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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

1. INTRODUCTION

The **Pact on Migration and Asylum**[1] is a key step in the development of a comprehensive approach to migration, asylum, border management and integration. It provides a solid foundation for a fair, firm and more effective way of managing migration and asylum in the Union, by ensuring a balanced system of solidarity and responsibility. After a transition period of two years following its entry into force, the Pact will start fully applying on 12 June 2026, marking the beginning of a new phase in European migration management. Extensive work has been undertaken to get the EU and the national systems ready. Based on the Common Implementation Plan[2], Member States, the Commission and the EU agencies have been working closely together to ensure that the new legislative framework is being translated into an operational reality to effectively govern migration management within the Union, ensure preparedness and resilience amidst the increasingly complex geopolitical context, and set the balance between solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility.

This Communication sets out the **state of play of the implementation** of the Pact, focusing on progress since November 2025[3] and identifying key areas for further action ahead of Pact's entry into application in June. This third update responds to the requirement[4] under the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation to regularly inform the European Parliament and the Council on the progress made in the implementation of the Pact.

The Pact **overhauls Europe's migration and asylum framework**. It demands significant legal and operational transformation together with sustained political commitment. The two-year transition period reflects the scale and complexity of this set of reforms: a system built on ten interlinked legislative acts, each requiring coordinated and integrated implementation across national authorities, EU institutions and agencies, as well as adaptation of domestic laws, administrative procedures, and operational protocols.

Overall, **considerable progress has been made** over the last years in implementing this large and complex framework. In particular, as of May 2026, many Member States are on track to adapt their national legislation, to set up and organise the mandatory screening and the border procedures, including to establish independent monitoring mechanisms, and to reach sufficient reception capacity. A number of Member States have also taken important steps to reduce backlogs and delays in asylum procedures, including by increasing capacity and providing adequate training, while concluding efforts to provide legal counselling and align with the work of the judicial systems. Member States have also advanced in reinforcing their capacity to ensure they can effectively process responsibility transfers to the Member State responsible for an asylum application and implement solidarity pledges.

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[1] https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/migration-and-asylum/pact-migration-and-asylum/legislative-files-nutshell_en.
[2] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52024DC0251&qid=1776165824453.
[3] First Report on the State of Play of the Implementation of Pact, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52025DC0319&qid=1776165712928; second report: Annex I to COM/2025/795 final.
[4] Article 84 (3) of 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.

In addition, significant steps have been taken also to further **operationalise, strengthen and complement the Pact framework**. These include the adoption of the first Solidarity Pool under the annual migration management cycle[5], currently being operationalised with the EU Solidarity Coordinator facilitating interaction and cooperation among Member States to achieve a balanced and effective implementation; the adoption of the implementing Regulation on the application of the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation[6] to advance on the reform of the Dublin rules; or the completion of the strategic programming of the EUR 3 billion in EU funds to support the implementation of the Pact and hosting displaced persons from Ukraine[7]. Furthermore, the amended rules on safe third countries and the first EU list of safe countries of origin entered into force, and negotiations are ongoing on the proposal for a Return Regulation[8] to swiftly reach an agreement on the missing piece of the Pact.

At the same time, **further efforts are needed to close the remaining gaps**. Readiness across Member States varies, as they face different challenges. It is urgent that Member States take all necessary measures to further deliver on all building blocks, focussing primarily on the most important components. In particular, Member States must ensure that the adaptation of their national legislation is completed on time; that the core functionalities of Eurodac[9], the central biometric database supporting the Pact, are tested and fully put in place; and that procurement processes and construction of facilities in the identified locations for screening and the border procedures are accelerated. In that respect, Member States need to ensure the timely establishment of their adequate capacity for screening and the border procedures, including measures to effectively prevent absconding and secondary movements, and scale up cooperation with third countries on readmission of people subject to the return border procedure. Furthermore, the preparatory steps for the effective application of the responsibility rules and for transfers must speed up and the new legal safeguards and guarantees be put in place on time, including the fundamental rights monitoring mechanism. Meanwhile the work on the operationalisation of the solidarity mechanism continues.

Alongside the implementation of the Pact, the comprehensive approach to asylum and migration management and our sustained efforts on migration diplomacy with third countries is already **delivering strong results.** Illegal border crossings at the EU's external borders fell by 26% in 2025 compared to 2024. The number of persons detected trying to cross the border illegally is at the lowest level since 2021. All this is the result of policy changes by the Union and the Member States, growing alignment among Member States, and strengthened cooperation with partner countries along key migration routes.

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[5] Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2025/2642 of 19 December 2025 on the establishment of the Annual Solidarity Pool for 2026.

[6] Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2025/2055 of 2 October 2025 laying down rules for the application of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 of the European Parliament and of the Council, as regards asylum and migration management and repealing Commission Regulation (EC) No 1560/2003.

[7] https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/european-commission-provides-additional-eur-3-billion-support-migration-and-asylum-management-2025-05-12_en.

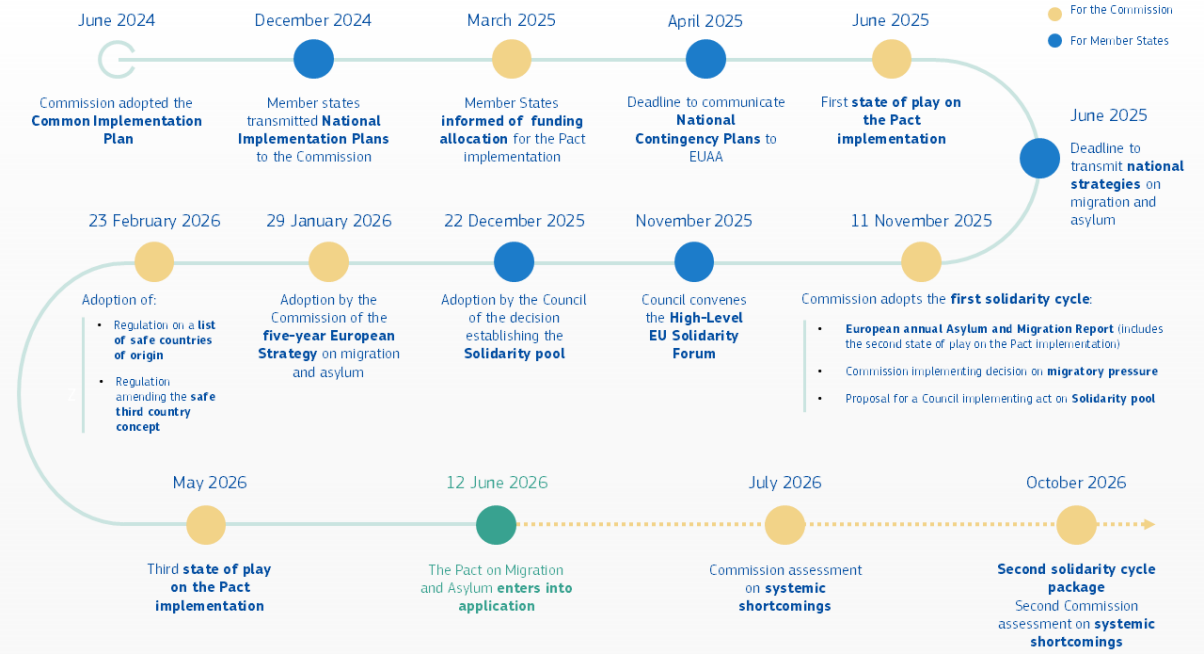
[8] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52025PC0101.

[9] 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.

Building on this dynamic, the European Asylum and Migration Management Strategy[10] sets out the **objectives for the years ahead**: preventing illegal migration and breaking the business model of criminal smuggling networks, protecting people fleeing war and persecution while preventing abuse of the asylum system, and encouraging talent to come to the Union to boost the competitiveness of our economy. Ensuring a firm, fair and effective asylum and migration management system based on the Pact and which is able to adapt and respond to geopolitical developments, will continue being a priority.

