



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MIGRATION AND HOME AFFAIRS

Task Force Migration Management

SENSITIVE*:
Solidarity Platform ‘Pact’

SOLIDARITY PLATFORM ‘PACT’
MONDAY 27 JUNE 2022
OPERATIONAL CONCLUSIONS

The first meeting of the **Solidarity Platform on the Declaration on a Voluntary Solidarity Mechanism** (Solidarity Platform ‘Pact’) took place on Monday, 27 June. The Declaration was proposed by the French EU Presidency “in the framework of the first stage of the gradual approach of the European Pact on Migration and Asylum and in parallel with the adoption of general approaches or negotiation mandates for the “screening” and Eurodac regulations” in the JHA Council of 9-10 June and COREPER of 15 June 2022.

The Solidarity Platform meeting was chaired by DG HOME’s Director-General, Ms Pariat, in cooperation with the French Presidency, Mr Regnault de la Mothe. Meeting participants included representatives from EU Member States, Schengen Associated States, EU Agencies (EUAA, FRONTEX), and Council General Secretariat.

This first meeting served to recall the main purpose of the new Solidarity Platform forum and to start operationalising some elements of the Declaration on the Voluntary Solidarity Mechanism.

The **European Commission** welcomed the Declaration and solidarity shown by the EU Member States and Schengen Associated States and underlined the importance to achieve the objective of 10 000 relocations and to rapidly clarify the other forms of contributions, as well as to identify the most efficient way to operationalize the voluntary solidarity mechanism. DG HOME stressed that this Platform will serve as a coordination forum, in which the participating states can discuss and exchange while keeping the lead on the operationalization of the mechanism.

The French Presidency welcomed the creation of this dedicated Platform and expressed appreciation to the EU Member States and Schengen Associated States who committed to supporting the Declaration. The Presidency also underlined the need to deliver concrete results and alleviate the pressure from certain Member States. As of 1 July, the upcoming Czech Presidency together with the Commission will continue to facilitate the effective and swift implementation of this mechanism.

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The Commission gave an **overview of main migratory routes** (presentation enclosed) underlining that the pressure still remains with the MED5 countries with an increase of arrivals through the all Mediterranean routes - including Atlantic - (1/3 more than last year), as well as forecast. The need to monitor the situation in and arrivals from the Western Balkans, Belarus and Ukraine was also underlined. The Commission stressed that it is highly likely for arrivals to continue to increase during the summer through all Mediterranean routes, with this estimation not taking into account the war in Ukraine and its effects, such as a possible upcoming food crisis.

The French Presidency recalled that 7 200 relocation pledges were announced during the last JHA Council (10 June), which, following bilateral contacts of the Presidency, have increased to 8 300. The Presidency underlined the importance of financial contributions, which need to be concretised, and recalled the opportunity for those Member States not having subscribed yet to the Declaration to do so in this meeting, or at a later stage.

During the tour de table on the **state of play on solidarity pledges and other type of contributions**, the following pledges and contributions were announced:

- **FR** pledged for 3 000 relocations, underlining the will to launch the mechanism rapidly through bilateral exchanges. The first relocations could be organized in July depending on security missions on the ground. FR recalled the recent experience in Moldova, noting that efficiency relies on smooth cooperation on the ground with all actors involved, operationalization with Member States, and the support of the Commission and EUAA.
- **DE** pledged for 3 500 relocations and stated that the process should build on previous SOPs which should be further simplified (more stringent and efficient). DE also announced financial contributions in the context of the ISBIG program in order to provide support for housing of refugees in Greece.
- **PT** pledged for 350 relocations and welcomed the support of the Commission.
- **IE** pledged for 350 relocations, of which 80 can be completed during the course of 2022.
- **LU** pledged for an initial 50 relocations, recalling though its currently overstretched reception system.
- **LT** pledged for 20 relocations, which could be increased depending on the situation. The implementation could start in the beginning of 2023.
- **RO** informed that it is facing difficulties due to arrivals of displaced people from Ukraine and pledged for 285 relocations upon condition that no financial penalties or compensations will apply, if the relocation beneficiaries cannot be relocated to RO. RO also requested for its pledges not to be made public.
- **BG** pledged for 179 relocations and informed that 50 persons can be relocated as of 1 August. BG stated that this number can increase if the situation allows but it is currently under pressure due to arrivals from Ukraine.
- **HR** reiterated its pledge for 60 relocations.
- **AT** is currently not in a position to support the Declaration, however signalled its readiness to contribute with external dimension measures.
- **BE** is willing to support the Declaration with relocations. Nevertheless, the pledges could only be concretised once the process to appoint a new Secretary of State is completed. The decision on the pledges could be expected in the coming weeks.
- **EE** expressed that it cannot pledge any commitments before September when its new government is expected to be formed.

