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NOTE

From: Commission Services

To: Delegations

Subject: Operationalization of the Pact – Action plans for strengthening
comprehensive migration partnerships with priority countries of origin and
transit
- Draft Action Plan responding to the events in Afghanistan

Delegations will find attached a draft Action Plan for responding to the events in Afghanistan prepared by the Commission Services.

Draft Action Plan responding to the events in Afghanistan

Overall EU Objectives – Lines to Take
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EU remains committed to support the people of Afghanistan and is looking into options to address the needs inside Afghanistan, which were already significant before the current events. • The seriousness of the evolving situation requires a strong and concerted response, from the EU and the international community, coordinating all dimensions of this situation (humanitarian, foreign policy, development, migration, security). • The EU will support efforts to prevent any further destabilisation and insecurity in the country and the broader region, and to preserve as much as possible the gains of the last 20 years, particularly in the rights of women and girls, and other human rights. • Engagement with Afghan power-holders will depend on the fulfilment of the five benchmarks agreed by the EU Ministers of Foreign Affairs at an informal meeting (Gymnich) on 3 September 2021. • The EU will pursue efforts to ensure that the Taliban regime ceases all ties and practices with international terrorism and that the situation in Afghanistan does not lead to new security threats. • The EU is determined to continue humanitarian assistance in accordance with the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. The EU will continue to coordinate with international partners, in particular the UN and its agencies to ensure that humanitarian aid can reach the vulnerable populations in Afghanistan and in neighbouring countries. • Work is underway on developing a regional political platform of cooperation with Afghanistan’s neighbours agreed by EU Ministers of Foreign Affairs to address, among other issues, management of migration flows from Afghanistan, prevention of the spread of terrorism, and fight against organised crime, including narcotics. • Building on its existing support for programmes linked to the forced displacement of Afghans in Afghanistan and in neighbouring countries (particularly Iran and Pakistan), the EU will work closely with the countries in the region and transit countries hosting large numbers of migrants and refugees, to reinforce their capacities to provide protection, dignified and safe reception conditions, and sustainable livelihoods. • The EU will also cooperate with those countries to prevent irregular migration from the region, reinforce border management capacity and prevent smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings. • Future EU development assistance is conditional on the respect of fundamental values and human rights. The rights of women and children are of particular relevance. The EU will coordinate closely on this with its global partners, including through the UNDP and the World Bank. • As first chair of the Core Group of the Support Platform of the Solution Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) in 2021, the EU will work to further boost Europe’s role in international coordination of humanitarian and development activities. • Efforts to evacuate former EU local employees and their dependents, as well as specific cases of Afghans at risk, such as e.g. Human Rights Defenders, who are particularly vulnerable to Taliban reprisals, will need to continue as conditions allow. This will require coordination within the EU and with other partners and the granting of humanitarian visas. Regarding the specific case of Human Rights Defenders, the EU is mobilising funds from human rights programmes to provide assistance to individuals at risk.
Goals for managing migration and addressing forced displacement – Lines to Take
<p>Protection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EU will work with international partners on durable solutions for Afghan refugees and addressing the needs of communities in countries where large numbers of them are hosted, including through support from EU agencies. • Through coordination of Member States’ voluntary resettlement supported from the EU budget, the

EU will play its part in the global resettlement efforts, with a focus on the most vulnerable, such as women, children and human rights defenders.

- As chair of the Core Group of the SSAR Platform in 2021, the EU will seek to strengthen the international response to the Afghan refugee situation and to stimulate further political, financial and material commitments.
- The EU will seek to step up engagement with and support to the countries in Afghanistan's neighbourhood to ensure that the needs of the long term displaced continue being addressed and that potential newly displaced people can receive safe and dignified reception conditions and protection in the region.