To that end, the Commission **calls on all Member States to further intensify their efforts for a timely implementation of the Pact**. While doing so, it is important that Member States engage with and involve local and regional authorities, social partners, civil society organisations and other stakeholders, making use of all resources available at EU and national level. The Commission remains in contact with the Member States to address the remaining gaps and stands ready to continue providing the necessary support.

The Pact's entry into application is an important step. It is not, however, the end of the process. **Sustained efforts will need to continue well beyond June** to operationalise the new European migration management system.



2. DELIVERING AT UNION LEVEL

In addition to the European Asylum and Migration Management Strategy, **key legislative initiatives** that are part of the comprehensive approach and are aimed at completing and complementing the Pact were adopted and entered into force in February.

[10] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52026DC0045https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52026DC0045.

The **revised rules on safe third countries**[11] make it easier for Member States to consider an asylum application inadmissible when applicants could receive effective protection in a third country that is safe for them and where their applications for protection would be examined. This should help to further ease pressure on national asylum systems and reduce incentives for illegal migration, while maintaining legal safeguards and in full respect of fundamental rights. The new **EU list of safe countries of origin**[12] promotes a more uniform approach across Member States when handling applications that are likely to be unfounded, allowing those claims to be processed more quickly and efficiently through accelerated or border procedures.

Over the past months, **the Commission continued to support Member States' efforts** to adapt their national legal frameworks. Coordination was ensured, notably through the Strategic Committee on Immigration, Frontiers and Asylum (SCIFA), and the Commission's bilateral dialogues with Member States. The Solidarity Platform remains the main forum for the implementation of the Solidarity Pool until the Technical-Level EU Solidarity Forum can take up its work in June 2026. The existing contact committees and expert groups have continued to discuss and offer guidance on the legal framework, often through joint meetings of different groups to help identify synergies across the legislative instruments and to avoid duplication.

The Commission is engaging in regular exchanges with the **European Parliament**, notably with the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) and the Working Group on Asylum – Implementation of the Pact/Common European Asylum System.

Engagement with **civil society** is taking place in various fora, including the European Migration Forum (a meeting took place in November 2025) and bilateral outreach. Engagement with **judiciary** networks has included work with the European Networks for Councils of the Judiciary (ENCJ) on the border procedure, to identify ways to support national judiciaries with the procedural changes introduced by the Pact.

EU agencies, in particular the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), eu-LISA, Frontex, Europol and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), continue to closely cooperate with the Commission and the Member States to support the reform process. They are progressing as planned with the preparation of the required guidance documents, templates and training material, in line with the Common Implementation Plan. Agencies also continue to provide tailored assistance to Member States upon request, helping to address newly arising and evolving challenges[13]. Following the EUAA pilot monitoring exercises in Estonia and the Netherlands to prepare for the implementation of the new mechanism for monitoring the technical and operational application of the asylum *acquis* in all Member States,

[11] Regulation (EU) 2026/463 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 February 2026 amending Regulation (EU) 2024/1348 as regards the application of the concept of safe third country.
[12] Regulation (EU) 2026/464 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 February 2026 amending Regulation (EU) 2024/1348 as regards the establishment of a list of safe countries of origin at Union level, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L_202600464.
[13] Further details on agencies' support are outlined in the relevant sections. In addition, the EUAA currently supports 12 Member States based on joint operational plans, Frontex has 36 joint operations with Member States and countries in the neighbourhood, and eu-LISA leads the overhaul of Eurodac.

a revision of the monitoring methodology will be completed by June 2026 and the first three Member States will be subject to monitoring in the second half of 2026[14].

The Commission also continues to provide support to Member States through the **Technical Support Instrument (TSI)**. The instrument supports eight Member States[15] to implement specific reforms outlined in their National Implementation Plans, in cooperation with the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Some of these Member States are also engaging in peer-to-peer learning through a community of practice, which includes for example thematic workshops and practical exchanges[16] and is set up with the support of the ICMPD and strengthened by the ad hoc participation of some EU agencies.

3. OPERATIONALISATION OF THE BUILDING BLOCKS – PROGRESS UPDATE

Supported by work in the Commission's contact committees, which continue to develop further guidance and help address any emerging queries and questions, the necessary **national legislation is being put into place**. In at least eleven Member States the draft legislation is in the parliamentary procedure[17], and most other Member States are in the final stages of preparing the necessary proposals[18]. Five Member States have already adopted most of the relevant national legislation[19].

Based on the needs identified in the National Implementation Plans, **the strategic programming of the EUR 3 billion** allocated to the implementation of the Pact was completed for 26 Member States[20]. This process allowed for the challenges that Member States are facing to be assessed, which helped maximise the added value of EU funds, adding to existing EU funding from national programmes and national budgets. By April 2026, most of the related programme amendments were adopted[21], while the process is underway for the remaining amendments[22].

Overall key challenges and next steps

It is crucial that Member States **complete the necessary legal adjustments** and those that are still drafting the necessary legislative frameworks advance as a matter of urgency.

[14] Slovakia, Malta and Bulgaria.
[15] Belgium, Czechia, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Italy, Romania and Slovakia.
[16] Member States share tools, templates, workflows and experiences to address common challenges and promote convergence of approaches. Topics have included areas such as the Screening Regulation, the conduct of vulnerability assessments and legal counselling.
[17] Austria, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Finland and Romania.
[18] Belgium, Latvia, Lithuania, Spain and Sweden are in the final stages of drafting or have finalised the draft measures. Although Denmark is not bound by the Asylum Procedure Regulation, its new legal framework will include the possibility of activating the asylum border procedure if the need arises.
[19] Czechia, Cyprus, Germany, Ireland and Slovakia.
[20] Hungary has not yet requested the assigned Pact-related allocations.
[21] Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Finland, France (BMVI), Germany, Greece, Italy, Latvia (AMIF), Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.
[22] Cyprus, Belgium, Luxembourg, Latvia (BMVI), Poland, Denmark (BMVI) and France (AMIF). The Schengen Associated Countries are involved in a dedicated strategic Pact dialogue with a view to submitting an amended programme by 12 June 2026.

The Commission will monitor the **use of EU resources** for the Pact, including through performance review meetings for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and the Border Management and Visa Instrument (BMVI). The Commission and the Member States will review in the second half of 2026 the overall performance of the programmes based on financial data on the absorption of the funds and on operational data on progress towards the agreed objectives. Part of the 2026-2027 budget of the AMIF Thematic Facility can be mobilised to provide further support to Member States, based on needs identified during the continued exchange of information on the implementation of the Pact, while taking into consideration other priorities. EU resources should be used to cover issues in areas that are crucial for the implementation of the Pact or must be addressed with priority in a given Member State due to their possible impact on preparedness.

3.1. BUILDING BLOCK 1 – EURODAC

The good functioning of Eurodac is key for the operationalisation of the Pact. **Member States need to continue working closely with the Commission and eu-LISA** to coordinate implementation and, where necessary, request and receive guidance without delay.

As of mid-April 2026, eleven Member States had reported being fully on track to start working within the new Eurodac system by June[23]. Sixteen Member States reported that they still face different challenges, but they expect to be able to solve the outstanding issues on time[24]. The main challenges faced by the Member States are delays in national procurement procedures, with eleven Member States declaring that they will be relying on the centralised solution developed by eu-LISA[25].

The test campaign of the new system in which Member States and eu-LISA are engaged is progressing. As expected, the test results indicate where there is a need for changes to the technical configurations at national level. To close the gaps, it will require concerted efforts at national level with the assistance from eu-LISA. To respond to these challenges, feedback to written questions is regularly provided by eu-LISA and meetings are being organised with the Commission and other stakeholders.

