Council of the European Union

Brussels, 6 November 2026
(OR. en)

14826/26

ASILE 92
JAI 1341
MIGR 323
FRONT 220
RELEX 1389

COVER NOTE

From:	Secretary-General of the European Commission, signed by Ms Martine DEPREZ, Director
date of receipt:	6 November 2026
To:	Ms Thérèse BLANCHET, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union
No. Cion doc.:	COM(2026) 835 final
Subject:	COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL - The European Annual Asylum and Migration Report (2026)

Delegations will find attached document COM(2026) 835 final.

Encl.: COM(2026) 835 final

EUROPEAN
COMMISSION

Brussels, 6.11.2026
COM(2026) 835 final

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL

The European Annual Asylum and Migration Report (2026)

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The European Annual Asylum and Migration Report (2026)

The **Pact on Migration and Asylum ('the Pact')**, fully applying since 12 June 2026, is overhauling the EU's migration and asylum legal framework. The Pact is a core element of the EU's common approach to asylum and migration, and its strength lies in the balance between the principles of solidarity and a fair sharing of responsibility among Member States. It is an essential part of a comprehensive and forward-looking approach to migration management. Together with assertive migration diplomacy, technologically advanced border protection, new rules for swifter and more effective returns, and stronger labour and talent mobility to boost EU competitiveness, it is intended to deliver an effective, resilient and sustainable European asylum and migration system, as outlined in the first-ever long-term **European Asylum and Migration Management Strategy**[1].

This second **European Annual Asylum and Migration report ('the Report')** shows that, already before the entry into application of the Pact, **the common European approach to migration and asylum has started delivering strong results**. For the second year in a row, illegal border crossings, applications for international protection and unauthorised secondary movements of third-country nationals have been decreasing significantly across the EU. Illegal entries more than halved in the last two years and further dropped by more than a third in the first half of 2026. In 2025, asylum applications decreased by 19%, with a further year-on-year decrease of 17% in the first half of 2026. It is estimated that secondary movements decreased by 22% in 2025. Effective returns increased by 22% in 2025, with additional 25 000 returns compared with the previous year, bringing the EU return rate in 2025 to 29%[2]. The migratory situation is improving overall, although further progress is still to be made, notably by fully implementing the new rules of the Pact and further strengthening the cooperation with third countries of origin and transit through migration diplomacy, in line with fundamental rights.

This **year's Report**, the first one following the entry into application of the Pact, launches the **second annual migration management cycle**[3]. The Report assesses the asylum, reception and migratory situation over the previous 12-month period, provides a strategic situational picture of the area of migration and asylum in the EU that also serves as an early warning and awareness tool for the Union and includes a projection for the coming year. This Report informs the **Commission implementing Decision (the 'Decision')** determining which Member States are under migratory pressure, at risk of migratory pressure or facing a significant migratory

[1] COM (2026) 45 final.
[2] Other than for the figures in this paragraph, the reference period used in this Report is July 2025-June 2026, with a comparison to the reference period of July 2024-June 2025, while relevant developments occurring outside the reference period are also taken into due account.
[3] The operationalisation of the 2025 cycle covered a period of six months.

situation[4], in line with Regulation (EU) 2024/1351[5]. It also sets out the elements for identifying the solidarity needs of Member States under migratory pressure, which are the basis for the Commission proposal for a Council implementing Decision establishing the **annual Solidarity Pool**. Together, these three components of the **annual migration management cycle** ('the cycle') support the aim of managing migration sustainably and provide Member States with the flexibility they need to effectively and fairly address the specific challenges they face.

Member States have already made **significant progress in implementing the various strands of the reform introduced by the Pact**: strengthened border management and preparedness, screening of all illegal arrivals and the border procedures, with more than a third of all applications for international protection now being processed directly at the external borders, the new Eurodac database, streamlined procedures for responsibility determination and for assessing the applications for international protection, and further stepped up efforts on returns. Moreover, **the operationalisation of the first annual migration management cycle launched in 2025 is progressing successfully**, with the swift establishment of the first Solidarity Pool by the Council in December 2025 and the progressive operationalisation of the new mandatory and flexible solidarity mechanism. Fair sharing of responsibility and solidarity should continue to advance hand in hand.

It is now important to **maintain this momentum and that Member States continue to apply sustained efforts**. While significant progress has been achieved, important work remains to be done to ensure that the new framework delivers fully and effectively in practice. With the support of the Commission and of the EU agencies, Member States must continue working to ensure that **all components of the Pact are fully operational and that all remaining gaps are addressed as soon as possible**. This requires completing the legislative amendments, implementing pending operational actions and ensuring close cooperation at all levels. In particular, efforts need to continue to fully apply the new responsibility rules, including on transfers. This is key for a well-functioning system.

Therefore, this Report presents an overview of the state of play of the implementation of the Pact and an assessment of the application of the new responsibility rules as required by the Commission implementing Decision (EU) 2025/2323.

At the same time, **European borders are being continuously tested**. The European Union's integrated border management has contributed greatly to strengthening the integrity and security of our external borders in recent years. However, recent events have put EU's borders to the test, from the Eastern borders to the shores of the Mediterranean. This summer's event in Ceuta showed how quickly sudden, massive arrivals can build up at the EU's external border and lead to emergency situations. It is crucial to continue strengthening our external borders.

[4] The assessment uses the methodology developed in 2025 by the Commission, in consultation with the Member States, SWD (2025) 792, Methodology for the purposes of Commission implementing decision pursuant to Article 11 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 of the European Parliament and of the Council. The methodology will be further fine-tuned once new and better data becomes available, including on attempted illegal border crossings. The new Eurodac database became operational in mid-2026 and will provide new data that will lead to a better understanding of secondary movements. Furthermore, more comparable data on reception are being collected, which will complement the picture on pressure and allow the Commission to assess the level of preparedness of a Member State's asylum, reception and migration system.

[5] Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 on asylum and migration management, amending Regulations (EU) 2021/1147 and (EU) 2021/1060 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 (OJ L, 2024/1351, 22.5.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1351/oj).

As President von der Leyen highlighted in the State of the Union address, the European solution is in our comprehensive approach to migration, including the Pact on Migration and Asylum, which needs to be fully implemented. Those events have also shown that our tools need to evolve for emergency situations, to protect the borders at all times. To that end, the Commission presented a proposal to strengthen the European Border and Coast Guard Agency ('Frontex')[6] and a 5-point plan to prevent, anticipate and respond to sudden, mass illegal arrivals, with the aim to strengthen the resilience and security of EU external borders[7]. Furthermore, the work on a new **European Emergency Response Framework** is ongoing in view of reinforcing the EU capacity to protect its borders at all times, especially in scenarios of engineered and weaponised movements.

I. Delivering on the Pact: responsibility and solidarity in balance[8]

Implementing the Pact's comprehensive set of reforms has required significant legal and operational work over the past two years. Since the May 2026 state of play report[9], remaining infrastructure and procedures have progressively been put in place, which has facilitated the successful entry into application of the new rules. Since the implementation of the Pact is an ongoing and continuous process, sustained efforts are necessary from the Member States to progress further. The Commission and EU agencies will continue providing the necessary support.

a. EU-level action on the implementation of the Pact

Various strands of **EU financial support** have given Member States the means to improve the implementation of the Pact. Following the allocation of EUR 3 billion for the implementation of the Pact under MFF 2021-2027, the adoption of programme amendments for all 26 Member States concerned has now been concluded[10]. In addition, preparations are ongoing for putting the **Permanent EU Migration Support Toolbox** into operation. As part of the financial component of the Permanent EU Migration Support Toolbox, the Commission launched a Specific Action with an indicative amount of EUR 250 million under the 2023-2027 Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) Thematic Facility work programme entitled 'Implementation of the Migration and Asylum Pact under the Toolbox (IMPACT)', aiming to support the effective implementation of the Pact. In parallel, from April 2025 to June 2026, the Commission, in cooperation with the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), supported eight Member States to implement specific reforms outlined in their National Implementation Plans through the **Technical Support Instrument** (TSI)[11].

The **first solidarity cycle** has been successfully operationalised, and implementation is progressing across all strands – relocations, responsibility offsets and financial contributions. Member States are implementing relocations and responsibility offsets, and financial contributions will be effectively distributed to the benefitting Member States at the beginning

[6] COM (2026) 1030 final.
[7] Staying the course on migration reform - Migration and Home Affairs.
[8] This fourth update respond to the requirement of Article 84(3) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351.
[9] COM (2026) 196 final, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions State of play on the implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum.
[10] Denmark has an opt-out from the Pact on Migration and Asylum.
[11] Belgium, Czechia, Estonia, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Romania, Slovakia.

of 2027, in line with Regulation (EU) 2024/1351[12]. Since the four Member States (Greece, Spain, Italy and Cyprus) determined by the Commission in 2025 as being under migratory pressure informed the Commission about their intention to make use of the Annual Solidarity Pool for 2026, the EU Solidarity Coordinator has worked in close cooperation with the contributing Member States to ensure a balanced distribution of the Pool among the four Member States[13]. Under the coordination of the **Technical-Level Solidarity Forum,** Member States are now implementing relocations and responsibility offsets and have earmarked their financial contributions within their national budgets. Member States should continue to coordinate closely to ensure the swift and effective implementation of the first Solidarity Pool, with a view to achieving the broader objective of ensuring balance between responsibility and solidarity. Together with the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), the EU Solidarity Coordinator will continue supporting Member States in their implementation efforts and monitoring progress closely.

EU agencies continue to support Member States in implementing the Pact. The EUAA has developed or updated 77 Pact-related products, including 32 training modules, and recorded over 48 000 training participants between January and August of this year alone. Frontex is providing targeted support for screening and return border procedures, including dedicated workshops, practical guidance and information materials. Building on its practical monitoring tool, with a common methodology for national monitoring mechanisms, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) continues to provide training on fundamental rights monitoring during screening. On 15 October 2026, the Agency published a new report on EU-mandated migration-related fundamental rights monitoring and investigations[14].

b. Implementation in Member States

Four months after the entry into application of the Pact, **Member States** have made significant efforts and further progress in putting into operation its various components. Member States' level of readiness varies, each of them facing different challenges and responding to different needs. Member States must make full use of the new legal and operational tools under the Pact, and for this work needs to continue. It is urgent that all Member States further step up their efforts and take the measures that are necessary to deliver on all the Pact's building blocks. The Commission will continue monitoring the implementation and stands ready to continue providing support to Member States to fill the remaining gaps to ensure that all components of the Pact are operationalised.

