



[Crossroads Europe Project](#) - Policy recommendations formulated during the event:

EU Migration and Asylum Policy and the Public Debate.

Migration has always been an essential reality of Europe and has contributed to shaping its foundations, priorities and public debates across the years. Most recently, with the large migration flows of 2015-2016, multiple voices from governments, law-makers, citizens and stakeholders from across Europe have asked for a deep reform of the EU migration and asylum policy framework. The images of migrants drowning in the Mediterranean Sea have seen Europe-wide expressions of solidarity, while at the same time anti-migrant rhetoric has increasingly pervaded the political debate.

In this context, the media plays a key role in how migration and its related challenges are perceived and discussed in our societies. The way the media covers migration has an impact on citizens' demands on the topic as well as on their political choices when casting their votes.

Furthermore, 2021-2022 will mark an important moment to debate Europe in the framework of the Conference on the Future of Europe (CoFoE) launched on 9 May 2021, and migration has been set as a priority topic for this continent-wide discussion. All citizens and stakeholders are encouraged to contribute to the public debate through the CoFoE digital platform. The most endorsed and discussed ideas and proposals will be presented to the Plenary of the Conference.

The first session focused on the EU migration and asylum policy and its main challenges, and the possible way forward to

achieve a truly EU-level migration system based on solidarity in the Schengen Area, within the framework of the UN Sustainable Development Goals of the Agenda 2030 and the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. Different speakers shared their views and experience: MEP Juan Fernando López Aguilar, chair of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE), Regina Catrambone, co-founder and director of Migrant Offshore Aid Station (MOAS), Apostolos Veizis, executive director of INTERSOS Greece, and Paloma Favieres from Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado (CEAR). Some ideas expressed were that the EU should find a way to tackle the most controversial problems within the migration system, such as the relocation of migrants as well as the distribution of responsibilities between the Member states. The discussion was followed by a training on how to use the digital platform of the Conference of the Future of Europe.

The second session was a discussion on the media and how the phenomenon of migration in Europe is framed. Various speakers were invited to lead the debate: Manuel Delia, a blogger and journalist at The Times of Malta, Xandru Cassar, student activist, and Laura Traveso, Communication Manager at Red Acoge. The speakers expressed that most of the media in Europe tends to frame migrants as 'others' and foreigners as well as uses rhetoric, which forms an impression of migration being a thing, rather than talking about real human beings. Afterward, participants of the event were actively involved in a workshop on how to make the EU fit for the migration phenomenon of our times, where they produced policy recommendations.

The following recommendations are the outcome of the participants' group work.



A. Easing pressures on countries that welcome and host refugees, through the creation of humanitarian corridors in order to simplify for migrants the ways and the processes to leave the countries of arrival to other countries in the EU.

B. Build self-reliance of refugees. The Union and its Member states should do more in terms of cultural and socio-economic integration. There is an urgent need for measures geared towards a universal basic income and a structured method of teaching the language of the country of destination.

C. Expand access to resettlement in third countries and other complementary pathways. Create safer and recognised pathways to leave the country of origin to reach the EU selected Member states; ensuring all the migrants receive a documentation which testify and assess their status, leaving no one behind. A change of the Dublin Treaty is necessary.

D. Foster conditions that enable refugees voluntarily to return to their home countries. This should include agreements between the countries of origin and the European Union to obtain documents and freedom of movement for migrants who are likely to have part of their family in their places of origin.

E. Involve former migrants in the creation of welcoming and inclusive policies, at a political level. In fact, it is important to "leave the microphone" to those who have experienced it first hand, not only in public opinion but also among policy makers. The NGOs and civil society organisations should not be left alone in managing their integration and inclusion in the society.

