

Joint Position Paper

The European Council

European Commission - Germany & France - Italy & Greece - Poland & Hungary - Sweden & Finland

The European Council has unanimously agreed on the following statement regarding migration in the European Union in the evening of the 9th of April 2019.

The European migrant crisis (2013-2016) hit in its magnitude the continent unprepared. Nobody apprehended that over 10,000 people would cross from Turkey into Greece in a single day at the peak of the crisis in October 2015. Consequently, the Migrant Crisis dominated EU and domestic politics in the recent years. The explosive nature of the issue, the lack of preparation, and the resulting different proposals for action lead to distortions within and between EU countries.

However, since the start of the migration crisis, the European Union has worked tirelessly to cope with the situation and its consequences. Moreover, thanks to the joint political actions (e.g., improving border management and especially the EU-Turkey agreement) irregular arrivals have decreased to their pre-crisis level of only 150,000 refugees in 2018. It has come down to the lowest point in the past five years, with 25% decrease from 2017 and 90% decrease from the peak of 2015.

The Member states and the European Commission agree on the further reduction of illegal arrivals by improving border management, readmission and return to safe countries, and additional agreements with transit and origin countries.

Although numbers of illegal arrivals have reduced, internal problems remain.

The burden of the EU migration crisis was unequally distributed as some member states chose not to accept many refugees due to disagreements over the mandatory reallocation system that arose on the national level. The European Council acknowledges the failure of the quota system and endeavours to find an alternative, common, and lasting solution based on solidarity, which not only brings more efficiency but also keeps the EU democratic, prosperous, and united. This is especially crucial when considering the difficulties of the current political reality, which include the rising influence of China, the decreasing reliability of the US, and, of course, Brexit. The desired solution should deepen the cooperation in migration policy, bring standardized process of asylum claims, reduce human trafficking, and include the protection of human rights. The European Council also strives to reform or at least improve the current Dublin regulation and to re-establish the free movements of the Schengen zone.

The Member States and the European Commission want to underline the importance of solidarity, cohesion policies, and the rule of law for the European Union. They are indispensable for the existence and functioning of the Union.

The overall goal is to agree on a new Multiannual Financial Framework for the years 2021-2027 that will be unanimously accepted.

Ratified by:

European Commission
Germany & France
Italy & Greece
Poland & Hungary
Sweden & Finland