

Summaries

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Asylum seekers in Europe: the geopolitical context

R.P.W. Jennissen

In recent years, the number of asylum seekers in Europe has increased again. According to the figures of Eurostat, more than 600.000 applications for asylum were submitted in the countries of the EU in 2014.

This is more than double compared to 2010. This article seeks to provide explanations for this sudden increase. Furthermore, this article contains a detailed description of the long route which refugees who lodge an asylum application in a Northern or Western European country have to accomplish. Many considerations have to be made during this route. Other people than the refugees themselves (i.e. traffickers) make these considerations as well and they are often restricted by the circumstances.

In search for protection in a free world. Asylum migration to Europe analyzed

H.B. Entzinger

The arrival of asylum seekers has become a major political and social issue in Europe recently, although not for the first time in history. This article describes and analyses the reasons why growing numbers of undocumented migrants come to Europe, many of them as asylum seekers. One important reason is growing political instability in a ring of countries that surround the EU. The article also describes the different routes undocumented migrants take to the EU, the rapid changes that occur in the choice of routes, and the backgrounds of these changes. Although most attention goes to the risky transit in the Central Mediterranean area, and the number of migrants taking this route is growing, a majority of asylum seekers has reached the EU via other

routes. Finally, this article also indicates roads towards finding solutions to the issue; this can only be achieved in the context of the EU.

Frontex and the limits of its mandate

M.H.A. Strik

As an EU agency operating at the external borders of the EU, Frontex is actively involved in combating illegal migration. Since a rising number of migrants drown in the Mediterranean Sea or are pushed back to unsafe third countries, Frontex is being accused by human rights organizations for violating the fundamental rights of the EU. The Agency however maintains that it can't be held accountable for human rights violations, as it is only assisting Member States, and not taking over their responsibility. This article analyses if this position is correct in the light of the growing tasks and mandate Frontex is granted by the EU.

The infinite dynamics of a migrant's journey

J. Schapendonk

In the context of the most recent European policy initiatives towards putting a halt on illegal immigration from Africa, this article discusses the transnational environment of West African migrants and the dynamics of their migration routes. By following one migration story more closely and by relating this route with the experiences of other migrants the article gives a clear insight into the aspirations of migrants, the often intangible way their journeys are facilitated, as well as into the various results of asylum procedures in Europe. The author argues that a European migration policy should go beyond the securitizing of migration through strategies aiming at immobilizing African migrants. This policy will prove to be ineffective since the aspirations of African migrants are constantly fed by political instability and the transnational reality of globalization.

Dublin: blind faith between states is fictional. On granting percentages and allocations

R. Bruin, S.G. Kok and A. Terlouw

In light of the high numbers of persons entering the EU via the southern borders and the current uneven distribution of asylum seekers (five Member States of the EU currently received in 2014 more than 70% of the total amount of refugees), there is a clear and urgent need

for the EU ministers to ensure a fairer distribution of asylum seekers within the EU. The Dublin Regulation's system of allocating the responsibility for an asylum request does not offer a solution for this challenge, also because Member States cannot have a blind faith in the standards of a number of states for processing asylum requests. There are significant differences in the application of the law and the procedures.

The Arabic Spring and Article 1F Refugee Convention

M. Bolhuis and J. van Wijk

In this article, the authors discuss in general terms the relevance of Article 1F Refugee Convention in relation to the recent increased asylum influx and the 'Arab Spring'. More specifically, they answer the question to what extent it can be expected that the application of Article 1F is an appropriate means for identifying potential IS sympathizers and thus possibly for removing the threat of future terrorist attacks. With regard to countries like Syria it is more likely that relatively low-level persons who have been employed as a soldier or officer in a repressive state apparatus are excluded on the basis of Article 1F, than IS sympathizers with future terrorist plans. When the situation in Syria does not improve, it is likely that those 1F-excluded individuals will end up in a limbo situation for a prolonged period of time. This not only has significant negative consequences for the individuals involved, but also means that every 1F-exclusion today creates a political problem for the future.

A residence permit, but what then? The socio-economic integration of refugees in the Netherlands

J.F.I. Klaver

Integration is an essential element of refugee protection. This article presents data on the socio-economic integration of refugees in the Netherlands who have received a residence status between 2000 and 2010. Many refugees are unable to integrate successfully into the Dutch labor market, which results in high levels of welfare dependency and poverty. The article furthermore discusses developments in Dutch integration policies, with a specific focus on civic integration, family reunification and citizenship. These policies are increasingly characterized by imposing more stringent requirements on migrants as a precondition for obtaining permanent residency and citizenship.

As such, these policy developments prove to be counterproductive to refugee integration in the Netherlands. A brief comparison between the Netherlands on the one hand and Denmark, the United Kingdom and Belgium/Flanders on the other, shows that the Netherlands pursue a particularly severe course with regard to imposing integration requirements on refugees.