced the maximum detention period for irregularly staying third-country citizens awaiting removal from 180 to 90 days. However, the period can be extended by 30 days if the returnee comes from a country with whom Italy has established bilateral readmission agreements. This possibility was [criticised](#) by activists and civil-society organisations as it introduces discrimination among detainees on grounds of nationality.

In Italy, the Authority for the Protection of People who are Detained or Deprived of their Personal Freedom [reported](#) that, in all CPRs, measures have been implemented to allow for isolation of those who have tested positive. However, the Authority noted that not all of the facilities comply with international safety standards and that the right to privacy is not always ensured. Moreover, most of the associations providing crucial services, such as anti-trafficking support, still are not operating. Two independent reports entitled “[No one is looking at us anymore, Migrant detention and Covid-19 in Italy](#)” and “[Locked up and excluded. Informal and illegal detention in Spain, Greece, Italy and Germany](#)” highlight inadequate material and hygienic conditions, isolation, and lack of complaint mechanisms.

In Malta, migrants detained for several months report little access to daylight, clean water and sanitation, according to the [Aditus Foundation](#). [OHCHR](#) reported severe overcrowding, poor living conditions, and limited contact with the outside world, including lawyers and civil society organisations. In a [habeas corpus case](#), a court ordered the release of four men who had been detained in the Safi and Lyster Barracks for 166 days. [The African Media Association](#) expressed concern regarding the use of vessels as detention facilities.

In Cyprus, the police stations are inappropriate for holding persons for more than 24 hours, the Cyprus Refugee Council reported to FRA. On average, third-country nationals have been detained in police detention cells for two weeks. Applicants who had to attend court hearings or visit a doctor had to submit a request for an exit permit to the Minister of Interior. Although the authorisations to exit were granted, this usually happened following interventions from NGOs and, in some cases, after the court hearing or appointment date.

In Hungary, Covid-19 infections in the Nyírbátor pre-removal detention centre resulted in rising tensions amongst detainees, [media reported](#). According to interviewed detainees, when some had fever and started to cough, the authorities did not test them. Tests were only ordered when a Nigerian detainee complained about the loss of smell, which confirmed the infection of two individuals. After separating the infected detainees within the facility (they were not in need of hospitalisation), the authorities disinfected the centre.

In **Bulgaria**, the Parliament adopted further **amendments** to the Act on Foreigners in the Republic of Bulgaria, according to which the maximum duration of short-term detention (30 days) will no longer include the period during which the detained person has been in isolation, hospital treatment or quarantine due to an infectious disease.

In **France**, the **Controller General of Places of Deprivation of Liberty** and the NGO **La Cimade** voiced serious concerns about the health situation of returnees in pre-removal detention centres. Although the capacity of these facilities were limited to 50 % in previous months to prevent the spread of Covid-19, the occupancy rates have been, in some cases, gradually increased up to 90 %, which led to multiple Covid-19 infections in these closed centres. For instance, the **press** reported about a cluster in the pre-removal detention centre at Coquelles (Pas-de-Calais), with twenty people diagnosed positive in November, while 26 positive cases were recorded in Lyon in October and November.

In **Belgium**, the Immigration Office adopted new instructions restricting visits to pre-removal detention centres, in response to an increase in Covid-19 cases. Under the new rules, visits by NGOs are limited to one visit a week by a maximum of two visitors; and visits by friends and family are limited to one adult (with minor children) per resident a week, the Jesuit Refugee Service and the NGO NANSEN reported to FRA. According to the Jesuit Refugee Service, the immigration detention centre in Bruges was closed down and emptied because of a Covid-19 outbreak among the guards. Detainees were relocated to other closed facilities.