Humanitarian assistance

- The EU will strive to continue to provide humanitarian assistance to those most affected by the situation in Afghanistan, including emergency healthcare, shelter, food assistance, access to clean water and sanitation facilities, education in emergencies, and protection support, with a particular focus on women and children.
- President von der Leyen pledged an increased package of €200 million in humanitarian assistance for 2021. Access and security for humanitarian actors, male and female, will be essential throughout the country. *[The contribution pledged by the EU and Member States at the UN High-level meeting on Afghanistan in Geneva on 13 September amounted to € xxx - TBC].*

Development support

- The EU is coordinating closely with all development partners and will take into account the UN response, with UNHCR announcing a first regional response multi-agency plan on 27 August for €250 million until the end of year.
- The EU will continue to provide development support aimed at strengthening resilience and self-reliance of Afghan refugees and their host communities in neighbouring countries, including access to basic services, opportunities to work and support to host communities. EU and Member states will step up ongoing activities in Iran and Pakistan as required with a view to supporting both long-term refugees and potential newly displaced persons, taking into account the needs of their host communities.
- The EU and Member States will extend their support linked to the Afghan displacement crisis to Central Asian countries, should this be required.

Regional/Whole of route approach:

- The EU will continue to address the risks of irregular migration and migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings and to effectively protect and secure the EU's external borders, including through the support of EU Agencies Frontex and Europol.
- The EU will prioritise targeted information campaigns to inform potential migrants on the risks of embarking on dangerous irregular journeys, and on legal pathways to the EU.
- The EU is committed to strengthening co-operation with and support to countries along the migration route from Afghanistan towards the EU with a view to preventing irregular movements, by strengthening programmes on capacity building notably on integrated border management on supporting protections systems and on preventing smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings.
- The EU will continue policy dialogue and support with/for Pakistan and Iran on migration. The EU will further engage with **Pakistan** under the Strategic Engagement Plan and a possible future Comprehensive Migration Dialogue. With **Iran**, depending on the evolution of the wider political environment, the EU will work towards a first meeting of the dialogue on migration under the Framework for a Comprehensive Dialogue on Migration and Refugee Issues.
- The EU should continue dialogue with **Turkey** on migration under the EU-Turkey statement. The Commission has proposed to allocate further €3 billion until 2024 in addition to the €6 billion already contracted under the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey and the €535 million committed in 2021, to further support refugees in Turkey and its migration management capacity, including at its Eastern borders.

<p>Returns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the current context, the situation in Afghanistan is clearly not safe and it will not be safe for the foreseeable future. The implementation of the Joint Declaration on Migration Cooperation has been suspended. • As part of a comprehensive approach and ongoing dialogues on migration, the use of third-country national readmission clauses in the readmission agreements concluded (or being negotiated) by the EU with certain transit countries should be used where the legal requirements are met.
<p>Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political engagement: The existing framework for dialogue has included the EU-Afghanistan Cooperation Agreement on Partnership and Development (CAPD, 2017), the EU Strategy on Afghanistan (2017), and the Joint Declaration on Migration Cooperation (JDMC, 2021), but under current circumstances these agreements are on hold until it is clear if and how the EU can engage with the new administration. • Political engagement with key partners in the region and along transit routes will be key recognising the role they already play in hosting many millions of Afghans, and underlining the importance the EU attaches, and support it can provide, for border management, and actions to counter smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings. • Deploying crisis management tools: The EU will use all its available tools to closely monitor and respond to developments on the ground, with regular stocktaking to further improve its crisis management capacity, building upon the tools already developed, including through IPCR and Blueprint Network meetings in order to steer action. The EU will encourage exchange of information and intelligence, in line with national competences, also with third countries, and the sharing of regular threat assessments. • Funding activities from EU budget under Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020: €255 million in development support for migration and forced displacement at national and regional level (Iran and Pakistan), including for reintegration, community development, access to basic services, livelihoods and market opportunities, border management, policy support, fight against human trafficking and smuggling of migrants; €1.4 billion Afghanistan MIP, including to address root causes of irregular migration. Most major development actions under the previous MFF are currently on hold, and discussions are ongoing with implementing partners on how to recalibrate activities in Afghanistan in light of the current events. Some funds already allocated for Afghanistan could potentially be redirected to provide basic services at a regional level. • Future funding from EU budget under Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027: Preliminary work under the new Neighbourhood and Development Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) included an indicative country allocation of around €1 billion for Afghanistan. Work to take this forward through the country Multiannual Indicative Programme 2021-2027 is now on hold, as the situation on the ground evolves. A regional programme under the Asia/Pacific Multiannual Indicative Programme is also foreseen, which will address migration, forced displacement, and mobility with particular attention to the regional dimension of the Afghan displacement situation. Within that framework, ongoing regional support to UNHCR in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran has been extended until April 2022. Activities foreseen at the regional level for 2022 are being anticipated. Development assistance will be strictly conditioned on a commitment to human rights, democracy and the rule of law. • Member States' bilateral engagement: see Annex. The Commission has presented to Member States a proposal for a Team Europe Initiative on the regional dimension of Afghan displacement in the Asia/Pacific targeting Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, and Central Asian countries that may be affected. The revised proposal taking into consideration the current events was presented to Member States on 2 September, and a number have expressed interest in participating. • Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP) on the Silk route (tbc): The possibility to develop RDPP for the Silk Route countries will be explored, including to address repercussions of events in Afghanistan, responding to an interest expressed by Member States and following the

