



PRESS RELEASE

A RENEWED CALL FOR ACTION TO IMPROVE THE PROTECTION OF REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS IN MIXED MOVEMENTS

A Roadmap for Advocacy, Policy Development, and Programming on Protection in Mixed Movements

The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the Mixed Migration Centre (MMC) release: “A Roadmap for Advocacy, Policy Development, and Programming: Protection in Mixed Movements along the Central and Western Mediterranean Routes 2021”. The Roadmap provides tailored recommendations to improve the protection of refugees and migrants in mixed movements on the Central and Western Mediterranean Routes and should serve as a resource for strategic engagement with different asylum and migration stakeholders at the local, national and international levels.

More than 40 persons of concern, researchers and academics, protection actors, policy-makers, and journalists from North, West, East and the Horn of Africa as well as Europe and North America contributed to and validated the Roadmap, through the production of 25 research papers informing policy, programming and advocacy, as well as discussions and debates which took place over a three-day policy workshop convened by UNHCR and MMC from 15 to 17 February 2021.

“[The Roadmap] offers concrete recommendations on, for example, the important role of local authorities, community-based approaches, the need for a stronger focus on children and youth on the move, more sustainable approaches to combating trafficking in persons and more nuanced approaches towards the migrant smuggling phenomenon. It is now up to policy makers and practitioners to translate these findings and recommendations into policy, advocacy, and action on the ground”, stated Bram Frouws, Head of MMC.

“Over the last five years, mixed movements across the Mediterranean Sea have attracted more international and national public attention than similarly dangerous, more massive movements by land. This disproportionate focus on sea crossings has been politically instrumentalised on both sides of the Mediterranean, and has fed apocalyptic and xenophobic rhetoric disconnected from the complex realities of displacement along long and dangerous routes. This roadmap provides a path forward”, added Vincent Cochetel, UNHCR Special Envoy for the Central Mediterranean Situation.

Key Recommendations for Advocacy, Policy Development, and Programming on Protection in Mixed Movements

Below is a glimpse of the broad recommendations put forward and further elaborated upon by the Roadmap to enhance the protection of people on the move on the Central and Western Mediterranean Routes:

- Emphasise systemic factors
- Implement flexible and adaptive protection programming
- Mobilise local support for national and regional protection frameworks
- Collaborate with cities and municipalities on urban mixed movement initiatives
- Create more comprehensive approaches to combatting trafficking in persons
- Unpack the complex roles and dynamics within smuggling networks for more targeted policies
- Advance child and youth-centered mixed movement programming and policies
- Advocate for solutions to enhance the protection of people on the move
- Place evidence and research at the centre of programming and policy

Thousands of people continue, annually, to risk their lives on dangerous, irregular journeys by land and sea, or take advantage of limited legal pathways. The complexity of mixed movement poses challenges to policy makers and practitioners along the Central and Western Mediterranean Routes. The Roadmap launched today sheds light on those challenges and provides a collective path forward to motivate action and lead a necessary yet positive change.

To read more about the roadmap: mixedmigration.org/roadmap-protection-2021/

About the Mixed Migration Centre (MMC)

The MMC is a leading source for independent and high-quality data, information, research and analysis on mixed migration. Through the provision of credible evidence and expertise on mixed migration, MMC aims to support agencies, policy makers and practitioners to make well-informed decisions, to positively impact global and regional migration policies, to contribute to protection and assistance responses for people on the move and to stimulate forward thinking in the sector responding to mixed migration. The MMC is part of, and governed by, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC).

About the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

The UN Refugee Agency is a global organization dedicated to saving lives, protecting rights and building a better future for refugees, forcibly displaced communities and stateless people. UNHCR works in over 130 countries, protecting millions of people and delivering life-saving assistance. UNHCR helps safeguard fundamental human rights and develops solutions that ensure that people have a safe place to call home where they can build a better future.

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