





Forum: *The European Parliament*

Issue: *Managing Migration and Asylum Policy Across the EU*

Student Officer: *Panagiotis Kamsaris*

Position: *Deputy President*

Chair Introduction

Dear Honorable Delegates,

Welcome to the European Parliament at LogosMUN, hosted by the Moraitis School. My name is Panos Kamsaris, I am 16 years old, and currently an 11th-grade high school student. It is a true honor to serve as your Deputy President for this session. Model United Nations has long been a passion of mine, and I am genuinely excited to embark on this journey with you.

This study guide is designed to provide you with the essential information you will need for our debate. Our topic, Managing Migration and Asylum Policy Across the EU, is complex and multifaceted. With diligent research, critical thinking, and an open mind, you will be fully prepared to engage in meaningful discussion and contribute valuable insights.

I am here to support you throughout this process. Should you have any questions or require assistance with your preparation, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at kamsaris.modelun.affairs@gmail.com

I look forward to an engaging, professional, and respectful debate, where your ideas and perspectives will help shape a dynamic and constructive session.

Warm regards,

Panagiotis Kamsaris

Deputy President of the European Parliament

LogosMUN 2025



Definition of key terms

Asylum Seeker

“Refers to a person who has left their home country and is seeking international protection in a foreign state but whose application for refugee status has yet to be legally determined.”

Refugee

“A person who has been granted refugee status after their asylum application has been accepted, confirming they have a well-founded fear of persecution (e.g., on account of race, religion, or nationality) or are fleeing violence or war.”

Dublin Regulation

“An EU law that establishes the criteria and mechanisms for determining which EU Member State is responsible for examining an asylum application, typically the first country of entry.”

Schengen Area

“A group of 29 European countries that have abolished internal border controls to allow free movement of people while maintaining a common external border policy. Member States cooperate on visa policy, border management, and security measures to facilitate seamless travel across participating countries.”

Frontex

“The European Border and Coast Guard Agency, which is tasked with coordinating the management of the EU's external borders in cooperation with the national authorities of Member States.”

Common European Asylum System (CEAS)



“A series of legislative instruments and policies aimed at harmonizing asylum standards across EU Member States, including a common procedure and reception conditions.”

New Pact on Migration and Asylum

“A set of proposals by the European Commission designed to reform and improve the EU's migration and asylum rules, with a focus on solidarity and responsibility.”

Relocation

“The process of transferring asylum seekers from one EU Member State to another, usually from a frontline country facing high pressure to a country with more capacity, as part of a solidarity mechanism.”

Migrant

“A person who moves to a country other than their country of nationality or usual residence, typically for a permanent or long-term stay.”

Illegal Migrant

“A person who enters or resides in a country without the legal authorization to do so, bypassing immigration procedures. Also known as Irregular or Undocumented Migrant.”

Human Smuggling

“The facilitation, for financial or material gain, of the illegal entry of a person into a country where they are not a national or permanent resident.”

Asylum shopping

“The practice of asylum seekers applying for international protection in multiple countries or choosing to apply in a specific country, often based on perceived advantages such as better



reception conditions, welfare benefits, or faster procedures, rather than applying in the first safe country they reach.”

Timeline of events

Date	Description of event
14th of June 1985	The Schengen Agreement Five founding members of the EU (Germany, Netherlands, France, Belgium and Luxembourg) signed an agreement to gradually abolish internal border checks. This agreement, which later expanded to form the Schengen Area, created the need for a common external border policy and became a foundational element for the migration debate.
15th of June 1990	The Dublin Convention This convention was the first major step toward a unified asylum policy. It established the principle that the first Member State where an asylum seeker enters the EU is responsible for processing their application, a rule that has since been at the center of the debate over burden-sharing.
1st of May 2005	Establishment of Frontex The European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (Frontex) was established to help Member States manage their external borders. Its role and budget have grown significantly over time in response to migration crises.
10th of April 2013	Adoption of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) The EU finalized a package of legislative acts to create a harmonized asylum system across all Member States. The goal was to establish a common set of standards for processing applications, reception conditions, and qualification for protection.
2015	The European Refugee Crisis This year saw an unprecedented influx of over one million asylum seekers and migrants to the EU, primarily from Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq. The crisis exposed major flaws in the Dublin system and triggered a political and humanitarian emergency across the continent.



