Please cite as: EUAA, 'Section 1. Introduction' in *Asylum Report 2025*, June 2025.

Section 1. Introduction

Introduction

Icon for global developments in asylum

2024 ushered in a new era for asylum and migration management in Europe. The adoption of the Pact on Migration and Asylum equipped the EU with a modern, robust and flexible architecture of legal and operational instruments to address evolving protection needs at a global level. Planning for the swift implementation of the Pact was a priority in 2024 (as the large majority of provisions enter into application in June 2026), with the European Commission presenting the Common Implementation Plan (CIP) in June 2024 and almost all Member States delivering their National Implementation Plans by the end of 2024. The EUAA established its dedicated Pact Programme to support the implementation process. Countries will need to allocate significant resources to ensure the asylum and reception systems provided for by the Pact operate successfully and can effectively address the changing environment of migration and asylum.

The number of forcibly displaced people worldwide continued to grow for the 12th consecutive year, as sources of persecution, violence, conflict and human right violations persisted. In the first semester of 2024, 5.3 million new displacements occurred, reaching a total of 122.6 million displaced people worldwide at the end of June 2024.1 Key hotspots for displacement included the inter-ethnic conflicts in Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Russia's war in Ukraine; political violence in Myanmar, Colombia and Venezuela; and deteriorating gang violence in Haiti. While Palestinians started to return to Gaza following the January 2025 ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas, millions of people were displaced due to the conflict and found themselves in a critical humanitarian situation.2 Most of the world's displaced people who have crossed international borders, continued to be hosted in low- and middle-income countries, which typically experience disproportionate pressure and a significant strain on their resources.3

In 2024, those fleeing in search of safety at times encountered complex or inaccessible protection systems, within economies that are still struggling to recover from the negative consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and within political realities that seem to be drifting toward anti-refugee, populist rhetoric. These phenomena have produced environments that are

growingly restricting access to protection for those in need.4 Countries and areas of the world that have traditionally been among the leading migratory destinations seem to be downsizing their involvement in international humanitarian efforts, limiting access to asylum and placing additional emphasis on enforcement and border control.5 At the same time, international efforts continued to increase the availability of protection and facilitate safe mobility through multi-stakeholder cooperation, such as the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

Against this global background, Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland (EU+ countries) were faced with a dual challenge: they continued receiving and processing a steadily high number of applicants for international protection (over 1 million in 2024), while allocating significant resources in designing and implementing the reforms foreseen in the different instruments of the Pact on Migration and Asylum. In parallel, as Russia's war in Ukraine continued for a third year, protection solutions were provided for displaced persons from Ukraine hosted in EU+ countries.

Using diverse sources, including observations from civil society, the 2025 EUAA Asylum Report offers an overview of efforts made in 2024 by European institutions and EU+ countries to manage migration and asylum effectively. It synthesises qualitative information on legislative, policy and practical developments; key indicators; and case law from European and national courts, covering major thematic areas under the building blocks of the Pact's CIP. As the go-to source of information on asylum, the report provides a comprehensive and balanced insight into asylum by highlighting main trends at the European and national levels and reflecting current and upcoming discourses and practices.

- 1

  United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2024). Mid-Year Trends 2024.

- 2

  United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). (2024). Mid-Year Trends 2024.

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  United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2024). Mid-Year Trends 2024.

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  United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (June 2024). A Route-Based Approach: Strengthening protection and solutions in the context of mixed movements of refugees and migrants. Migration Policy Institute. (2024). Top 10 Migration Issues of 2024.

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  Migration Policy Institute. (2024). Top 10 Migration Issues of 2024.

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