Solidarity towards refugees and asylum seekers

Understanding the impact of the refugee crisis on the EU and EFTA countries
In 2015, the European Commission and the Council agreed on an Emergency Relocation Mechanism (ERM). Through this mechanism, Member States committed to relocate people in need of international protection to the EU in order to alleviate pressure from their reception systems. As of July 2015, 34,323 asylum seekers have been relocated as part of the scheme to 16 countries, the largest of which is Germany, France, Sweden, and the Netherlands.

Asylum application requests

Total applicants and positive decisions for asylum to EU and EFTA countries, 2016-2017

In 2017, 1 million first instance decisions were issued by EU Member States. The majority of decisions were granted by the respective authority acting as a first instance of the administrative or judicial asylum procedure in the receiving country. This figure is slightly lower than the 1.3 million recorded in 2016, as it only double the number of 533,000 that was issued in 2015. In 2016, more than 1.9 million asylum seekers in the EU and EFTA countries resulted in a positive outcome: 533,792 asylum seekers received the refugee status. 248,165 were granted a subsidiary protection status, and 54,865 were not granted an authorization to stay for humanitarian reasons. In 2016, the highest share of positive first instance decisions out of the total number of decisions in the country were recorded in Switzerland and Malta; the lowest share of positive decisions were positive decisions were recorded in Greece, Iceland, Poland, and Hungary.

Attitudes towards immigration

Comparing feelings towards immigration in the EU, 2017

According to the last Eurobarometer data available, two out of three Europeans are in favour of ‘a common European policy on immigration’. Spain, the Netherlands and Germany were highest among the countries in favour of such a policy, while the Czech Republic is the only country in which most respondents oppose immigration.

Employment rates of asylum seekers in 2014

Factors for integration vary considerably depending on the country of origin, the destination country and the length of stay. Unfortunately, few data are collected on the relative employment rates of asylum seekers and refugees; these figures show the latest information available.

Integration into the labour market

On 7 June 2016, the European Commission adopted an Action Plan on the integration of third-country nationals, which includes particular attention to the specific challenges faced by refugees.

Comparing rates of employment of asylum seekers and first generation immigrants in 2014

The information in the 2014 European Labour Force Survey is based on self-declared reasons for coming to Europe. Employment rates of refugees do not invariably lag behind those of labour migrants in Switzerland, Slovenia, Italy, France, and Croatia, for instance, the employment rate of asylum seekers is higher than the total employment rate of immigrants.
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