implementation of similar programmes in North Africa and the Horn of Africa.

Timelines

Next Steps by EU and by Member States

IMMEDIATE

- Continued evacuation of EU citizens, EU local employees and their dependents, as well as specific cases of Afghans at risk.
- Secure possibility of humanitarian corridors into Afghanistan, safe movement of humanitarian workers and access for delivery of humanitarian assistance, in particularly food aid where required.
- In close consultation with UNHCR, as well as the members of the SSAR Core Group, revise the 2021 workplan prioritising humanitarian funding and coordinating efforts, to strengthen engagement between donors and countries of the region hosting displaced Afghan populations, and to support IDPs in Afghanistan. A calendar of Core Group activities for the rest of 2021 is under revision.
- Step up monitoring to ensure optimal crisis preparedness.
- Pursue appropriate outreach with key partners in the region and on transit routes.
- Conduct targeted information campaigns to combat narratives used by smugglers, including in the online environment.

SHORT TERM

- **Resettlement:** An EU High-Level Resettlement Forum will be organised shortly to discuss resettlement and humanitarian admission of Afghan refugees in the light of new developments. Coordination with international partners will also be pursued. The Commission aims to secure €300 million from the EU budget to support resettlements from priority countries 2021/2022.
- Consider extension of EU role as chair of the Core Group of the Solution Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) Support Platform in 2022.
- **Coordination group on migration under NDICI-Global Europe.** First meeting October (tbc) to exchange information and views to ensure coordination and coherence between the use of NDICI – Global Europe supported migration-related actions and Member States’ migration-related actions should consider impact of events in Afghanistan
- **NDICI-Global Europe:** Funding decisions resulting from events in Afghanistan to feature in second high-level geopolitical dialogue with the European Parliament (October 2021); Comitology procedure (October/November); Adoption of Multiannual Indicative Programmes (November/December).
- **Operationalise plans for Team Europe Initiative in the region** targeting Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran with the possibility to expand activities to interested Central Asian countries.
- **Deploy a Frontex Liaison Officer to Pakistan with a mandate for Afghanistan, (tbc).** The Commission has provided a positive opinion for a Frontex Liaison Officer to work alongside the European Migration Liaison Officer (EMLO) already posted in Pakistan with a regional mandate. Discussions in Pakistan are ongoing.
- **Regional Dialogue – Silk Route Partnership for Migration - the Budapest Process** (next Senior Officials Meeting in November 2021).