Member States have committed to a set of milestones for testing technical compliance of their implementation as well as testing their business processes. The 62nd meeting of the eu-LISA Management Board on 18 March acknowledged that many Member States had made good progress overall, confirming the planning for the entry into operation of June 2026. At the same time, some Member States still need to increase their efforts after not meeting the agreed testing milestone of 15 April. As of 24 April, nineteen Member States completed their compliance testing[26]. The remaining Member States will need to swiftly finalise such testing. Those relying

[23] Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Greece, Malta, Romania, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.
[24] Austria, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal and Slovakia.
[25] The centralised solution, which allows Member States to perform Eurodac operations through a Web-User Interface (WUI), is the fall-back option for Member facing difficulties with national implementation.
[26] Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Latvia, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

on a hybrid implementation approach[27] should rely on the fall-back option in case issues with their national implementation are protracting. Regarding business process testing, Member States are required to demonstrate sufficient test results of all critical business processes as soon as possible; the nine Member States that have not started yet need to do so as a matter of urgency[28].

The Commission Implementing Act on cross-system statistics[29] and all but one of the required amendments to be adopted by the Commission to non-legislative acts to support the interoperability framework between EU information systems have been adopted[30]. These also enable the use of Eurodac by the European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS) once it is operational by the end of 2026.

Eu-LISA continues to deliver under a tight timeline. Thanks to its work, the Eurodac central system is now ready to handle all functionalities required[31]. Eu-LISA has also successfully integrated Eurodac into the interoperability framework, connecting the system with the Common Identity Repository, the European Search Portal and the shared Biometric Matching Service.

Key challenges and next steps

Eurodac testing and training of personnel must be the main focus for the months to come. Eu-LISA convened multiple dedicated workshops on testing and the functionalities of the Web User Interface. Europol and Member State authorities that have the right to access Eurodac should invest in adequate training and test their operational procedures accordingly. To ensure operations start successfully, it is crucial to procure IT solutions and related hardware (e.g. Eurodac machines) on time[32].

Member States that opted for a hybrid implementation approach but who are at risk of delays need to ensure operational readiness based on the central solution and undertake the relevant testing.

[27] Member States can implement the Eurodac Regulation by either adapting their national systems based on the Eurodac Interface Control Document, allowing for an automatised (system-to-system) interaction between the national and central Eurodac systems, or by using the WUI, developed by eu-LISA, allowing end users to perform operations via the interface itself and reducing the need for national implementation. Hybrid implementation refers to the use of system-to-system interaction for the most demanding operations (e.g. the transmission of new datasets), while relying on the WUI for less demanding ones.
[28] Croatia, Denmark, France, Hungary, Latvia, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal and Slovakia.
[29] Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2026/533 of 11 March 2026 laying down rules for the application of Regulation (EU) 2024/1358 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the content of the monthly cross-system statistics using data from Eurodac, the Visa Information System, the European Travel Information and Authorisation System and the Entry/Exit System pursuant to Article 12(3) of that Regulation.
[30] Because of discussions about a new delivery timeline for the revised Visa Information System (VIS), the act establishing correspondence between VIS and Eurodac data is postponed.
[31] Given the challenging timeline, Commission and eu-LISA agreed on the functionalities that are strictly necessary to be in place in June. Other functionalities will come by the end of the year.
[32] Member States where Eurodac-related procurement is ongoing and generally on track include Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Slovenia and Spain. France and Slovakia have concluded this process.

3.2. BUILDING BLOCK 2 – A NEW SYSTEM TO MANAGE MIGRATION AT THE UNION'S EXTERNAL BORDERS

The number of Member States that either already have or are about to have both reception facilities and human resources in place to establish **adequate capacity for the border procedures has increased** to 15 since the last update[33]; the remaining 11 Member States[34] need to urgently step up efforts to establish and reach their adequate capacity. Some Member States had to define provisional (interim) solutions while new facilities such as multi-purpose centres are under construction[35]. Existing sites are being refurbished to meet the standards required under the Pact and arrangements made to prevent absconding in some Member States[36]. The locations where Member States carry out the border procedures had to be notified to the Commission by mid-April 2026: until 4 May, 17 Member States notified the Commission about such location[37]. To anticipate the new deadlines for the border procedure, some Member States have introduced deadlines for the courts, and/or tried to increase court capacities to avoid bottlenecks at the appeal stage. Measures include increasing staffing resources and the technical infrastructure, including facilities for remote interviews[38]. Other preparatory measures include creating or updating standard operational procedures and guidelines, digitalising procedures and setting up common case management systems[39].

The Commission is updating the draft guidance document on the asylum and return border procedures based on discussions with national experts, border guards, asylum officials and return case workers. The new EUAA Practical Guide on the Asylum Border Procedure, adopted by the EUAA Management Board in March 2026[40] outlines key practical elements for an effective border procedure.

Most Member States are progressing in setting up and organising mandatory **screening**[41]. Around two thirds of Member States have notified the competent screening authorities ahead of the 12 June deadline[42]. Many are already training personnel or are finalising planning for training, many with the support – or drawing on material – from the EUAA and Frontex, as

[33] Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Finland, France, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia and Sweden.
[34] Bulgaria, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Poland, Romania and Slovenia.
[35] E.g. Estonia, Latvia, among others.
[36] E.g. Austria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Spain and Italy.
[37] Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, Spain and Sweden.
[38] Croatia and the Netherlands have introduced new legislation to set deadlines for the judiciary. Belgium and Croatia have invested in capacity such as new staff and/or technical infrastructure. Italy is recruiting additional staff for asylum commissions and courts. France has reinforced the capacity of the appeal courts reviewing return decisions. Cyprus is in the process of reinforcing the International Protection Administrative Court with four judges.
[39] Member States that updated guidelines and operational procedures: Austria, Croatia, Estonia, France, Lithuania, Malta, Greece, Italy and Spain. Member States that took measures to digitalise procedures or set up common case management systems: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, France, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.
[40] https://www.euaa.europa.eu/publications/practical-guide-asylum-border-procedure.
[41] Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Latvia, Spain and Sweden are on track to implement screening; Italy is ready for sea arrivals.
[42] Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, France, Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Switzerland.

well as IOM[43]. Screening pilots, organised with the support of Frontex, EUAA and Europol took place on the island of Lampedusa and in Sicily, as well as at Lisbon airport and at the land border in Romania. The Commission is further developing its guidance on the implementation of the Screening Regulation in view of a future update of the Practical Handbook for Border Guards. The training modules on screening, developed by the EUAA and Frontex, were made available to users at the end of September 2025. Both agencies aligned the content of their training to ensure a harmonised implementation. Frontex developed a training programme for border guards that adapts to national contexts. EUAA developed a training module 'Introduction to Screening in the Context of International Protection' which is available since March 2026[44]. The screening toolbox[45] developed by Frontex and the EUAA complements the Commission guidance, and comprises a set of templates, guidance materials and practical resources. Incorporating the lessons learned from the field-testing in Italy and Romania, the final version of the screening toolbox deliverables has been finalised and distributed to Member States for their use, including an operational checklist for medical practitioners.

Key challenges and next steps

Member States must act without delay to ensure the full operationalisation of screening and the border procedures. This is in particular the case for some Member States[46] that need to ensure **adequate capacity**. While some Member States are relying on interim solutions until the newly planned facilities are ready, it is important that these solutions meet the standards set out in the new Reception Conditions Directive and are adequately staffed. Member States that have not yet notified to the Commission the locations where the border procedures will be carried out need to do so as a matter of urgency[47].

