

# **EUROPE** MONTHLY REPORT



## TRENDS AND KEY FIGURES

Between 01 January 2017 and 30 September 2017, 138,300 refugees and migrants arrived by sea and land to Europe (Greece, Italy, Spain and Cyprus only, including arrivals to the Canary Islands and by land to Spain). Arrivals by sea in this period comprised of 18% children, 13% women and 70% men. The reduced number of refugees and migrants entering Europe via the Central Mediterranean route since mid-July continued with just under 6,000 people arriving by sea in Italy in September, a 65% decrease compared to September 2016. While the increased arrivals of refugees and migrants via the Western Mediterranean route to Spain this year continued with a 8% increase in September compared to September last year, arrival numbers in September fell 36% compared to August. In Greece, the number of refugees and migrants arriving by sea reached its highest levels since March 2016 with 4,900 people arriving in September, a 60% increase compared to September last year and a 36% increase compared to August.

As of 30 September, over 104,800 refugees and migrants arrived in Italy by sea in 2017 (dropped 64% compared to same period in 2016), including over 13,500 unaccompanied and separated children (UASC), 13% of sea arrivals. While arrivals from Libya in Italy have reduced, the proportion of arrivals by sea in Italy from other countries have increased. The primary nationalities that had arrived by sea in Italy in 2017 as of the end of September were Nigerians, Guineans, Bangladeshis, Ivorians and Malians.

As of the end of September, 17,400 refugees and migrants have arrived in Spain by land and sea, a 91% increase compared to the same period last Mediterranean

138,300

2,655 estimated dead/missing in 2017

Greece

**Italy** 

20,000

104,800

**Spain**<sup>2</sup> 17,400

**Cyprus** 

2 657 3 213 Jul

New asylum applications in EU countries 3

**407,000** applications in 2017 1,236,300 applications in 2016 1,325,500 applications in 2015

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> data.unhcr.org/mediterranean as of 30 September 2017. <sup>2</sup> Includes land and sea arrivals in the Mediterranean and to the Canary Islands <sup>3</sup> Source: Eurostats. Partial data for January to September 2017. All data is provisional and last updated 04 October 2017.



29,698

Relocated in total 4

from Greece 20.410 (30% of 66,400)

from **Italy** (23% of 39,600)

<sup>4</sup> Source: European Commission as of 04 October 2017.

year, but modest numbers compared to arrivals in recent years. Over 70% of arrivals in Spain this year have arrived by sea but the number of arrivals via the land borders has also increased 35% compared to the same period last year. The number of sea arrivals to Spain (12,400), is 128% higher than the same period last year.

As of 30 September 2017, over 20,000 refugees and migrants had reached Greek shores in 2017, compared to 166,800 arriving in the same period last year (a 88% reduction). Arrivals mainly originate from the Syrian Arab Republic (40%) and Iraq (20%). Most arrivals in September have been to Lesvos (49%), followed by Samos (20%), Chios (12%), and the South Dodecanese islands (13%). In addition to the sea arrivals, an estimated 3,300 people have arrived this year at the Evros Greek-Turkish land border, based on provisional data as of 30 September 2017 with over 1,000 crossing via this route in September. The 2,850 UASC who are present in Greece are from Pakistan (40%) Afghanistan (19%) (EKKA statistics as of 30 September).

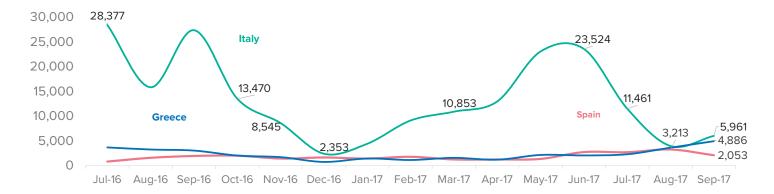
According to Turkish authorities, the Turkish Coast Guard (TCG) intercepted or rescued 3,408 people during September,

contributing to a total of 15,471 in 2017 of persons mostly headed to Greece. Since the beginning of the year, some 20,695 persons were intercepted by Land Forces at the Greek and Bulgarian land borders, with over 18,000 (or 91%) intercepted at the Greek land border.