In **Spain**, on 20 October 2020, the **National Ombudsperson** expressed concern over the conditions at facilities where migrants are deprived of liberty. At the Centres for Temporary Attention for Foreigners (*Centros de Atención Temporal de Extranjeros*, CATE) deficiencies relate to overcrowding, the presence of mothers with children and of sick people, and insufficient guarantees to access asylum. Concerning the Detention Centres for Foreigners (*Centros de Internamiento de Extranjeros*, CIE), recommendations recurring in several centres **relate to** the availability of medical care, interpretation, legal and social assistance, possibility to communicate with lawyers, access by NGOs, video surveillance and the registration of the use of coercive measures.

According to Amnesty **Sweden**, detention conditions differ depending on the regional division of the Migration Agency. At some locations, physical visits are not possible and information on alternative ways to keep in touch with the outside world does not seem to reach the detainees. The Red Cross offered detainees the possibility to video chat, but the interest has been limited so far.

In **the Netherlands**, the National Preventive Mechanism examining the conditions of detention and treatment of detainees reported in **its annual review** that the rights of persons restricted in their freedom in the Netherlands are generally respected. However, the report shed light on the lack of meaningful daytime activities, the lack of privacy and in particular the frequent and prolonged placement in seclusion as punishment, common in Dutch detention facilities.

In **Serbia**, access to free legal aid at the Shelter for Foreigners may be limited as legal aid providers such as the Belgrade Centre for Human Rights are only allowed to visit the centre to meet the management on a monthly basis, as well as third-country nationals who previously contacted the organisation or are referred to them. Moreover, statistical information on the number of persons held and their status is not available, according to the Belgrade Centre for Human Rights.

Bright spots

Greece adopted **legal amendments** providing that unaccompanied children shall not be placed in protective custody only based on the fact that they are deprived of a safe or known place of residence. Due to a lack of accommodation places in dedicated facilities for children, unaccompanied children were often held in pre-removal detention facilities or police stations pending their transfer. These provisions are expected to put an end to this practice.

Alternatives to detention

In **Poland**, the Border Guard issued guidelines to ensure that alternatives to detention (reporting duties) are implemented in a way that limits the possibility of direct contact.

In **Bulgaria**, **media research** on the situation of irregular migrants published for the first time statistical data on the limited use of alternatives to detention. According to the study, regular reporting to the police was imposed on 24 persons for the first eight months of 2020 and on 53 persons in 2019. In the same period, of all detained irregular migrants, 80 persons remained in detention for more than six months (52 in 2019 and 28 in the period January – August 2020) despite the fact that, according to the national **law**, detention for more than 6 months can be used only exceptionally in cases of non-cooperation with the authorities or of delays in the receipt of return documentation.

Detention of children

In **Austria**, the **Federal Minister of the Interior** reported on 6 October 2020 that, as of that date in 2020, 12 unaccompanied children were held in detention pending removal.

Return

In **Poland**, the Ombudsperson communicated to FRA that he still receives complains regarding the lack of access to the case files classified as 'secret' by national authorities, applying administrative procedural law while granting residence permits and during return procedures.

In **Germany**, in view of the increased dangers during the corona pandemic, the Federal Workers' Welfare Association, together with the Federal Association for Unaccompanied Minors, Pro Asyl and a large number of civil society organisations, are calling for a **deportation freeze** until at least April 2021. The German Red Cross expressed concern about the plan to **end the return ban to Syria** as of January 2021. For **practical reasons**, however, it is expected that returns to Syria remain impossible, as there are no direct flight connections and no diplomatic relations with Syria.

The authorities in France returned a person infected with Covid-19 to Morocco, the NGO **ANAFÉ reported**. After having been detained for eight days, the person was removed without the result of his PCR test, which proved to be positive. Also in France, an HIV-positive asylum-seeking woman was held for 14 days at the Charles de Gaulle International Airport, deprived of access to medical treatment, before being removed to Egypt, the NGOs ANAFÉ reported in a **statement**.

In **Sweden**, many rejected asylum applicants cannot return or get information about when they will be able to return due to the on-going pandemic, according to the Stockholm City Mission, the Swedish Refugee Centre and Save the Children. They are not entitled to housing nor any financial assistance, according to the Red Cross. Save the Children, Amnesty and the Swedish Refugee Law Centre also expressed concerns over plans to resume returns to Afghanistan given the deteriorating security situation. A return flight to Afghanistan in December 2020 **was cancelled** due to a positive Covid-19 case among the flight staff.

