

EMN BULLETIN

The EMN Bulletin provides policymakers and other practitioners with updates on recent migration and international protection policy developments at EU and national level. The 9th Edition provides information from August 2014 to November 2014, including (latest) relevant published statistics.

The Bulletin is organised by policy area. You can directly access the area of your interest by clicking on one of the following themes:

[1. General policy developments](#); [2. Legal migration](#); [3. International protection and asylum](#); [Unaccompanied minors](#); [4. Eradication of trafficking in human beings](#); [5. Schengen borders and visas](#); [6. External dimension](#); [7. Irregular migration and return](#); [8. Integration and citizenship](#); [Annex on EU & Complementary Statistics, Additional information, other EMN outputs and upcoming events.](#)

SPECIAL NOTE



★ As part of the new European Commission College, which took office on 1st November 2014 under the leadership of Jean-Claude Juncker, Mr. Dimitris Avramopoulos was appointed as the [Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and](#)

[Citizenship](#). The Commissioner responsibilities are, amongst others: developing a new European policy on regular migration; ensuring the full and correct implementation of the Common European Asylum System; tackling effectively irregular migration by ensuring effective and smooth return of irregular migrants; boosting the effectiveness of the EU border management system; enhancing security by intensifying EU action in preventing and fighting organised crime, particular trafficking in human beings, smuggling and cybercrime; countering radicalisation and fighting terrorism.

WHAT IS THE EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK (EMN)?

A network co-ordinated by the European Commission, assisted by a Service Provider, in co-operation with National Contact Points (EMN NCPs) established in each Member State plus Norway. Its purpose is to provide up-to-date, objective, reliable and comparable information on migration and asylum, with a view to supporting policymaking in the European Union in these areas, as well as to the wider public. More information, as well as all EMN outputs, is available at www.emn.europa.eu.

1. GENERAL POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

★ The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights held its [annual Fundamental Rights Conference](#) on 10th and 11th November in Roma focusing on Fundamental Rights and Migration to the EU. The high-level event was co-hosted together with the Italian Presidency of the Council of the European Union and brought together over 250 policy makers and practitioners from across the EU. Main topics of discussion included the means of alleviating the effects of the current migration pressures at the EU's external sea and land borders, while fully respecting fundamental rights. During his [speech, Commissioner Avramopoulos](#) also stressed the importance of the promotion of the human rights of migrants.

- ★ On the 3rd -7th November 2014 the International [Metropolis Conference](#) took place in Milan, Italy. The Conference dealt with a number of migration-related issues, such as: forced migrations particularly from the Mediterranean; policies towards undocumented migrants; global migration management; integration policies and diversity; migration governance in the EU post-Stockholm Program; and development through migration.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- ★ **Belgium:** a [new federal government](#) was established since October 2014, including a new State Secretary on Immigration and Asylum. The new government aims to continue working on a coherent, effective and qualitative asylum and migration policy, respecting the international commitments. In particular, it focusses on providing high-quality reception, transparent and fast procedures on the one hand and a humane but firm return policy on the other. The thorough evaluation of asylum and migration policies, leading towards more transparency, quality and efficiency, is also foreseen, as well as the commitment to tackle improper parallel procedures. The main asylum and migration priorities of the coalition agreements can be found [here](#).

2. LEGAL MIGRATION

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

Economic migration

- ★ **France:** In August 2014, the [Decree n° 2014 – 921 of 18 August 2014](#) entered into force and provided measures to improve the reception of foreign talents. Amongst other changes, the medical examination is no longer mandatory for specific categories of migrants (e.g. scientists-researchers, artists, holders of the “skills and talents” residence permit, posted workers and their family members) when arriving in France. Furthermore, foreign students looking for a first professional experience in France are no longer required to apply for a temporary residence authorisation four months before their “student” residence permit expires. Finally, if foreign scientists are involuntarily deprived of employment, their residence permit may be extended for one year.
- ★ **Ireland:** The Irish Department of Enterprise Jobs and Innovation together with the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration service introduced the [Reactivation Employment Permit \(REP\) Scheme](#) on 1st October 2014. The scheme is designed to allow foreign nationals who enter the state on a valid employment permit, but who fall out of the system through no fault of their own or who have been badly treated or exploited in the workplace, to work legally again.
- ★ **Latvia:** On 1st September 2014, amendments to the Immigration Law came into force. According to these, the minimum value of a property for acquisition for which a person can obtain a temporary residence permit in Latvia was raised to € 250,000. Before these amendments, the value of the property was €142,300 in Riga planning region and € 71,150 outside such region; in addition it was also possible to buy several properties in order to reach the necessary value. The amendments have therefore established that the real estate acquired shall be a single functional build-up property. Also, when applying for the first time for a temporary residence permit, the applicant must pay 5% of the value of the real estate as a tax to the state budget.
- ★ **The Netherlands:** As a result of the failed negotiations with Morocco on amending the treaty in line with changes to the Dutch social security system, the Dutch government decided to terminate the [Netherlands' social security treaty](#) with Morocco. In June, the Dutch Senate passed a bill to stop the payment of child benefits and child budget to recipients in countries outside the EU. Currently, the Netherlands is also holding talks with other countries to amend treaties in this area.