Between 01-13 September, three vessels carrying refugees or migrants attempted to cross from Turkey to Romania, consisting over 300 individuals, the majority of whom were Iragis. In addition, over 800 individuals, who were attempting to cross to Romania from Turkey, were intercepted by Turkish Coast Guards during September in five incidents.

Asylum Applications: According to Eurostat data as of 30 September over 400,000 asylum applications have been lodged throughout the EU+ countries in 2017. When comparing the total figures of applications received in previous years (1,236,360 total in 2016 and 1,325,565 in 2015) this is an estimated drop of around 67% so far in 2017. By the end of June 2017 there were over 958,000 pending applications. The most common countries of asylum between January and August 2017 were Germany (122,800), Italy (83,100), France (50,800), Greece

#### MEDITERRANEAN ARRIVALS - JANUARY to SEPTEMBER 2017



## OTHER SITUATIONS IN EUROPE

### Turkey 3.5 millio Refugees and asylum seekers 5 Syrian Arab Republic 3,208,131 Afghanistan 145,409 Iraq 140,168 32.345 Iran <sup>5</sup> Source: UNHCR as of 30 Sep 2017

Ukraine 1.6 million Internally Displaced Persons 6 Refugees: 3,253 Asylum seekers: 8 5,049 5.463 Stateless persons: 9 <sup>6</sup> Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine as of August 2017 <sup>7</sup> UNHCR, State Migration Service of Ukraine. Includes persons granted complementary protection as of June 2017 8 UNHCR as of August 2017 <sup>9</sup> State Migration Service of Ukraine *as of June 2017* 



(27,100) and the United Kingdom (18,800). Syrian, Afghani and Iraqi nationals are among the most common nationalities of asylum applications, with Syrians representing 15% of new asylum applications.

Dead and missing: Dead and missing: As of 30 September, an estimated 2,655 people have died or gone missing while trying to reach Europe by sea via the three Mediterranean routes in 2017, compared to 3,543 in the same period in 2016, a 25% decrease. Over 94% of deaths this year have been as refugees and migrants have tried to cross from North Africa to Italy. Deaths in September included many aboard a boat that departed the Libyan coast in mid-September before running out of fuel. The boat remained adrift for several days before capsizing. Around 40 survivors were ultimately rescued or swam to the Libyan shore, but some 90 persons are thought to have drowned. Off the coast of Greece, a shipwreck on 28 September northwest of the island of Kastelorizo claimed the life of a 9-year-old Syrian girl.

**Relocation:** According to the <u>European Commission (EC)</u>, 29,698 asylum-seekers have been relocated from Greece

and Italy as of 04 October 2017, including 20,410 from Greece (out of 66,400 originally foreseen, 30 per cent of the total) and 9,288 from Italy (out of 39,600 originally foreseen, 23 per cent of the total) respectively.

**Resettlement:** To date in 2017, 16,535 persons have been resettled to Europe. On 11 September, UNHCR issued a global call for an additional 40,000 resettlement places to be made available for refugees located in 15 priority countries<sup>10</sup> along the Central Mediterranean route.

**Returns:** In September, 29 people were returned from Greece to Turkey on the basis of the <u>EU-Turkey Statement</u>. The total number of people returned in accordance with the EU-Turkey Statement is 1,336 as of 30 September 2017.

1,336

#### Returns EU-Turkey statement 11

<sup>11</sup> Source: Ministry of Citizen Protection, Greece as of 30 September 2017.

### KEY DEVELOPMENTS

In Greece, increased arrivals coupled with the limited number of reception places at the Reception and Identification Centres (RIC) have led to the further deterioration of reception conditions on the **Greek** islands and added pressure to processing capacity, particularly in Lesvos, Samos and Chios. In early September, UNHCR <u>drew attention</u> to the deteriorating situation, highlighting the threat of violence, self-harm and sexual assault and calling for more security.

In Lesvos RIC, increased numbers, plus the lack of sufficient police presence, along with the reduction of UNHCR and NGO staff, as part of the transfer of the response to national authorities in July has created an environment of increased protection risks, heightening also the risk for sexual and gender based violence (SGBV). UNHCR provides information, counseling and referral to appropriate services on the islands for SGBV survivors and works through its partner IRC on SGBV prevention and referral in Kara Tepe, Lesvos as well as through the accommodation partners for rented housing. The increase in population size has also raised pressure on the WASH facilities, leading to unhygienic conditions. As a way to alleviate the overcrowded conditions, UNHCR in cooperation with the relevant authorities, coordinates the transfer of those eligible to depart from the islands to sites and rented housing in the mainland and Crete, where they can continue their asylum application.