ANNEX I

EU cooperation and areas of engagement under the New Pact

i. Asylum/ international protection

Under the MFF 2014-2020, Afghanistan and Afghans on the move in Pakistan and Iran are the main beneficiaries (€255 million) of two regional measures addressing challenges of migration and forced displacement in Asia and the Middle East. Humanitarian assistance is addressing humanitarian needs of returnees from Iran. In Pakistan humanitarian funding is aimed at contributing to the resilience of Afghan refugees through protection services, health and education in emergencies. In Iran, humanitarian funding supports Afghan refugees regardless of their registration status, with a specific attention on the most vulnerable, including the undocumented. Sectors of assistance include protection, food assistance, health and psycho-social support, education in emergency and disaster preparedness

ii. Addressing root causes

- Ongoing bilateral cooperation under the MFF 2014-2020 (€1.4 billion) focusing on: peace, stability democracy; sustainable growth and jobs; and basic social services (education and health); transparent and accountable governance, as well as economic growth and livelihood opportunities - all contributing to addressing the root causes of irregular migration and are important aspects preventing forced displacement and also pull factors for return.
- Ongoing regional cooperation under the MFF 2014-2020 (€255 million) covers support to displaced Afghans and their host communities in Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan. The Afghan displacement situation will continue to be addressed in the Regional MIP for Asia-Pacific, where Migration and mobility is proposed as one of three priority areas. Planned activities range from support through policy dialogue to protection, access to basic services and livelihoods, jobs creation, skills development and access to market opportunities, as well as Migration management including labour migration and mobility. Support will be extended to Central Asian countries, should this be requested. Efforts to include Afghanistan in regional programmes for Central Asia will also be enhanced in the programming cycle 2021-2027.
- Cooperation with Afghanistan will be subject to its continued commitment to democracy, human rights, gender equality and transparent and accountable governance.

iii. Migration governance and management

- Continuing programmes in preparation, following a cross-border or regional approach as relevant and based on Afghanistan's needs.
- Frontex does not currently implement border related activities in Afghanistan and negotiations on a working arrangement with the country are not foreseen. The Commission assessed positively the possibility of deploying a Liaison Officer to Pakistan with a mandate for Afghanistan.
- Regional projects on capacity building for integrated border management (funded by the Commission under MFF 2014-2020 and implemented by International Centre for Migration Policy Development – ICMPD):
 - Silk Routes' Countries Integrated Border Management project (€12 million)
 - Border Management in Central Asia and Afghanistan project (BOMCA 10 – additional €4 million for Afghanistan) – a possible role for Frontex to implement limited activities is foreseen.

Awareness-raising Campaigns

- Regional Project on Improving Migration Management in the Silk Routes Countries (funded by the Commission under MFF 2014-2020 – €12 million, implemented by ICMPD). An information centre for potential migrants – the Migrant Resource Centre (MRC) has been operating since July 2018 to empower Afghans to make informed decisions on migration by sensitising them to the risks, dangers and consequences of irregular emigration, and alert them to signs of exploitation and ways of protecting themselves against migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings.
- Info Migrants portal: aims at countering misinformation on the risks of irregular migration, funded by the Commission under MFF 2014-2020.
- Exploring further support for future information campaigns on the risks of irregular migration and the benefits of legal migration for 2022 (2021-2027 programming period).

Counter-Smuggling and Trafficking in Human Beings

- Ongoing Silk Route Project aiming to enhance law enforcement cooperation to address migrant smuggling (funded by the Commission – €1.3 million, implemented by a consortium of Member States led by Austria, participants Hungary and Bulgaria) – until 31 December 2021.
- Ongoing regional action on the fight against trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling (law enforcement agencies, such as border police and customs, funded by the Commission – implemented by UNODC/GLOACT- €12 million).

iv. Returns, readmission, reintegration

- With the understanding that it is Member States who implement decisions on return, under the current circumstances, the situation in Afghanistan is clearly not safe and it will not be safe for some time. The implementation of the Joint Declaration on Migration Cooperation is suspended.
- Ongoing Commission funded project entitled “Reintegration and Development Assistance in Afghanistan” (RADA – €50 million, implemented by IOM) supporting sustainable reintegration of returnees within their communities. IOM supports individual returnees from the EU Member States and non-EU countries (i.e. Turkey), as well as Afghan households in communities of high return in Afghanistan.

