

REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA



Federale Overheidsdienst
Binnenlandse Zaken



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MINISTRY OF INTERIOR



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MINISTRY FOR HOME AFFAIRS,
SECURITY AND EMPLOYMENT



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OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
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European and
International Affairs
Republic of Austria



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Interior
Republic of Austria



REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA
MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR



MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA



MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR
OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA

ROMANIA
MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS



MINISTER



Ministry of the Interior
Republic of Latvia



Government Offices of Sweden
Ministry of Justice



Government Offices of Sweden
Ministry for Foreign Affairs



Ministerie van Asiel en Migratie



Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken



Ministry of the Interior
Finland



DEPUTY MINISTRY OF MIGRATION
AND INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION



Ministry of Immigration
and Integration

Denmark



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF DENMARK



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
Ministry of Migration & Asylum



MINISTERO
DELL'INTERNO



Ministero degli Affari Esteri
e della Cooperazione Internazionale



Ministry of the Interior and Administration
Republic of Poland



Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Poland



MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR
OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC



Federal Foreign Office



Federal Ministry
of the Interior

To the attention of: *Mr Magnus Brunner, Commissioner for Internal Affairs and Migration*
 Ms Kaja Kallas, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
 Ms Dubravka Šuica, Commissioner for the Mediterranean
 Mr Jozef Šikela, Commissioner International Partnerships
 Ms Marta Kos, Commissioner Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood Affairs

16 December 2025

Joint follow-up letter from the undersigned ministers on the operationalisation of new and innovative solutions to counter and prevent irregular migration to Europe

The following is a joint letter from the undersigned ministers.

The undersigned ministers responsible for migration and foreign affairs call for a new approach to migration and emphasise the importance of the European Union working with key partner countries to continue pursuing efforts to create a fairer and more sustainable asylum and migration system worldwide. This entails systematically addressing the drivers of irregular migration and the challenges encountered along migration routes, providing adequate protection for those in need, preventing dangerous journeys and loss of life, tackling human smuggling and trafficking, countering instrumentalization of migration and effectively implementing returns and sustainable reintegration. As conflicts intensify and tensions rise across the globe, more people are on the move, and there is increasing migratory pressure on Member States and concern among EU citizens. As a result, it is essential to continue the current efforts and increasingly urgent to further develop and implement new and innovative solutions in partnership with third countries.

The conclusion of the negotiations on the recent legislative proposals put forward by the Commission in the area of asylum and return is an important step towards addressing the internal challenges of the EU asylum and migration system. Alongside the EU reform of the asylum and migration system, the further development of a coherent EU strategy on the external dimension of migration, including new and innovative solutions, is paramount. On the internal side, important steps are being taken to enhance EU asylum and migration legislation, catering for innovative solutions such as the safe third country arrangements and return hubs. The EU is also strengthening legal pathways.

It is essential that the EU works closely together with countries along the migratory routes, as part of a whole of route approach, to address the root causes of irregular migration, improve protection and sustainable solutions to displacement, manage migration flows, combat human trafficking and migrant smuggling, and facilitate returns. The EU and its Member States, together with key partner countries, need to continue enhancing the comprehensive partnership approach, of which migration management is a fundamental part, and expand it with new and innovative solutions. This will require us to further develop innovative solutions, creating necessary conditions within the EU legal framework and policies to ensure that these partnerships are practical and sustainable.

In light of the above, the undersigned ministers commend the European Commission, the European External Action Service (EEAS), EUAA, Frontex and other relevant EU Institutions and Agencies for their achievements in this area and emphasise the need to further strengthen collaboration with the Member States and international organisations to ensure that the necessary conditions and resources are in place for implementing innovative solutions. This includes sufficient available

funding, providing expertise and capacity for development and implementation, and defining a coherent diplomatic approach. We, the undersigned ministers, stand ready to actively support this cause.

The efficient use of financial resources is necessary for the establishment and operationalisation of innovative forms of cooperation, embedded in comprehensive and mutually beneficial partnerships. With the right financing structure in place, programmes can be designed and implemented to create the conditions for establishing innovative solutions more swiftly in the future. A coordinated strategy is needed for funding instruments. We call on the European Commission to draft guidelines on the use of current and future EU funding programmes for supporting the establishment and implementation of innovative solutions, in line with the objectives and guiding principles of the relevant instruments, including those of NDICI-GE. The use of the NDICI-GE in this context must remain consistent with its objectives of promoting sustainable development and international cooperation. In regard to the upcoming Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and without prejudging the negotiations, the undersigned ministers stress the need for sufficient attention for funding the internal and external dimensions of migration including innovative solutions, among others through the use of Global Europe and an effective governance mechanism.

To ensure the effectiveness of innovative solutions, sufficient capacity and expertise are vital. It is essential to consider **the role that EU agencies and international organisations** could play across the exploration, design, implementation and monitoring phases of innovative solutions. In that light, EU agencies should be able to provide support to the implementation of innovative solutions within the scope of their mandates. The undersigned ministers call on the Commission and the EU agencies to explore and propose, within their respective competences, the necessary legislative and policy changes. This includes, where relevant, revision of the mandate and competences of Frontex, to ensure effective support and sufficient capacity in this area of cooperation with third countries. International organizations may provide invaluable complementary support to member states, particularly in the development and implementation of innovative solutions, in line with their respective mandates and in full respect of European and international law.

Innovative solutions open up new avenues of cooperation, which should be seen as an integral part of the broader EU external strategy on asylum and migration and developed alongside and as part of comprehensive and mutually beneficial partnerships. A common narrative and joint **diplomatic outreach** by Member States and the EEAS, including their missions and delegations on the ground, and the European Commission involving all its relevant Services, is necessary in order to involve – in the earliest possible stages – prospective partner countries in the joint development of innovative solutions in the context of sustainable and mutually beneficial partnerships. A joint understanding could be developed during dialogues, summits and processes of the EU and its Member States with third countries and multilateral and regional organisations, as well as in other forums. We call on the Commission and the EEAS to facilitate the EU coordination of joint messages, and to further incorporate innovative solutions into EU summits and dialogues with countries along the migratory routes.

We reiterate that all new measures must be implemented in full compliance with the Union's and Member States' international and EU legal obligations and legislative frameworks and the rights of the migrants involved, including the principle of non-refoulement, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, the European Convention on Human Rights and other applicable EU and international law.

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