18th of March 2016	The EU-Turkey Statement In response to the crisis, the EU and Turkey agreed to a statement aimed at stopping the flow of illegal migrants to Greece. The deal involved Turkey taking back migrants in exchange for financial aid and promises of visa liberalization.
23rd of September 2020	The New Pact on Migration and Asylum The European Commission proposed a comprehensive legislative package to overhaul the EU's migration and asylum policy. The Pact aims to create a new "solidarity mechanism" and streamline border procedures, marking a new phase in the ongoing debate.
16th of July 2023	The EU-Tunisia Memorandum of Understanding The EU signed a deal with Tunisia to curb illegal migration from its coasts in exchange for financial aid. This marked a growing trend of the EU pursuing "externalization" policies, partnering with third countries to manage migration flows before they reach Europe.
10th of April 2024	European Parliament Adopts the New Pact After years of negotiations, the European Parliament formally adopted the New Pact on Migration and Asylum. The legislation is expected to be fully implemented by 2026, introducing significant reforms to border screening, solidarity between Member States, and the asylum application process.

Background information

Historical Background

The European Union's migration and asylum policy grew out of the post-war ambition for free movement across Europe. That idea took shape with the 1985 Schengen Agreement, which removed internal border checks and opened the way for unrestricted travel within much of the Union. It was a remarkable achievement, but not without consequences. Once internal borders disappeared, the responsibility for guarding Europe's external frontiers—and for deciding how to process asylum claims—could no longer be left to individual states alone. This shift in focus gradually moved the conversation from questions of internal mobility to the far more complex issue of collective border management.



The 1990 Dublin Convention was the EU's first attempt to deal with asylum in a common framework. Its basic rule was straightforward: the first Member State an asylum seeker entered should be the one to examine their application. In theory, this prevented people from filing claims in several countries. In practice, it placed a heavy burden on border states such as Greece and Italy, something that remains a point of tension today. The system was later updated into what is now called the Dublin III Regulation, which still forms the backbone of EU asylum law. At the same time, the Union developed the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). This was meant to harmonize standards, so that procedures and protections would not vary dramatically from one country to another. The aim sounded simple—fair and equal treatment for all asylum seekers—but turning that principle into reality has been far more difficult.

The European Refugee Crisis of 2015

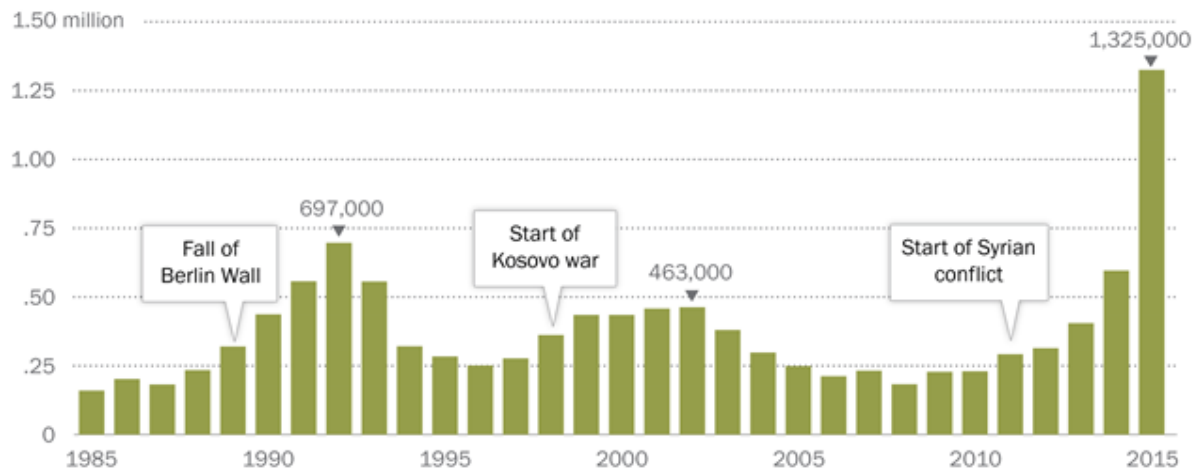
The year 2015 marked an important turning point in the EU's migration policy, as it faced an unprecedented influx of asylum seekers that exposed the deep-seated flaws in its existing framework. Over one million people, (a majority of whom were refugees from the civil war in Syria), arrived in the EU, primarily through the dangerous Eastern Mediterranean and Western Balkan routes. This massive, sudden movement of people created a humanitarian emergency and placed immense pressure on the bloc's frontline states.

