

A secure area without internal borders

35. A **strong and well-protected external border** is vital for Estonia to ensure free movement as a fundamental EU freedom and the functioning of the free movement area. **Development of external border infrastructure, as well as surveillance and information systems, must be jointly financed to a greater extent**, since a strong external border is a common interest of the European Union. This must include the joint development and funding of drone surveillance and counter-drone systems.

36. We are ready to organise **training in Estonia** on a larger scale **for the European Border and Coast Guard Agency's (Frontex) standing corps** with the support of EU funding. We are seeking greater participation of Frontex officers in guarding our eastern border.

37. Situations where a third country uses **illegal migration as a means of pressure** to destabilise the Union, or a Member State, must also be regarded as hybrid attacks. The European Union and its legal framework must support Member States in such situations, so that they can react decisively and take the necessary measures to safeguard national security and public order.

38. The European External Action Service needs to carry out **strategic communication** towards countries of origin to **explain the consequences of illegal entry into the EU**. To improve readmission cooperation, the European Union needs to make more active use of foreign policy instruments (visa, trade, and development cooperation policies). **A simpler and more effective legal framework for returns** is needed, including stricter rules to limit abuses and prevent returnees from absconding, as well as a legal basis for establishing return centres in third countries.

39. In the case of ending the **application of temporary protection for Ukrainian war refugees**, a coordinated approach by the European Union is needed, – for example, temporary residence permits for work and study – to prevent refugees from moving into the asylum system. EU coordination and cooperation with Ukraine is also essential to support the return of war refugees to their home country.