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.

**EUROPE: THE CONTINENT OF SOLIDARITY**

In the face of the worst refugee crisis since the Second World War, Europe is the world’s first responder. In 2016 alone, EU Member States granted asylum to 710,395 refugees and offered safe and legal pathways through resettlement to 14,205 people in need of protection – more than three times as much as Australia, Canada and the United States combined.
First time asylum applications received from 2012-2017:

- **2012**: 278,280
- **2013**: 367,825
- **2014**: 562,680
- **2015**: 1,257,030
- **2016**: 1,206,120
- **2017 (Jan-Oct)**: 481,705

Number of persons granted protection from 2012-2017:

- **2012**: 116,320
- **2013**: 132,285
- **2014**: 193,580
- **2015**: 333,925
- **2016**: 710,635
- **2017 (Q1-Q3)**: 348,165

Migration: The challenge of a generation

Even if irregular arrivals to the European Union have dropped by 63% in 2017, the trend for the years to come and factors in migration dynamics, such as climate change and demography in the EU and its neighbourhood, point to migration remaining a challenge for decades. With growing instability in our neighbourhood increasing the risk of new routes opening, Europe urgently needs to equip itself with future-proof means of managing migration responsibly and fairly.

The way forward

The European Union needs a system equal to the long-term reality of increased migration flows and capable of coping with any future crises. In view of the joint commitment to move to a system ensuring resilience to future crises, the Commission invites the leaders to agree on a number of elements, both inside and outside the EU, which would allow for an agreement on a comprehensive package by June 2018.
### ROADMAP TO A DEAL BY JUNE 2018 ON THE COMPREHENSIVE MIGRATION PACKAGE

#### In 2018

#### BY FEBRUARY

- ✓ Member States to **pledge at least 50,000 places for the resettlement of people** in need of protection, including through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Emergency Transit Mechanism from Libya;
- ✓ Support at least 15,000 assisted voluntary returns through the International Organisation for Migration and **1,000 resettlements from Libya** through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Emergency Transit Mechanism.

#### BY MARCH

- ✓ Adopt the EU-Asylum Agency and the Eurodac proposals;
- ✓ Reach political agreement between the European Parliament and the Council on the Qualification Regulation;
- ✓ Member States to contribute all the assets and staff needed for the **rapid reaction pools** of the European Border and Coast Guard so that they stand fully ready for deployment;
- ✓ All Member States to contribute to close the funding gap of €340 million for the **North of Africa Window of the EU Trust Fund**;
- ✓ The European Border and Coast Guard Agency puts in place a fully functioning **return capacity**.

#### BY APRIL

- ✓ Identify the broad outlines for an **agreement on the right balance between responsibility and solidarity**.

#### BY MAY

- ✓ Reach political agreement between the European Parliament and the Council on the Reception Conditions Directive and the Union Resettlement Framework;
- ✓ Obtain a negotiating mandate on the Asylum Procedures Regulation in the European Parliament and the Council;
- ✓ Reach an agreement on the **right balance between responsibility and solidarity** at the meeting of the EU Leaders in Sofia and swiftly translate it into a negotiating mandate for the Council on the Dublin Regulation;
- ✓ Adopt first wave of projects under the European Sustainable Development Fund;
- ✓ Launch the first pilot projects for coordinating legal economic migration offers for key partners countries;
- ✓ Increase the number of returned migrants in operations organised in cooperation with the European Border and Coast Guard Agency by at least 20% compared to the same period of 2017;
- ✓ Agree on **readmission agreements or operational arrangements** with three further partner countries.
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<th><strong>BY JUNE</strong></th>
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<td>✓ Reach political agreement in the June European Council on the overall reform of the Common European Asylum System;</td>
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<td>✓ Reach political agreement between the European Parliament and the Council on the “Blue Card” Directive;</td>
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<td>✓ Further increase the number of returned migrants in operations organised in cooperation with the European Border and Coast Guard Agency by 50% compared to the same period of 2017.</td>
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<td>✓ Implement 50% of the resettlement pledges for at least 50,000 people in need of protection.</td>
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<td>✓ Implement the remaining 50% of the resettlement pledges for at least 50,000 people in need of protection.</td>
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Source: European Commission