



[United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees](#) , [Filippo Grandi](#) , presented a set of proposals in Brussels today to better protect refugees, focusing on how the EU can address the ongoing migration crisis and overcome its fragmented responses with a more coherent policy.

Mr Grandi acknowledged the gravity of the current situation, with over one million refugees and migrants arriving by sea to Europe in 2015 alone, mostly from the world's top 10 refugee-producing countries - primarily Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq. One year later, this humanitarian crisis shows no sign of improvement, and the High Commissioner pointed out that the number of migrants and refugees arriving on Italian shores reached a new peak this October, marking a monthly record for the last four years.

Despite the challenge posed by these worrying figures, Grandi believes that the current situation is not unmanageable. "Europe has dealt in the past with similar crisis, as in 1956 with Hungary and in the 1990s with former Yugoslavia," he said, adding that this time "the EU was manifestly unprepared for this chaotic inflow of people" and that the existing migration policies were not implemented by a number of Member States, leaving a small group of countries, such as Italy and Greece, bearing all the migration pressure.

Recalling the beginning of the crisis, one year ago, Grandi stated that he was shocked by “how much Europe seemed to distance itself from its fundamental values” of cooperation, and from its commitment to “share responsibilities for meeting common challenges.” This is why the UNHCR paper titled [Better Protecting Refugees in the EU and Globally](#) aims at informing the ongoing discussions at EU level to develop a more coherent response to the refugee crisis, along with restoring European citizens’ confidence in their governments and addressing their feelings of anxiety, fear, or rejection.

Among the main proposals, which build on the existing Common European Asylum System and some of the reforms proposed by the European Commissions, Mr Grandi highlighted the importance of a common registration system, which would guarantee more accurate security screenings and ease data sharing among countries. He also urged Member States to take action with regard to unaccompanied children

, which are at great risk of falling into smugglers’ hands. Indeed, another key proposal is the establishment of safe pathways for refugees and migrants. Grandi pointed out that when an organized and coherent response by the

States is lacking, smugglers and criminals invariably take over. As a result, currently the only available routes for refugees are illicit, dangerous, and expensive.