Since the previous state of play report, there has been a steady increase in the adoption of **national legislative measures**, which have now been taken at least partially in most Member States. All remaining Member States should conclude the adoption of their national legislation or put interim solutions in place as a matter of urgency[15].

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[12] According to Article 63(3) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351, Member States shall implement their pledged solidarity contributions for a given year before the end of that year, without prejudice to Article 65(3) and Article 67(12) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351, with the exception of financial contributions.

[13] Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2025/2323 of 11 November 2025 pursuant to Article 11 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 of the European Parliament and of the Council C/2025/7099.

[14] EU-mandated migration-related fundamental rights monitoring and investigations - 2026 Update.

[15] Legislative adjustments are ongoing in Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovenia and Spain, while Hungary has yet to put forward the necessary legislative changes.

The new **Eurodac**[16] database has been integrated into the national asylum and migration workflows and is being implemented successfully across all Member States. National authorities of all Member States have been registering applicants for international protection and irregular migrants and conducting searches for registrations in Eurodac by other Member States related to applications for international protection, illegal border crossings, search and rescue (SAR) disembarkations and illegal stay to the extent expected, indicating that the new Eurodac system is used as foreseen.

Screening[17] of illegally arriving migrants is now being carried out at the external borders as a rule, with the vast majority of Member States gradually expanding to operate at full capacity. Through screening, all illegal arrivals at EU external borders are registered, identified and subject to a health, security and vulnerability assessment, enhancing EU internal security. All Member States have notified the Commission of their screening authorities and are taking the necessary steps to reach full operational capacity. Member States should continue working in view of reaching full capacity swiftly.

Similarly, the first months of implementation of the new **border procedures** led to overall positive results. Since the Pact entered into application, according to preliminary data, one third of applications for international protection (i.e. around 50 000) registered in the EU was processed under accelerated or border procedure. The border procedures are being carried out at the EU external borders, with most Member States having established their adequate capacity or interim solutions. According to EUAA consolidated data, between 12 June and the end of August 2026, around 7 000 asylum applications were subject to the asylum border procedure alone. Most Member States have established their adequate capacity, while work is ongoing in few others to achieve it. A key challenge is to put effective measures in place to prevent absconding during screening and the border procedures. To support Member States on this, the Commission has published guidance on the asylum and return border procedures[18], as well as guidance on the use of detention, alternatives to detention and restrictions of freedom of movement. The documents further clarify the rules to prevent unauthorised entry into the EU territory at the EU's external borders during screening and the asylum border procedure[19]. The EUAA also published a practical guide on the asylum border procedure[20]. In addition, the Commission, together with the EUAA, Frontex and Member States, organised joint workshops on screening and the border procedures for some of the Member States most concerned, providing practical training and guidance, including to members of the judiciary. The Commission will continue providing specific support to Member States that so request, including by updating the relevant guidance as necessary.

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[16] Regulation (EU) 2024/1358 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 on the establishment of 'Eurodac' for the comparison of biometric data in order to effectively apply Regulations (EU) 2024/1351 and (EU) 2024/1350 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Directive 2001/55/EC and to identify illegally staying third-country nationals and stateless persons and on requests for the comparison with Eurodac data by Member States' law enforcement authorities and Europol for law enforcement purposes, OJ L, 2024/1358, 22.5.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1358/oj.

[17] Regulation (EU) 2024/1356 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 introducing the screening of third-country nationals at the external borders and amending Regulations (EC) No 767/2008, (EU) 2017/2226, (EU) 2018/1240 and (EU) 2019/817, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1356/oj/eng.

[18] ARP-RBP Guidance on the asylum and return border procedures.

[19] Guidance on the use of Detention, Alternatives to Detention and Restrictions of Freedom of Movement under the 2024 Recast Reception Conditions Directive | Migration and Home Affairs.

[20] EUAA, *Practical Guide on the Asylum Border Procedure*, March 2026.

Member States have been adapting to the reformed **responsibility system** of the Pact. Overall, good progress has been made across Member States in streamlining procedures and improving efficiency. Several Member States have hired additional staff to ensure the effective application of the new rules and are addressing challenges in adapting to new IT-systems. However, significant challenges remain and further work is needed, notably in relation to the effective implementation of rules on responsibility transfers by all Member States. Full and sustainable implementation of the new responsibility rules, in parallel to the ongoing implementation of the first Solidarity Pool, remains a priority. To that end, section III of this Report includes an assessment of the application of the new responsibility rules as set out in Part III of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351.

Member States are undertaking reforms of their **reception systems**[21]. As 16 Member States had not notified the transposition of Directive (EU) 2024/1346 on reception by the deadline, the Commission sent letters of formal notice to the Member States concerned in July 2026[22]. Since then, progress has been made, with several Member States notifying complete transposition while others have only partially transposed the Directive or have yet to notify transposition measures[23]. The Commission will continue following this matter with the Member States concerned. Overall, Member States report sufficient reception capacity and are adapting facilities and services to better address the needs of unaccompanied minors and applicants with vulnerabilities. Early integration measures are available in most Member States, while work is also ongoing to improve digitalisation, data exchange and connectivity between relevant systems. Member States should ensure that any adjustments to their reception capacity remain consistent with the need to maintain well-prepared and resilient asylum and reception systems, in compliance with the new standards. Particular efforts are needed in situations of high occupancy levels, uneven standards or continued reliance on temporary or emergency accommodation. Account should be taken of the above-mentioned Commission guidance on the use of detention, alternatives to detention and restrictions of freedom of movement.

Swifter and more harmonised **asylum procedures** remain essential to safeguarding the integrity of the system. Following the entry into force of the Pact, many Member States reported no significant backlog of new asylum applications, supported also by an overall decrease in asylum applications in the EU. At the same time, Member States are taking steps to reduce existing backlogs and strengthen case-management capacity, including through the recruitment of additional staff, procedural streamlining, digitalisation and the allocation of additional resources. Furthermore, to close gaps between the asylum and **return** procedures, negative asylum decisions and return decisions are issued jointly or in close succession in the majority of Member States. The Return Regulation further strengthens the framework for a faster and more effective EU return system.

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[21] Measures necessary to transpose into national law Directive (EU) 2024/1346 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection (recast), OJ L, 2024/1346, (ELI: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1346/oj/eng).

[22] Commission takes action to ensure complete and timely transposition of EU directives.

[23] Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Greece, Finland, France, Croatia, Italy, Luxembourg, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, Slovakia have notified complete transposition; transposition remains partial for Austria, Belgium, Germany, Spain, Ireland, Lithuania and Romania, while Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, and Slovenia have yet to notify transposition.

National **judiciaries** are key to making the Pact work, and Member States generally report very good cooperation of the various authorities, including courts and Ministries of Justice, who have invested in the implementation of the Pact with additional staff, adapted administrative arrangements and trainings. All Member States need to continue maintaining a close dialogue with the judiciary and to address any emerging needs swiftly, in particular to ensure that new deadlines set in the Pact are met and any potential backlogs are limited. The Commission is making available an indicative budget of EUR 90 million via the IMPACT Specific Action to support the national judicial systems of Member States of first entry, which are most in need of support in this effort.

Member States have put in place arrangements to provide free **legal counselling**, and some are providing multidisciplinary age assessments for minors, involving trained professionals and appropriate methodologies. Member States continue to put arrangements in place for the independent fundamental rights **monitoring mechanism**, including through staff training, as well as new methodologies, working methods and coordination mechanisms. To progress further, appointing the independent monitoring authority is a key step, where this has not been done yet, completing the necessary legal and operational adaptations, and ensuring adequate staffing and arrangements[24]. In many Member States the systems for appointing representatives for unaccompanied minors are functioning effectively. However, gaps persist in recruiting a sufficient number of representatives.

Most Member States have started or continue to provide **integration** measures as provided for in the Pact, including language courses, vocational training and access to information. Several Member States also reported that work on **resettlement** is ongoing, at different stages of progress.

II. Strategic situational picture of the area of asylum, reception and migration

The strategic situational picture provides (a) an **analysis** of the main developments in the area of asylum, reception and migration in the Union and in the Member States over the 12-month period between 1 July 2025 and 30 June 2026, and (b) a **projection** for 2027, which includes information on the level of preparedness in the EU and the Member States to respond and adapt to the expected trends. The overview in this Report also includes findings[25] from the monitoring undertaken by Frontex, and from the evaluation of the application of the Schengen *acquis* carried out by the Commission in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2022/922[26].

[24] Belgium, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden have yet to formally designate or fully operationalise the national mechanism for monitoring compliance with fundamental rights in the context of screening and the asylum border procedure, although work is ongoing. Poland has designated an interim body while establishing the mechanism.

[25] The result of the monitoring undertaken by the EUAA, as well as the monitoring carried out in accordance with Article 10 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1356 referred to in Article 9(e) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 were not yet available at the time of reporting. Under the EUAA monitoring mechanism, the Agency launched the first monitoring exercises in July 2026.

[26] Council Regulation (EU) 2022/922 of 9 June 2022 on the establishment and operation of an evaluation and monitoring mechanism to verify the application of the Schengen *acquis* (ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2022/922/oj).

The strategic situational picture is based on quantitative and qualitative data and information provided by Member States, Eurostat, relevant EU agencies[27] and the European External Action Service. Both the analysis and the projection also build on the results of regular exchanges within the EU Migration Preparedness and Crisis Blueprint Network[28].

The strategic situational picture is complemented by a statistical breakdown, detailed information supporting the analysis[29], and the projection for 2027[30].

a. Analysis of the asylum, reception and migration situation between 1 July 2025 and 30 June 2026

Overall, between 1 July 2025 and 30 June 2026, **the migratory situation in the Union continued to improve for the second year in a row**. Illegal arrivals in the EU, applications for international protection and unauthorised movements continued to decrease[31]. This was thanks to a combination of factors, including (i) the joint efforts undertaken by the Commission and Member States in stepping up cooperation with countries of origin and transit, and (ii) the fact that Member States - with the full application of the Pact - have strengthened their asylum and migration management systems, and the protection of their sections of the EU external borders.

Illegal migration at the EU's external borders[32]

Illegal border crossings (IBCs) at the EU's external borders **decreased by 32%** between 1 July 2025 and 30 June 2026, compared with the previous reporting period. IBCs decreased along most migratory routes, including those accounting for most IBCs.