To manage the process at the external borders, Member States need to ensure that persons subject to the border procedure do not enter the territory of the Member States but remain in the dedicated areas. Pilot screening exercises have shown challenges in preventing absconding, leading to a situation in which no effective referral to the appropriate subsequent procedure is possible. Learning from this experience, it must be a priority for Member States to **establish effective measures to prevent absconding and secondary movements**. Member States need to use the period of initial apprehension by law enforcement authorities to do screening checks, notably the identity and security checks and the Eurodac registration. In addition, in accordance with the legal instruments of the Pact, Member States can rely on the differentiated application of restrictions of movement, detention and alternatives to detention to effectively prevent absconding, ensuring proportionality and the respect of fundamental rights, including review where necessary. In addition, for border procedures to work, third countries will need to play their role and respect the international obligations to readmit their own nationals. As part of its migration diplomacy outreach, the EU is increasing its engagement with relevant third

[43] This includes Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Spain, Finland, Italy, Slovakia and Czechia. All training has been finalised in Bulgaria.
[44] More information on the module is available through this link: https://www.euaa.europa.eu/training-catalogue/introduction-screening-context-international-protection#section14332-1.
[45] Developed by Frontex, EUAA and the Commission with the support of Europol and Member States' experts.
[46] Hungary, Bulgaria, Germany, Greece, Latvia, Italy, Spain and Poland.
[47] Austria, Czechia, Greece, Hungary, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal and Slovenia.

countries. Member States need to step up readmission cooperation so that irregular migrants are effectively returned before the time limit for the return border procedure expires.

Screening and the border procedures rely on the effective cooperation of different stakeholders. Further preparatory work needs to focus on creating the conditions for this cooperation, including through electronic forms and national case management systems, to avoid bottlenecks or procedural gaps[48]. Arrangements on health checks are still to be finalised in some Member States[49]. It is important that information is provided in time during the screening phase to allow Member States to apply rules on non-compliance when appropriate. Screening should cover all arrivals even when arrivals are high: for this, protocols and guidance need to be brief and focused on key aspects to allow fast procedures, avoiding situations in which only some of the arrivals will be screened. These should, to the extent possible, be done during the initial apprehension by law enforcement authorities, so as to effectively prevent absconding without having to take individual decisions on detention or restriction of freedom of movement.

The Commission is in close contact with all Member States to address remaining challenges. In addition, with EUAA and Frontex assistance, the Commission is organising practice-oriented workshops with the most affected Member States[50]. The workshops are tailored to the specific national context of each Member State, based on their geographical and migratory situation, different reception systems and wider national institutional contexts. By bringing together all national authorities and key stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Pact, including the judiciary, the workshops aim to help create a seamless process, from screening through the asylum border procedure to the return border procedure, and cover all the necessary technical and operational aspects that need to be put in place. To simplify coordination, the Commission asked Member States to nominate national contact points for screening and their national screening authorities ahead of June 2026.

As of the end of May, Eurostat will publish on its website the list of countries with a low rate of recognition of international protection applications (20% or less), which is one of the grounds for the mandatory border procedure. Member States' competent authorities will need to consult this list regularly to ensure clarity for the determining authorities and for the applicants concerned, promoting its common application across the Union. In this context, EU Delegations in the countries concerned will also provide timely information on the ground.

3.3. BUILDING BLOCK 3 - RETHINKING RECEPTION

Most Member States are undertaking partial reforms of their reception systems to adjust to the new rules, while for few Member States this is part of a larger-scale systemic reform[51]. Some Member States indicate sufficient reception capacities[52], and many Member States are

[48] Related challenges vary from ensuring IT infrastructure and developing the forms, addressing the guardianship of unaccompanied minors, outstanding designation of locations.
[49] These include Estonia, Germany, Slovenia and Spain.
[50] Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy and Spain.
[51] Portugal, Ireland and Sweden. Sweden is shifting from private accommodation to collective centres.
[52] E.g. Czechia, Lithuania, France, Finland, Spain, Malta, Slovakia and Greece (mainland).

constructing new facilities or refurbishing or remodeling existing ones[53]. Work on setting up new multipurpose centres is ongoing in several Member States[54]; the models and blueprints developed by the EUAA and the Commission remain useful for this purpose[55].

Various Member States continue their work to set up different reception arrangements for different groups of applicants. These arrangements can be useful to cater for the needs of people with vulnerabilities[56] or families, and to provide dedicated facilities for transfer cases[57].

Advancing the digital integration and connectivity of existing case management systems, improving data transfer and facilitating access to information for relevant authorities continues to be a major work strand for almost all Member States, while situations and starting points differ[58]. Many Member States are likely to continue projects for the integration of case-management systems beyond June 2026.

Work in the Reception Contact Committee continues, focusing on the transposition of the 2024 Reception Conditions Directive and the transition from the currently applicable Directive to the recast Directive. This also includes the provisions on the use of restrictions on freedom of movement, detention and alternatives to detention that will be detailed in a dedicated guidance document. Ahead of the deadline for transposition of the Reception Conditions Directive in June, one Member State already communicated full transposition[59]. Drawing on work in the EUAA Reception Network, the EUAA published a Practical Guide on Management of a Reception Centre[60] in December 2025. It covers key elements related to the management and organisation of reception centres with a specific focus on the initial phase of reception and the link to procedural aspects. It also stresses the important role of access to early integration measures during the reception phase in creating the basis for successful subsequent inclusion in the host society. This covers elements of the Reception Conditions Directive: access to language, civic education and vocational training courses, to the labour market, as well as procedures for the recognition of qualifications. In March 2026, the EUAA adopted the updated 'Operational Standards and Indicators on Reception including Vulnerability-related Aspects'[61]. It includes a focus on children and on vulnerability.

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[53] E.g. Austria, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Italy and Malta. Delays expected in Bulgaria, Cyprus, Latvia, Slovenia, Slovakia and Portugal.
[54] E.g. Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Portugal, Romania and Slovakia.
[55] The EUAA is applying these blueprints in the context of support to Romania.
[56] E.g. Cyprus, Italy, Malta, Slovenia and Sweden.
[57] E.g. Belgium, Cyprus, Germany, the Netherlands, Slovenia and Sweden.
[58] Work on reception-related IT-systems is ongoing in Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Lithuania, Finland, France, Italy, Malta, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and others. While Finland has an advanced system, prioritisation of tasks is required in view of a lack of IT experts. Slovenia will not finalise all work by June 2026. Others, such as Spain, indicate good progress. Estonia will carry out the integration of IT systems after June under a different project and ensure that all necessary interconnectivity is in place by June.
[59] Czechia.
[60] https://www.euaa.europa.eu/publications/practical-guide-management-reception-centre-arrival.
[61] The guidance updates and consolidates the following: Guidance on Reception Conditions: Operational standards and indicators (2016); Guidance on Reception Conditions for Unaccompanied Children: Operational standards and indicators (2018); https://www.euaa.europa.eu/publications/guidance-reception-operational-standards-and-indicators; https://www.euaa.europa.eu/publications/guidance-vulnerability-operational-standards-and-indicators.

Key challenges and next steps

Member States need to address gaps that could lead to delays in the procedures, create new capacities where needed, or ensure adequate quality conditions in the facilities, in respect of specific needs and vulnerabilities notably for children, including unaccompanied minors. Where necessary, intermediate measures need to be put in place to guarantee sufficient capacity. Efforts are especially needed where Member States have no clear plans to establish adequate reception capacities or have recently implemented a reduction in capacity[62]. Particularly in these cases, the relevant Member States must ensure that any such measures are in line with the overall need for well-prepared asylum and reception systems.

The EUAA is organising outreach activities to promote tools, guidance and training, and will continue to organise thematic workshops and exchange programmes for Member States. At the Commission's request, the EUAA will develop guidance on reception models.