The reception conditions on the islands demand the urgent deployment of additional national services staff, especially in the areas of health, psychosocial support and protection of unaccompanied children. The increase in arrivals and inadequate reception conditions on the islands have harboured further discontent amongst some local residents. On 25 September, UNHCR's accommodation partner staff in Samos were physically attacked following a council meeting in Paleokastro where issues related to the expansion of UNHCR's Accommodation Scheme were discussed. UNHCR had issued a press release

locally, condemning the violent attack and calling for the local residents of Samos to continue with the spirit of solidarity and support towards the refugees and migrants hosted on the island and the people who work to assist them. To alleviate the situation on the islands, UNHCR has intensified the transfer of eligible people from the islands to UNHCR's accommodation on the mainland and Crete (over 13,000 since 1 June 2016) to continue their asylum procedures there.

While the situation on the island has significantly deteriorated, the situation on the mainland is slowly improving. Temporary sites, including warehouses, are gradually closing, with five more expected to close by the end of November 2017. In turn, an increasing number of people are accommodated in rented housing.

The implementation of the accommodation project, which is funded by the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) and aims to create 22,000 accommodation places in Greece by the end of 2017, continues. At present, 17,661 places have been created of which over 13,342 are actually occupied. In September 2017, 32,416 people of concern, corresponding to roughly 14,630 households, benefitted from cash assistance in Greece provided directly by UNHCR through the Greek Cash Alliance (GCA) card.

On 22 September, the Greek Council of State rejected the applications of two Syrians which challenged the legality of the EU Turkey Statement and the application of the safe third country concept for Turkey.

In **Italy**, UNHCR has continued to follow-up on the situation of the refugees who were evicted from an occupied building in Rome in late August. UNHCR has been meeting with the refugees, with a view of collecting information on their needs and facilitating their dialogue with the relevant authorities.



## KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN EUROPE



Includes Serbia and Kosovo (S/RES/1244 (1999))

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

On 11 September, the National Ombudsperson for Children invited UNHCR, as well as other NGOs, professional associations and international organisations focusing on the rights of children, to contribute to a discussion on how to best implement the law providing voluntary guardian rosters. Both UNHCR and EASO will provide inputs and support in this regard. UNHCR, in particular, will provide support in relation to delivering training to voluntary guardians.

On 26 September, Italy's first National Integration Plan was approved by the inter-institutional body coordinating asylum-related activities (Tavolo nazionale di coordinamento). The integration plan includes provisions relating to language training, housing, healthcare, and employment, amongst others. UNHCR welcomes this relevant development and has been advocating for the inclusion in relevant legislation of a provision requesting the approval of the Plan. A number of UNHCR's recommendations have been incorporated in the Plan.

On 13 September, the Deputy Head of the Directorate of Migration in **Bulgaria** delivered the first official decision granting statelessness person status to a 28-year-old man of Armenian origin from the former Soviet Union. Bulgaria has officially started conducting Statelessness Determination procedure since July 2017, following the adoption of the Regulation for the Implementation of the Law for the Foreigners on 23 June 2017, according to which the Migration Directorate is the competent body to receive applications. UNHCR has been closely involved in this process for the last several years

and has advocated for accession, the subsequent legislative changes and the establishment of the Statelessness Determination procedure. UNHCR will continue to support the authorities throughout the procedure.

In **Serbia**, over 150 refugee children aged 7-14 are now attending local primary schools countrywide. At least another 250 are expected to join in the coming weeks. Children from all 18 governmental centres except those in three transit centres will attend local public schools. UNHCR continued to support the efforts for school enrolment by the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration (SCRM), Ministry of Education, UNICEF and others by transporting children to medical exams/vaccinations, through donation of clothes and non-food items to children, as well as furniture and equipment to schools.

