

## Article – New Migration Pact proposal gets mixed reactions from MEPs



Members of Parliament's [civil liberties, justice and home affairs committee](#) discussed the [new plan for an Asylum and Migration Pact](#) a day after it has been presented by the Commission. on 24 September. The aim of the proposal, presented is to change and improve current procedures by ensuring shared responsibility and solidarity. However, [committee members voiced mixed reactions](#), wondering if it will bring about real change.

During the debate with Commission Vice-President Margaritis Schinas and Commissioner for Home Affairs Ylva Johansson, MEPs requested more concrete information about how the pact would be applied on the ground and enforced. Some considered the initiative to be a positive step to help EU countries where most of the asylum seekers first arrive, while others described it as the only way forward from the current situation.

However, MEPs also questioned whether the new rules will prevent another humanitarian disaster such as the [recent fire in the Moria refugee camp](#) and wondered whether the new screening and border procedures would respect fundamental rights. Several MEPs regretted that the principle of the [current Dublin regulation](#) – requiring the country of first entry to handle asylum claims – remains in the new regulation proposal, because they were worried this will maintain the burden on countries where most of the asylum seekers first arrive.

The Commission's proposal avoids compulsory relocation quotas, which proved so controversial in the previous proposal. EU countries can choose to take in (relocate) asylum applicants or commit to returning irregular migrants (sponsor returns) from another EU country. MEPs were concerned that this flexibility could lead to a situation where many EU countries choose to sponsor returns instead of taking in applicants and raised questions about the enforcement mechanisms and the effective cooperation with third countries. Some MEPs demanded the mandatory relocation of refugees, while others wanted a firmer stance on irregular arrivals.