Most Member States must still transpose the Reception Conditions Directive and communicate to the Commission the relevant texts, along with an explanatory document by 12 June. The Commission encourages all Member States to identify the responsible authorities and communicate this information as soon as possible to facilitate exchanges on implementation.

Accurate and complete reception data are central to inform the assessment of the reception situation. Member States are required to report on core reception indicators for the next European Annual Asylum and Migration Report. As of 2027, Member States will then report data to the EUAA on a complete set of reception indicators. Member States will need to further improve reporting and the granularity of data to ensure comparable and complete statistics.

3.4. BUILDING BLOCK 4 - FAIR, EFFICIENT AND CONVERGENT ASYLUM PROCEDURES

The newly adopted EU list of safe countries of origin gives Member States the possibility to frontload some elements of the Regulation, notably the application of the 20% (or lower) recognition rate as a ground for an accelerated procedure, and the possibility to designate safe countries of origin and safe third countries with exceptions for specific parts of Member State's territory or clearly identifiable categories of persons.

Various Member States are taking measures to tackle existing backlogs and improve their case management. This includes setting up dedicated teams, hiring additional staff, reforming processes through digitalisation and integrated case-management systems, and harmonising workflows and procedures across different stakeholders[63]. Some Member States are also making using EUAA support for instance to jointly develop procedures, request deployments or training, or operational support[64]. Many Member States continue to engage with the judiciary

[62] Reception-related concerns, in particular regarding unaccompanied minors, persist in Cyprus, Belgium, the Netherlands and Greece. Spain is reducing capacities in light of a decrease in arrivals. France reorganised its reception system in 2025 by reducing in-kind capacity and providing a financial allowance to applicants who are not granted housing in-kind (Member States can provide material reception conditions in-kind or through cash / vouchers).

[63] Member States currently engaged in these different reforms include Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal and Spain.

[64] E.g. Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania and Portugal.

and are taking concrete measures to align national judicial procedures with the Pact's requirements, strengthen the efficiency of court systems and increase capacity to handle appeals[65].

The EUAA is working on several products that will assist Member States in rolling out the new asylum procedures. The EUAA Operational Standards and Indicators on the Asylum Procedure were published on 25 November 2025[66], to support Member States in achieving fair and effective asylum procedures and strengthen the Common European Asylum System at an operational level. The EUAA also continues to actively engage with members of courts and tribunals on a variety of themes[67].

Key challenges and next steps

Concrete actions need to be maintained and, in some cases, intensified to **clear existing backlogs** and prevent new ones from emerging[68]. Some of the measures Member States need to take are to promptly initiate recruitment processes, whether temporary or permanent, and deliver the necessary training to ensure staff are well acquainted with the new framework, potentially in collaboration with the EUAA[69]. In parallel with reducing backlogs, Member States should also strengthen judicial capacity. Given the risk of overburdened court systems and staff shortages that may result from shorter deadlines under the new procedures, national administrations must ensure efficient coordination among the relevant services.

As part of their preparatory work, Member States also need to take the necessary measures and, where applicable, introduce legislative changes to ensure effective access to asylum procedures, while always upholding the principle of *non-refoulement*.

Under the Asylum Procedure Regulation, Member States are required to notify the Commission of the other relevant national authorities, apart from the determining authority, responsible for receiving applications, as well as of the designated competent authority for registering applications by 12 June 2026. They must also designate a national contact point for the purposes of both that Regulation and the Qualification Regulation and communicate their contact details to the Commission. The Commission will then share this information with the other Member States.

3.5. BUILDING BLOCK 5 - MORE EFFICIENT AND FAIR RETURN PROCEDURES

In parallel to the negotiations on the proposed Return Regulation, the Commission and Member States are defining practical and operational measures to increase the efficiency of return. Almost all Member States adjusted their framework or practices to align the issuing of return decisions closely together with negative asylum decisions in accordance with the Asylum Procedure Regulation. Member States are introducing further measures as part of broader joint

[65] Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Finland, Estonia, Portugal, Slovenia, Latvia and Spain.
[66] https://www.euaa.europa.eu/publications/operational-standards-indicators-asylum-procedure.
[67] https://www.euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2025-11/2026_Courts_Tribunals_Schedule_Activities_EN.pdf.
[68] Member States who continue to face challenges include Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain.
[69] The EUAA continues to update its training modules and draft new ones. So far, 26 training modules have been updated or newly drafted, bringing the European Asylum Curriculum up to date with the Pact.

efforts to simplify and streamline administrative processes[70]. Member States have taken steps to modernise their national return case-management systems: to date, with the support of Frontex, 22 Member States[71] have put in place IT solutions to manage return cases by going through a gap analysis against a model IT-system (RECAMAS model).

With the Return Coordinator's support, Member States and Frontex continue their efforts on targeted return actions and the coordination of operational measures to increase returns to common priority third countries. For the return border procedure, those Member States with the highest numbers of cases in the border procedure are likely to return third-country nationals to a group of third countries of particular relevance for the respective Member State. The focus of coordinated measures should include deploying liaison officers in these third countries, increasing the uptake of voluntary returns, joint return operations, and identification tools.

Frontex, in collaboration with Member States and other stakeholders, gathered good practices on effective identification and documentation of third-country nationals for return. The good practices, explicitly reflecting the short timelines and operational constraints introduced by the return border procedure, will be available to Member States in the second quarter of 2026.

Returns supported by Frontex continue to increase, accounting for almost half of overall returns from the Union in 2025. The work of deployed standing corps officers, such as Return Specialists (RS), Frontex Return Escort and Support Officers (FRESO) and Fundamental Rights Monitors, continues to support Member States' return processes. In addition to standard deployments, the Agency plans to deploy teams composed of both FRESO and RS in Member States. This would allow more coordinated approach in supporting the return border procedure, acting in more agile manner.

In the first half of 2025, all Member States continue to make active use of the Frontex EU Reintegration Programme, which currently provides reintegration assistance in around 40 Countries of Origin. In response to Member States' requests, Frontex continues to provide targeted capacity-building support to Member States to harmonise the return and reintegration counselling through regular and multiplier training courses.

In exchanges with third countries, as well as on occasions such as the meetings of the regional processes on migration, the Commission conveyed to partners the implications of the return border procedure and the need to improve overall cooperation to increase the efficiency of procedures and respect timeframes. The main elements were also presented at the 2026 EU Ambassadors' Conference.

Key challenges and next steps

To have more efficient and effective procedures, the European Parliament and the Council should reach a swift agreement on the proposed Return Regulation. Furthermore, the

[70]This includes Austria, Italy, Romania, Slovenia, Cyprus (new assisted voluntary return centre for vulnerable), Bulgaria and Czechia (assisted voluntary return), on return offices: Bulgaria and Sweden. Poland is planning a new return strategy and renew efforts to step up returns.

[71] Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and Switzerland.

Commission will put forward a proposal on the digitalisation of case management in the area of return, readmission and reintegration this year.

Member States should upscale their use of the current possibilities for Frontex support on return: at the moment, just three Member States use more than 60% of this kind of support. The Commission and Frontex are engaging with Member States to identify operational needs and find practical solutions for implementing the return border procedure, including in dedicated workshops. Frontex will continue to tailor support to Member States based on the results of its annual survey.

Return and readmission remain key elements in the comprehensive approach to migration cooperation with third countries. Experience shows that if the obligation to readmit own nationals is implemented in a structured way, with clear and agreed rules, this will foster regular dialogue. The EU-Nigeria Readmission Agreement, which was recently initialled by the Parties, goes in this direction, providing a structured framework for cooperation. This is essential in addressing concrete issues and identifying solutions, based on political will to cooperate. The well-functioning of cooperation on readmission with third countries whose nationals are subject to the return border procedure is a key precondition for the new mandatory border procedures to work in practice. In this context, it is also essential to ensure coordination between EU Delegations and Member States' embassies so that they have adequate information and capacity for action in third countries, and so that return and readmission are integrated into the broader set of EU interests vis-à-vis the third country concerned.