The crisis served as a critical stress test for the Common European Asylum System and the Dublin Regulation. The principle that the first country of entry must process all asylum claims was designed for a different era and proved highly challenging under the sheer volume of arrivals. Countries like Greece, Italy, Malta and Cyprus were quickly overwhelmed and lacked the infrastructure to register, house, or process all the applicants, leading to widespread chaos at the borders. This systemic failure fueled a political crisis, as Member States became deeply divided over how to respond.

In response to this crisis, the EU provided significant funding to frontline states like Greece to help manage its borders, improve reception systems and develop much stronger infrastructure to house refugees and migrants. This funding, channeled through various EU funds and international organizations, was linked to the creation of the so called “hotspots” on Greek islands. These facilities had the stated goal of helping Greek authorities swiftly identify, register, and fingerprint incoming migrants. However, they effectively served as a means of managing and containing large numbers of arrivals at the EU's external border, thereby limiting onward movement into Western Europe and shifting the responsibility and burden of the crisis to the frontline state.

Number of asylum seekers in Europe surges to record 1.3 million in 2015

Annual number of asylum applications received by EU-28 countries, Norway and Switzerland, 1985 to 2015



Note: "Europe" consists of the EU-28, Norway and Switzerland. Asylum seeker definitions varied by European country prior to 2008. Numbers for asylum applications since 2008 are based on first-time applicants and do not include appeals or transfer of applications between countries. See [methodology](#) for more details. Data on asylum applications is missing for some countries in some years. See [Appendix A](#) for list of countries with missing data. All countries that are part of the EU today are included in previous years' data even though several were not part of the European Union in earlier years. Rounded to nearest thousand.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of Eurostat data, accessed June 22, 2016.

"Number of Refugees to Europe Surges to Record 1.3 Million in 2015"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Figure 1. Asylum Seekers in Europe Hit 1.3 Million in 2015 (2015 - Pew Research Center)

The New Pact on Migration and Asylum

The shortcomings of the old asylum system became painfully clear during the 2015 refugee crisis, which overwhelmed frontline states and exposed deep divisions within the Union. In response, the European Commission unveiled the "New Pact on Migration and Asylum" on the 23rd of September 2020. The proposal was ambitious, aiming not just to patch the system but to redesign it entirely. After years of political wrangling and stalled negotiations, the Pact finally cleared the European Parliament on the 10th of April 2024 and was signed off by the Council a month later. It is now set to be rolled out in stages, with full implementation expected by 2026.



At the core of the Pact lies a shift in philosophy: the idea that migration pressures must be shared more evenly. The centerpiece is a “mandatory but flexible” solidarity mechanism. In practice, this means every Member State must take part, but they are given choices in how. Some may accept relocated asylum seekers, others may contribute funds, and still others may provide staff or technical assistance at the borders. Alongside this, the Pact introduces faster border procedures, particularly for applicants from countries with low recognition rates. The goal is to speed up both the granting of protection and, just as importantly, the return of those who are not entitled to stay.

Not everyone is convinced. The flexible solidarity scheme has already met resistance, with governments such as Hungary and Poland rejecting the principle of relocation outright. Their opposition underlines a larger truth: the political rifts that paralyzed earlier reforms have not disappeared. Even with a new framework on paper, the fight over how Europe should handle migration is far from settled.