In **Denmark**, the **Danish Parliamentary Ombudsperson** criticised the use of force during a return procedure. The police had allegedly used a belt fixation on both arms for almost 3,5 hours, including for 45 minutes after the flight company had cancelled the flight and there was no longer a tenable prospect that the return could take place.

In the **Netherlands**, a **report** published by Amnesty International states that the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) places heavy demands on asylum applicants to prove their identity. According to the report, lack of evidence of nationality may result in a dismissal of the asylum request and potential deportation. Furthermore, the report shows that the Dutch Repatriation and Departure Service (*Dienst Terugkeer en Vertrek* or DT&V) does not check whether the IND has investigated whether an applicant is at risk of persecution in the country of deportation, before returning him/her. If the nationality of the asylum applicant is established during the return process, the Dutch Repatriation and Departure Service usually does not pass this new information on to the Immigration and Naturalisation Service for an assessment of the risks.

Bright spots

In **Poland**, due to the 'state of epidemic threat' announced on 20 March 2020, many third-country nationals **have been allowed** to remain legally in the country during the epidemic and until 30 days after its end. These measures also apply to rejected asylum applicants and returnees.

Hate speech and violent crime

In **Greece**, a group of people attacked a shelter for unaccompanied children, according to **media reports**. Twelve persons gathered outside the facility with knives, sticks and iron bars, chanting racist slogans. Four children were **reportedly** injured, while a 38-year-old man and his 14-year-old son were identified as perpetrators. The incident prompted the intervention of the Deputy Prosecutor of the Supreme Court for racist violence.

In **Greece**, according to **media reports**, the National Council Against Racism and Intolerance adopted the first national action plan against racism and intolerance.

In **Italy**, the National Office against Racial Discrimination (*Ufficio Nazionale Antidiscriminazioni Razziali*, UNAR) and the association "Carta di Roma" **adopted** a joint statement on 11 October, criticising an Italian newspaper for conveying a racist message and inviting newspaper editors to refuse to give visibility to similar articles and avoid publishing statements containing dehumanising messages.

In **Malta**, the **Hate Crime and Speech Unit** reported having received 40 reports against 35 individual perpetrators of hate speech, including nine concerning migrant victims.

In **Croatia**, the **Ministry of the Interior** recorded 34 incidences of hate crime and hate speech in the first half of 2020. According to the **Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights OSCE-ODIHR**, 48 cases of hate crime were recorded by the police in 2019. Two cases reported by civil society organisations refer to attacks against migrants.

In **Austria**, a deadly terrorist attack in Vienna left four civilians dead and 13 severely injured, **the media reported**.

The Federal Agency for State Protection and Counter Terrorism informed FRA that, between July and September 2020, some 29 xenophobic/racist, eight anti-Semitic, and two Islamophobic crimes were reported to the authorities. In Styria, the regional Antidiscrimination Office of Styria reported to FRA that 52 insults were registered between 1 October 2020 and 31 December 2020. Some 46 % were based on ethnicity, 19 % on religion and 19 % on multiple discrimination. During the same period, 1,703 incidents of online hate speech were reported to the Antidiscrimination Office Styria. Some 29 % of these incidents were based on ethnicity, 23 % on political opinion and 12.8 % had an anti-Muslim content.

In **Poland**, in December 2020, the Ombudsperson published his latest **report** on discrimination, which indicates that racial discrimination is the most common form of discrimination in Poland. The Ombudsperson told FRA that complaints regarding hate crimes are increasing in Poland, pointing out that the Polish Public Prosecutor's Office often fails to disclose information regarding hate crimes to them despite an obligation to do so.