The main countries of origin of migrants entering the EU illegally as IBCs were Bangladesh, Sudan, Afghanistan, Algeria and Egypt. The main countries of origin of those involved in IBCs and with a percentage of positive decisions on international protection in the EU of 20% or less during the reporting period (i.e. an asylum recognition rate of 20% or less)[33] were Bangladesh,

[27] The European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol), the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex), the European Union Agency for the Operational Management of Large-Scale IT Systems in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (eu-LISA) and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA).

[28] The Blueprint Network, an early deliverable of the Pact, is the operational framework bringing together relevant EU stakeholders to monitor and anticipate migration flows and situations. It was set up by Commission Recommendation (EU) 2020/1366 of 23 September 2020 on an EU mechanism for preparedness and management of crises related to migration (ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reco/2020/1366/oj).

[29] The Staff Working Document 'Statistical breakdown supporting the analysis of the asylum, reception and migration situation in the Union and in the Member States' and the Staff Working Document 'Supporting the analysis of the asylum, reception and migration situation in the Union and in the Member States' are marked as sensitive as they contain data which may not be disclosed to the public given the granularity of the information they contain and the risk of hampering EU agencies and Commission operational activities.

[30] Staff Working Document 'Projection pursuant to Article 9(3)(b) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 of the European Parliament and of the Council for the year 2027' classified as 'RESTREINT UE/EU RESTRICTED'.

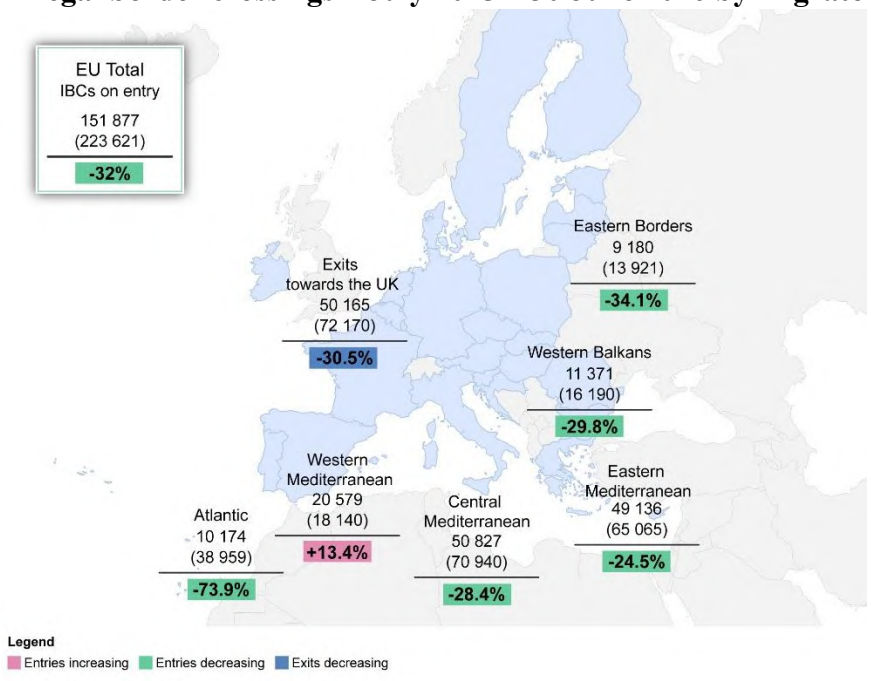
[31] Since this Report covers the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026, the year-to-year comparison ('previous reporting period') refers to the 12-month period from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

[32] The analysis in this section is based on Frontex data.

[33] The recognition rate reflects the percentage of asylum applicants who receive decisions granting either refugee status or subsidiary protection at first instance. Each year, Eurostat publishes the list of countries of citizenship with a recognition rate of 20% or lower for the purposes of Regulation (EU) 2024/1348.

Algeria, Egypt, Morocco and Senegal. In accordance with the rules in force[34], applications made by persons of such nationalities are to be mandatorily examined in the border procedure.

Figure 1 – Illegal border crossings 1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026 by migratory route[35]



Source: Joint Research Centre (JRC) elaboration on Frontex data

Looking more in-depth into the different routes, **on the Eastern Mediterranean route**, while the number of IBCs to Greece decreased (-23%) compared with the previous reporting period, Greece continues to have the highest number of IBCs in the Union[36] relative to its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and population. The majority of IBCs that occurred through the Eastern Mediterranean route were mostly from Libya and Türkiye. During the reporting period, while arrivals along the Eastern Mediterranean route have overall decreased, arrivals along the land border to Greece from Türkiye increased by 33% compared to the previous reporting period. Overall, they represented 21% of all arrivals along this route. In addition, arrivals in Crete increased by 105%. Close to half of all arrivals to Greece were recorded in Crete (around 21 000). In Cyprus, the number of IBCs decreased (-34%) compared with the previous reporting period, mostly due to the significant decrease in the number of migrants from Syria and the continued cooperation with the Lebanese authorities. However, relative to its GDP and population, Cyprus still ranked third in the EU in terms of illegal arrivals.

On the Central Mediterranean route, in Italy, the number of IBCs decreased (-28%) although Italy remained the Member State receiving the highest number of illegal arrivals in absolute

[34] Regulation (EU) 2024/1348 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 establishing a common procedure for international protection in the Union and repealing Directive 2013/32/EU, (OJ L, 2024/1348, 22.5.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1348/oj).
[35] Only routes with more than 500 IBCs are included in this map.
[36] Calculated comparing the share of each Member State for this indicator with its share of GDP and population. The share of GDP and population for each Member States is calculated in accordance with the reference key set out in Article 66 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351.

terms in the EU. This decrease was due to the consolidated cooperation with the Tunisian authorities[37] and tighter controls on maritime departures from the Turkish coast. Departures from Libya to Italy remained stable, as migrant smuggling networks exploited the continued instability in Libya and neighbouring countries.

On the Western Mediterranean and Atlantic routes combined, IBCs to Spain almost halved (-46%) during the reporting period compared with the previous reporting period, due to fewer arrivals along the Atlantic route to the Canary Islands. This was thanks to a continued cooperation with key third countries in Northern and Western Africa, particularly on prevention of departures. At the same time, on the Western Mediterranean route, the number of IBCs increased, with Algeria as the main country of departure.

In addition, on 30-31 July 2026, according to the data communicated by the Spanish authorities, approximately 72 000 persons, including 3 560 unaccompanied minors, entered illegally the **Spanish autonomous city of Ceuta** from Morocco. The incident shows the particular exposure as regards large-scale illegal arrivals of Ceuta as well as Melilla, the only external land borders of the EU in Africa. Spain reacted to this emergency situation and most of the third-country nationals arriving illegally (more than 90% according to Spain) returned to Morocco in the days following the incident. At the same time, due to the specific situation of Ceuta and Melilla in the Schengen area, as provided for by Article 41 of Regulation (EU) 2016/399[38], checks are carried between Ceuta and Melilla, and the Spanish mainland, thereby preventing onward movements and preserving the integrity of the Schengen area.

In the weeks following the events, Spanish authorities continued to face challenges in carrying out the necessary operations and in providing reception and assistance to those remaining illegally in Ceuta, particularly to unaccompanied minors. In response to this emergency situation, following Spain's request, the Commission swiftly provided EUR 114.7 million in emergency funding to Spain, and Frontex, the EUAA and Europol enhanced their operational support. Ceuta and Melilla's exposure to sudden increases in illegal arrivals and the extraordinary challenges caused by the incident in Ceuta show the need for continued preparedness in effective border protection and migration management.

In the **Western Balkans** region, IBCs decreased (-30%) compared with the previous reporting period, continuing the declining trend seen in previous years. Action taken in the framework of the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT)[39] and the implementation of the EU Action Plan on the Western Balkans[40] contributed to this decrease. Furthermore, enhanced police controls disrupted migrant smuggling activities, and fewer people arrived along the Eastern Mediterranean route (which is the main entry point of migrants moving illegally along the Western Balkans route). The Bosnia and Herzegovina-Croatia corridor remained the most active, although IBCs also decreased along this route. During the

[37] Memorandum of Understanding on a strategic and global partnership between the European Union and Tunisia, signed in July 2023.
[38] Regulation (EU) 2016/399 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016 on a Union Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders (Schengen Borders Code) (codification) OJ L 77, 23.3.2016.
[39] EMPACT is the EU's flagship security initiative to fight serious, cross-border organised crime.
[40] EU Action Plan on the Western Balkans of 5 December 2022 available at https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/eu-action-plan-western-balkans_en.

reporting period, Croatia accounted for 78% of the arrivals along the route and therefore for the second highest number of IBCs at EU level relative to GDP and population.

At the **EU's Eastern border**, the number of IBCs remained low, and decreased (-34%) compared with the previous reporting period. Actions by Russia and Belarus continued to influence migratory dynamics, especially in Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland and Estonia. In response to continued state-sponsored attempts of weaponisation of migration by Belarus, Poland, Latvia and Lithuania strengthened their border controls. In addition, Poland extended the existence of a buffer zone along its border with Belarus to maintain operational vigilance and ensure the effectiveness of border protection. Latvia and Lithuania enhanced surveillance measures at their borders with Belarus. This helped reduce the number of IBCs from Belarus (259 IBCs in total, of which 56% to Latvia). Latvia and Estonia strengthened border management measures at its border with Russia. Finland extended the national special regime at its crossing points with Russia, in response to Russia's attempts to weaponise migration. As a result of these initiatives, migratory movements at the border with Russia further decreased and remained very low in absolute numbers (-31%, 54 IBCs). Nevertheless, the risk of weaponisation of migration remains a serious challenge, adding to occasional violent incidents and attempts to cross the border illegally.

In relation to IBC on exit from the EU, along the **Channel** route migrants continued trying to illegally cross the border from the EU towards the United Kingdom. Along this route, departures from France to the United Kingdom decreased by 30% compared with the previous reporting period. Border management efforts in France prevented many attempted crossings from France to the United Kingdom. Successful crossings (arrivals in the United Kingdom) decreased by 20% compared with the previous period. On 16 June, the Commission presented an EU action plan for the Channel migratory route[41].