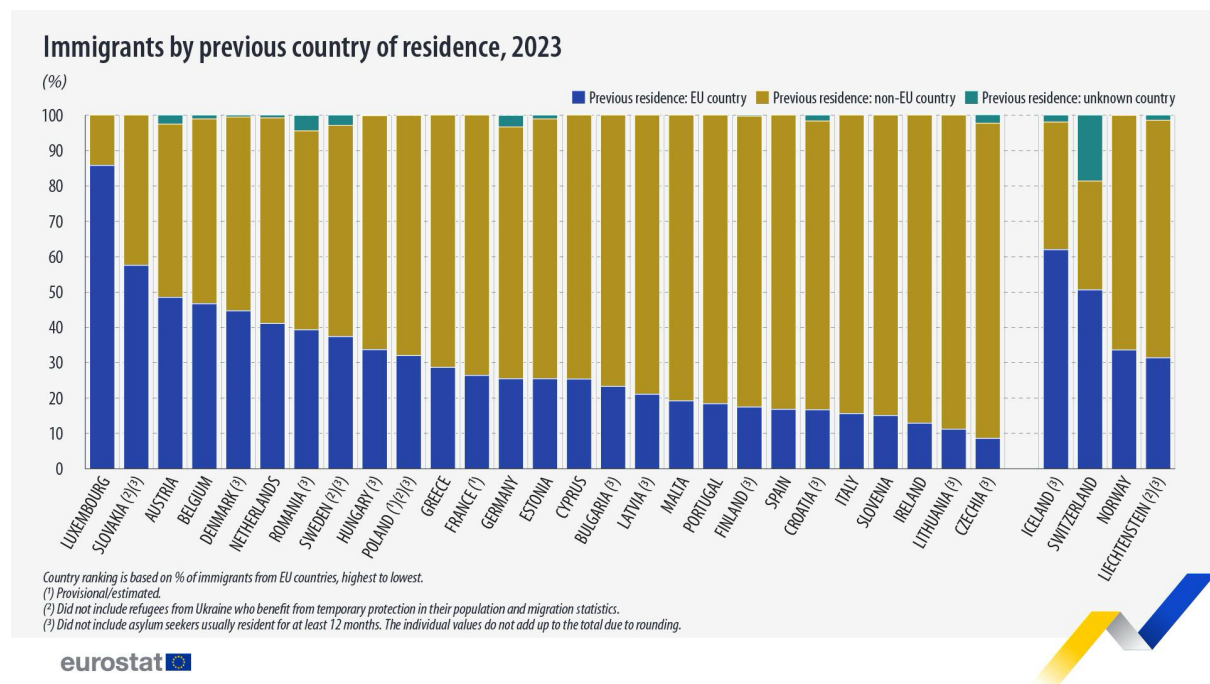


Figure 2. Immigrants by previous country of residence (2023 - Eurostat)

Current Migration Routes into the EU



The journeys of migrants and asylum seekers heading toward the European Union do not follow a single road. Instead, they form a shifting web of routes, each shaped by its own set of dangers and obstacles. Frontex, the EU's border agency, monitors these movements closely, noting how war, poverty, and border controls affect the flow. Some routes grow quieter over time, while others suddenly see sharp increases.

The Central Mediterranean Route

This path is widely regarded as the most perilous of the sea crossings. It runs mainly from Libya and Tunisia across the Mediterranean to Italy and Malta. Boats are often overcrowded and poorly maintained, making the journey extremely unsafe. Every year, many lives are lost at sea. Although 2024 recorded almost a 59% drop in arrivals, this corridor remains a vital gateway for people fleeing instability and conflict in North Africa and beyond.

The Eastern Mediterranean Route

Another major corridor starts in Turkey and leads either by sea to the Greek islands and Cyprus or by land into Greece and Bulgaria. It was the main entry point during the 2015 refugee crisis, when Syrians, Afghans, and others used it to reach Europe in huge numbers. Today, it continues to be one of the busiest channels, still carrying thousands each year despite stronger border controls.

The Western Balkan Route

Many who first arrive through the Eastern Mediterranean continue north using this land route. It runs from Greece through Albania, and Serbia, then toward EU members such as Croatia and Hungary. The trip is demanding, often requiring long stretches on foot through harsh conditions. In 2024, the number of crossings fell sharply—by more than three quarters—due to tougher measures by regional governments. Even so, the route has not disappeared and remains in use.

The Western Mediterranean and Atlantic Routes

Both of these lead to Spain. The Western Mediterranean connects Morocco and Algeria with the Spanish mainland. The Atlantic Route, far more dangerous, runs from the coasts of West Africa to the Canary Islands. In recent years it has become increasingly active. Over 46,000 people made the crossing in 2024 alone, making it the busiest entry point into Spain and one of the most heavily used in all of Europe.