v. Legal migration and mobility

- Under the last call for proposals for pilot projects on labour migration launched on 28 February 2020 there were no applications related to Afghanistan. Although the priority area for the moment is north Africa, the geographical scope of future Talent Partnerships should be kept wide and opportunities should be sought to include key partner countries from Asia

ANNEX II

Member States' bilateral engagement

Austria – bilateral cooperation on humanitarian aid, reintegration, development cooperation including on institution building for border and migration management (since 2017 EUR 11,5 million humanitarian aid); awareness raising and information campaigns; interested to consider developing an RDPP along the Silk Route, capacity building on migration management and protection; creating protection in the region - in the process of establishing a partnership with Afghanistan on capacity-building in the area of rule of law; fight against smuggling and irregular migration (cross-border crime) - contact with UNODC-Afghanistan to invite a delegation to Austria. Cooperation within the framework of "RESTART" (currently third edition). On reintegration of returnees, Austria is working closely with IOM.

Belgium – over the past 10 years, Belgium has financed humanitarian aid programmes in Afghanistan and the region, among which specific programmes addressing refugees and internally displaced persons.

Bulgaria – bilateral law enforcement cooperation, trainings for police professionals from Iraq and Afghanistan (financed from the national Development Support instrument – currently on hold due to the pandemic), a technical meeting hosted by Bulgaria within the Budapest Process on dismantling migrant smuggling networks with Afghanistan's participation.

Czech Republic – de facto budget support through government based development and security related trust funds - CZK 35-40 million per year since 2012 with existing cooperation to be continued at least until 2024 (ARTF – with focus on agriculture and rural development, LOTFA – focusing on assistance to civil police forces, ANATF – assistance to Afghan national armed forces); assistance to refugees and returnees from Iran and Pakistan to Afghanistan in close long-term cooperation with IOM and UNHCR with annual contribution CZK 10 – 15 million.

Denmark – support under the Peace and Stabilization Programme for Afghanistan; On-going Regions of Origin Initiative focused on Afghanistan and Afghan refugees in the region (access to protection and durable solutions for refugees, rejected asylum-seekers, returnees, IDPs and host communities by improving living conditions, supporting the safe and dignified return and assisting re-integration, self-reliance and local integration in the country of asylum); on-going Regions of Origin Afghanistan Country Programme that supports a) Afghan government's initiative entitled "Citizens' Charter Afghanistan Project" to support local needs, including needs of returnees (financed and monitored by the World Bank with a focus on community institutions, prioritizing grants for local infrastructure and services) and b) the UN Habitat's project "Sustainable Human Settlements in Urban Areas to Support Reintegration in Afghanistan (SHURA)", which aims to enable returnees and protracted IDPs in urban areas to become self-reliant, resilient and productive citizens; provision of direct assistance to NGOs addressing needs and opportunities among vulnerable people in communities most affected by displacement through cooperation with the Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees (focusing on water supply and sanitation), the Norwegian Refugee Council (facilitating shelter solutions for reintegration of displaced Afghans) and Save the Children (focusing on building resilient communities). In addition, Denmark Support the Capacity-Building Program for Reintegration and Social Protection, which is a transitional programme, centered on providing individualized support to each eligible returnee from Denmark so that each beneficiary achieves a safe transition into Afghan society.