Judgment of the European Court of Justice Case [491/13](#)

On 10th September 2014 the Court ruled that according to the EU Students Directive (Directive 2004/114/EC), a Member State is obliged to admit to its territory a third-country national who wishes to stay for more than three months for study purposes, when that national meets the general and specific conditions exhaustively listed in the Directive. The Court notes that the Directive is intended to promote the mobility of students from third countries to the EU in order to promote Europe as a world center of excellence for studies and vocational training. Thus, to allow a Member State to introduce additional conditions for admission would be contrary to that objective.

Also, on 1st October 2014, [a joint agreement](#) between employer organisations in the Asian restaurant industry, the Employee Insurance Agency (UWV) and the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) took effect. Under this agreement, a limited number of single permits for work and residency (GVVA) for qualified Asian cooks can be issued for the next two years without being subject to checks by the UWV for the available supply of “priority workers” (candidates in the Netherlands and Europe who are looking for work and who have priority).

Family reunification

- ★ **The Netherlands:** The Netherlands Institute for Human Rights concluded in a [report](#) that family reunification laws in the country are too strict and hence people who want to bring their family to the Netherlands face needless obstacles. The Dutch government does not share this view. The response of the Secretary of State to the report can be found [here](#).

In October 2014 the Advisory Committee on Migration Affairs (ACVZ) also published an [advisory report](#) on the implementation of migration policy on family members of persons who have been granted an asylum residence permit. The report examines the relationship between Dutch policy implementation on family members of asylum residence permit-holders and international and European law.

Student Migration

- ★ **Poland:** In September 2014 Poland signed the [first student exchange agreement with an Arabic country](#) - the Sultanate of Oman. Similar agreements are being negotiated with the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. Also, as part of a new initiative of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education to support internationalisation, projects submitted by Polish Universities aimed at promoting Polish higher education abroad and attracting international students, have been selected and will receive state funding.

3. INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION AND ASYLUM AND UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

EU AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

- ★ In August and September 2014 EASO also published two Country of Origin Information (COI) reports. The first one entitled [South and Central Somalia: Country Overview](#) provides a comprehensive overview of facts relevant to the asylum application process of Somali nationals in several EU and associated countries. The second report, entitled [Chechnya Women - Marriage, Divorce and Child Custody](#) gives an account of the situation of women in Chechnya and the effects of the islamisation of Chechnya on women's rights and their position in society, including the so-called 'virtue campaign' launched by President Ramzan Kadyrov on women's dress code.

LATEST RELEVANT STATISTICS

- ★ EASO published its [Quarterly Asylum Report for the Q2 2014](#). The report states that during the Q2 2014, a total of 130,900 **applications for international protection** were lodged in the EU, **representing a 13% increase** when compared with Q1 2014. This pattern reflects the trend registered during 2013. The five main groups of **asylum applicants** during Q2 2014 **originated from Syria, Western Balkan countries, Eritrea, Afghanistan, and Nigeria**. As registered in the previous quarter, the main destination countries were **Germany, Sweden and France**, together **receiving 55% of all asylum applicants** in the EU.
- ★ EASO statistics also showed that a **significant rise** in the numbers of **asylum applicants** compared to Q1 2014 was registered in particular for the following nationalities: **Eritreans** (+263%), **Maliens** (+ 78%), **Nigerians** (+36%) and **Syrians** (+24%).
- ★ The **highest peak in number of asylum applications** in the EU 28 was reached in July 2014 with **56,840** total applications. (See Figure 1a in Annex).
- ★ A total number of **80,330 first instance asylum decisions** were issued in **Q2 2014**.¹ Total positive decisions for this period amounted at 33,650, while negative decisions accounted for 46,680 (see Figure 2 in Annex). The largest number of first instance asylum decisions were issued in **Germany** (19,820); followed by **France** (16,850), **Sweden** (9,410), **Italy** (8,650) and **Greece** (5,050).
- ★ One year after the Lampedusa disaster, the [UNHCR released a report](#) warning that there is an increasing number of people perishing while attempting to irregularly crossing the Mediterranean. As many as 165,000 people have crossed the dangerous sea route so far in 2014, a record compared to the previous years (60,000 in 2013). Moreover, the percentage of deceases has more than doubled from the period January-June (1%) to the period July-September 2014 (2.4%).

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- ★ **Cyprus:** On 6th October 2014, the children's shelter "Home for Hope" was officially inaugurated in Nicosia. The shelter has the capacity to host 24 unaccompanied minors seeking asylum. In August 2014 the expansion of the Reception and Accommodation Centre for Applicants for International Protection in Kofinou was also completed. The centre's capacity was significantly increased from 70 to 400 persons. Also in August 2014, a new Centre for Emergency Accommodation, for cases of mass influx of persons in need of international protection, was created outside the city of Nicosia. Following the opening of the centre, in September 2014, a total of 337 people coming from Syria were rescued at sea by the Cypriot Authorities and transferred to the centre.

