



THE ROAD FROM ROME MANAGING MIGRATION



“Too many people are still dying in the Mediterranean. We have implemented actions to address the situation but we need to do more. First and foremost, stability in Libya and the region as a whole is required. While continuing our support to this process, we can take forward actions to help make a difference, save lives and break the smugglers’ and traffickers’ business model – which will also impact the flows towards Europe.”

President Jean-Claude Juncker, 25 January 2017

Throughout history, people have migrated from one place to another. People try to reach European shores for different reasons and through different channels. They look for legal pathways, but they also risk their lives, to escape from political oppression, war and poverty, as well as to find family reunification, entrepreneurship, knowledge and education. Every person’s migration tells its own story. Over the past 20 years, the European Union has put in place some of the highest, common asylum standards in the world. And in the past two years, European migration policy has advanced in leaps and bounds with the European Agenda on Migration proposed by the Juncker Commission in May 2015. Progressively, a more united approach to dealing with migration is emerging. But there is still work to be done to build up a coherent and comprehensive way of both reaping the benefits and addressing the challenges deriving from migration in the long term.

In 2015, 2016 and 2017 EU operations contributed to:



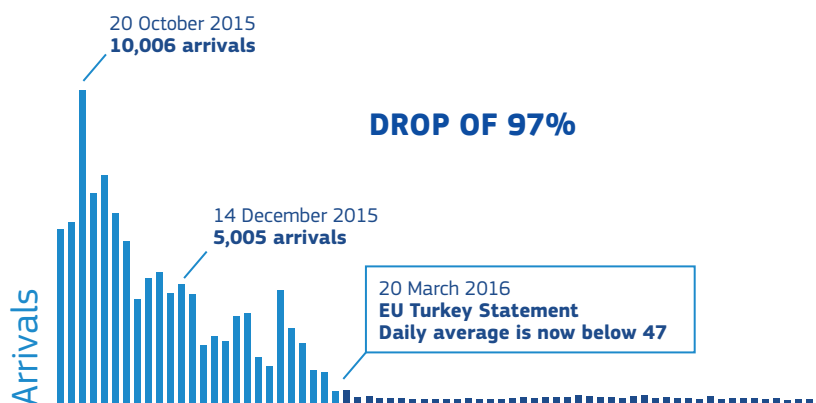
Over 520,000 lives saved



Over 2,100 suspected traffickers and smugglers apprehended



387 vessels removed



The Rome Declaration:

“We pledge to work towards a union where all citizens feel safe and can move freely, where our external borders are secured with an efficient, responsible and sustainable migration policy, respecting international norms.”

THE CHALLENGE

The refugee crisis, which saw 1.2 million people coming to Europe in 2015, is of a scale unprecedented since the Second World War. This has led to a contentious debate about solidarity and responsibility among the Member States and fuelled a broader questioning of the future of border management and free movement within Europe. For the 1.7 million Europeans who commute to another Member State every day, and for the hundreds of millions who travel across Europe for family, tourism or business reasons every year, borders are a thing of the past. Yet, for the first time since walls were torn down a generation ago, the recent crises have led to temporary controls being reintroduced at certain borders within Europe.

It is therefore now time to look at how Europe can deliver a “*responsible and sustainable migration policy*” for the long term, as called for by leaders in the **Rome Declaration** of 25 March 2017.

THE WAY FORWARD

All actors need to work together to make a common European migration policy a reality. The European Agenda on Migration presented by the Commission in May 2015 set out the need for a comprehensive approach to migration management. Since then, a number of measures have been introduced to address the immediate challenge of the refugee crisis and the Commission has put in place all the important building blocks needed for a European approach to ensure strong borders, fair procedures and a sustainable system able to anticipate problems. The European Border and Coast Guard was agreed in record time and launched in December 2016. Now, joint investment and engagement in ensuring it becomes fully operational as quickly as possible are still needed, as a practical expression of the commitment by Member States to share responsibility and demonstrate solidarity. What is needed now is also a swift adoption of the Commission’s proposals on reforming the Common European Asylum system and full implementation of the collective decisions already taken.

The **White Paper on the Future of Europe** recognises that whatever scenario the Union decides to follow, migration and border policy will be crucial topics. Under four of the five scenarios, cooperation and coordination in the management of external borders, asylum policies and counter-terrorism matters is likely. The key question for Europe is whether this cooperation is systematic and effective, or not.

KEY DATES