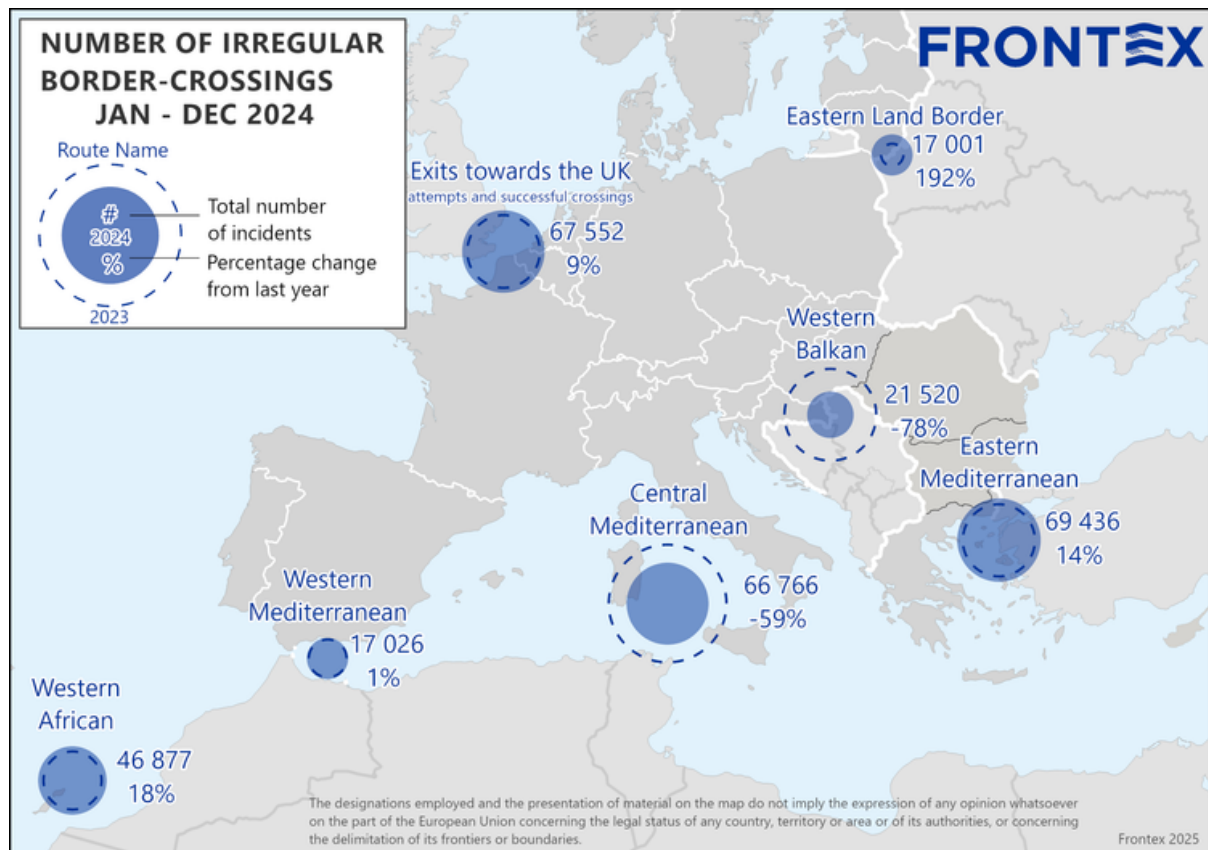


Figure 3. Map of Illegal border crossings into the EU. (2024 - Frontex)

The Impact on Frontline and Destination States

The arrival of migrants and asylum seekers has left a visible mark on both frontline countries, which bear the brunt of first arrivals, and destination states, where many ultimately hope to settle. Economically, migration has sparked fierce debate. On one hand, newcomers often step into jobs that are hard to fill, particularly in sectors such as agriculture, construction, and tourism. They expand the labor force and can help keep certain industries running. For employers, this means access to flexible and inexpensive labor, lowering operational costs and boosting competitiveness. On the other hand, this dynamic has raised serious concerns. Many locals argue that migrants are being hired over natives, often for lower pay, creating downward pressure on wages. This has become especially contentious in countries like Greece and Spain, where youth unemployment remains seriously high and people feel increasingly pushed out of their own job markets.