¹ Figures exclude Austria as statistics were not yet available

- ★ **France:** Following the introduction of [Law n° 2014 - 891 of 8 August 2014](#), applicants for international protection in “fast track” or “Dublin” procedure are entitled to the temporary waiting allowance (allocation temporaire d’attente (ATA)). In 2014 the amount of the ATA was established to €340.50 per month.

On 22nd August 2014, the **first displaced or threatened Iraqi nationals**, belonging to minorities who were persecuted for their religious beliefs, **were received in France**. More Iraqi nationals are expected to arrive in France and they will be able to enter France with a long-stay visa for asylum purposes or “visitor” visa. The examination time of their application for international protection has been shortened and priority will be given to applications of persons who have family members in France.

- ★ **Germany:** On 6th November, [a new law](#) adding Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to Germany’s list of presumed safe countries of origin entered into force. The act reduces to three months the time asylum applicants and foreigners, whose deportation has been suspended, must wait before being allowed to work. This provision is intended to give asylum applicants the earlier opportunity to financially support themselves by taking up employment.

- ★ **Ireland:** The Irish Department of Justice and Equality announced a [Working Group](#) to examine improvements to the Protection process and the Direct Provision Reception system.

In addition, subsidiary protection applications may now be made at the same time as applications for refugee status. This follows the Court of Justice of the European Union ruling in the case of *HN v The Minister for Justice, the Equality and Law Reform, Ireland and the Attorney General*, for which the Office for Refugee Appeals Commissioner (ORAC) issued an [Important Notice regarding the making of applications for Subsidiary Protection by Applicants for Refugee Status](#).

- ★ **The Netherlands:** From September 2014, families with minor children applying for asylum at Schiphol Airport are no longer placed in a closed application centre but sent to an open application centre.

- ★ **Poland:** An informal [coalition](#) of NGOs supported by the UNHCR, appealed to policy-makers in Poland to provide stateless persons with the greater protection, including Poland’s accession to the *Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons*. In addition, after NGOs providing legal aid to asylum seekers and irregular migrants stressed that the delayed adoption of the AMIF National Programme would cause the reduction of legal assistance in the first half of 2015, the Minister of the Interior pledged to establish a separate fund for legal services provided to asylum seekers.

During the reporting period, an [information campaign](#) was also launched in reception centers aimed at informing asylum seekers who are potential victims of sexual and gender based violence about the possible support and assistance provided.

- ★ **Spain:** a resettlement mission to Jordan took place in October 2014. The mission, organised by the Ministry of Interior together with the Ministry of Employment and Social Security, was carried out within the framework of the Spanish national resettlement programme. As a result, 127 refugees of Syrian origin will be resettled in Spain. The arrival of the first group of Syrian refugees in Spain is expected before the end of the year.

4. ERADICATION OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

EU AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

- ★ The [8th EU Anti-Trafficking Day](#) was marked by a series of events across EU Member States on 18th October 2014. At EU level, the Commission presented a mid-term [report](#) of the 2012-2016 EU strategy accompanied by the [statistical report](#) on victims and traffickers for the years 2010-2012. The report provides an overview of all coordinated efforts made during the 2010-2014 European Commission’s mandate towards eradicating human trafficking.
- ★ On the occasion of the 8th Anti-Trafficking day (18 October), a number of EU agencies, including the European Police College (CEPOL), Europol, Eurojust, The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (Frontex) and the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), have issued a [joint report on their joint actions in the field of trafficking in human beings](#).

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- ★ **The Netherlands:** In September 2014, [research](#) of the National Rapporteur on Human Trafficking and Sexual Violence against Children showed that those suspected of human trafficking have been convicted more often in 2012 and 2013 than in previous years. The courts have also increasingly been imposing heavy punishments since 2010. A total number of 1,437 potential victims of human trafficking were recorded in 2013.
- ★ **Poland:** The Ministry of the Interior announced its decision to allocate additional funds (+10%) in 2015 to provide assistance and support to victims of human trafficking through the National Consulting and Intervention Centre for Victims of Trafficking.