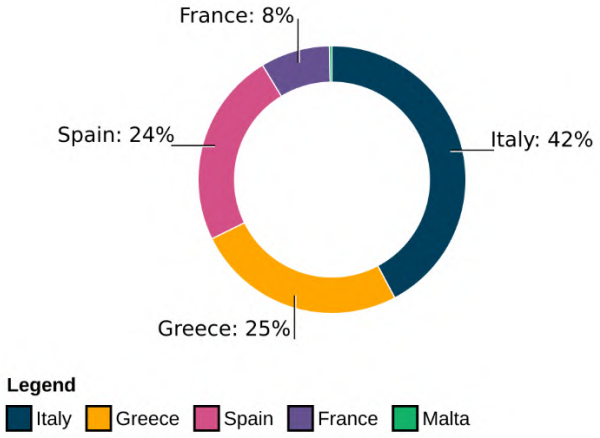
At the EU's external borders, between 1 July 2025 and 30 June 2026, over 110 000 people were **refused entry** between 1 July 2025 and 30 June 2026, mainly at land (51%) and air (45%) borders. Most refusals of entry were due to missing or invalid documentation[42]. Poland, Spain and France recorded the highest numbers in absolute terms, while Croatia, Latvia and Estonia issued most refusals relative to their GDP and population. Most refusals of entry involved Ukrainians[43], Albanians, and Moldovans. The Entry/Exit System, which has been fully operational since 10 April 2026, has played an important role in this context.

Arrivals by sea following search and rescue operations[44]

The number of third-country nationals disembarked in EU territory following search and rescue operations (SAR) **decreased by 34%** in July 2025-June 2026, compared with the previous reporting period. From 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026, over 64 000 persons were disembarked in the EU following SAR operations. Italy accounted for almost half (42%) of all migrants disembarked in the EU, followed by Greece, Spain and France.

[41] https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/eu-action-plan-channel-migratory-route_en.
[42] This included cases where non-EU nationals overstayed the permitted 90 days within a 180-day period or lacked a valid visa or residence permit, or where they were subject to alerts created for security reasons.
[43] Ukrainians without valid permits or not covered by temporary protection.
[44] The analysis in this section is based on Frontex data.

Figure 2 – Persons disembarked in search and rescue operations



Source: JRC elaboration on Frontex data

Migrant smugglers continue to put migrants' lives at risk by organising dangerous crossings to reach the European Union on unseaworthy vessels. During the reporting period, 3 758 people were reported dead or missing at sea, an increase of 12% compared with July 2024-June 2025. The Central Mediterranean and the Atlantic route continued to be the deadliest sea routes to the EU[45].

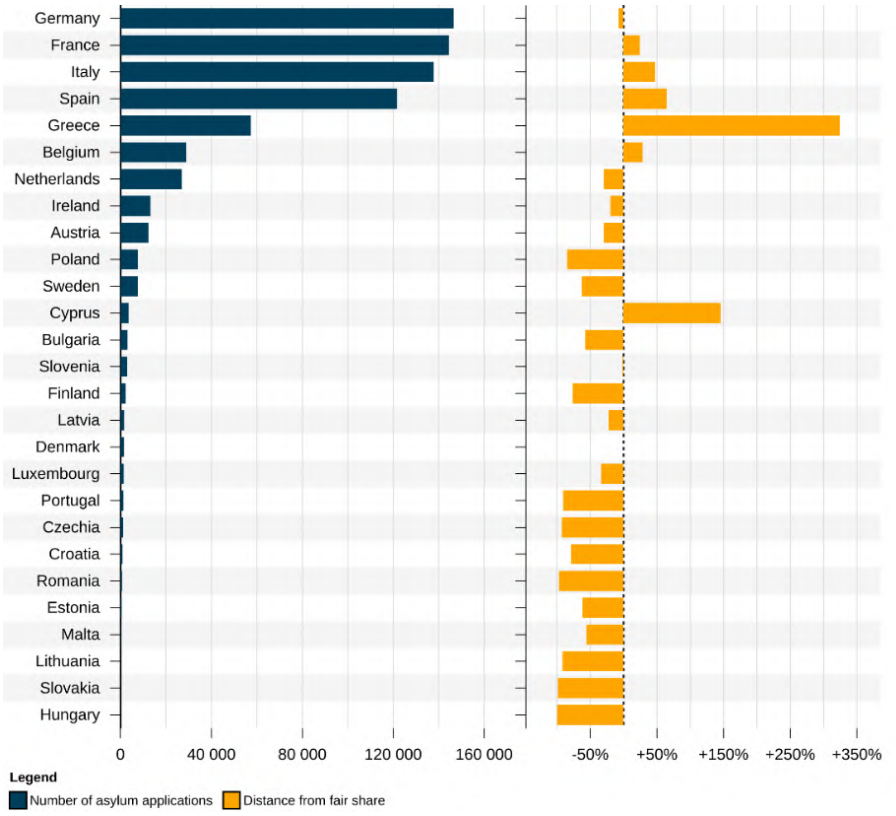
Sea crossings in small boats from France to the United Kingdom across the Channel facilitated by smuggling networks also led to SAR operations. Smuggling networks continued to organise simultaneous departures in order to overwhelm authorities, with increasingly overcrowded boats, thereby increasing the risks for migrants' lives.

International protection and temporary protection in the EU[46]

Applications for international protection in the EU **decreased by 16%** between July 2025 and June 2026, compared with the previous reporting period. However, applications still remained high in absolute numbers, with 730 800 applications lodged. The decrease was driven mainly by fewer illegal arrivals and the decrease of applications by Syrian nationals.

[45] Data | Missing Migrants Project, source: IOM.
[46] The analysis on international protection and temporary protection is based on EUAA and Eurostat data, respectively.

Figure 3 – Applications for international protection by Member States in absolute values, and per capita and GDP[47]



Source: JRC elaboration on EUAA data

Greece and Cyprus received the highest number of applications relative to their GDP and population combined. In absolute numbers, Germany received the highest number of applications for international protection – despite a 20% decrease compared with July 2024 - June 2025 – followed by France, Italy and Spain. During the reporting period, there was an increase in the number of applications lodged by Afghan nationals, who lodged the highest number of applications for international protection.

Applications by unaccompanied minors accounted for 2% of the total number of applications lodged; they decreased for a second consecutive year (by 42% compared with the previous reporting period). Relative to GDP and population, Greece and Cyprus received the highest number of applications by unaccompanied minors at Union level. In absolute terms, unaccompanied minors lodged the highest numbers of applications in the Netherlands, Greece and Germany.

In the reporting period, 390 000 applications (53% of the total) were lodged by nationals of countries with a recognition rate of 20% or lower[48]: Venezuela, Bangladesh, Türkiye, Egypt and Pakistan were the main countries of origin of those applicants. From 12 June 2026, these nationals are among those to be treated in the mandatory border procedures.

[47] Calculated comparing the share of each Member State for this indicator with its share of GDP and population. The share of GDP and population for each Member States is calculated in accordance with the reference key set out in Article 66 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351.
[48] Based on the recognition rate in the reporting period.

EU Member States issued 280 000 decisions granting international protection status[49], a **3% increase** compared with the previous reporting period[50]. Relative to their GDP and population, Greece, Austria and France were the Member States that granted the highest proportion of positive international protection decisions. In absolute terms, Germany, France and Greece issued most positive decisions on international protection applications, while Spain was the top country granting national humanitarian status, mostly to Venezuelans. By the end of 2025, most Member States had resumed processing applications for international protection lodged by Syrian applicants, following several months during which their processing was postponed due to the uncertain situation in Syria. During the reporting period, Syria was the fourth largest country of origin in terms of number of third country nationals applying for international protection in the EU, half of them in Germany.

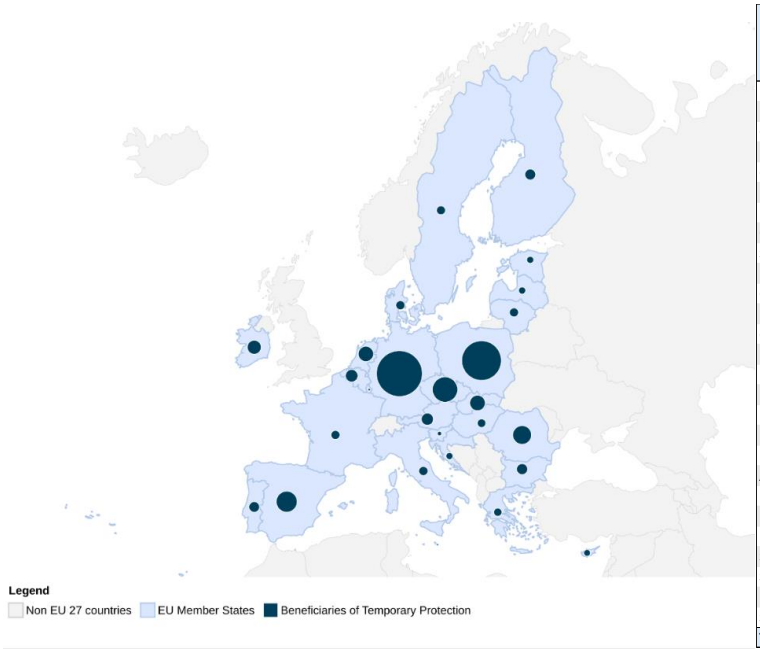
As a result of Russia's ongoing war of aggression and escalation of attacks against Ukraine, **4.4 million persons were benefitting from temporary protection in the EU** at the end of June 2026. Most of them continue to be hosted in Germany and Poland, which together account for 51% of all beneficiaries in the EU. Relative to GDP and population, Czechia hosted the highest number of temporary protection beneficiaries at the end of June 2026, followed by Poland, Slovakia and Estonia. Ukrainians continued to arrive in the EU, not only to request temporary protection, but also on a temporary basis for family visits or seasonal work. Between July 2025 and June 2026, temporary protection status in the Union was granted to nearly 700 000 beneficiaries. Relative to GDP and population, Czechia granted temporary protection status to the highest number of beneficiaries, followed by Slovakia, Poland, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. Between July 2025 and June 2026, the number of Ukrainian nationals applying for international protection decreased by 44% compared with the previous reporting period. Most of them applied in France and Poland.