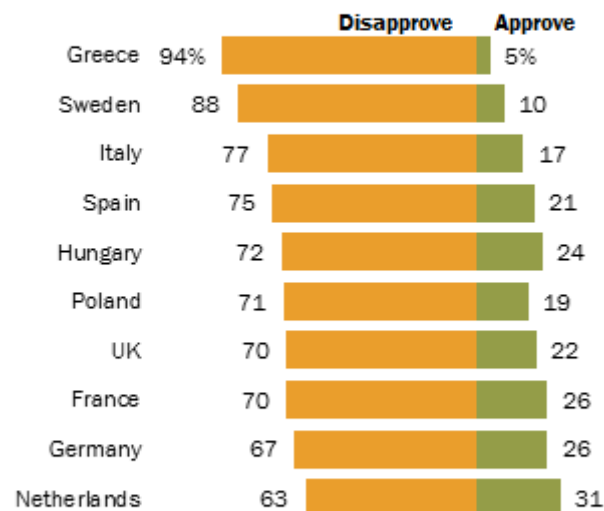


The strain on public services and infrastructure has been another major consequence. Southern European states, such as Greece, Italy, Spain, and Malta struggle to manage the large amounts of arrivals (including many illegal) with limited resources, frequently depending on EU funds to keep reception facilities running. Further north, destination states including Germany, Sweden, France, the Netherlands, Austria and others have seen their healthcare systems, housing markets, and schools placed under pressure by rapid population increases. Beyond the financial costs, the challenge of integrating people from very different cultural, religious, and social backgrounds has become even more difficult and can be highly challenging. In some regions, this has fueled tensions, created divides, and even contributed to the rise of anti-immigration ideas. Where integration fails, the risk of forming parallel societies grows, a problem openly discussed in several EU states with long-standing migrant communities.

Public security has remained a recurring theme in migration policy debates across the EU. Public opinion and crime statistics have entered into political discourse and policy modifications in several Member States. In Germany, the Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA) reported in 2018 that certain categories of crime increased when asylum applications peaked but noted that more pervasive socioeconomic and demographic drivers are also in play. Official statistics from Sweden report that public debate intensified as violent crime offenses rose, with some ascribing this to integration problems in urban centers, though causality is controversial. Both Austria and Denmark tightened asylum and migration regulations, citing crime and social cohesion issues. By contrast, Poland has followed a different path. Its government has been clear that only migrants who are ready to integrate and contribute to society are welcome, a policy that has allowed the successful integration of large numbers of Ukrainian refugees. This selective approach, which prioritizes cultural fit and economic contribution, has been presented as one model for maintaining both security and social stability while still offering protection to those in genuine need.

Overwhelming majorities unhappy with EU's handling of refugees

Do you ___ of the way the European Union is dealing with the refugee issue?



Source: Spring 2016 Global Attitudes Survey.

"Euroskepticism Beyond Brexit"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Figure 4. European public opinion on EU refugee policies (2016 - Pew Research Center)

Refugee and Migrant Rights

Refugee Rights Under International Law

International law provides a robust protection mechanism for refugees primarily through the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol. These provide a refugee as a person who has fled their home country out of fear of persecution due to reasons of race, religion, nationality, belonging to a particular social group, or political opinion. Most notable among them is that they promote the principle of non-refoulement, which prohibits the repatriation of refugees to where their life or freedom would be threatened. The principle is seen as a cornerstone of international refugee protection. However, the restrictive definition of the Convention guarantees that many migrants who are displaced because of



other circumstances, such as generalized violence or natural catastrophes, do not qualify as refugees and thus do not enjoy equivalent legal protections.

Migrant Rights Under EU Law

The European Union (EU) boasts a rich corpus of law designed to protect migrants, particularly those who are in precarious situations. The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights guarantees everyone, regardless of their status, rights such as dignity, freedom, equality, and solidarity. Asylum procedures have also been harmonized by the EU by establishing common standards under the Common European Asylum System in a bid to provide fair and effective processing of asylum applications in Member States. While the CEAS targets asylum seekers in general, the EU targets the migrants' human rights as a whole, emphasizing the need for dignified and respectful policy towards them. This is a reflection of the provisions of international human rights law, according to which all migrants are entitled to protection without discrimination.

Overview of the Main EU Institutions

European Commission:

Proposes new laws, manages policies, enforces EU treaties, and represents the EU internationally. It is the executive branch of the EU.

European Parliament:

Directly elected by EU citizens. Debates and adopts laws together with the Council of the EU. Also it approves the annual budget.

Council of the European Union (also known as the Council of Ministers):

Represents the governments of the 27 Member States. Ministers meet in different formations (e.g. foreign affairs, justice, economy) to adopt laws and coordinate the EU's policies.



European Council:

Composed of heads of state or government (e.g. presidents, prime ministers). It sets the EU's overall political direction and priorities (but can not pass laws).

Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU):

Ensures EU laws are applied consistently across all Member States and settles legal disputes between institutions and countries.



Figure 5. EU immigration law enforcement on non-EU citizens (2024 - Eurostat)

Stakeholders

UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees): The UN agency responsible for protecting refugees, providing humanitarian aid, and advocating for their rights.

More information:

<https://www.unhcr.org/what-we-do>



IOM (International Organization for Migration): A UN agency that provides services and advice to governments and migrants, particularly in the areas of return and resettlement.

