



Common Project :

“Migration and Asylum - On the way to a joint European response”

**Publication and Series of three Expert Roundtables
on the New Pact on Migration and Asylum
2023**

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1. Background of the Common Project

Since the peak of the migration crisis in 2015/2016, the Commission and the Council of the EU have sought in vain for a compromise between the Member States in order to manage migration in an effective and humane way and to rebalance the responsibilities and burdens in this area more fairly among the Member States. In September 2020, the European Commission presented the “New pact on migration and asylum”, a new EU framework aimed at helping to manage and normalise migration for the long term and which addresses the interdependence between Member States’ policies and decisions. However, despite intensive efforts on the part of the European Institutions and certain Member States, only few steps have been made and no breakthrough has been achieved until now. The main responsibilities for this policy area still lie with the Member States, which have very different approaches and expectations. Even if progress has been made at strategic level, implementation is still lacking. During the Corona pandemic, the topic moved more and more into the background and the number of illegal border crossings decreased. But with the Russian war in the Ukraine and other worldwide crises, illegal border crossings are on the rise again. Due to persistent bottlenecks at all levels of procedures, Member States and in particular local entities find it more and more difficult to cope with the increasing pressure; and new tensions are arising also at political and diplomatic level.

Against this background, the project would like to build on the successful dialogue series from 2021 and bring together experts and stakeholders from different sectors and countries in order to exchange views and find a common ground for further discussion on the topic.

1.2. Key Questions

How open are Member States to making progress in this area, given the multiple current challenges? What would be the consequence of not succeeding in a common approach on migration and asylum policy? Which concepts might succeed in bringing the Member States back to the negotiating table and in building mutual trust? Which obstacles might arise in achieving a basic political agreement? How EU institutions and EU policy can further support Member States? What potentialities emerge from the new elements agreed upon the New Pact on Migration and Asylum and already in place (such as the New mandate of the European Agency for Asylum or the EU Return coordinator)?

2. OBJECTIVE, PURPOSE & EXPECTED RESULTS

2.1. Objectives

- Promoting and facilitating political dialogue (in-person and virtual) among relevant actors on questions related to the new pact of migration and asylum.
- Facilitating an open and inclusive exchange, bringing different perspectives around the table
- Raising awareness and improving expertise and knowledge of relevant political actors on current developments, positions and challenges in the negotiation process of the new pact of migration and asylum.

2.2. Expected results

- The critical reflexion and debate of relevant target groups on issues related to the new pact of migration and asylum is encouraged.
- The mutual understanding of actors relevant to European politics for other positions has improved.
- The exchange between relevant political actors has improved.
- A group of experts meeting on a regular basis has been further consolidated.
- Experts and policy makers will make use of the findings in their work.
- Experts and a broader public are informed about important findings, results and positions of the expert roundtables on the new pact of migration and asylum.

2.3. Target group

Relevant actors from different levels (national, regional, local) and European Member such as:

- Politicians
- Decision-makers from national and European legislative and executive bodies
- Academic experts
- Diplomats
- Socio-political organisations / NGOs

2.4. Topics:

I New Pact on Migration and Asylum - New structures and unresolved (old) challenges

- Taking stock of progress and current key challenges
- How can the implementation of accepted measures be driven forward?

- How can we reach more understanding and solidarity between Member States?
- How can the new European Agency for Asylum support the Member States?
- The role of Frontex under the reinforced mandate

II The Internal Dimension – Finding a balance between responsibility and solidarity

- Maintaining Dublin? - How to safeguard Schengen and channel secondary movements
- How can coordination between Member States become more efficient? Where should agencies replace national approaches and ensure common standards?
- Local dimension: Overloading of reception facilities and insufficient return of rejected asylum candidates.
- Public perception of irregular migrants and the impact on national politics: Potential for internal political divisions and "successful" election issue for right-wing populists
- Vulnerability of irregular migrants and risk of criminalisation or radicalisation
- Legal migration and integration
- Effects of irregular migration on labour markets and social security systems

III The External Dimension

- How can we lift the burden/pressure from first income countries? How to further implement the Action Plan on the Central Mediterranean?
- How to cooperate more efficiently with non-EU countries and how can return be organised more effectively - Incentives or conditionality?
- How to prevent the use of illegal migration as an external means of political pressure (see Turkey, Belarus)
- Keyword “pull factors”: Negotiating the balance between human rights and deterrence
- Shall the EU launch a new search and rescue mission?
- Focus on procedures for legal channels for labour migration