On 16 September 2025, following a Commission proposal, the Council adopted a Recommendation on a coordinated approach to transitioning out of temporary protection for displaced persons from Ukraine[51], including recommendations on moving to other legal statuses. Since the adoption of this Recommendation, displaced persons from Ukraine have been able to transition from temporary protection to other legal statuses, while more progress is needed. Some Member States have also put in place specific pathways to dedicated national residence permits. While the conditions in Ukraine are still not conducive to a safe and durable return, the Commission is working on a pilot project supporting informed and voluntary return, linked to reintegration and Ukraine's recovery, in preparation for the eventual end of temporary protection. On 30 July 2026, the Council adopted a Decision extending temporary protection for people fleeing Ukraine until 4 March 2028[52]. According to this Decision, as of 5 August 2026, temporary protection should not, in principle, be granted by the Member States to newly

[49] Includes decisions at first instance and decisions in appeal or review on Geneva Convention refugee status and subsidiary protection status.
[50] The recognition rate at first instance for international protection decreased to 31%, mainly on account of there being fewer positive decisions issued to Syrian, Afghan and Iraqi nationals.
[51] Council Recommendation of 16 September 2025 on a coordinated approach to the transition out of temporary protection for displaced persons from Ukraine (OJ C, C/2025/5129, 23.9.2025, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2025/5129/oj).
[52] Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2026/1912 of 30 July 2026 extending the temporary protection introduced by Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/382 (OJ L, 2026/1912, 4.8.2026, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec_impl/2026/1912/oj).

arriving persons who are not authorised by the Ukrainian authorities to leave Ukraine in view of their military obligations.

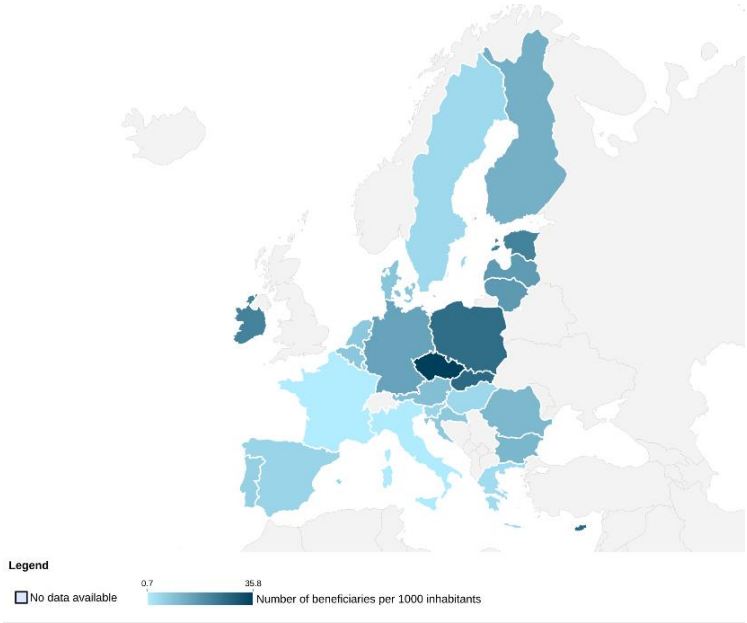
Figure 4A – Beneficiaries of temporary protection in the Member States



Member State	June 2026
Belgium	96 180
Bulgaria	74 035
Czechia	390 810
Denmark	51 195
Germany	1 286 230
Estonia	30 405
Ireland	120 165
Greece	40 980
Spain	269 690
France	49 340
Croatia	30 000
Italy	51 105
Cyprus	26 750
Latvia	31 690
Lithuania	50 230
Luxembourg	3 835
Hungary	44 965
Malta	2 660
Netherlands	142 210
Austria	90 570
Poland	961 170
Portugal	68 310
Romania	215 300
Slovenia	11 570
Slovakia	147 320
Finland	72 240
Sweden	48 725
Total	4 407 675

Source: JRC elaboration on Eurostat data

Figure 4B – Distribution of beneficiaries of temporary protection in EU Member States per 1 000 inhabitants



Source: JRC elaboration on Eurostat data.

Unauthorised movements within the EU[53]

Available data suggest that during the reporting period unauthorised movements of migrants and applicants for international protection within the EU decreased. However, this

[53] The analysis on unauthorised movements is based on EUAA and eu-LISA data.

phenomenon, as well as the deficiencies in implementing the rules determining which Member State is responsible for the examination of an application for international protection[54], continued to pose challenges to the already strained capacities of several Member States.

Following the implementation of the new Eurodac Regulation which entered into application on 12 June 2026, there are more granular data capturing unauthorised movements. For most of the reporting period, however, such data were not available. Instead, the analysis relies on indicators that give an indication by proxy of the scale and direction of these movements within the EU[55]. Data from Eurodac suggest that **unauthorised movements within the EU decreased by around 13%** in the reporting period compared with the previous one[56]. Even though unauthorised movements typically took place from countries of first entry into the EU towards Member States in the north-west, there were also circular movements of migrants going back to the countries of first entry, in particular to Italy. In absolute terms, Greece, Germany, France, Croatia and Italy were the main countries of departure, while Germany, Italy, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands were the countries of destination for most unauthorised movements. The routes with most unauthorised movements were Greece to Germany, Greece to France, Greece to the Netherlands and Italy to France.

Data collected to monitor the functioning of Regulation (EU) No 604/2013[57] (decisions on requests to transfer applicants for international protection to the country responsible for the examination of the application) can also be used to track unauthorised movements; it should be recalled that, as of June 2026, this Regulation has been replaced by Regulation (EU) 2024/1351. Based on the number of decisions on requests to transfer back applicants for international protection to the country of first entry issued by the other Member States, Croatia, Slovenia, Belgium, Luxembourg, France and the Netherlands were the countries most affected by incoming unauthorised movements from other Member States, relative to their GDP and population.

In the reporting period, around 13 000 transfers were implemented among Member States. When compared with the over 58 000 decisions accepting incoming requests, this results in an implementation rate of 22%, up from 19% in the previous reporting period.

In absolute numbers, France, Germany and the Netherlands carried out the highest number of transfers, while Germany, Spain and France were the Member States receiving most transfers.

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[54] Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person (recast) (OJ L 180, 29.6.2013, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2013/604/oj); repealed with effect from 12 June 2026 and replaced with Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

[55] Proxy indicators include data collected to monitor the functioning of Regulation (EU) 604/2013 ('Dublin data') and data stored in the Eurodac database – the EU's fingerprint database (set up by Regulation (EU) No 603/2013) that stores and compares fingerprints of individuals who have applied for asylum or been apprehended while illegally crossing the external borders of the Schengen area.

[56] 344 532 foreign Eurodac hits were reported (when both the country of departure and the country of destination are Member States), 13% less than in the July 2024-June 2025 period. With the new Eurodac Regulation, from 12 June 2026 there have been changes to the way fingerprints are recorded and stored in Eurodac, likely to impact year-on-year comparison of Eurodac data.

[57] Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person (recast), OJ L 180, 29.6.2013, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2013/604/oj/eng.

Croatia received by far the highest number of transfers from other Member States relative to its GDP and population. Greece and Italy received a very low number of transfers compared with the number of positive decisions following requests from other Member States.

The new Eurodac Regulation[58] will help to provide a clearer understanding of unauthorised movements from 2027 onwards and enable authorities to determine more efficiently which Member State is responsible for an asylum application.

Increasing the overall number and efficiency of transfers is key for the well-functioning of the Pact, notably by ensuring that transfers towards the Member States that have not been accepting them over the last years are fully resumed in a sustainable manner, and by establishing the necessary operational cooperation between the Member States. In addition, addressing existing challenges in the national reception systems is crucial to reduce incentives for unauthorised movements, ensuring effective functioning of the system, and maintaining the balance between responsibility and solidarity.

Reception[59]

Despite considerable efforts to improve the collection of data on reception, the statistics are not yet fully comparable between Member States and remain incomplete. There is still a fragmented picture preventing a conclusive assessment of the reception situation in the Union and in the Member States[60]. Addressing the remaining gaps in the next cycle should improve the situational picture and allow for a better assessment of the reception capacity in the Union[61].

Based on the available data, Member States hosted around **1 315 000 people in their national reception systems**, mostly in Germany, Italy, France, the Netherlands and Austria. Relative to their GDP and population, Germany, Luxembourg, Austria, the Netherlands and Ireland[62] had the highest number of persons hosted in their reception systems. Some Member States provided

[58] Regulation (EU) 2024/1358 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 on the establishment of 'Eurodac' for the comparison of biometric data in order to effectively apply Regulations (EU) 2024/1351 and (EU) 2024/1350 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Directive 2001/55/EC and to identify illegally staying third-country nationals and stateless persons and on requests for the comparison with Eurodac data by Member States' law enforcement authorities and Europol for law enforcement purposes, amending Regulations (EU) 2018/1240 and (EU) 2019/818 of the European Parliament and of the Council and repealing Regulation (EU) No 603/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council. According to this Regulation, Member States will furthermore register in Eurodac additional data and information, such as new categories of migrants, including those illegally staying in a Member State (Category 3).

[59] The analysis on reception is based on EUAA data.

[60] For the first two annual cycles (2026 and 2027), the Commission and EUAA set out an 'incremental approach' by which Member States are required to report reception data at least on two core indicators: persons in the reception system (total number of persons in the reception system including breakdown per legal status of persons in reception and number of unaccompanied minors); and capacity of the reception system (total beds available at the end of the reporting period). As of 2027, Member States are to report on the whole set of reception indicators.

[61] From 1 July 2026, Member States are required to report to EUAA the full set of reception indicators, which can be found in the revised EPS Technical Guide for data exchange.

[62] In Ireland, a significant proportion of international protection applicants enter the country irregularly, principally arriving across the land border with Northern Ireland. This, alongside the significant arrivals from Ukraine, put a strain on the Irish reception system. During the reporting period, applications for international protection in Ireland stood at 14 000 compared with the unprecedented high numbers in the previous reporting period (18 000), this trend has been visible since early 2022, alongside a high number of arrivals from Ukraine.

financial allowances as alternatives to in-kind housing[63]. The overall occupancy rate in the national reception systems in the EU was around 80% at the end of June 2026[64].

The organisation of reception systems varies across the EU. In particular, Member States have adopted different approaches to the accommodation of beneficiaries of temporary protection. Some Member States also accommodate temporary protection beneficiaries in their reception systems, together with persons with other legal statuses, such as rejected asylum applicants or persons who have received a return order. Temporary protection beneficiaries accounted for over 50% of the population hosted in the asylum reception systems of Finland, Sweden, Austria, Portugal and Slovenia. At the same time, a large number of temporary protection beneficiaries receive accommodation support outside the reception system, notably in Czechia, Poland, Hungary and Romania. Beneficiaries of temporary protection who are provided accommodation support outside the reception system are not counted in Member States' reporting.

