

# WHAT WERE THE NEW TRENDS IN LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND PRACTICES ACROSS THE EU ON MIGRATION AND ASYLUM IN 2018?

## EMN FLASH #6 - 2019

Introduction to the EMN Annual Report on Migration and Asylum 2018

### Background

2018 marked a decrease of arrivals of asylum seekers and irregular migrants compared to pre-2015 levels. Despite this reduction, Member States and Norway still had to face challenges to manage the integration or return of large number migrants arrived in Europe during the previous years. As a result, Member States and Norway introduced changes in their legislation, policies and measures as a means to foster legal migration pathways, promote inclusion of migrants as well as ensure protection of refugees and vulnerable groups.

The EMN Annual Report on Migration and Asylum 2018, and the

accompanying National Reports for all participating Member States and Norway, provide a rich source of information to inform policy makers and the wider public across a range of issues: What were the main developments in legal migration at EU level in 2018? What have been the main integration-related measures introduced at the national level? What approaches were taken to prevent the misuse of legal migration channels? Which actions were taken to ensure swifter and more effective returns? Some of the key trends and findings are introduced below.



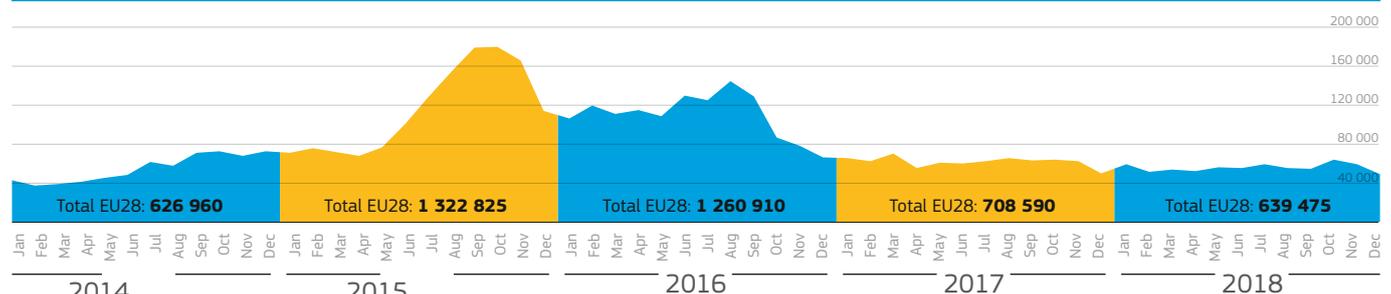
### Key trends and findings

- Several Member States **simplified procedures to facilitate the admission of specific groups of legal migrants** such as highly-skilled workers, trainees, au-pairs and volunteers.
- The majority of Member States and Norway **introduced changes to the rights and obligations of persons seeking international protection.**
- Member States continued to **improve protection of unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable groups** by training their staff to provide better services. Moreover, the definition of vulnerability has been widened to include wider groups at risk.
- Almost all Member States **revised their inclusion plans and strategies**, following the migration crisis, and broadened their integration measures, aiming at empowering migrants to actively become members of their host society.
- Several Member States **introduced the possibility of revoking citizenship** awarded to third-country nationals in case of national security concerns.

- Increasing the effectiveness of border controls was a priority** for Member States as they adopted new strategies, reinforced border personnel and also strengthened cooperation with neighbouring and third countries as well as Frontex.
- Many Member States **intensified the fight against migrant smuggling**. While decreasing overall, irregular migration increased significantly through the Western Mediterranean/Atlantic and the Eastern Mediterranean routes.
- The majority of Member States **revised their national strategic policies to fight trafficking in human beings**, also by ratifying key international conventions and focussing on building capacities of their staff to ensure early detection and identification of victims.
- Several Member States **improved and streamlined procedures to implement swift and effective returns policies**, including fostering voluntary returns.



### Asylum applications in the EU 28: January 2014 – December 2018



Source: Asylum and first time asylum applicants, Eurostat (migr\_asyappctzm), extracted on 6 April 2019.

#### FIND OUT MORE

- About the report:** [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/reports\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports_en)
- About the National Reports:** [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/reports/nationalreports\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/nationalreports_en)
- About the EMN:** <http://www.ec.europa.eu/emn>
- EMN Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/EMNMigration>