On 29 September, UNHCR and OSCE held a strategic regional coordination meeting in Belgrade to define their joint future roles and responsibilities in the Regional Housing Programme (RHP) beyond 2017 in all four partner countries.

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, the presidents of the State and entity level parliamentary committees working on human rights, refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) met with Ministers between 11 and 12 September for the first in a series of planned thematic discussions focused on removing obstacles to addressing protracted displacement. UNHCR supported the event together with the OSCE.

UNHCR 20-October-2017



During a visit to **Hungary** on 12 September, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi expressed concern that asylum-seekers, including children, were being kept in Hungary's "transit zones", which are in effect detention centres, during their asylum process. He <u>appealed</u> to the Hungarian government to ease constraints so that asylum-seekers can have their cases heard in line with Hungary's international commitments and highlighted access to asylum. During his visit, High Commissioner Grandi visited one of the "transit zones" where he met unaccompanied children, including from Syria and Afghanistan. "The refugees I met are simply in search of safety in Europe and now are extremely anxious about their future," he reported.

On 08 September in **Austria** UNHCR presented the recommendations in UNHCR's <u>Better Protecting Refugees in the EU and Globally</u> paper at a panel discussion on asylum and migration with the Federal Defense Minister, who presented the ministry's vision for asylum centres outside the EU, including transfers of irregular arrivals. Separately, on 22 September UNHCR, UNICEF and IOM submitted a letter to the Ministry of Justice and other relevant ministries expressing joint concerns relating to the current guardianship system for UASC. The letter highlights the importance of guardians being available directly upon arrival and offers support in respect of administrative and legislative mechanisms.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi, accompanied by the Regional Bureau for Europe Director, Pascale Moreau, visited **Sweden** to participate in two panel discussions during a high level conference on security, organized by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), in the presence of the Swedish royal family. Topics covered by the High Commissioner included the dynamics of forced displacement and the way forward for refugee protection. During his mission, the High Commissioner also met with the Prime Minister, the new Migration Minister, and the President of the Swedish Red Cross.

During the last half of September, the Government in **Ukraine** adopted two amendments targeting assistance and implementation of services for internally displaced persons (IDPs). On 16 September, amendments adopted by the Government on targeted assistance and the verification of payments to IDPs entered into force. On 20 September, the Government adopted amendments to several resolutions in order to ensure the implementation of a previously adopted law on access to housing solutions for IDPs. This will give employed IDPs with no property in government-controlled areas of Ukraine access to the government's housing assistance programme irrespective of their place of residence registration. Despite the amendments, programme implementation depends on available funding in the 2018 state budget.



Watch @SIPRIorg Conference opening w/ UNHCR @refugeeschief talk on dynamics of forced displacement & the way forward bit.ly/2fgxW7g



2 UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR NorthernEurope, Swedish MFA and 6 others

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## EU RELATED DEVELOPMENTS

On 06 September, in a key <u>judgement</u>, the Court of Justice of the EU rejected the request brought by Slovakia and Hungary against one of the relocation Decisions. UNHCR welcomed the judgement in a <u>news</u> comment.

On 14 September, a Justice and Home Affairs Council took place in Brussels, Belgium. The <u>agenda</u> included the fight against terrorism and migration. On migration, discussions focused on the Central Mediterranean, as well as on the return and the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement.

The EU Relocation scheme officially ended on 26 September 2017, however, UNHCR has <u>urged</u> EU Member States to continue to promptly relocate all asylum-seekers eligible under the scheme, and for the scheme to continue pending the adoption of reforms to the Dublin system. The EC <u>Communication on the Delivery of the European Agenda on Migration</u> of 27 September 2017 stated that relocation should continue to ensure that

all the remaining eligible persons are relocated from both Italy and Greece swiftly. It also states that the EU should continue to show solidarity with Italy and Greece and the Commission stands ready to provide financial support.

On 27 September, the European Commission released a Migration and Asylum <u>package</u>, with a) a Communication on the delivery of the European Agenda on Migration; b) a Recommendation on ensuring effective legal pathways to Europe; and c) a Recommendation establishing a common Return Handbook.

On 28 September, a Strategic Committee on Immigration, Frontiers and Asylum (SCIFA) took place in Brussels, Belgium. The meeting gathered high-level participants from EU Member States to discuss matters of strategic interest. UNHCR participated in the meeting in the session on resettlement and emphasized that resettlement is a tool for protection and a durable solution, not a migration management tool.