3.6. BUILDING BLOCK 6 - MAKING RESPONSIBILITY WORK

The good functioning of the existing Dublin rules and of the new rules under the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation is of fundamental importance for the Pact. The rules to implement the new responsibility system were adopted in October 2025[72]. Several Member States are strengthening the capacities of their Dublin units through new recruitment or via internal transfers[73]. Member States are also taking other measures. These include internal reorganisation, improvement in IT and case management systems, new guidance and training, refining procedures for vulnerable groups and families, setting up new dedicated facilities for persons subjects to transfers, and increasing flanking measures such as counselling services[74].

New EUAA 'Operational standards and indicators on the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation', adopted in March 2026[75] and developed together with Member States, fully revise

[72] Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2025/2055 of 2 October 2025 laying down rules for the application of Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 of the European Parliament and of the Council, as regards asylum and migration management and repealing Commission Regulation (EC) No 1560/2003.
[73] Austria (internal transfers), Belgium, Croatia, Estonia, Greece, Malta, Portugal and Slovenia
[74] E.g. internal reorganisations in Croatia and Ireland; improvement in IT and case managements systems in Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, France, Finland, Ireland and Italy; new guidance including relating to vulnerable groups and families in Austria, Czechia, France and Ireland; additional training in Austria, Czechia, France, Ireland, Portugal and Sweden; the establishment of special facilities to house people for responsibility transfers in Belgium, Finland, Germany and Slovenia, but also enhanced counselling to address the risk of absconding, as for example in Belgium.
[75] https://www.euaa.europa.eu/publications/operational-standards-indicators-asylum-migration-management-regulation.

and update the existing standards and indicators for the Dublin III Regulation[76]. They offer support and guidance to Member States in the implementation of the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation, focusing on the mechanism to determine the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection, to help achieve fair and effective procedures and to strengthen the Common European Asylum System. To complement this guidance, the EUAA is working on new recommendations for practical solutions including on the organisation of transfers, coordination between relevant stakeholders, preventing absconding and ensuring that fundamental rights are respected throughout the procedure.

Key challenges and next steps

To ensure a sustainable transition from the current Dublin system to the new responsibility rules, particular attention should be paid to the operational cooperation among Member States. Member States should be actively engaged in facilitating transfers and cooperating on practical and logistical matters. Member States had to notify their designated locations for responsibility transfers by 12 April 2026[77]. This is essential for the transition to the new responsibility system. While reforms are underway, staffing shortages still exist in some Member States and need to be addressed[78].

The Commission is in close dialogue with Member States to ensure that the conditions are in place so that transfers can take place towards all Member States in accordance with the new rules as soon as they will start applying. The Commission will assess by 12 July, and again by 15 October, whether the current practices with regard to applicable transfer rules have not been remedied, and thereby constitute systemic shortcomings that could result in serious negative consequences for the functioning of the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation.

The Commission will finalise the delegated acts planned under the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation to facilitate the application of the rules on unaccompanied minors and dependent persons, including determining responsibility based on these criteria. The upgrade of DubliNet continues on the basis of the concept note developed by eu-LISA and the Commission and agreed by the Member States in June 2024. Eu-LISA is also developing the technical and operational details of communication between Member States via DubliNet.

3.7. BUILDING BLOCK 7 – MAKING SOLIDARITY WORK

In November 2025, the first annual migration management cycle was launched with the adoption of the European Annual Asylum and Migration Report, assessing the migratory situation in the Union and the Member States for the period July 2024 – June 2025, and identifying potential trends and developments for the coming year[79]. Based on the findings of

[76] 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).
[77] All Member States but Hungary have for now notified designated locations to the EUAA.
[78] Croatia, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Romania.
[79] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025DC0795.

the report, the Commission adopted an implementing decision[80] determining Member States under migratory pressure (Cyprus, Greece, Italy and Spain), at risk of migratory pressure (Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia. Germany, Ireland, France, Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland and Finland) and facing a significant migratory situation (Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Croatia, Austria and Poland). Following the Commission proposal for a Council implementing act establishing the solidarity pool, the Council convened the High-Level EU Solidarity Forum where Member States pledged their solidarity contributions[81]. The Council adopted its implementing decision on the establishment of the Solidarity Pool for 2026 on 19 December 2025, with a reference number of 21 000 relocations or other forms of solidarity support or EUR 420 million financial contributions[82]. The EU Solidarity Coordinator is currently preparing the operationalisation of the Pool under the Solidarity Platform[83].

The new EUAA Practical Guide on the Solidarity Mechanism, adopted in March 2026[84], provides guidance on the practical implementation of the solidarity mechanism by national authorities, especially for relocations. A second part will focus on responsibility offsets.

Key challenges and next steps

Work is advancing well on the implementation of the first Solidarity Pool, with exchanges taking places between the Commission and all Member States. The Technical-Level EU Solidarity Forum will be convened after the Pact starts to fully apply in June, to take forward the operationalisation of the solidarity mechanism based on the Solidarity Coordinator's proposal for a balanced and fair distribution of the Pool among benefitting Member States. To prepare this, in-depth exchanges are currently taking place with all Member States in the Solidarity Platform and bilaterally with both benefitting and contributing Member States. Moreover, the Commission will continue working to ensure that all Member States contribute to the Solidarity Pool. It remains key for the implementation of the Solidarity Pool that there are no systemic shortcomings in the benefitting Member States with regard to the rules on responsibility under the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation that could result in serious negative consequences for the functioning of the system. If such shortcomings are detected, contributing Member States will not be required to implement their pledges.

Following the launch of the first annual migration management cycle, data quality and completeness improved. However, more work is needed for the next cycle[85]. Member States should ensure that quantitative and qualitative data and information are reported in a timely manner to the relevant EU bodies, in particular to the EUAA, Frontex and Eurostat, as set out

[80] 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.
[81] All Member States pledged except Hungary and Slovakia.
[82] Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2025/2642 of 19 December 2025 on the establishment of the Annual Solidarity Pool for 2026.
[83] A meeting of the Solidarity Platform took place on 23 March 2026 to prepare the operationalisation of the Solidarity Pool for 2026, once the Pact enters into application.
[84] https://www.euaa.europa.eu/publications/practical-guide-solidarity-mechanism-part-i.
[85] Based on the first Annual Report, significant data gaps persisted across several Member States, notably in the areas of return, asylum appeal decisions, reception systems, unaccompanied minors and illegal stay. Incomplete or missing data were reported for one or more indicators by Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Portugal, Romania and Spain.

in the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation. Ongoing work to set up a new data flow model should ensure a single set of official European statistics on international protection[86]. This would allow the Commission to further improve the quality and comprehensiveness of its assessment when determining the migratory situation in the Member States.

3.8. BUILDING BLOCK 8 - PREPAREDNESS AND CONTINGENCY PLANNING

Recent geopolitical developments, such as those relating to the Middle East, further underline the importance of preparedness and contingency planning. As indicated by Leaders in the European Council Conclusions of March 2026[87], the EU is ready to fully mobilise its diplomatic, legal, operational and financial tools to prevent uncontrolled migratory movements to the EU and preserve security in Europe. The Commission and relevant EU agencies are closely monitoring the developments and the possible implications on migratory flows, including through early warning, forecasting and scenario modelling, to ensure situational awareness and support timely and coordinated responses where needed. The Commission, together with the EUAA and Frontex, is engaging with Member States in dedicated exchanges to discuss possible scenarios and contingency planning at the external borders[88] and in the areas of asylum and reception in the event of increased migratory flows and identify areas where additional actions may be required to enhance preparedness.

