



7 JULY 2016

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PRESS RELEASES

## Interior ministers discuss sustainable migration and border protection

Bratislava (7 July 2016) – The Slovak Presidency of the Council of the European Union will focus on migration as one of the most serious challenges currently faced by the EU. We aim to come up with sustainable solutions, both for all Member States and for the EU as a whole.

In addition to continuing with ongoing activities, the Slovak Presidency will concentrate on providing appropriate solutions and assistance that may be needed in an emergency. We will do our utmost to support progress on legislative proposals. The Presidency will promote a positive agenda in the area of migration, including policies such as smart borders and the Blue Card scheme, which will encourage legal migration to the EU.

Migration and sustainable solutions thereto, as well as issues related to the protection of borders and the Schengen area, were discussed by the Interior Ministers of the EU's 28 Member States, EFTA countries and candidate countries in Bratislava on 7 July. The meeting was also attended by Dimitris Avramopoulos, the European Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship.

*'Having learnt their lesson last year, the European Commission and the European Council no longer refer to the issue of migration in general terms. Instead, concrete measures have been adopted. I believe that what we set out to do within our Presidency of the Council of the EU will materialise very soon ... and that in six*

*months from now we will be able to show the EU's citizens that we are capable of safeguarding the values of the Union, which are taken for granted today', Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister of the Slovak Republic Robert Kaliňák told a press conference after the informal talks.*

## Migration and sustainable solutions

Migration continues to be a key issue that demands targeted attention and sustainable solutions. In this regard, we welcome the Commission communication on establishing a 'new Partnership Framework' with third countries, which lays the groundwork for entering into and implementing individualised bilateral agreements on migration management with third countries. The issue of returns and readmissions is one of the top priorities.

Furthermore, we aim to follow closely the state of play regarding the Western Balkans route and the implementation of the EU's agreement with Turkey. It is necessary to halt the inflow of illegal migrants and to fight criminal networks and organisations of smugglers, which take advantage of the precarious situation of the groups of people who are fleeing war, oppression and persecution.

## Control of the Schengen borders

Effective control of the external borders is the backbone of security. The restoration of the functioning of the Schengen borders is a key priority. With that in mind, we need to continue the process of establishing a European Border and Coast Guard, which is vital to ensure the proper functioning of the Schengen system. We are doing our best to ensure that the Guard can begin to operate as early as this autumn.

We will focus on measures within the 'smart borders package' with an eye to bringing the vision of better and more secure legal mobility one step closer. Advanced technologies are key for modern border management. In the long-term perspective, 'smart borders' would enable us to move ahead from a nationality-based risk assessment, which is the conceptual basis of the visa policy, to a risk assessment based on the traveller's individual characteristics and past travel history.

***'I believe that what we set out to do within our Presidency of the Council of the EU will materialise very soon.'***

***Robert Kaliňák***

## Reform of the asylum system

The Presidency aims to manage the Council's work in an intensive, careful and constructive manner with the aim of attaining the consent of the Council and the engagement of the European Parliament post-haste. A sustainable reform of the Common European Asylum System is a priority.

## Internal security and the fight against terrorism

The Slovak Presidency will continue to pursue efforts to strengthen the exchange of information and the use of the EU's databases by the relevant bodies of the Member States. It is particularly crucial to make the best possible use of the existing channels.

# PHOTO GALLERY



07.07.2016 / 31 foto

(<http://www.eu2016.sk/en/galleries/download/the-informal-meeting-of-the-interior-ministers>)

([http://www.eu2016.sk/data/galleries/large/27531595784\\_e48adc840a\\_k.jpg](http://www.eu2016.sk/data/galleries/large/27531595784_e48adc840a_k.jpg))

# VIDEO GALLERY



08.07.2016

Arrival of the delegations at the Reduta building

<http://www.eu2016.sk/en/press-releases/interior-ministers-discuss-sustainable-migration-and-border-protection>

(<http://www.eu2016.sk/sk/embed-code/38>)



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