Germany – support to Afghan Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR) primarily in the implementation of the Afghan National Diaspora Engagement Policy (ANDEP) on the global Afghan diaspora; voluntary returns [support to voluntary returnees through REAG/GARP programme (travel and transport costs, travel agency assistance, financial start-up assistance and, in individual cases assumption of medical costs), StarthilfePlus” (financial start-up assistance), ERRIN and ERIN Action Plan (supplementary reintegration project to ERRIN for voluntary returnees 01/08/19 – 30/09/21 via two projects: business start-up and training and career for women)]; support to integrated durable solutions and legal assistance for displacement – affected communities (shelter upgrades, access to durable shelters and basic services including WASH and solar energy; rehabilitation of community WASH infrastructure and services; livelihood and food production support services; information, counselling, and legal assistance as well as trainings for duty-bearers on HLP/LCD; support to various small-/medium scale activities implemented via NGOs with IDPs/returnees as primary target group, including trainings on conflict resolution, mediation, anti-violence, as well as access to basic education; support actions related to integration of refugees from Pakistan and Iran in Northern Afghanistan (IDP/IDPII) with GIZ being project partner; funding projects related to awareness raising campaigns [(Afghanistan Migrant Communications 2021 -2022” by The Seefar Foundation, a project that targets Afghans (Eastern Provinces), considering to migrate irregularly and “Voluntary Returnees as Messenger III” implemented by IOM, which addresses communities in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan].

Hungary – enhanced engagement via Budapest Process.

Italy – carrying out a project in favour of Afghan refugees located in Iran (EUR 905,000) with collaboration of the Ministries of Health and Education of Iran and Afghanistan aiming at a) strengthening the maternity ward of a Tehran hospital, b) strengthening the capacity of the Department of Obstetrics of the Medical University of Kabul through the Afghan-Iranian academic collaboration and c) providing training in obstetrics to about fifty Afghan refugees in Iran, so as to facilitate their return to the country and the prospects of reintegration into society.

Netherlands – bilateral cooperation is limited in size and form and emphasizes awareness raising, return and reintegration.

Slovakia – ongoing bilateral cooperation on education projects (the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava (STU) assists the universities of Kabul and Herat with capacity building and the establishment of study fields in the area of chemical and food technologies, inorganic technologies and metallurgy. Through financial and material assistance, the Slovak Republic has also long supported Abdulhafiz Jalili Primary School in Mazar-e-Sharif).

Sweden – When it comes to long-term assistance, Afghanistan is the largest bilateral recipient of Swedish development aid. Recently adopted a new development cooperation strategy 2021–2024, which aims to contribute to Afghanistan’s development and stability. With regard to recent and long-term migration projects, Sweden provides support through many initiatives, including the European Return and Reintegration Network – Sustainable Reintegration in Afghanistan (ERRIN-SRA - post-arrival business training for returnees and awareness campaigns among local communities in Afghanistan and operational staff in Europe). Last year, Sweden deployed a European Return Liaison Officer (EURLO) to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in order to support all EU Member States and Schengen Associated Countries to organise returns to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. In cooperation with IOM and as a part of the Swedish voluntary return-program, the Swedish Migration Agency also implemented a Cash support-project in Afghanistan.

Finland – Annual development and humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan amounts to 30 MEUR. Finland’s financial support is directed mainly to improving provision of basic services, strengthening institutions, and to improving human rights, including the rights of women and girls. Finland’s support to projects and programme also benefit either directly or indirectly forcibly displaced and returnees and facilitate reintegration, e.g. job creation through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund.

Slovenia – Currently two Afghan citizens are receiving scholarships for doctoral studies in civil engineering at the University of Ljubljana. Slovenian Police participated in the Coalition mission in Afghanistan with the aim to train and educate local police officers. One police officer was deployed in Afghanistan for a period of six months. The mission was organised in the framework of the Strategy for Slovenian Cooperation in International Peacekeeping Operations and Missions, which introduced a comprehensive approach towards cooperation in the field of humanitarian, development, military and police assistance.

Estonia – The Estonian NGO Mondo carries out a project “Coping with health crisis: Expanding health education and services to girls and women in Northern and Eastern Afghanistan” (EUR 210 960). The project continues Mondo's development cooperation activities in the health education sector in Afghanistan and also targets returnees and IDP girls and women in Nangarhar province. The project results in improved awareness on reproductive health, sanitation and hygiene among girls and women in four provinces of Northern and Eastern Afghanistan.