All Member States but one[89] submitted for now their national contingency plans to the EUAA. Most of these plans reflect the core elements of the template developed by the EUAA; however, the plans vary in their levels of completeness on asylum, reception and unaccompanied minors[90]. As follow-up to the previous state of play on the implementation of the Pact, some Member States are already in the process of revising or complementing their contingency plans[91]. A few Member States[92] also reported recent or planned testing and simulation exercises of their various contingency plans.

Key challenges and next steps

Overall, the level of preparedness in the Union and in the Member States is benefitting from the implementation of the new provisions of the Pact. The Commission and the EUAA continue to work with the Member States to identify good practices and areas in the plans to be

[86] A joint EUAA-EUROSTAT project is put in place to streamline statistics on international protection. A working arrangement is to be signed between the two entities by mid-2026 and the new data flow will be applicable from reference month July 2025.

[87] https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/lwhk3itd/en-20260319-european-council-conclusions.pdf.

[88] Frontex has updated the Handbook on Contingency Planning for Border Management and Return, a practical reference designed to help activate, test and refine national contingency plans for high migratory influxes and other crises at the EU's external borders.

[89] Hungary.

[90] E.g. Spain, Estonia, France, Latvia, the Netherlands and Austria. As part of the Commission's dialogues with Member States, some of these Member States, as well as Poland, indicated that they are in the process or plan to revise and complement their contingency plans. Other Member States indicated that, due to ongoing legislative and administrative preparations for the entry into application of the Pact, revisions of the contingency plans are not yet planned, or are foreseen only at a later stage, but measures could nonetheless be deployed in case of necessity.

[91] E.g. the Netherlands and Estonia.

[92] E.g. Malta, Portugal, Spain, France and Italy reported recent or planned exercise activities related to their respective contingency plans.

strengthened, including under the Migration Preparedness and Crisis Blueprint. Notably, areas such as asylum procedures and the appointment and caseload of representatives for unaccompanied minors would benefit from improvement and further clarity. Furthermore, it is in some cases unclear whether preparedness measures (e.g. logistics and procurement preparation, stockpiling, training or buffer reception capacity) are already in place or planned. Identifying measurable thresholds and indicators for different scenarios and response measures would enhance the effectiveness of the contingency plans. Well-defined activation and review procedures would also contribute to their robustness.

The Commission invites the Member States to ensure their plans are, where necessary, completed, refined or updated, adopted and notified to the EUAA once revised. In addition, Member States are encouraged to ensure appropriate capacity-building measures and to plan activities to test the contingency plans (e.g. simulations, tabletop exercises or other stress-testing mechanisms). Member States will also need to notify the Commission and the EUAA if the contingency plan is activated as from 12 June 2026, or earlier if the Member State has transposed and started applying the Reception Conditions Directive prior to that date[93].

The EUAA provides technical support to Member States through structured feedback and targeted activities, upon request. So far, feedback on national contingency plans has been provided to nine Member States[94]. The EUAA started developing a Practical Guide on Contingency Planning methodology with the support and contribution of the Commission, Member States and Frontex, expected to be finalised in 2027. The Practical Guide aims to provide Member States with structured, practical and operational guidance to support the revision of their national contingency plans. Contingency planning on reception and asylum will be assessed as part of the regular EUAA multiannual monitoring programme. Full-scale monitoring will start as of June 2026 following the adoption of the revised monitoring methodology, with three Member States, Slovakia, Malta and Bulgaria, being monitored in the first year and on average five Member States in the following ones.

3.9. BUILDING BLOCK 9 - NEW SAFEGUARDS FOR APPLICANTS FOR INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION AND VULNERABLE PERSONS, AND INCREASED MONITORING OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

Work is advancing on the arrangements for legal counselling and monitoring of fundamental rights. Almost all Member States are close to concluding arrangements to ensure free legal counselling is provided at the administrative stage of the procedure, although a third of the Member States still need to finalise the necessary legislative changes[95]. Operationally, a majority of Member States have chosen to work with different external partners, independent

[93] On 30 July 2025, joint indications on how to notify the Commission and the EUAA on the activation and deactivation of the plan in the cases foreseen in the Reception Conditions Directive were circulated to the Member States.
[94] As of 27 March, feedback has been provided to Austria, Cyprus, Lithuania, Estonia, the Netherlands, Malta, Luxembourg, Poland and Sweden.
[95] This includes Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Malta, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

agencies and/or lawyers/legal aid associations or NGOs[96], either by continuing with existing arrangements or introducing new ones. All but a few Member States are also concluding their arrangements in relation to the mechanism for monitoring fundamental rights in the border procedures, often with the national ombudspersons[97].

Following its earlier guidance[98], FRA has developed a practical monitoring tool setting out a common methodology for the monitoring mechanisms. In April 2026, FRA also provided awareness raising workshops to monitoring staff in number of Member States[99] and published a report[100] with lessons learned from FRA's operational work in Greece and Italy to inform the implementation of the Pact in line with the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. The EUAA finalised issued a practical guide on free legal counselling in the administrative stage of the asylum procedure[101].

In relation to children, Member States are focusing on ensuring appropriate reception conditions and reviewing age assessment procedures to adapt to the new rules introduced by the Asylum Procedure Regulation, in particular the obligation to apply a multi-disciplinary approach involving panels of qualified professionals[102]. The specific provisions and concrete safeguards related to children, including unaccompanied minors, were last discussed at the annual meeting of the dedicated expert group in November 2025 and at the Asylum Working Party in March 2026. The EUAA training module on children in the asylum process was revised in October 2025. The Practical Guide on Age Assessment[103] provides comprehensive guidance to support authorities and professionals involved in age assessment when there is uncertainty about the claimed age. EUAA also published a Report on Age Assessment Practices in March 2026[104]. The report maps age assessment practices, methods, safeguards and roles in the EU+ in 2025, covering also planned or ongoing adjustments in view of Pact implementation and identifies trends and promising practices. The Practical Guide on the Best

[96] Belgium (NGOs and the Immigration Office), Bulgaria (National Legal Aid Bureau), Croatia (NGOs), Czechia (law firm), France (NGOs), Ireland (legal aid board), Italy (UNHCR), Lithuania (State guaranteed), Luxembourg, Poland (NGOs), Portugal (Lawyers Association), Romania (NGOs), Slovakia (NGOs), Austria, (BBU – government body independent from asylum agency), Slovenia (public tender under preparation for external staff to provide legal assistance), Sweden (NGOs), Estonia (procurement ongoing) and Latvia. Germany, Finland, Malta and the Netherlands are relying on internal arrangements inside the government bodies also responsible for procedures.

[97] Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, France (along with the *Contrôleur général des lieux de privation de liberté*), Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain. Other Member States chose different arrangements: Ireland (Chief Inspector for Asylum and Border Procedures), Germany (*Nationale Stelle zur Verhütung von Folte*r & *Deutsches Institut fuer Menschenrechte*), the Netherlands (Institute for Human Rights and Dutch Inspectorate) and Croatia (governmental office for human rights). Belgium, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Malta and Sweden have not yet concluded arrangements.

[98] https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2024/border-rights-monitoring.

[99] Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania. In Romania the practical monitoring tool was tested at a screening simulation exercise.

[100] https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2026/operationalising-pact-migration-and-asylum-hotspot.

[101] https://www.euaa.europa.eu/publications/practical-guide-free-legal-counselling.

[102] Few Member States have a multi-disciplinary procedure in place: Austria, France, Germany, Croatia, Lithuania, Italy, Norway, Portugal and Sweden.

[103] https://www.euaa.europa.eu/publications/practical-guide-age-assessment-0.

[104] EUAA: Age Assessment Practices in EU+ Countries, https://www.euaa.europa.eu/publications/age-assessment-practices-eu-countries-0.