Some Member States have increased their accommodation capacity, including Portugal, Croatia and Denmark while at the same time, other Member States, in view of the decreasing number of applicants, have decreased their accommodation capacity, including Finland, Austria and Bulgaria. Ensuring sufficient capacity and adequate reception conditions is a key element of a well-prepared asylum, reception and migration system and the well-functioning of the responsibility rules.

Resettlement and humanitarian admission[65]

Fourteen Member States[66] made pledges under the ad hoc Union resettlement and humanitarian admission scheme for 2024-2025 and ten Member States made pledges for 2026-2027[67]. Eleven of those Member States had **transferred more than 7 000 persons to the EU** through resettlement or humanitarian admission during the reporting period. More than half of the beneficiaries were transferred to France, Germany and Italy, while Finland and Sweden resettled the highest number of beneficiaries relative to their GDP and population. Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan and Syria were the countries of origin of more than two thirds of the persons who arrived through resettlement or humanitarian admission during the reporting period.

Return[68]

Between July 2025 and June 2026, Member States issued 463 000 return orders to third-country nationals with no right to stay in the EU[69]. This represents a **decrease of 5% in return orders** issued, compared with the previous reporting period, which is also linked to the overall decrease of the number of illegal arrivals to the Union. France, Germany and Spain issued the most return orders in absolute terms. Relative to GDP and population, Cyprus issued by far the

[63] https://emn.ie/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/2025_EMN_inform_alternatives_to_housing_in_kind.pdf.
[64] At the end of June 2026, it was possible to calculate the occupancy rate for 26 Member States.
[65] The analysis on resettlement and humanitarian admission is based on EUAA data.
[66] Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Spain and Sweden.
[67] Under the 2026-2027 Union Plan or under a national resettlement scheme. These Member States are Bulgaria, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Romania, Spain and Sweden.
[68] The analysis on return is based on Eurostat data.
[69] The number of return orders should be treated with caution, as some decisions may be counted twice or suspended, and this is not reflected in the figure.

most return orders, followed by Croatia and Portugal. The nationalities of third-country nationals issued with a return order differed significantly across Member States[70].

At the same time, 142 000 illegally staying third-country nationals were effectively returned to a third country, which represents an **11% increase** compared with the previous reporting period. Over half of the returns were implemented by only five Member States: Germany, France, Poland, Sweden, and Cyprus. Relative to GDP and population, most returns were implemented by Cyprus, Croatia and Malta. **The overall return rate during the reporting period increased from 26% to 31%**, but still remains too low, resulting in a backlog of cases of persons with an order to leave still remaining in EU territory[71]. Most nationals ordered to leave were nationals of Algeria, Morocco, Türkiye, Syria and Tunisia. The number of return orders issued to Algerians increased by 9%. Those returned were mainly nationals of Türkiye, Georgia, Syria, Albania, and Colombia. With the exception of Türkiye and Syria, third countries that rank highest in terms of third-country nationals ordered to leave do not correspond to the third countries with the highest number of implemented returns. Voluntary returns also further increased with more than 60% of all returns being voluntary. Sustained efforts on readmission through the Article 25a Visa Code mechanism and the Visa Suspension Mechanism have delivered results. It remains crucial that Member States follow up return orders with readmission requests to the relevant third countries and systematically request emergency travel documents for persons with confirmed nationality[72]. Schengen evaluations and monitoring identified progress in strengthening national return systems through gradual modernisation[73] and development of operational tools for returns in several Member States. At the same time, additional efforts are needed on issuing return orders in a timely manner and effectively enforcing them, streamlining the applicable procedures, implementing measures to prevent absconding and unauthorised secondary movements and consolidating the use of the Schengen Information System (SIS). All these improvements are particularly relevant to ensure the effectiveness of the return border procedure. Furthermore, the efforts to enhance readmission cooperation must increase for all nationalities, with a particular focus on the nationalities subject to the border procedures. The entry into application of the new Return Regulation[74], the proposal for a renewed mandate of Frontex and the proposal on the digitalisation of returns, readmission and reintegration[75] will further contribute to the overall aim to increase the efficiency of the return procedure across the EU.

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[70] France issued most orders to nationals of Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco; Germany to nationals of Türkiye, Syria and Afghanistan, and Spain to nationals of Algeria, Morocco and Senegal. Cyprus issued most orders to leave to nationals of Syria, India and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Croatia to nationals of Türkiye, Bangladesh and Nepal, Portugal to nationals of Brazil, India and Angola.

[71] The EU-wide return rate increased to 31% during the reporting period (in the previous reporting period it was 26%). Due to the time lag between the administrative procedures related to the issuance of the return order and the effective implementation of the return, the resulting calculation of the return rate based on such statistics for a specific reporting period should be treated with caution.

[72] According to data reported by Frontex, Member States submitted fewer requests for identification and emergency travel documents (6%, 68 908 compared with 73 449 in the previous reporting period).

[73] The Commission is working on a legislative proposal on the digitalisation of case management in the area of return, readmission and reintegration.

[74] Regulation (EU) 2026/2280 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 October 2026 establishing a common system for the return of third-country nationals staying illegally in the Union and repealing Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Council Directive 2001/40/EC and Council Decision 2004/191/EC, OJ L, 2026/2280, 15.10.2026 (ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2026/2280/oj).

[75] COM (2026) 1037 final.

b. Projection for the coming year and information on the level of preparedness in the EU

The Commission proposal for a **Solidarity Pool** is intended to address the needs of Member States identified as being under migratory pressure. In identifying those needs, the Commission considers the main findings of this Report, including both the impact of past trends on the Member States concerned and the projection for the coming year.

The projection suggests that, overall, **illegal arrivals at EU level are expected to continue decreasing across all the main migratory routes in 2027**[76], in line with the downward trend already observed in the first half of 2026. The expected decrease results, among other factors, from strong EU engagement with key countries of origin and transit, intensified action against migrant smuggling networks both within the EU and in third countries, the effective implementation of the reinforced EU asylum and migration management system following the full application of the Pact as well as the reinforced external borders protection. This is also expected to further reduce illegal arrivals and unauthorised secondary movements in the medium to long term, **provided that no major external events occur.**

Illegal arrivals along the **Central Mediterranean route** are projected to decrease further, supported by continued engagement with key countries of origin and transit. Developments along the **Eastern Mediterranean route** will remain dependent on the evolving situation in the Middle East and the Gulf. While the overall downward trend observed on this route since late 2025 might continue, recent increase in illegal arrivals from eastern Libya to Crete could maintain through 2027. Illegal arrivals along the **Atlantic route** are expected to decrease further, continuing the downward trend observed in 2025 and the first half of 2026, mainly thanks to strengthened border management measures by countries of departure along the Atlantic coast. The **Western Mediterranean route** is expected to remain broadly stable, with numbers comparable to 2025 and the first half of 2026, supported by continued cooperation with the third countries concerned to contain illegal crossing attempts. Along the **Western Balkans route**, illegal arrivals are also expected to decrease further, supported by closer regional cooperation and action against smuggling networks. At the **Eastern Borders**, attempts by Russia and Belarus to weaponise migration are expected to continue, but reinforced border management measures are expected to keep illegal crossings at low levels. Finally, when it comes to IBCs on exit, the continued implementation of measures under the EU Action Plan for the Channel migratory route and cooperation with the United Kingdom are expected to contribute to containing and reducing departures along the **Channel route**.

The downward trend for **applications for international protection** observed in 2025 and in the first half of 2026 is expected to continue in 2027. In addition, the application of the new Pact rules is also expected to decrease **unauthorised movements** within the EU.

As regards **temporary protection**, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine will likely continue to generate protection needs for persons fleeing Ukraine in 2027. New registrations for temporary protection will persist at levels dependent on the overall situation in the country.

[76] As the data for the full year 2026 is not available at the time of the adoption of this Report, the 2025 data are used as the most recent and complete annual reference point to contextualise the projection for the coming year 2027. The trend observed in 2026, however, has been fully taken into account in the analysis.

The comprehensive approach to migration should be coupled with sustained investments in strengthening **preparedness and contingency planning** in the Member States and in the EU as an important component of a well-prepared asylum, reception and migration system. Efforts in this area are ongoing. Obligations on contingency planning are embedded into EU legislation[77]. Almost all Member States have national contingency plans for **reception and asylum** in place[78] and three Member States[79] have reviewed their plans following exchanges and feedback provided by the EUAA. Most of the contingency plans are broadly aligned with the EUAA's template and obligations within Directive (EU) 2024/1346 and they also integrate interlinkages with other contingency or crisis management frameworks. In connection with the regular review of the contingency plans[80], areas to be further strengthened include the identification of pressure scenarios and related response measures, as well as of the necessary operational arrangements to ensure such measures can be activated in a timely manner if needed. The results of the vulnerability assessment conducted by Frontex for 2025 show that all Member States report having relevant contingency plans in place for border management, although some gaps exist, as underscored by Schengen evaluations. Some Member States face issues related to the content of the plans and lack of relevant procedures, such as developing the contingency plans based on comprehensive risk assessments and scenarios.

The 2026 State of Schengen Report[81] emphasised in particular the need to ensure that national contingency plans provide for the use of European support, where relevant, as well as coordination with Frontex and neighbouring Member States. Despite the requirement set out in Article 9(3) of Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, most Schengen Member States still need to fully integrate return operations based on risk analyses in their contingency plans.

Regular testing and updating of the contingency plans and prompt activation of the plans, when necessary, are key to remaining prepared for and responding effectively to any sudden increases in migratory flows. Equally, at EU level, the Commission and the EU agencies will continue providing financial and operational support to Member States facing such situations. Learning from the incident in Ceuta this summer, the Union and its Member States should develop more capacity to better prevent, anticipate and respond to such events, as put forward by the 5-point plan proposed by the Commission on 29 September 2026. The plan introduces measures aiming

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[77] Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 on asylum and migration management, amending Regulations (EU) 2021/1147 and (EU) 2021/1060 and repealing Regulation. (EU) No 604/2013; Directive (EU) 2024/1346 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection; Regulation (EU) 2024/1359 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 addressing situations of crisis and force majeure in the field of migration and asylum and amending Regulation (EU) 2021/1147 (OJ L, 2024/1359, 22.5.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1359/oj); Regulation (EU) 2019/1896 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 November 2019 on the European Border and Coast Guard and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1052/2013 and (EU) 2016/1624 (OJ L 295, 14.11.2019, pp. 1–131, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2019/1896/oj); Regulation (EU) 2021/2303 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 December 2021 on the European Union Agency for Asylum and repealing Regulation (EU) No 439/2010 (OJ L 468, 30.12.2021, pp. 1–54, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/2303/oj).