Bright spots

In **Italy**, on 24 November 2020, the National Office against Racial Discrimination (UNAR) signed a **protocol** with the major Italian trade unions and employer organisations. It commits the entities to working jointly to prevent and tackle, in the workplace, discrimination based on ethnic origin, race, and other grounds; and to foster a culture of integration, inclusion, and social promotion in the labour market, including through shared training initiatives and awareness-raising campaigns.

In **Bulgaria**, **UNHCR** published the results of two surveys conducted in 2019 and 2020 on the attitudes of Bulgarian society towards refugees and asylum seekers. The studies concluded that awareness among Bulgarians about refugee issues is deficient and has decreased significantly over the years. In addition, most Bulgarians have never communicated with refugees. The conclusions also show that Bulgarians demonstrate higher tolerance towards refugees than towards migrants.

In **Spain**, a **survey** by the Observatory on Racism and Xenophobia (*Observatorio Español del Racismo y la Xenofobia*) **concluded** that nine out of ten Muslims living in Spain (87 %) are discriminated against when buying or renting a home, and 83 % when they look for a job. It concludes that prejudice towards Muslims places them among the most discriminated groups in Spain, alongside Roma. The **report** '*Covid-19 health crisis: Racism and xenophobia during the state of emergency in Spain*' (*Crisis sanitaria Covid-19: Racismo y xenofobia durante el estado de alarma en España*) describes racist incidents and hate speech since the beginning of the Covid-19 epidemic.

In **Denmark**, the Danish National Police reported to FRA that, between October and December 2020, 13 people were convicted for offences committed based on the victims' race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion or sexual orientation.

In **Serbia**, anti-migrant **protests** took place on 25 October in Belgrade. A group of extreme right-wing organisations **shouted** paroles such as "Let's clean the park", in a park where migrants have often gathered since 2015. The police cordoned off counter-protesters.

