Towards a More Orderly Migration: Policy Options for Asylum Seekers

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Asylum seekers

Asylum seekers are all "[...] whose request for sanctuary has yet to be processed." National asylum systems are in place to determine who qualifies for international protection. However, during mass movements of refugees, usually as a result of conflict or violence, it is not always possible or necessary to conduct individual interviews with every asylum seeker who crosses a border. These groups are often called “prima facie” refugees. (UNHCR, 2022)

Why they cross borders to save their lives

War

Violence

Conflict

Persecution

[...] Refugees are defined and protected in international law [...]” and the 1951 Geneva Convention is the key legal document defining them. (UNHCR, 2022)
Several aspects of the application process need to be addressed:

1. **The duration** of the vetting process (6 months on average in the EU)

2. **Hosting policies** and inclusion (incl. relocation)

3. **Degree of integration** (incl. the right to work)

- 1 in 5 “economically active” refugees is unemployed (EU labor force survey)
- Practices are disperse in the EU
Caveats....

1. The economic literature did not address the pros and cons of better integration policies of asylum seekers (as opposed to refugees);

2. It rather focused on the integration of refugees (as opposed to economic migrants);

3. The standard approach looks at inflows of migrants as a simplistic binary phenomenon (refugees vs non-refugees) failing to accurately capture the complex reality;
Policy options

- Increasing border controls (incl. offshore)
- Expanding legal pathways (incl. “economic migrants”)
- Applying inclusive hosting policies (incl. labor integration)
- Implementing hybrid solutions (incl. “Refugees Labor Pathways”)
INCREASING BORDER CONTROLS (INCL. OFFSHORE)

Concerns:
- Opaque decision making
- Data privacy
- Independent evaluation of effectiveness

The EU New Pact on Migration and Asylum foresees more efficient and faster procedures for evaluating the applications;

This includes:
- pre-entry screening
- use of digital tools

In order to reduce pending applications

a. A pre-entry screening outside the borders of the Union

b. A new Regulation of processing the applications, which divides the applications between those that show a high or a low probability of being accepted. With the latter, direct repatriation is carried out.
EXPANDING LEGAL PATHWAYS (INCL. “ECONOMIC MIGRANTS”)  
Hosting countries may freely choose how many “non forced migrants” to accept.  
The new EU Pact on Migration and Asylum promotes 2 new actions:  
- Talent Partnership (building on Erasmus and Leonardo programs)  
- Skill and Talent Package (a search and match system from the admission of workers from third countries)  

Labour mobility in EU  
Revisions of quotas for labour mobility, as only 9% of flows in 2021 were motivated by “forced reasons”
APPLYING INCLUSIVE HOSTING POLICIES (INCL. LABOR INTEGRATION)

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Comparison of different integration policies

- Urban vs rural hosting
- Permanent vs temporary protection
- Concentration vs dispersion

Integration and relocation

The admission of a person in need of international protection to the territory of a State other than the first-entry State.

The EU-FRANK (European Union Action on Facilitating Resettlement and Refugee Admission through New Knowledge)

- improve the efficiency of existing relocation programs
- relocations should be diverted from the urban locations and directed towards rural areas.
IMPLEMENTING HYBRID SOLUTIONS (INCL. “REFUGEES LABOR PATHWAYS”)

❖ Relying solely on the humanitarian channel forces people to demonstrate their vulnerability to gain entry;

❖ Providing alternative legal pathways can recognize and value all aspects of a person without neglecting the need for protection:
  * University corridors;
  * Community sponsorship;
  * Refugee Labor Pathways;

Community sponsorship schemes and complementary pathways.
THANK YOU

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