UNHCR 20-October-2017



## REFUGEE STORIES

### Children of Luhansk start new school year hoping for peace

By Oksana Grytsenko and Anastasia Vlasova in Velyka Verhunka, Ukraine - 25 September 2017

Seven-year-old Lera Holovko was all smiles as she entered school on September 1, ready to start the first lesson of her life. Lera woke up early to get to a school in Velyka Verhunka, a suburb of Luhansk, because the school in her village of Krasny Yar had been destroyed by shelling back in 2014. The conflict in Ukraine has cost more than 10,000 lives and damaged at least 700 schools, including 55 since the beginning of 2017. Since opening its office in Luhansk in autumn 2015, UNHCR has delivered shelter repair materials to more than 1,500 families, rehabilitated 88 houses and, in 2017 alone, helped to repair 89 schools. Lera's school in Velyka Verhunka is one of them.



## Summer camp in Armenia helps displaced youth settle in

By Anahit Hayrapetyan in Lake Sevan, Armenia - 18 September 2017



The stunning Lake Sevan in Armenia became the setting for a summer camp that helped 40 displaced young people from Syria, Iraq and Nagorno-Karabakh find confidence, opportunities and friends in their new home. Set up by YMCA NGO Vardenis to promote social and cultural integration, the two-week-long camp also worked to improve the emotional and psychological well being of displaced and refugee youth. Activities included theatre, music, art, team-building and sports. "I made many friends at camp," says Aram, a boy displaced from the landlocked mountainous region of Nagorno-Karabakh, where conflict escalated in April 2016. "We were similar and different at the same time - similar with our stories of having lost our homes, and different with our language, traditions and culture." At the end of the camp, the children received certificates of acknowledgement from UNHCR and awards for creativity and talent, intelligence and enthusiasm, mobilisation and leadership skills.

## Former refugee from South Sudan to address Brussels education gathering

By Helen Womack – 27 September 2017

A former refugee from South Sudan was the keynote speaker at a presentation in Brussels of an initiative by United World Colleges (UWC) to extend access to education for refugees. The UWC Refugee Initiative, supported by UNHCR, aims to provide 100 scholarships a year to enable refugee and internally displaced students to attend one of 17 UWC colleges worldwide teaching the International Baccalaureate. Among others, refugees from Syria, Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone, Colombia, Yemen or Afghanistan will benefit from the UWC Refugee Initiative. The education of these young refugees is crucial to the peaceful and sustainable development of the countries that have welcomed them, and to their homes when they are able to return





## KEY DOCUMENTS FROM THE WEB PORTAL



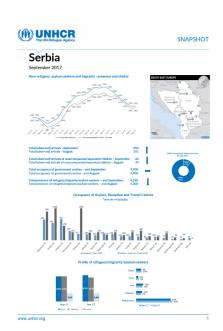
### Refugee and Migrant Children in Europe

Mid year overview of of the trends - January to June 2017



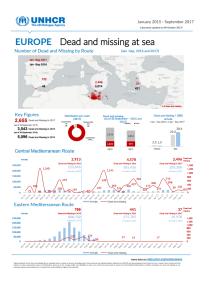
Greece fact sheet September 2017

Greece fact sheet covering September 2017 with key figures on refugees and migrants



Serbia Snapshot September 2017

September snapshot - overview of the new arrivals to Serbia and presence of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants



### Dead and missing at sea

Number of dead and missing by route - September 2017



Resettlement to Europe - July 2017

Overview of resettlement submissions to Europe between January and July 2017.



RMRP Interagency Funding snaphot- 13 Oct 2017

2017 Regional Refugee And Migrant Response Plan For Europe Funding snapshot as of 13-Oct-17

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## ELINE OVERVIEW

#### 20 March 2016

Start of the EU-Turkey Statement .

#### 03 April 2016

Greece implemented a new law highlighting the creation of the Reception and Identification Service, restructuring of the Asylum Service, the creation of an Appeals' Authority, and the creation of new Regional Asylum Offices.

#### 04 April 2016

First returns take place under the EU-Turkey Statement: 202 people returned to Turkey from Greece.