5. SCHENGEN BORDERS AND VISAS

EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

- ★ On 10th November 2014 the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) issued two reports on the respect of fundamental rights of third country nationals entering the EU through [air borders](#) and [land borders](#). The research was conducted in five airports and six main land border crossing points. Potential infringements of fundamental rights of non-EU citizens were reported, together with several FRA's proposals to improve right's safeguard at the borders.
- ★ On 29th October 2014 the Commission adopted two reports concluding that [Colombia](#) and [Peru](#) meet the criteria to start negotiating agreements allowing their citizens visa-free access to the Schengen area. Negotiations may start in the first trimester of 2015.
- ★ The [first progress report regarding Turkey fulfillment of the requirements of the visa liberalisation roadmap](#) was presented by the Commission on 20th October 2014. While progress was noticed in the fields of migration and international protection, improvements are needed in other areas such as border management, police and judicial cooperation and document security to fully comply with the requirements of the visa roadmap.
- ★ On 10th October 2014, the European Commission adopted its first [report assessing the situation of non-reciprocity with certain third countries in the area of visa policy](#) since the revised visa reciprocity mechanism entered into force in January 2014. The countries concerned by the negotiations have been Australia, Canada, Japan and the United States.

Judgment of [Case C-575/12](#) of the European Union Court of Justice

On 4 September 2014 the Court of Justice ruled that in light of the provisions of the Schengen Borders Code, national legislation cannot require third-country nationals to present a valid visa at the border check necessarily affixed to a valid travel document. A valid uniform visa may also be affixed to an expired or cancelled document, because the cancellation of the concerned travel document by an authority of a third country does not imply that the uniform visa affixed to that document is automatically invalidated.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- ★ **Austria:** On 23th September 2014, a [ministerial proposal](#) for amendments to the Austrian Citizenship Act and the Border Control Act was issued. The proposal aims to prevent persons whose travel documents were withdrawn and minors who do not have the consent of their guardian from crossing Austria's borders. The proposal also enables the state to revoke Austrian citizenship from dual nationals who voluntarily and actively engage in armed conflicts outside of Austria (Citizenship Act).
- ★ **Poland:** Newly appointed Minister of the Interior presented her [priorities](#), among which ensuring the security of borders, in the context the Ukraine conflict, is included.
- ★ **United Kingdom:** On 6th October 2014 the Home Secretary signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Republic of Ireland to strengthen the Common Travel Area. This will allow the UK and Ireland to share data and exchange information to inform and determine immigration decisions and allow visitors from India and China to travel more easily between the two countries, while maintaining the security of the borders

6. EXTERNAL DIMENSION

EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

- ★ A Mobility Partnership was officially established between the EU and Jordan through a signed [Joint Declaration](#) on 9th October 2014. The partnership will ensure a better management of the movement of persons and improvements in the area of migration, asylum and borders. In particular, measures should be taken with regard to the access of qualified Jordanian citizens to employment, education and training opportunities in the EU.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- ★ **Austria:** In October 2014, the [European Commission initiated infringement proceedings](#) against Austria for not having properly implemented the EU Association Agreement with Turkey. According to the agreement, immigration conditions for Turkish nationals are not allowed to become stricter following Austria's accession to the EU in 1995.
- ★ **Poland:** in the framework of the Eastern Partnership Panel on Migration and Asylum, Poland hosted a [meeting](#) on joint opportunities and challenges in the field of legal labour migration which took place on 6th- 7th November. In addition, during the [Prague Process Senior Officials' Meeting](#) three new projects were officially initiated, including the project on identification of irregular migrants carried out by Poland together with Romania.

7. IRREGULAR MIGRATION AND RETURN

EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

- ★ On 1st November 2014 Frontex launched [the Joint Operation "Triton"](#) to support Italy's efforts in the Central Mediterranean. Triton will have an estimated budget of €2.9 million per month and so far 21 Member States have offered to participate providing human and technical resources.
- ★ The EMN Study "[The use of detention and alternatives to detention in the context of immigration policies](#)" and the corresponding [Inform](#) were published in November 2014. The study identified similarities, differences and best practices with regard to the use of detention and alternatives to detention in the context of immigration policies of the EU Member States and Norway.

LATEST RELEVANT STATISTICS

- ★ The [Frontex Risk Analysis Report](#) for the second quarter of 2014 was released in October 15th 2014. A **general increase in all indicators of irregular migration** was registered during the summer period, in parallel to what observed for asylum applications. Such increase was the highest- quarterly data- registered since 2007. Overall an **increase of more than 170% detections of illegal border crossing** was registered. Detections at sea border counted for 90% of **all detected illegal border-crossings**, and those at the **Italian sea border represented almost 3/4 of them** in Q2 2014. Compared to the first quarter of 2014, in Q2 2014 Italy reported an eightfold increase on illegal border-crossings, while numbers in Greece more than doubled.
- ★ **Eritrean** nationals registered the highest number of those detected in Q2 2014 (16,994 detections), followed by **Syrians** (16,432), **Sub-Saharan Africans** (8,733), **Maliens** (3,915) and **Afghani nationals** (2,739). The top-five countries of origin of third-country nationals refused entry were **Ukraine** (3,844) followed by **Albania** (3,342), **Russia** (2,255), **Serbia** (2,075) and **Belarus** (1,192). The top five nationalities found in illegal stay were **Syrians** (14,754), **Eritreans** (12,082), **not specified** (6,133), **Moroccans** (6064) and **Albanians** (4,655). Finally, the highest national group of irregular staying migrants returned were **Albanians** (6,217), **Pakistani** (2,414), **Moroccans** (2,224), **Indians** (2,196) and **Ukrainians** (1,916) representing together **38% of the total**. (See Figure 3a- 3d in Annex)

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- ★ **The Netherlands:** [The Secretary of State](#) announced that it is not necessary to change the return policy for migrants who have to return to countries affected by the Ebola virus. Also, it was further announced that if the health care system in the country of origin- affected by the Ebola virus- is under pressure and medical treatment of migrants who are ill is not guaranteed, the forced return of migrants can be suspended.

8. INTEGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP

EU DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

- ★ The scope of the European Integration Forum has been extended with the [launch of the European Migration Forum](#) on 15th October 2014. The European Migration Forum will continue to be a participative platform covering several topics related to immigration and asylum, with a greater involvement of civil society organisations. The first meeting of the Forum will take place in Brussels on the 26th – 27th January 2015.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- ★ **Austria:** On 2nd October 2014, a [ministerial proposal](#) for a new Islam Act in Austria was issued. The latter would amend the Islam Act of 1912 in line with current requirements of a modern state of law. Amongst other amendments, the proposal requires Islamic religious organisations in Austria to be financially self-sufficient. The new law would also only allow recognised organisations to deliver religious teachings and would require them to present their materials in German. The proposal was criticised by several Islamic communities and institutions in Austria.

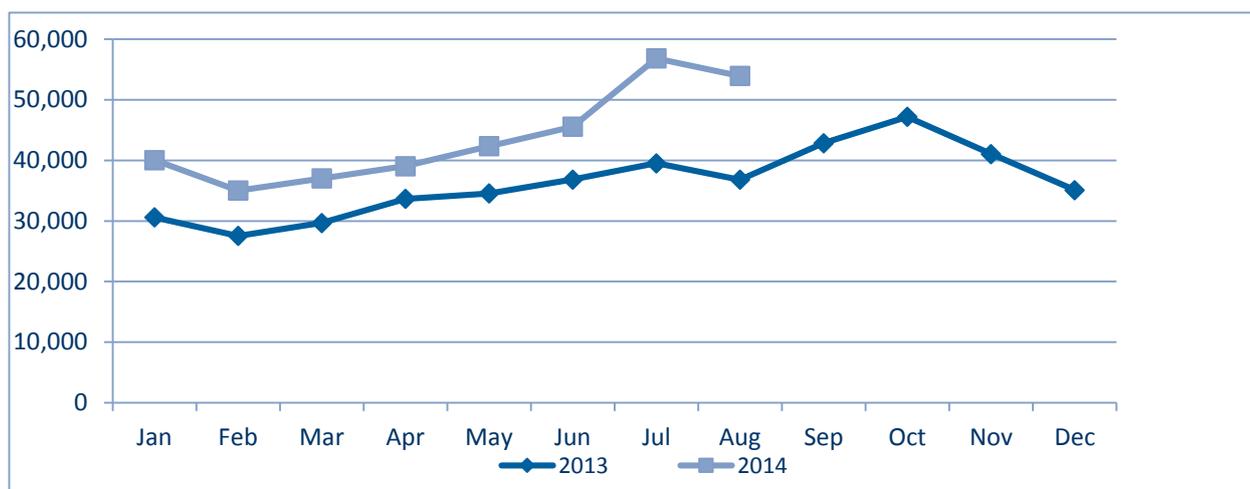
Also in October 2014, Austria seconded an [integration commissioner](#) to the Austrian embassy in Belgrade (Serbia), thereby expanding its implementation of pre-integration measures in countries of origin. The integration commissioner provides counselling for potential migrants who would like to immigrate to Austria.

- ★ **Italy:** As from November 2014, foreign nationals who wish to apply for Italian citizenship can communicate with the Department for Civil Liberties and Immigration (Ministry of the Interior) via Certified Email (PEC) which aims to reduce the application processing period. Applicants may use PEC to officially send information, clarifications and additional documents. An on-line service to check the status of applications is already available.
- ★ **Netherlands:** On 1st November 2014 a new [basic civic integration exam](#) took effect. The exam is no longer undertaken by telephone, but it is now computer-based. According to the [Fifth Refugee Integration Barometer](#) published by the Dutch Council for Refugees the economic integration of refugees is stagnating. The latter further stressed that strict family reunification rules in the Netherlands make it more difficult for refugees to integrate.