Interests of the Child was adopted by the EUAA Management Board in March[105]. FRA is updating the 2014 Handbook on children deprived of parental care[106].

To identify vulnerabilities, the EUAA revised the training modules on victims of gender-based violence in November 2025 and on applicants with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, and sex characteristics in February 2026. The new screening toolbox also includes an annex on conducting preliminary vulnerability checks, for which tailor-made training has been made available[107]. In relation to returns, Frontex, in collaboration with other stakeholders, is developing a mobile application on working with vulnerable groups, including also a vulnerability check.

Key challenges and next steps

Member States that have not yet defined arrangements for providing free legal counselling at the administrative stage[108] or the mechanism for monitoring compliance with fundamental rights in the border procedure[109] should do so as soon as possible. All Member States should address any outstanding issues relating to ensuring adequate financing, staffing and training, and define clear lines of responsibility and accountability (where this role is divided among multiple actors, a clear lead actor should be designated). Following its December 2024 guidance on establishing the Mechanism, FRA is now preparing methodological guidance to support the work of future monitors.

Member States should increase efforts to reinforce the guardianship system to ensure timely appointment and an adequate number of representatives available to be appointed for unaccompanied minors, the respect of children's rights, including access to education and healthcare, and safeguards for children in relation to reception, the border procedures and detention. For many Member States' systems, this requires reaching out to different actors and authorities, such as child welfare services. Similarly, Member States must step up preparations to ensure that they can carry out a multi-disciplinary approach to age assessment, including at the borders.

3.10. BUILDING BLOCK 10 - RESETTLEMENT, INCLUSION AND INTEGRATION

The two-year Union Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission Plan for 2026–2027, adopted by the Council on 18 December 2025[110], sets out the Union's first biennial cycle of coordinated resettlement and humanitarian admission efforts. Based on voluntary pledges from nine Member States, the Plan provides for 10 430 safe and legal pathways for persons in need of international protection over the two-year period, increasing cooperation with key third

[105] https://www.euaa.europa.eu/publications/practical-guide-best-interests-child, EUAA: Practical guide on the best interests of the child in the framework of international protection.
[106] European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights: Guardianship for children deprived of parental care. https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/guardianship-children-deprived-parental-care
[107] EUAA training: Vulnerability in the Pact on Migration and Asylum. https://www.euaa.europa.eu/training-catalogue/vulnerability-pact-migration-and-asylum
[108] Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Estonia, Latvia and Italy.
[109] Belgium, Hungary, Italy and Malta.
[110] Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2025/2628 of 18 December 2025 on the Union Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission Plan (2026-2027).

countries hosting displaced populations. The Plan, prepared in consultation with the High-Level Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission Committee, taking into account Member States' contributions and the UNHCR's global needs assessment, entered into force on 11 January 2026. In support of the implementation of the Plan, the EUAA has finalised the update to its training modules on complementary pathways and on the selection phase in the context of resettlement and humanitarian admission.

Legal pathways with third countries also contribute to effective migration management and the integration of migrants. The Visa Strategy[111] and the Recommendation for Attracting Talent for Innovation[112] from January 2026 set out a new framework for visa policy and put forward recommendations to make the Union more attractive to highly skilled professionals, students, researchers and innovative entrepreneurs to support the Union's competitiveness in a global context. The Commission also launched the Talent for Innovation Attraction Platform with a first meeting organised in March 2026 and a second one envisaged for June 2026.

In their National Implementation Plans, several Member States signalled the need to invest more in or support further integration measures, including language and civic integration, and support to labour market integration through facilitating the recognition of qualifications and the validation of skills. This work is ongoing, with various Member States mapping and assessing further needs as well as rolling out reforms[113]. Since November 2025, one more Member State has adopted a wider integration strategy[114]. Some Member States concentrate their efforts on specific aspects of integration, such as language courses or civic training or are developing integration-specific IT-tools[115]. The European Integration Network meeting of December 2025 focused on challenges and good practices for ensuring that migrants facing multiple barriers to labour market integration (e.g. applicants and beneficiaries of international protection, migrant women with vulnerabilities) can access employment and employment-related training quickly and sustainably.

Key challenges and next steps

The focus is now on the implementation of the Union Resettlement and Humanitarian Plan 2026-2027. The Commission stands ready to support Member States in their efforts. The High-Level Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission Committee will be convened after summer 2026 to exchange with Member States and relevant stakeholders on the implementation of the EU Plan.

Integration support measures still vary greatly in comprehensiveness and quality across Member States. Several Member States need to increase their efforts to cover gaps in access to

[111] Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on EU visa policy strategy, COM(2026) 43 final.
[112] Commission Recommendation (EU) 2026/311 of 29 January 2026 on attracting talent for innovation.
[113] Austria, Belgium, Estonia, Czechia and Latvia work on adapting existing systems and adding new components. Portugal is undertaking a systemic reform.
[114] Cyprus. As of March 2026, all Member States except Hungary and Romania have adopted strategies for migrant integration at national or regional level. Italy is currently preparing an update of its National Integration Plan.
[115] E.g. Czechia and Estonia.

free integration measures[116], including language and civic orientation courses, which are not yet available in all Member States; support to labour market integration, including employment-related training and services offered by employment offices; and access to procedures for the recognition of qualifications and validation of skills. It is important to move from sporadic, project-based actions to structural integration support[117] and follow-up to commitments with clear action[118]. To increase the effectiveness of their support, Member States should promote a smooth transition between early integration measures for applicants for international protection and measures for beneficiaries. They should also take measures adapted to specific needs and remove obstacles for women and children or specific groups such as persons with mental health related needs[119]. The Commission stands ready to further guide Member States in making the best use of EU integration funds such as AMIF, the European Social Fund+ (ESF+) and the European Regional Development Fund, including through the exchange of good practices[120].

4. CONCLUSION

The progress already achieved by Member States, EU institutions and Agencies, and other stakeholders during the transition period leading to the full application of the Pact in June is significant. Yet, inevitably for a task of such a scale and complex nature involving many actors both internally and externally, challenges remain. We are at a stage where Member States need to advance on national reforms and prioritise setting up the new procedures and infrastructure needed for the Pact to function. In particular, the new Eurodac, screening and the mandatory border procedures, measures to apply the new responsibility rules and the necessary adjustments to national legislation must be in place in June. It is now the time to address the remaining gaps. The Commission and the EU agencies remain committed to helping Member States in implementing the new framework successfully and on time.

With a view to ensuring the balance between solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility set out in the Pact, the Commission is also working towards a balanced distribution of the Solidarity Pool and its operationalisation as soon as possible after the Pact starts to fully apply. Effective functioning of the solidarity mechanism is indispensable for the Pact to function. All Member States must contribute to the solidarity mechanism in accordance with the obligations set by the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation, and the Commission will take the necessary measures to ensure the respect of these obligations by all Member States. Furthermore, the Commission will assess in July and again in October whether the current practices regarding applicable transfer rules persist and thereby constitute systemic shortcomings that could result in serious negative consequences for the functioning of the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation.

[116] E.g. Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, Slovakia and Poland.
[117] E.g. Croatia, Greece, Hungary, Slovakia and Romania.
[118] E.g. Bulgaria.
[119] See https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52025SC0162.
[120] This could be done through the ESF+ Community of Practice on Migrant Integration. https://socialinnovationplus.eu/cop/migrant-integration/.

Beyond June, the work will continue for Member States, the Commission and the EU agencies to jointly ensure that all the elements of the new European migration system are in place and effective. The Commission will launch its second Annual Migration Cycle in October 2026, including the Annual Asylum and Migration Report, which will provide a comprehensive overview of the asylum and migration situation in the EU and asses the migratory situation Member States are facing.