More information:

<https://www.iom.int/who-we-are>

Amnesty International: A global human rights NGO that actively monitors migration policies, documents human rights abuses, and advocates for fair treatment of migrants and asylum seekers. The organization campaigns for compliance with international law, including the right to asylum and protection against unlawful detention or deportation.

More information:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/what-we-do/>

Doctors Without Borders (Médecins Sans Frontières – MSF): A medical humanitarian NGO that provides direct assistance to migrants and refugees, especially in crisis zones and at key points of entry into Europe. MSF delivers emergency healthcare, runs rescue missions at sea, and advocates for safer migration routes and humane reception conditions.

More information:

<https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/who-we-are>

Red Cross / Red Crescent Societies: These humanitarian organizations provide emergency assistance, shelter, medical care, and legal aid to refugees and migrants on the ground.

More information:

<https://www.ifrc.org/who-we-are/about-ifrc>

Save the Children: a NGO focusing on protecting vulnerable migrant and refugee children, including unaccompanied minors. The organization provides access to education, health services, and psychosocial support while also advocating for stronger child protection policies within the EU migration framework.

More information:

<https://www.savethechildren.net/what-we-do>

Caritas: A faith-based NGO that provides humanitarian aid and long-term integration support to migrants and asylum seekers. Its work includes shelter, food assistance, legal aid, and advocacy for human dignity, with particular attention to women, families, and vulnerable groups.



More information:

<https://www.caritas.org/what-we-do/>

European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA, formerly EASO): Provides operational support and guidance to national asylum authorities, helping them manage asylum applications efficiently and in line with EU and international standards. The agency also offers training, shares best practices, and deploys teams to assist Member States under high pressure.

More information:

<https://euaa.europa.eu/about-us/what-we-do>

Frontex (European Border and Coast Guard Agency): Coordinates EU border management by supporting national authorities with surveillance, risk analysis, and emergency operations. It also conducts search-and-rescue missions, combats illegal migration, and strengthens cooperation across Member States to secure external borders.

More information:

<https://www.frontex.europa.eu/what-we-do/operations/operations/>

Primary frontline EU Member States, which are the main points of entry for migrants and asylum seekers and often bear the initial burden of the crisis: **Greece, Cyprus, Italy, Spain, Malta, and Bulgaria.**

Major destination countries for migrants and asylum seekers that are heavily impacted by integration and social policies: **France, Germany, The Netherlands, Sweden, Austria, Belgium, and Denmark.**

Third countries that are crucial transit or origin points for migrants and with whom the EU negotiates or can negotiate external migration deals: **Libya, Tunisia, Morocco, Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria**

Member States that have historically been **critical of EU migration policy** and have often opposed mandatory relocation schemes: **Hungary, and Poland**

Relevant UN resolutions, treaties, and events (Previous attempts)

The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees



Date adopted: 28th of July 1951

Date entered into force: 22nd of April 1954

Official number: United Nations Treaty Series, vol. 189, p. 137

This treaty defines who qualifies as a refugee and sets out the rights of refugees, as well as the legal obligations of states toward them. Its central principle is non-refoulement, which prohibits returning refugees to territories where they face persecution. The treaty was later expanded by the 1967 Protocol, which removed temporal and geographic restrictions.

The 1990 Dublin Convention

Date signed: 15th of June 1990

Date entered into force: 1st of September 1997

Official number: OJ C 254, 19.8.1997, p. 1–12

The Dublin Convention was the first serious attempt by the European Union to bring order to asylum policy. It set out that the country where an asylum seeker first arrived would be responsible for handling their claim. The intention was clear enough: stop people from applying in several countries at once and create a system that looked fair on paper. In reality, though, the arrangement put a heavy weight on states along the EU's external borders, especially Greece and Italy, which had little choice but to take on the majority of cases. That imbalance quickly became a source of tension and has remained at the heart of Europe's long and unfinished debate over migration reform.

The 2016 EU–Turkey Agreement

Date adopted: 18th of March 2016

Date entered into force: 20th of March 2016

This Turkish-European Union political agreement aimed to curtail illegal migrant movements into Europe, particularly across the Aegean Sea. All the illegal migrants who arrived on Greek islands after the 20th of March 2016, the agreement stated, would be returned to Turkey. One Syrian would be resettled in the EU for every Syrian returned. As a quid pro quo, the EU provided economic aid to support refugees in Turkey, accelerating visa liberalization for Turkish citizens, and progress in accession talks. The agreement openly countered asylum shopping and illegal migration by attempting to shut off one primary gateway into the EU and



reallocate the burden, though it also produced concerns regarding human rights and the legality of returns.