[78] Except Hungary.

[79] Cyprus, Estonia, the Netherlands.

[80] The contingency plans on asylum and reception should be reviewed when needed due to changed circumstances and at least every three years, Article 32 of Directive (EU) 2024/1346 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection.

[81] Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions 2026 State of Schengen Report, COM (2026) 150 final, 18 May 2026.

at increasing cooperation with partner countries to prevent illegal migration, strengthening further EU external borders, improving monitoring, situational awareness and early warning systems, dismantling migrant smuggling and trafficking networks and increasing returns.

In addition, it will also require improving existing tools, including the EU Migration Preparedness and Crisis Blueprint Network, which plays a key role in providing a common situational picture and early warning and forecasting in support of better preparedness. The Network hosts a dedicated subgroup on contingency planning to help Member States prepare for situations of increased migratory pressure. In addition, the Blueprint Network has initiated work to further consolidate and integrate new sources of information, while producing regular forecasting products as well as setting up early warning systems, in line with President von der Leyen's State of the Union address 2026.

III. Assessment of the overall migratory situation, migratory pressure, risk of migratory pressure or significant migratory situation

Despite the overall improvement in the migration and asylum situation in the Union, some Member States remain under migratory pressure, within the meaning of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351, as they face disproportionate obligations in the context of the overall situation in the EU. The **solidarity mechanism** aims at addressing these disproportionate obligations for the Member States concerned.

Every year, the Commission is required to determine whether there are Member States under migratory pressure, at risk of migratory pressure, or facing a significant migratory situation.

While all Member States are required to pledge their preferred solidarity contribution, the Member States considered by the Commission as being under migratory pressure have access to the Solidarity Pool and, once they decide to access it, are not obliged to implement their pledged solidarity contribution. Member States facing a significant migratory situation are entitled to receive, upon their request and following the assessment of the Commission, by the decision of the Council, a full or partial deduction of their solidarity contributions. Member States at risk of migratory pressure can benefit from priority access to the Permanent EU Migration Support Toolbox.

To ensure fair sharing of responsibility and solidarity, Member States need to cooperate among themselves and with the Commission to ensure an effective and efficient distribution and operationalisation of the solidarity contributions of the Annual Solidarity Pool, in a balanced and timely manner. The operationalisation should be based on the needs of the benefitting Member States, as identified and communicated to the Commission, and on the solidarity contributions available. This ensures that the operationalisation of the Annual Solidarity Pool is tailor-made to the needs of the Member States under pressure, is flexible to swiftly adapt to the evolving nature of the migratory challenges and takes into due account the pledges as well as the migratory situation of the contributing Member States. The type and amount of the pledged solidarity contributions should be taken into due account when distributing the Solidarity Pool to the Member States under migratory pressure.

Based on the information presented in this Report, the Commission has assessed and determined which Member States faced disproportionate obligations, taking into account the overall migratory situation in the Union. At the same time, the Commission is proposing to the

Council the total number of solidarity contributions for the Solidarity Pool at Union level for 2027 necessary to address the migratory situation in a balanced and effective manner.

Member States under migratory pressure

Considering the situational overview outlined in this Report for the reference period from July 2025 to June 2026 and the methodology, the Commission Decision determined that, when all the relevant quantitative and qualitative data and information are aggregated and assessed in relation to the overall situation in the Union, **Greece and Cyprus** are under migratory pressure. In addition, the Commission Decision determined that **Italy** is under migratory pressure because of a large number of arrivals due to recurring disembarkations following search and rescue ('SAR') operations, that are of such a scale that they create disproportionate obligations in relation to the overall situation in the Union on even a well-prepared asylum, reception and migration system of the Member State concerned. Furthermore, following the request by **Spain** to take into account developments outside the reporting period, a possibility foreseen by Article 9(1) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351, and notably the incident that took place on 30-31 July 2026 leading to large-scale illegal arrivals to the autonomous city of Ceuta, the assessment also concludes that Spain is under migratory pressure.

While trends continue decreasing compared to the previous 12-month period, **Greece** faced disproportionate obligations in relation to the overall situation in the Union, in particular due to the number of illegal border crossings, applications for international protection and a high number of positive decisions. Although illegal border crossings decreased by 23%, the country recorded the highest number of illegal border crossings relative to its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and population and recorded a significant increase in arrivals following SAR operations. Furthermore, while the applications for international protection registered in Greece decreased by 19% compared to the previous reporting period, Greece continued receiving the highest number of applications for international protection relative to its GDP and population. More than half of all arrivals to Greece along the Eastern Mediterranean route were recorded in Crete.

Spain continued being particularly exposed to the fluctuations of illegal arrivals along the Western Mediterranean and Atlantic routes during the reporting period. Spain accounted for approximately 20% of all illegal border crossings at Union level and is the third Member State in terms of arrivals due to search and rescue operations. While applications for international protection decreased by 22%, Spain was the third highest receiver of such applications relative to GDP and population in the Union and the fourth in absolute numbers. Spain is also among the Member States with most temporary protection registrations ranking fourth in the Union in absolute numbers. When the relevant quantitative and qualitative data and information are considered and assessed in relation to the overall situation in the Union for the reporting period from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026, Spain would be at risk of migratory pressure. However, following the incident that took place on 30-31 July 2026 leading to large-scale illegal arrivals to the autonomous city of Ceuta, Spain requested the Commission to take these developments into account in the context of the current Annual Migration Management Cycle. After assessing the quantitative and qualitative data and information in relation to the reporting period and, pursuant to Article 9(1) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351, the additional data and information transmitted by the Spanish authorities in relation to the incident that took place on 30-31 July 2026 leading to large-scale illegal arrivals to the autonomous city of Ceuta, it is concluded that Spain faced disproportionate obligations in relation to the overall situation in the Union.

The migration and asylum situation in **Cyprus** improved compared to the previous reporting period, but it still faced disproportionate obligations in relation to the overall situation in the Union, in particular due to registrations for temporary protection, illegal border crossings, applications for international protection and a strained return system. Despite illegal border crossings continued to decrease, by 34% compared to the previous reporting period, the number of arrivals, relative to its GDP and population, put a strain on the asylum and migration system of Cyprus. Cyprus was in relative terms the second highest receiver of applications for international protection in the period under analysis.

During the reporting period from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026, a high number of persons were disembarked in **Italy** following SAR operations. Although the total number of persons disembarked in Italy decreased by 33% compared to the previous reporting period, the share and absolute number of arrivals due to recurring disembarkations following SAR operations were of such a scale that they created disproportionate obligations on Italy compared to the overall situation in the Union. Italy accounted for 42% of the total number of persons disembarked in the Union.

It should be recalled that, in order to ensure the balance between solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility and to safeguard the functioning of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351, Article 60(3) of that Regulation establishes that contributing Member States are not required to implement their solidarity pledges towards a benefitting Member State where the Commission has identified systemic shortcomings in that benefitting Member State with regard to the responsibility rules set out in Part III of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 that could result in serious negative consequences for the functioning of that Regulation.

For that purpose, Article 4 of Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2025/2323 asks the Commission to assess by 12 July 2026 and again by 15 October 2026 whether the practices referred to in that Implementing Decision with regard to Regulation (EU) 604/2013 have not been remedied and thereby constitute systemic shortcomings that could result in serious negative consequences for the functioning of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351, in which case Article 60(3), fourth subparagraph, of that Regulation applies. The Commission presented its first assessment in July 2026[82].

In that first assessment, the Commission concluded that the measures taken by Greece, including their active engagement and cooperation with other Member States, constituted positive indications of progress and demonstrated Greece's readiness to ensure the effective and correct implementation of Part III of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351. However, the Commission considered that it was too early to conclude whether the practices previously identified had been fully remedied. Based on the information provided by Member States since 12 June 2026, the progress observed in the Commission's assessment of July 2026 has been further consolidated. Effective cooperation between Greece and all Member States has been established. Greece has continued providing positive replies to take-charge requests and take-back notifications. The change in the practices observed in the application of Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 has led to the first successful transfers to Greece. The Commission should continue monitoring the progress made by **Greece** towards the continuous and sustained effective implementation of Part III of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351.

[82] COM(2026) 387 final.

In that same first assessment, the Commission concluded that, following the entry into application of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351, **Italy** has made significant efforts to prepare for the implementation of Part III of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 while observing that responsibility transfers had not yet resumed and that further efforts were necessary to remove the remaining impediments to ensure that transfers are effectively carried out.

Based on the information provided by the Member States between 12 June and 30 September 2026, transfers requested by other Member States continued to be rejected by the Italian authorities and operational cooperation to facilitate the transfer of persons for whom requests and notifications have been accepted or confirmed by Italy in accordance with Article 40 and Article 41 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 need to be further developed. Furthermore, according to information received, there have been cases in which the Italian authorities returned persons to the transferring Member States, despite Italy having been determined as the Member State responsible. Italy has also modified the default locations for transfers, which according to Italian authorities was needed for internal organisational reasons and with a view to ensure a better management of the large migration caseload Italy is confronted with, including preventing the risk of absconding.

At the same time, some positive developments have been observed as Italy took steps to establish bilateral contacts with the Member States with the biggest caseload under Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 towards Italy, which have resulted in a limited number of transfers, in addition to transfers of unaccompanied minors for the purpose of family reunification. In addition, Italy adopted a new administrative letter on 29 October 2026 which specifies that Italy has resumed transfers since 12 June 2026, subject to a case-by-case assessment of whether the relevant conditions are effectively met.

Despite these new encouraging developments, at the time of adoption of this Report, it is not possible to determine whether the transfers of persons for whom Italy is responsible in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 have been effectively and sustainably resumed. To that end, close and continuous monitoring will be necessary for determining so. To that end, Italy should continue taking determined steps to address the existing shortcomings. In particular, it should ensure that the administrative letter of 29 October 2026 is implemented fully line with Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 and establish effective and sustainable operational cooperation with all Member States, in particular regarding the implementation of Chapter V of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2025/2055. In this context, it is important that the forms submitted to Italy in accordance with that Implementing Regulation are processed effectively and the necessary practical and logistical information is provided accordingly. As part of this cooperation, Italy should ensure that the default locations for transfers allow for effective transfers by other Member States without undue operational obstacles. At the same time, Italy should actively communicate about the preferred modalities for transfers and close cooperation between the Member States of transfer and Italy should be ensured with a view to reducing the use of default locations.