- **CZ** declared to be fully committed to continuing the work of the French Presidency, with negotiations to continue in the informal JHA Council on 11 July and SCIFA on 20 July. CZ recalled that its reception system is currently overstretched due to arrivals from Ukraine, thus not allowing for relocation pledges for the moment. Support financially might not be excluded.
- **NL** informed that due to its overstretched reception system, it cannot pledge for relocations at the moment, while keeping an open position once situation allows. NL is willing to support MED5 countries based on their needs assessment and support the needs of refugees in the countries along the main migration routes.
- **SE** is supportive and in favour of the content of the Declaration. However, currently SE is not in a position to offer pledges and financial contributions due to constitutional constraints.
- **DK** expressed concerns about the usefulness of the relocation exercise, as it could lead to more arrivals. Nevertheless, DK expressed its commitment for financial support to improve border management, returns and to help countries professionalise their migration management, including through the deployment of experts. DK is also willing to offer financial contributions (1.7% as ‘fair share’ – *possibly up to 6%*) through third country projects and the relevant political decision is expected to be made in the second half of this year.
- **FI** indicated that the exact figure for pledges is still to be decided; however, it gave an indicative figure of 175 people. FI expressed its intention to be able to relocate in 2 months.
- **LV** was not present at the meeting.
- **HU** is not a signatory of the Declaration and confirmed not being in a position to make any pledges. HU reiterated its position of already providing support with border measures and returns to the Western Balkan countries.
- **PL** is not a signatory of the Declaration and did not make any relocation pledges. According to PL, the migration management system of which is currently overstretched due to arrivals from Ukraine, a temporary solidarity mechanism can serve as a factor in attracting irregular migration. However, it did not exclude possible financial contributions.
- **SK** is not a signatory of the Declaration, and, given the current pressure due to arrivals from Ukraine, there is no political decision foreseen to join in the immediate term.
- **SI** is not a signatory of the Declaration. A new government has been recently formed (June), and it has not made a position on this matter. SI did not provide an indication on the timing but committed to inform the Commission.
- **CH** showed its support to the Declaration, however, it did not make any pledge for the moment, due to current migratory pressure. CH showed its willingness to finance projects in different areas of migration management in the MED5 countries as well as the Western Balkans.
- **NO** pledged for 200 relocations.
- **IS** has not yet adopted a political decision on the Declaration yet (decision likely to be made by Friday).
- **LI** supports the Declaration and is willing to make relocation pledges. However, the current migratory pressure due to arrivals from Ukraine does not allow it to pledge at the moment.

MED5 countries expressed their appreciation for solidarity shown by the EU Member States and Schengen Associated States and thanked the Commission and French Presidency:

- **IT** shared updates on the migratory situation in the country recalling that it has already communicated to the Commission the following requests for relocation with reference to the new Voluntary Solidarity Mechanism: (a) 112 migrants disembarked from Aita Mari vessel (b) 476 migrants disembarked from Sea-Eye 4 vessel and (c) 19 migrants disembarked from Nadir vessel.
- **ES** underlined that its migratory pressure comes not just from African countries, but also arrivals from Ukraine. ES is currently working to identify the profiles of persons that could be relocated. ES enquired about the procedure of the relocations and whether SOPs will be established.
- **CY** anticipated that pledges take into consideration both current and upcoming influx of arrivals.
- **MT** welcomed the support of the Commission with the coordination of implementation of the mechanism. MT confirmed it is carrying out a needs assessment and considered relocation to be the most effective tool to support Member States under pressure. MT also indicated that arrivals are expected to increase during the summer period.
- **EL** expressed concerns on the visibility and communication of the mechanism and underlined that it is important not to give the wrong message and encourage irregular arrivals. Arrivals to EL are expected to increase during the summer.

The Commission encouraged all states to **reconsider their pledges** (currently at 8 169) and encouraged participation in the mechanism to those not yet signatories. In the immediate term, it was underlined the need to reach the number of pledges identified upon the FR Presidency's bilateral contacts (8 300) and to the set target of 10 000.

Beyond the number of pledges, the Commission also underlined the importance of start with the **implementation of the voluntary solidarity mechanism**. The Commission encouraged the benefiting countries to discuss and suggest a possible distribution among themselves of the pledges expressed so far before the next meeting (4 July) by Thursday 30 June. The proposing countries were invited to express their views on the organization of their pledges and any possible criteria they may have for their pledges. The Commission underlined that it is important for pledging states to show flexibility with their preference criteria that should match the profiles of asylum seekers to allow for a fair, efficient and realistic implementation of the exercise. To this end, the Commission, in coordination with benefiting Member States, will share information available on the profiles of asylum seekers arrived in the past 6 months to facilitate this.

On **financial contributions**, the Commission encouraged the benefiting countries to come up with a clear list of their financial needs and the proposing states that have expressed financial contributions to concretise in writing those offers (amount, types of projects, etc.).

Following questions by MS on the **role of the European Commission**, the Commission clarified that it will maintain the coordination, while the states will also contribute to the implementation of the relocations. EUAA informed that it stands ready to support at operational level on the basis of the role they held so far in the voluntary relocation process, and FRONTEX informed that it can support as needed, notably with regard to screening, data sharing as well as analysis of migratory routes.

The issue of **communication** was briefly discussed, indicating that communication should focus on the ongoing nature of the process and main milestones ahead, avoiding

to provide concrete figures. The Commission offered support to Member States in this regard as needed.

OPERATIONAL CONCLUSIONS

- Member and Associated States are requested to revert in writing on the following points before Thursday 30 June 2022 COB:
 - Benefiting countries:
 - to discuss among themselves a possible distribution of the pledges expressed so far before the next meeting (4 July) by Thursday 30 June to the FMB: home-solidarity-platform@ec.europa.eu
 - to come up with a clear list of their financial needs.
 - Member States having expressed financial contributions to concretise in writing those offers (amount, types of projects, etc.).
 - Contributing member States: to provide their views on the organisation of relocations and conditions attached to pledges, contributions to SOPs welcome
- Commission to:
 - share information available on profiles of asylum seekers (countries of origin, numbers, detailed information if available on family composition, vulnerables).
 - As a further step, work with benefitting Member States to assess the needs (types of projects, volume of financial needs, etc).

The next meeting of the Solidarity Platform ‘Pact’ will take place on **Monday 4 July (14h-16h)**.