ANNEX: EU & COMPLEMENTARY STATISTICS, ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, OTHER EMN OUTPUTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

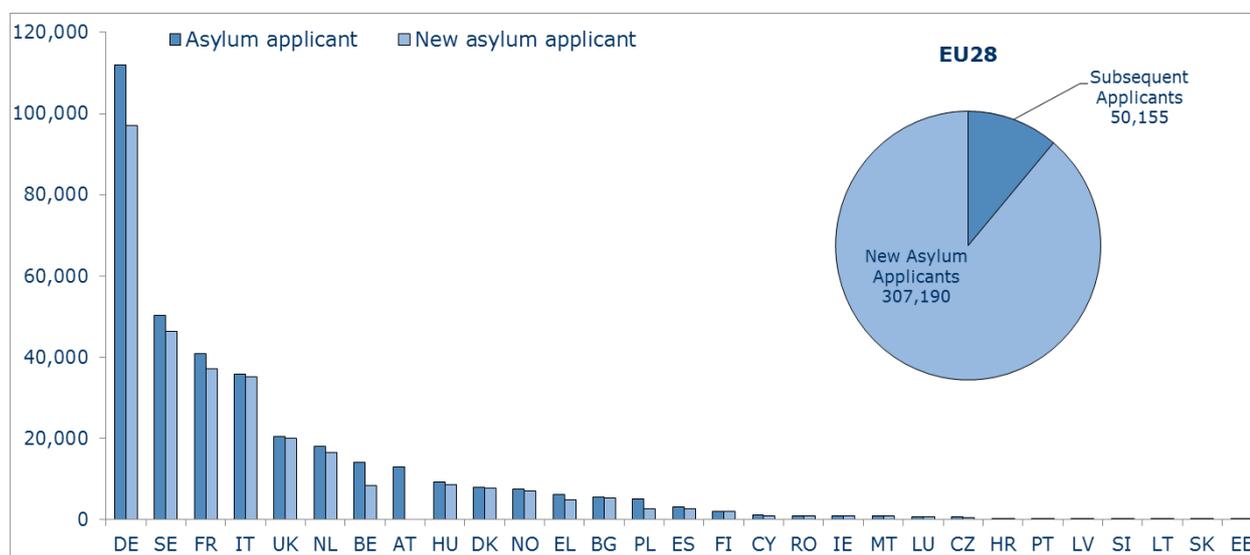
EU Figures

Figure 1a: Asylum applications in EU-28, January 2013 – August 2014



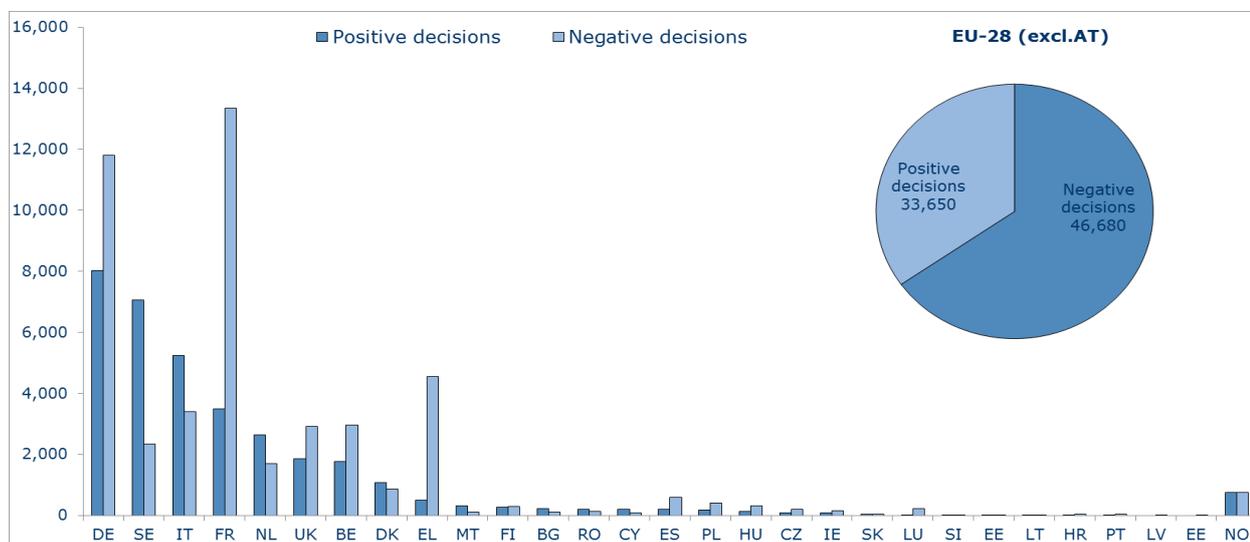
Source: Eurostat [migr_asyappctzm], accessed on 18th November 2014. NL data is provisional.

Figure 1b: Asylum and new asylum applicants in EU-28 and Norway, January – August 2014 (monthly data)



Source: Eurostat [migr_asyappctzm], accessed on 12th November 2014. Data for NL is provisional. No data available for Austria on new asylum applications.

Figure 2: First instance asylum decisions in EU-28 and Norway, second quarter 2014 (quarterly data)



Source: Eurostat [migr_asydcfstq], accessed on 12th November 2014– Negative decisions include also “Dublin decisions” (according to Art. 4, EC Regulation n. 862/2007) Data were not yet available for Austria.