For the purpose of the monitoring, Italy will regularly report to the Commission on the measures taken to remedy the identified practices and the Commission will consult the Member States and inform the Technical-Level EU Solidarity Forum accordingly. Meanwhile, the solidarity contributions to the benefit of Italy should be operationalised pursuant to Article 60 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 only after the Commission has informed the Technical-level EU

Solidarity Forum of the outcomes of the monitoring. On that basis, and provided positive progress is observed, the Technical-Level EU Solidarity Forum should operationalise the share of the Solidarity Pool allocated to Italy accordingly. If the monitoring shows that the practices previously observed are not being effectively remedied, the Commission should bring the matter to the attention of the High-Level Solidarity Forum for discussion; in case the situation persists, the Commission should bring the matter to the attention of the Council accordingly.

Where on the basis of the information obtained as well as the monitoring, and at the latest in the context of the 2027 Report, the Commission establishes that the identified practices have not been remedied and their continued existence thereby constitutes systemic shortcomings that could result in serious negative consequences for the functioning of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351, Article 60(3) fourth subparagraph of that Regulation applies.

Member States at risk of migratory pressure

Based on the findings of this Report and the methodology, having considered all the relevant quantitative and qualitative data and information and having assessed them in relation to the overall situation in the Union, the Decision also determined **Croatia, Czechia, Germany, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Slovenia, Ireland, Romania, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Finland** have been identified as at risk of migratory pressure.

Croatia, as a Member State of first entry into the Union, continued being particularly exposed to the fluctuations of illegal arrivals via the Western Balkans and Eastern Mediterranean routes. Significant increase of illegal arrivals during the year could lead the Croatian migration and asylum system, already strained, to be affected by disproportionate obligations. During the reporting period from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026, Croatia was impacted by illegal border crossings and refusals of entry, registering 78% of all arrivals along the Western Balkans route, the second highest number of illegal border crossing at Union level relative to GDP and population, and accounting for the highest number of refusals of entry in the Union in relative terms. Furthermore, Croatia received the highest number of transfers in accordance with Regulation (EU) 604/2013 in relative terms. In parallel, Croatia also received the highest number of decisions relative to its GDP and population on requests submitted by Croatia to other Member States to take the responsibility for persons who have reached Croatia in unauthorised manner and whose applications should be examined by another Member State in accordance with Regulation (EU) 604/2013. In addition, Croatia recorded an increase of 109% in absolute numbers regarding the number of decisions received in reply to such requests submitted to other Member States compared to the previous reporting period.

The continued scale of temporary protection registrations placed sustained pressure on the national reception system of **Czechia**. During the reporting period from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026, the country registered the highest number of registrations for temporary protection in the Union relative to GDP and population – at a level significantly exceeding the levels recorded by other Member States.

A number of Member States recorded high numbers of unauthorised movements of applicants for international protection within the Union, which put particular pressure on their asylum, migration and reception systems. The challenges associated with such unauthorised movements are addressed by acknowledging the possibility of applying responsibility offsets to these cases

as part of the solidarity contributions, in line with Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 and Council implementing decision establishing the Annual Solidarity Pool for 2026[83].

Germany registered a significant decrease, by almost 56%, in outgoing take back requests and take charge requests related to irregular entry and stay submitted to other Member States for persons who have reached Germany in an unauthorised manner (19 782 compared with 45 419 in the previous reporting period) Despite that decrease, Germany received the second highest number of decisions on such requests among all Member States in absolute numbers. Furthermore, while Germany registered almost 20% decrease in received applications of international protection compared to the previous reporting period, it continued to receive the highest number of applications in the Union in absolute terms during the reporting period, which impacted its asylum and reception systems. This was further compounded by the hosting of the highest number of temporary protection beneficiaries in the Union in absolute terms and a very high share of applications for international protection in the last ten years.

France also received a very high number of unauthorised movements of applicants for international protection compared to other Member States and faced illegal border crossings at exit towards the United Kingdom, which impacted its national asylum and reception systems. France received the second highest number of applications in absolute numbers and sixth in relative terms, although the number of applications for international protection decreased by 8% compared to the previous reporting period.

Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands were also impacted by unauthorised movements of applicants for international protection, which put a strain on their reception systems; relative to the GDP and population, they ranked respectively eight, seventh and eleventh among Member States. **Slovenia** was also impacted by a significant number of unauthorised movements which impacted its national asylum and reception systems; it registered the highest number of decisions received on take-back requests sent during the reporting period in relative terms compared to its GDP and population. **Ireland** has also experienced a sustained high number of applications for international protection in relative terms, and a significant proportion of applicants enter the country illegally principally arriving across the land border of the United Kingdom. This, together with the significant number of persons benefitting from temporary protection in Ireland, had an impact on its national asylum and reception system. Ranking fifth among Member States in temporary protection registrations, **Romania** faces growing challenges with its reception capacity, which could intensify with further arrivals driven by Russia's ongoing war against Ukraine.

Actions by Russia and Belarus continued to influence migratory dynamics, especially in **Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Finland**. All of them had introduced various border and migration management measures in response to continued state-sponsored attempts to weaponise migration and to maintain public order and security. The risk of weaponisation of migration remains a serious challenge, adding to occasional violent incidents and attempts to cross the border illegally.

The Member States at risk of migratory pressure will have priority access to the Permanent EU Migration Support Toolbox. At the same time, should the situation in these Member States

[83] Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2025/2642 of 22 December 2025 on the establishment of the Annual Solidarity Pool for 2026, OJ L, 2025/2642, 23.12.2025.

deteriorate, the Commission will be ready, in line with Regulation (EU) 2024/1351, to re-evaluate their situation in an expedited manner.

Member States facing a significant migratory situation

Based on the Report and the methodology, the Commission Decision also determined that **Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Croatia, Austria, and Poland** are facing a significant migratory situation, due to the cumulative effect of the quantitative and qualitative data and information aggregated and assessed during the last five-year period (1 July 2021 to 30 June 2026).

In **Bulgaria**, for the last five years, relative to the share of GDP and population, notably the inflow of registrations for temporary protection since 2022, together with a relative high number of international protection applications, put a strain on its system, in particular as Bulgaria issued a significant number of positive decisions on applications for international protection, as well as of rejections of applications for international protection, which created a high burden on its return system.

When assessing the situation in **Croatia** over the previous five years, and in relation to the overall situation in the Union, the strain on its return system relative to its share of GDP and population, in addition to the obligations at its external border, had a major impact on its migration and border management capacities. Croatia issued in relative terms a large number of refusals of entry and has experienced a sustained relative high number of illegal border crossings due to migrant smuggling activities in the region.

Following Russia's ongoing war of aggression and escalation of attacks against Ukraine, 4.4 million persons are benefitting from temporary protection in the Union as of 30 June 2026. Since the beginning of the war, **Poland and Czechia** have recorded among the highest number of temporary protection registrations in the Union relative to their GDP and population. This has put a significant strain on the migration, asylum and border management systems of those Member States over the last years since 2022 and created integration challenges. **Estonia** has recorded a high number of temporary protection registrations relative to its GDP and population combined with a relative significant number of applications for international protection that resulted in a high number of positive decisions in the last five years.

During the five-year period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2026, **Austria** received high numbers of applications for international protection (242 100). While between 1 July 2025 and 30 June 2026 this number has decreased, compared to the previous reporting period, the overall number of applications for international protection, and the resulting number of positive decisions, over the five-year period has had a cumulative effect on the capacity of the migration, reception and asylum systems in Austria.

These Member States will have the possibility to request from the Council a full or partial deduction of their solidarity contributions for the upcoming year.

Although **Portugal, Malta, Slovakia, Sweden and Hungary** do not fall under any category based on the methodology applied for this report, they also face specific situations that should be acknowledged. Relative to the GDP and the population combined, **Portugal** had the second-highest number of hits on return alerts as country of destination. Relative to the GDP and the population combined, **Malta** reported the second highest number of third-country nationals illegally staying. **Slovakia** ranked second in granting temporary protection and hosting

beneficiaries of temporary protection relative to its GDP and population combined. In the context of EU resettlement and humanitarian admission efforts, **Sweden** ranked second relative to the GDP and the population combined. **Hungary** registered low numbers of IBCs during the reporting period, further decreasing compared to the previous 12 months.

The Commission and the EU Agencies will continue supporting all Member States in addressing the particular challenges they face as well as in managing migration and asylum effectively and sustainably.

IV. Conclusion

This year's Report confirms that our common European approach to asylum, migration and border management delivers substantial and consistent results. It also shows that the EU and the Member States are better prepared and equipped to manage migration and asylum. At the same time, challenges remain: the events over the summer show that our Union's resilience will continue to be tested, as will our ability to closely cooperate to manage migration and protect our borders, upholding the integrity of the Schengen area.

To remain successful, we must continue to act together. The Member States must put all efforts into implementing all the components of the Pact and address all remaining challenges, including the full application of the responsibility rules and transfers. Together with solidarity, this is key for the well-functioning of the system. The Commission, together with the EU agencies, will continue supporting Member States in implementing the Pact and tackling emerging challenges. The experience gained with the implementation of the new asylum and migration rules during the first months will be key for the review planned for 2027 and to identify whether targeted adjustments may be necessary, while preserving the overall balance and structure of the Pact.

At the same time, effective migration management starts well beyond our borders. The Commission will therefore continue pursuing a robust and assertive migration diplomacy, building partnerships with both countries of origin and transit, based on shared interests, mutual responsibility and tangible results. For this, the Commission will continue the work to bring together all available instruments and leverage across migration, trade, development, investments, visa and mobility, backed by adequate financial resources.

As in the previous cycle, following the publication of this Report, the Commission Decision and the Commission proposal for a Council implementing Decision establishing the Annual Solidarity Pool, the Council should convene, within 15 days, the High-Level EU Solidarity Forum in view of agreeing on the size of the Solidarity Pool and on how each Member State will contribute. The Commission stands ready to support the Council throughout this process. The EU Solidarity Coordinator will then convene the Technical-Level EU Solidarity Forum to operationalise the Solidarity Pool for 2027 and to monitor its implementation.