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Foreword

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International and temporary protection remained at the forefront of policy discussions throughout 2022, with a combined figure of 5 million people seeking protection arriving into Europe. The total includes the number of asylum applications which soared to almost 1 million, in addition to over 4 million registrations for temporary protection by people fleeing the war in Ukraine. Naturally, the magnitude of the inflow tested national asylum and reception systems to new highs, and EU+ countries were faced with finding rapid, yet viable, solutions.

Photo of the EUAA Executive Director, Nina Gregori

Developments in international protection in 2022 highlighted the importance of having in place an effective protection architecture with multi-stakeholder participation. As presented in this report, EU institutions continued their efforts to advance the reform of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) and further foster practical cooperation among EU+ countries on the basis of solidarity and responsibility. They also played a leading role in the development of an orchestrated European response to the needs of displaced persons from Ukraine.

To cope with existing and emerging needs, EU+ countries responded by adjusting policies and practices, allocating additional resources and enacting changes to legislation. The many positive developments are to be appreciated and celebrated. But in a world of quickly-shifting patterns in migration and asylum, there is no time for complacency and the lessons learned in 2022 should serve as a catalyst for further refinement. The quick activation and extension of temporary protection indicated that effective legislation and contingency planning, coupled with broad political will, can lead to swift responses to humanitarian crises; provide predictability and stability to beneficiaries; and foster convergence in practices across several countries. Importantly, the EU response in protecting displaced persons from Ukraine can pave the way in guiding the EU’s asylum system as a whole through similar expressions of solidarity and shared responsibility.

After a full year of functioning with an enhanced mandate, the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) closed 2022 with an unprecedented number of operating plans to provide operational and technical assistance primarily to Member States experiencing disproportionate pressure on their asylum and reception systems. As stipulated in the EUAA Regulation, the new work programme of the Agency will continue to evolve over the coming year. The newly-

appointed EUAA Fundamental Rights Officer will ensure that the Agency’s operations continue to fully adhere to fundamental rights, Liaison Officers in Member States will further calibrate the cooperation with national authorities and a Monitoring Mechanism will begin in early 2024 to help harmonise practices across the EU. Living up to its status as the centre of expertise on asylum, the Agency will continue to play a key role in the European effort to provide protection to those in need.

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