The Estonian School of Diplomacy carries out the Project Capacity building of the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, in total EUR 56 700. This project aims to contribute toward enhancing the quality of the higher education provided by the Afghan Diplomatic Institute (ADI) by supporting the ADI and Kabul University joint MA program.

Estonian Tallinn University carries out a master study at Tallinn University on the programme „Open Societies Technologies“ for Kabul university and IT Ministry employees to raise their professionalism“), (EUR 283 863). The objective of the project is for ten students to take part of the Tallinn University School of Digital Technologies master programme Open Society and thereby acquire a higher scientific qualification in master degree.

ANNEX III

Key figures and trends
Irregular migration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illegal border crossing of Afghan nationals to the EU: 10 140 in 2020 (34 154 in 2019) of which 4 603 in Hungary, 3 873 in Greece, 921 in Italy. In the first half of 2021: 4 007 illegal border crossings (5 441 in the same period of 2020). • Illegal stay of Afghan nationals in the EU 34 125 in 2020 (56 200 in 2019) of which 7 825 in Germany, 6 220 in Greece, 5 945 in Hungary
Return <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persons ordered to leave¹: 18 425 in 2020 (29 630 in 2019) of which 5 235 in Croatia, 3 555 in Greece, 1 855 in Sweden. In the first quarter of 2021: 3 625² • Return rate³: 6% in 2020 (8% in 2019) • Highest return in 2020: 83% in Romania, 29% in the Netherlands, 19% in Germany • Lowest return rate in 2020: 0% in Hungary, Italy, Slovenia⁴
Asylum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First time asylum applications: 44 285 in 2020 (54 300 in 2019) of which 11 100 in Greece, 10 000 in France, 9 900 in Germany; 19 305 in January-May 2021 (16 505 in the same period of 2020) of which 5 750 in Germany, 4 435 in France, 2 155 in Romania • First Instance asylum decisions: 41 765 in 2020 (34 035 in 2019); 11 350 in the first quarter of 2021 (9 055 in the same period of 2020) • EU recognition rate: 51% in 2020 (46% in 2019); 54% in the first quarter of 2021 • EU recognition rate incl. humanitarian protection: 58% in 2020 (54% in 2019); 62% in the first quarter of 2021
Legal migration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First time residence permits: 49 635 in 2019 of which 25 297 in Germany, 6 718 in Sweden, 6 191 in Austria– NO available data for 2020 • Total valid residence permits: 287 531 at the end of 2019 of which 162 342 in Germany, 48 527 in Sweden, 20 241 in France– NO available data for 2020
Visas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short stay visa applications to the EU: 353 in 2020 (1,676 in 2019) • Share of Multiple Entry Visas (MEVs): 38% in 2020 (37.4% in 2019). Top three MSs of MEV issuance in 2020: France (44), Italy (33), the Netherlands (12) • Visa refusal rate : 1.7% 2020 (22.6% in 2019)
Forced displacement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registered Afghan refugees hosted by Pakistan and Iran: According to UNHCR, 2.2 million of which approximately 780 000 in Iran and 1.4 million in Pakistan. In addition, some 1.5 million undocumented Afghans are estimated to be living in Pakistan and 2 to 3 million in Iran (undocumented and passport holders)⁵. • Afghan Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Afghanistan: since 2012 close to 5 million due to reasons related to security, conflicts and climate change (source IOM) • Pakistani Refugees in Afghanistan: 72 192 in 2020⁶

¹ Without DK data in 2020.

² Without DK, CY and FI in 2021Q1

³ Without DK data in 2020.

⁴ 0% also in CZ, EE, IE, LT, LU, PL and SK but with less than 100 return orders issued.

⁵ <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/afghanistan-situation-regional-refugee-preparedness-and-response-plan-summary-and>

⁶ <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=5DrvBN>