Figure 3a: Illegal cross-border crossing – Top nationalities (in %)

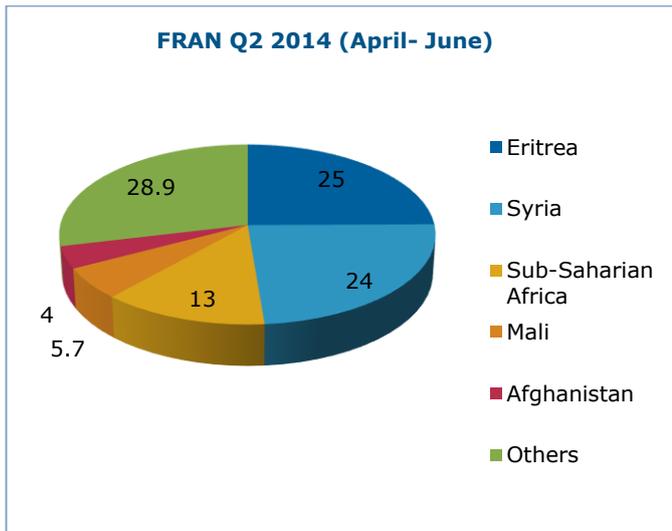


Figure 3c: Illegal stay – Top nationalities (in %)

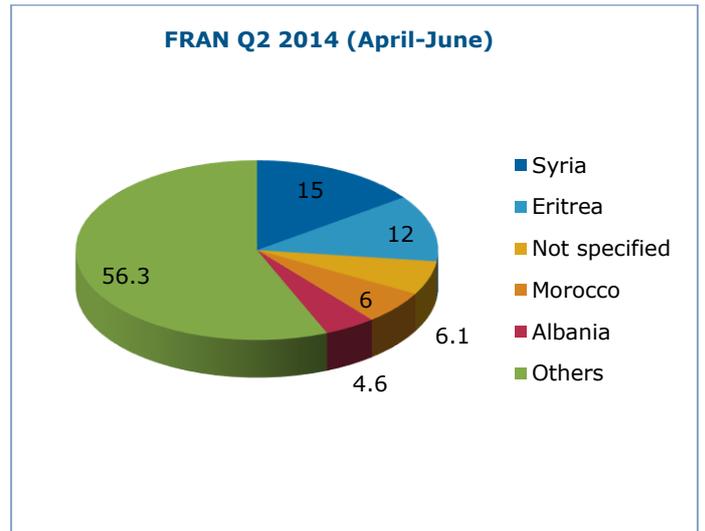


Figure 3b: Refused entry – Top nationalities (in %)

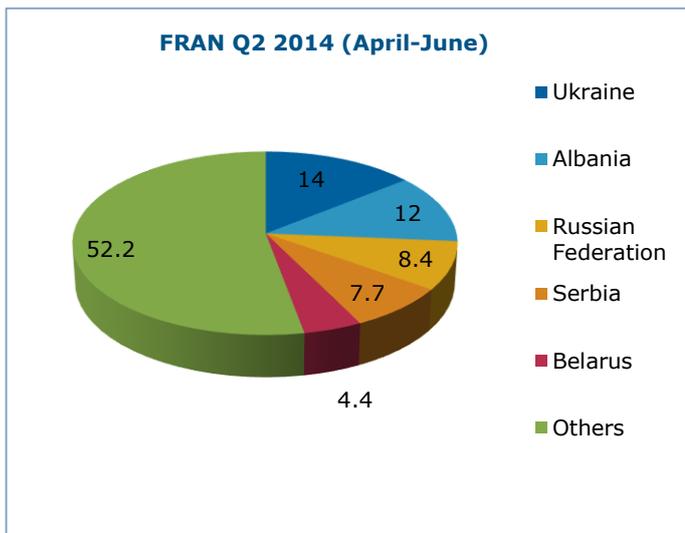
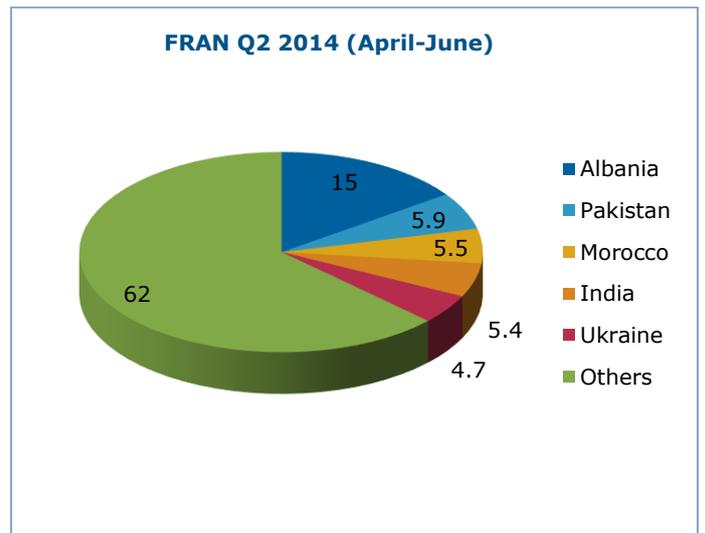


Figure 3d: Effective return – Top nationalities (in %)



Note: Data were not yet available for Austria.