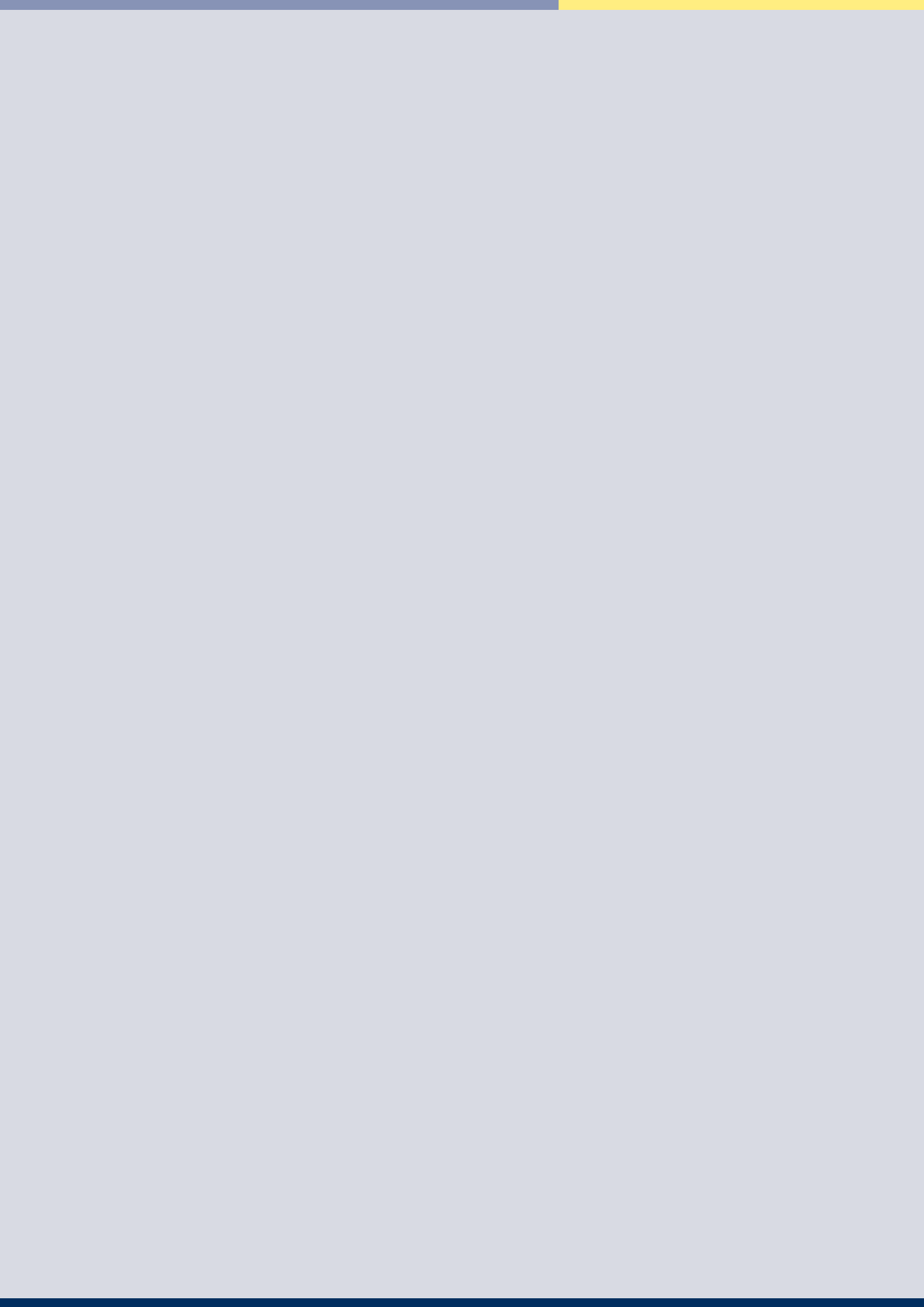
COUNTRY	STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED OR CONSULTED VIA E-MAIL
AUSTRIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Federal Ministry of the Interior, Department V/9/a (<i>Bundesministerium für Inneres, Abteilung V/9/a Grundversorgung und Bundesbetreuung</i>); → Federal Ministry of the Interior, Department V/8 (<i>Bundesministerium für Inneres, Abteilung V/8 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>); → Austrian Ombudsperson Board (<i>Volksanwaltschaft</i>); → Antidiscrimination Office Styria (<i>Antidiskriminierungsstelle Steiermark</i>); → Caritas Vienna (<i>Caritas Wien</i>); → Austrian Red Cross (<i>Österreichisches Rotes Kreuz</i>).
BELGIUM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Ministry of Justice (unaccompanied refugee children unit); → Immigration Office (<i>Dienst Vreemdelingenzaken/Office des Étrangers</i>); → FEDASIL – Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (<i>Federaal agentschap voor de opvang van asielzoekers/Agence fédérale pour l'accueil des demandeurs d'asile</i>); → Myria – Federal Migration Centre (<i>Federaal Migratiecentrum/Centre fédéral Migration</i>); → UNICEF Belgium; → Jesuit Refugee Service Belgium; → <i>Vluchtelingenwerk Vlaanderen</i> NGO; → NANSEN NGO.
BULGARIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → State Agency for Refugees (SAR) (<i>Държавна агенция за бежанците, ДАБ</i>); → Ministry of the Interior, Directorate General Border Police (Mol – DGBP) (<i>Министерство на вътрешните работи, Главна дирекция „Гранична полиция“, МВР – ГДГП</i>); → Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria, National Preventive Mechanism and Fundamental Human rights and Freedoms Directorate (<i>Омбудсман на Република България, Дирекция „Национален превантивен механизъм и основни права и свободи на човека“</i>); → State Agency for Child Protection (SACP) (<i>Държавна агенция за закрила на детето, ДАЗД</i>); → Ministry of the Interior, Directorate General National Police (Mol – DGNP) (<i>Министерство на вътрешните работи, Главна дирекция „Национална полиция“, МВР – ГДНП</i>); → UNHCR Bulgaria (based on weekly updates, other reports and information presented during the regular meetings of the Working Group on Integration of Beneficiaries of International Protection in Bulgaria (<i>Работна група по интеграция на лица с предоставена международна закрила в България</i>) coordinated by UNHCR); → Bulgarian Red Cross, Refugee Migrant Service (BRC – RMS) (<i>Български червен кръст, Бежанско-мигрантска служба, БЧК – БМС</i>); → Center for Legal Aid Voice in Bulgaria (<i>Център за правна помощ – Глас в България</i>).