The 2016 UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants

Date held: 19th of September 2016

Location: New York, United Nations Headquarters

Official number: UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/71/1 ("New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants")

In 2016, the United Nations organized a high-level meeting where world leaders came together to address the escalating refugee and migration crisis. The outcome of this summit was the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, a document where states committed to protecting the rights of displaced people, fighting xenophobia, and enhancing international collaboration. Its most long-lasting legacy, nevertheless, is that it set in motion the procedure which finally gave rise to the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, both of which were approved in 2018. The summit mattered because it reaffirmed the reality that migration is a shared responsibility and not an issue to be managed by states in isolation. It also illustrated how piece-meal national approaches—such as policies that encourage so-called "asylum shopping"—can undermine attempts to develop strong and shared solutions.

Possible solutions

Strengthening Border Security by Improving Frontex

Frontex, the EU's border agency, has grown in size and budget over the years, but its effectiveness still depends on how it uses its tools. Giving the agency better equipment—drones, satellite systems, and mobile rapid-response units—would help states manage illegal crossings in real time. To put it simply, when enforcement is credible, numbers fall. In fact, illegal crossings into the EU dropped by almost 40 percent in 2024. That said, audits show that most of Frontex's resources still go into sea patrols, leaving gaps elsewhere. Unless those are fixed, any increase in funding risks being wasted.

Faster Asylum Processing



One of the biggest complaints about the EU's asylum system is how long it takes. In some countries, applicants wait years before they get a final answer. That undermines confidence, both for citizens and for migrants themselves. A way forward is to create fast-track procedures at border points, particularly for applicants from countries with very low recognition rates. These cases could be decided within weeks, not months, while still allowing appeals. Some states already use this approach on a small scale, so the EU would not be starting from zero—it would simply be scaling up what already works.

Tackling Smuggling Networks

Smugglers remain one of the hardest problems. They adapt quickly, they shift routes, and they profit enormously from desperate people. Europol supported over 220 investigations into these groups in 2023, but the problem is far from solved. More cross-border cooperation is essential. Following the money is one answer: tracking profits, freezing assets, and cutting smugglers off from digital platforms where they recruit. Without this, new routes will continue to open as soon as old ones are shut down.

Expanding Regional Protection

Not everyone wants to move to Europe permanently—many simply want safety or temporary protection. Regional Protection Programmes in North Africa, the Sahel, and the Middle East already provide alternatives, but they remain too limited in scale. If properly funded, they could support return, integration, and education options closer to home. This would not only reduce the number of people risking their lives at sea but also show that the EU is willing to share responsibility beyond its own borders.

Integrating Legal Migrants

When people are granted the right to stay, integration becomes critical. Without language support and recognition of qualifications, many migrants end up stuck in low-skilled jobs, even if they arrive with degrees or professional training. This so-called “brain waste” hurts both sides: migrants lose opportunities, and host societies lose talent. Practical measures like vocational training, partnerships with employers, and language programs can close that gap and make integration a benefit rather than a burden.

Refugees vs. Economic Immigrants



Finally, there must be a clear distinction between who qualifies as a refugee and who does not. Refugees fleeing war or persecution deserve protection under international law. Economic migrants, however, should be channelled through legal work permits and visa systems instead. Blurring the line between the two weakens public trust and overloads asylum systems. Being clear on this point allows Europe to remain both humane and realistic.

Further reading

EU Charter of Fundamental Rights — European Union (EUR-Lex)

eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A12012P/TXT

Procedure History of the 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol — United Nations (UN Audiovisual Library of International Law)

legal.un.org/avl/pdf/ha/prsr/prsr_ph_e.pdf

Pact on Migration and Asylum — European Commission, DG Home Affairs

home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/migration-and-asylum/pact-migration-and-asylum_en

The Common European Asylum System (CEAS): Briefing — European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS)

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Timeline of CEAS Reform and the New Pact on Migration (2024) — European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA)

euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2024-06/2024_CEAS_timeline-v8.pdf

Migration and Human Rights — Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

ohchr.org/en/migration/about-migration-and-human-rights



Migration Outlook 2024 — International Organization for Migration (IOM)

iom.int/migration-outlook-2024

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