Source: FRONTEXT FRAN Q2 2014 (April - June)

Latest available national statistics

LEGAL MIGRATION

- ★ **Poland:** A [sharp increase in the number of foreigners working](#) (mainly nationals of Ukraine) in the first half of 2014 was noted. As many as 30.5% more employers' declarations of intent to employ a foreigner (under so-called simplified procedure) were registered, and 16.5% more work permits were issued when compared to the respective period in 2013. The increase in nationals from Ukraine appears to stem inter alia from the deterioration of the situation in Ukraine, as well as the entry into force of the new Polish immigration law (simplifying procedures). The number of visas issued to nationals of Ukraine also increased, by some 20% between the 1st January and 30th October 2014 (the majority of which are Schengen visas) compared to the respective period of 2013.
- ★ **United Kingdom:** The Office for National Statistics' published its report on *Migration Statistics Quarterly* (produced with Home Office, Department for Work and Pensions and National Records of Scotland) on 28th August 2014 providing the latest national figures on UK migration flows.

INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION AND ASYLUM AND UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

- ★ **Poland:** Due to a significant decrease (approx. 62%) in the [number of asylum applications](#) recorded in the period January-November 2014 when compared to the corresponding period in 2013, Poland expects to register in 2014 the lowest number of asylum applications in the past 3-4 years. In addition, due to situation in Ukraine, the number of nationals of Ukraine submitting asylum applications continues to grow in Poland (1,940 applications recorded between 1st January and 12th November 2014 compared to 46 applications filed in 2013) although less sharply since September.

IRREGULAR MIGRATION AND RETURN

- ★ **Poland:** the number of foreigners refused entry between 1st January and 31st October in Poland fell by almost 45% when compared with the respective period in 2013, whereas the number of foreigners found illegally present as well as apprehended for illegally crossing the EU external border raised by nearly 15% and 40%, respectively. In both cases, the highest numbers were recorded with regard to citizens of Ukraine, Russia and Belarus.

National legislative updates

IRREGULAR MIGRATION AND RETURN

- ★ **Italy:** On the occasion of the closing of the *Mare Nostrum* operation, which was replaced by the *Triton* operation, Italian Ministers Mr. Alfano and Ms. Pinotti thanked all those who took part in the sea operations, including the Italian navy, law enforcement authorities and port authorities, noting that *Mare Nostrum* had provided an opportunity to put to the test coordination between different State actors involved in the operations, and that the test was seen as successful.
- ★ **United Kingdom:** The Home Office's Immigration Statistics for the period April to June 2014 were on 28th August 2014 providing the latest national figures on those subject to immigration control.

IRREGULAR MIGRATION AND RETURN

- ★ **The Netherlands:** A [Country Assessments Report](#), together with a [practical toolkit for return](#) was published by the IOM Netherlands. The reports researched the challenges migrants with chronic medical conditions face during their reintegration process. The IOM also produced the [booklet 'Seventeen Return Stories'](#) in which migrants tell about their personal experiences after return.

Other EMN outputs and upcoming events (see also the [EMN website.](#))

- ★ **Italy:** Within the framework of the Italian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the Department for Civil Liberties and Immigration of the Ministry of the Interior is organising an [International Conference - Towards a European Migration Policy: Strategies for a Multilevel Governance of Integration](#) on 17th-18th December 2014 in Rome at the headquarters of the National Research Council (CNR). International-level experts, institutions, organisations and NGOs working with migrants will explore key issues concerning integration processes. As an outcome of the Conference, the Italian Presidency will draft a document to submit to the JHA Council.
- ★ **Slovak Republic:** EMN NCP organised the third edition of the EMN education seminar entitled [Forced Migration – Causes and Possible Solutions](#). The seminar was held in Bratislava on 19th – 21st August 2014 and focused on the following topics: causes of contemporary displacement and current situation with regard to forced migration, asylum and other forms of international protection globally and in the EU, resettlement as a vital tool of international protection, and refugee hotspots in the Mediterranean region.
- ★ **Spain:** The first EMN National Conference entitled "*Migration as a Key Element of Competitiveness*" was held on 13th November 2014 in Madrid at the General Secretariat for Immigration and Emigration, Ministry of Employment and Social Security. The Conference focused on the analysis of business related economic migration, exploring the links between migration and economic competitiveness; delegates included policymakers, the European Commission Representation in Madrid, EMN NCPs from different countries, stakeholders and senior representatives of the business community. It provided a forum for dialogue and debate between administrations and "the administered" (large business associations, business schools, mobility enterprises). Panels focused on: "How can economic migration contribute to economic growth and business"; "Migration and international commerce" and; "Open to investors and entrepreneurs".