COUNTRY	STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED OR CONSULTED VIA E-MAIL
CROATIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Centre for Peace Studies (<i>Centar za mirovne studije</i>); → Croatian Law Centre (<i>Hrvatski pravni centar</i>); → Croatian Red Cross (<i>Hrvatski crveni križ</i>); → Jesuit Refugee Service (<i>Isusovačka služba za izbjeglice</i>); → Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy (<i>Ministarstvo rada, mirovinskog sustava, obitelji i socijalne politike</i>); → Médecins du Monde-BE (<i>Liječnici svijeta</i>); → Ombudsperson for Children (<i>Pravobraniteljica za djecu</i>); → Rehabilitation Centre for Stress and Trauma (<i>Rehabilitacijski centar za stres i traum</i>); → The Office of the Ombudswoman (<i>Ured pučke pravobraniteljice</i>); → The State Attorney's Office (<i>Državno odvjetništvo</i>); → Welcome! Initiative (<i>Inicijativa Dobrodošli</i>).
CYPRUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Asylum Service (<i>Υπηρεσία Ασύλου</i>), Ministry of the Interior (<i>Υπουργείο Εσωτερικών</i>); → Social Welfare Office (<i>Υπηρεσίες Κοινωνικής Ευημερίας</i>), Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance; → Menogia Detention Centre (<i>Χώρος Κράτησης Μεταναστών Μενόγειας - ΧΩΚΑΜ</i>), Ministry of Justice and Public Order (<i>Υπουργείο Δικαιοσύνης και Δημόσιας Τάξης</i>); → UNHCR Representation in Cyprus (<i>Αντιπροσωπεία της Ύπατης Αρμοστείας του ΟΗΕ για τους πρόσφυγες στην Κύπρο</i>); → Cyprus Refugee Council (<i>Κυπριακό Συμβούλιο για τους Πρόσφυγες</i>) (NGO acting as implementing partner of UNHCR, offering legal, social and other assistance to asylum applicants and refugees); → Legal expert of the University of Cyprus (<i>Πανεπιστήμιο Κύπρου</i>) advising the Ministry of Justice and Public Order (<i>Υπουργείο Δικαιοσύνης και Δημόσιας Τάξης</i>) on human rights; → KISA (<i>Κίνηση για Ισότητα, Στήριξη και Αντιρατσισμό- ΚΙΣΑ</i>) national NGO offering support to migrants and refugees. → Caritas Cyprus.
DENMARK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Danish Ministry of Justice (<i>Justitsministeriet</i>), including the Danish National Police (<i>Rigspolitiet</i>); → Danish Immigration Service (<i>Udlændingestyrelsen</i>); → The Danish Parliamentary Ombudsperson (<i>Folketingets Ombudsperson</i>); → Danish Refugee Council (<i>Dansk Flygtningehjælp</i>); → Danish Red Cross (<i>Dansk Røde Kors</i>); → Amnesty International Denmark; → SOS Racism (<i>SOS Racisme</i>); → UNHCR Regional Representation for Northern Europe.