#### 06 April 2016

The European Commission (EC) published Communication on reforms to Common European Asylum System (CEAS).

#### 07 April 2016

Turkish government amended the Temporary Protection Regulation regarding access to temporary protection for Syrian nationals who irregularly travel to Europe and who are returned to Turkey from Greek islands.

#### 27 April 2016

Turkey amended labour legislation to grant those holding subsidiary protection work permits.

#### 04 May 2016

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The EC released Proposals to reform the CEAS, with proposals to reform the Dublin Regulation, the EURODAC system and to turn the European Asylum Support Office into an European Union Agency for Asylum.

#### 18 May 2016

The Turkish President approved the legislative framework regarding the EU-Turkey Statement with regards to the readmission of people from Greece.

#### 13 July 2016

The EC released:

- Its proposals to <u>recast</u> the Asylum Procedures Directive, recast the Qualification Directive and <u>amend</u> the Reception Conditions Directive.
- Its proposal on an EU Resettlement Framework.

#### 20 September 2016

Leader's Summit on Refugees was held in New York bringing together countries and international organisations, and announced pledges to increase efforts in support of refugees

#### 06 October 2016

The EC officially launched the European Border and Coast Guard (EBCG) Agency.

#### 05 December 2016

UNHCR presented a paper to the EU to call for stronger EU action on refugees.

#### 08 December 2016

The EC released a <u>recommendation</u> to Member States to gradually resume Dublin transfers to Greece under certain circumstances.

#### 31 December 2016

362,376 refugees and migrants reached Europe in 2016 and 5,096 went dead or missing.

#### 19 January 2017

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UNHCR, IOM and 72 other partners launched the Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan to help respond to the situation of refugees and migrants in Europe in 2017.

#### 02 February 2017

<u>UNHCR</u> and <u>IOM</u> released a joint <u>statement</u> on addressing migration and refugee movements along the Central Mediterranean route.

Informal European Council meeting. EU Leaders adopt the Malta Declaration on "addressing the Central Mediterranean route".

#### 14 February 2017

UNHCR calls for concrete measures to be adopted by the Greek authorities, the EU and its Member States to ensure wwadequate care, support and solutions for the women, men and children seeking asylum in Greece.

### 07 March 2017

UNHCR is deeply concerned at a new law which has been voted at the Hungarian Parliament and which foresees the mandatory detention of all asylum seekers, including many children, for the entire length of the asylum procedure.

#### 09-10 March 2017

European Council Migration on the agen-

#### 25 March 2017

Informal European Council meeting. EU Leaders adopt the Rome Declaration. Migration and asylum included in the "safe and secure Europe" overarching area of work.

#### 10 April 2017

UNHCR urges suspension of transfers of asylum-seekers to Hungary under the Dublin Regulation.

#### 12 April 2017

The EC releases the communication on the protection of children in migration.

UNICEF and UNHCR welcome EU policy to protect migrant and refugee children.

### 12 May 2017

On 12 May, Frontex' Consultative Forum on Fundamental Rights, which UNHCR is co-chairing, published its **Annual Report** 

#### 18 May 2017

On 18 May, a Justice and Home Affairs Council took place in Brussels. Among other issues, EU Home Affairs Ministers discussed the reform of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), focusing on the issues of responsibility and solidarity.

#### 13 June 2017

The European Commission (EC) released i) the 13th Report on Relocation and Resettlement; ii) the 6th Report on the EU-Turkey Statement; iii) the 4th Report on the Migration Partnership Framework and iv) the 4th Report on the European Border and Coast

#### 15 June 2017

The EC launched infringement procedures regarding the relocation programme against Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic.

#### 01 July 2017

Estonia took over the rotating Presidency of the Council of the EU for six months (Ju-ly-December 2017). UNHCR released updated recommendations to the Estonian Presidency.

#### 04 July 2017

the EC released an Action Plan on Measures to Support Italy, Reduce Pressure along the Central Medi-terranean and Increase Solidarity.

#### 26 July 2017

The EC <u>moved to the next</u> <u>step</u> of infringements procedures against Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic for non-compliance with the relocation decisions

#### 26 September 2017

Marks the two-year plan of the EU

2017

2016