COUNTRY	STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED OR CONSULTED VIA E-MAIL
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>), General Authority and Department for the Protection of the Rights of the Child; → Controller General of Places of Deprivation of Liberty (<i>Contrôleur général des lieux de privation de liberté – CGLPL</i>); → National Association of Border Assistance for Foreigners (<i>Association nationale d'assistance aux frontières pour les étrangers – ANAFÉ</i>); → <i>La Cimade</i> NGO (<i>Inter-Movement Committee for Evacuees – Comité inter mouvements auprès des évacués</i>); → Doctors of the World (<i>Médecins du Monde</i>); → League for Human Rights – France (<i>Ligue des droits de l'homme – France</i>); → The Immigrant Information and Support Group (<i>Groupe d'information et de soutien des immigrés</i>); → Service centre for migrants in Calais (<i>Plateforme de service aux migrants à Calais</i>).
GERMANY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Jesuit Refugee Service (<i>Jesuitenflüchtlingsdienst – JRS</i>); → Federal Association for Unaccompanied Minors (<i>Bundesfachverband unbegleitete minderjährige Flüchtlinge – BumF</i>); → United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Berlin (<i>UNHCR</i>); → Federal Working Group of Psycho-Social Support Centres for Refugees and Victims of Torture (<i>Bundesweite Arbeitsgemeinschaft der psychosozialen Zentren für Flüchtlinge und Folteropfer – BAfF</i>); → German Red Cross (<i>Deutsches Rotes Kreuz</i>); → Federal Workers' Welfare Association (<i>Bundesverband der Arbeiterwohlfahrt AWO</i>); → Berlin Refugee Council (<i>Flüchtlingsrat Berlin e.V.</i>); → The Berlin Senate Department for Education, Youth and Family (<i>Berliner Senatsverwaltung für Bildung, Jugend und Familie</i>).
GREECE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Hellenic Police Headquarters - Migration Management Division (<i>Αρχηγείο Ελληνικής Αστυνομίας-Τμήμα Διαχείρισης Μετανάστευσης</i>); → The Greek Asylum Service (<i>Ελληνική Υπηρεσία Ασύλου</i>); → The Greek Ombudsperson (<i>Συνήγορος του Πολίτη</i>); → United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (<i>UNHCR</i>) Greece (<i>Υπατη Αρμοστέία του ΟΗΕ για τους Πρόσφυγες</i>); → Racist Violence Recording Network (<i>Δίκτυο Καταγραφής Περιστατικών Ρατσιστικής Βίας</i>); → Greek Council for Refugees (<i>Ελληνικό Συμβούλιο για τους Πρόσφυγες</i>); → Hellenic League for Human Rights (<i>Ελληνική Ένωση για τα Δικαιώματα του Ανθρώπου</i>); → Human Rights 360 (<i>Ανθρώπινα Δικαιώματα 360</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 Headquarters of the Police (<i>Országos Rendőr-főkapitányság</i>); → National Directorate-General for Aliens Policing (<i>Országos Idegenrendészeti Főigazgatóság</i>); → UNHCR Hungary; → Migrant Solidarity Group of Hungary (<i>Migráns Szolidaritás – MigSzol</i>); → Hungarian Association for Migrants (<i>Menedék Migránsokat Segítő Egyesület</i>); → Cordelia Foundation (<i>Cordelia Alapítvány</i>).

COUNTRY	STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED OR CONSULTED VIA E-MAIL
ITALY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Ministry of Labour and Social Policies; → Ministry of the Interior; → Public Security Department of the Ministry of the Interior – Directorate General for Immigration and Border Police (<i>Ministero dell’Interno Dipartimento della Pubblica Sicurezza - Direzione Centrale dell’Immigrazione e della Polizia delle Frontiere</i>); → National Commission for the Right of Asylum (<i>Commissione Nazionale per il Diritto d’Asilo</i>) of the 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>); → Authority for the Protection of Childhood and Adolescence (<i>Autorità Garante per l’Infanzia e l’Adolescenza</i>); → National Office against Racial Discrimination (<i>Ufficio Nazionale Antidiscriminazioni Razziali, UNAR</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>); → United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); → ‘Melting Pot Europa’ project; → Observatory for the Security against Discriminations of the Italian Police (<i>Osservatorio per la Sicurezza Contro gli Atti Discriminatori – OSCAD</i>); → Chronicles of Ordinary Racism (<i>Cronache di ordinario razzismo</i>).
MALTA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Ministry for Home Affairs, National Security and Law Enforcement – Hate Crime and Hate Speech Unit; → International Protection Agency (formerly the Office of the Refugee Commissioner); → Agency for the Welfare of Asylum Seekers → Detention Service; → NGO ‘KOPIN’; → NGO ‘African Media Association’.
NETHERLANDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Dutch Council for Refugees (<i>Vluchtelingenwerk Nederland</i>); → Amnesty International – Netherlands; → Netherlands Institute for Human Rights (<i>College voor de Rechten van de Mens</i>); → Defence for Children the Netherlands; → Ministry for Justice and Security: 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’); → Stichting LOS (knowledge centre for people and organisations that support migrants in an irregular situation); → UNICEF the Netherlands; → NIDOS (independent family guardian organisation, fulfilling the guardianship task for Unaccompanied Minor Asylum Seekers).
NORTH MACEDONIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Ministry of Interior; → Ombudsperson; → UNHCR North Macedonia; → IOM North Macedonia; → Jesuit Refugee Service JRS; → NGO Legis (<i>HBO Лезус</i>); → NGO Helsinki Committee of Human Rights of the Republic of Macedonia (<i>HBO Хелсиншки комитет за човекови права на Република Македонија</i>); → NGO EUROTHINK – Center for European Strategies.

COUNTRY	STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED OR CONSULTED VIA E-MAIL
POLAND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Ombudsperson for Children, (<i>Rzecznik Praw Dziecka</i>); → United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Office in Poland (UNHCR); → Ombudsperson (<i>Rzecznik Praw Obywatelskich</i>); → Border Guard, Border Guard Headquarters (<i>Straż Graniczna, SG</i>); → Police, Police Headquarters (<i>Policja</i>); Plenipotentiary for human rights of the Police Headquarters; → Head of the Office for Foreigners (<i>Szef Urzędu do Spraw Cudzoziemców</i>); → Association for Legal Intervention (<i>Stowarzyszenie Interwencji Prawnej</i>); → Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights (<i>Helsińska Fundacja Praw Człowieka</i>).
SPAIN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Asylum and Refugee Office of the Spanish Ministry of the Interior (<i>Oficina de Asilo y Refugio del Ministerio del Interior – OAR</i>); → Spanish Ombudsperson (<i>Defensor del Pueblo</i>); → UNHCR (<i>Oficina de la Agencia de la ONU para los Refugiados en España – ACNUR</i>); → Spanish Committee of UNICEF (<i>Comité español de UNICEF</i>); → Spanish Observatory for Racism and Xenophobia (<i>Observatorio Español del Racismo y la Xenofobia, OBERAXE</i>); → Spanish Refugee Aid Commission (<i>Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado – CEAR</i>); → Jesuit Migrant Service (<i>Servicio Jesuita Migrantes</i>); → General Directorate for International Protection Programs of the Ministry of Labour Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Security (<i>Subdirección General de Programas de Protección Internacional del Ministerio de Trabajo Ministerio de Trabajo, Migraciones y Seguridad Social</i>); → Chair of Refugees and Forced Migrants of Comillas ICAI-ICADE, INDITEX (<i>Cátedra de Refugiados y Migrantes Forzosos de Comillas ICAI-ICADE, INDITEX</i>).
SERBIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Asylum Office; → Shelter for Foreigners; → Centre for the Youth care in Niš; → Home for children without care Jovan Jovanović Zmaj in Belgrade; → INDIGO- Group for Children and Youth; → UNHCR Serbia.
SWEDEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Swedish Migration Agency, Department of digitalisation and development (<i>Migrationsverket, enheten för digitalisering och utveckling</i>); → Swedish Migration Agency, Statistics Department; → Swedish Migration Agency, Detention Department; → Swedish Police Authority, Border Department; → National Board of Health and Welfare (<i>Socialstyrelsen</i>); → Save the Children Sweden (<i>Rädda barnen</i>); → Red Cross Sweden (<i>Röda Korset</i>); → The Swedish Refugee Law Centre (<i>Asylrättscentrum</i>); → Stockholm City Mission (<i>Stockholms Stadsmission</i>); → Amnesty Sweden.





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