

Hungary – governance through exclusion

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	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Application, total	1,693	2,157	18,900	42,777	177,135	29,432	3,397
3 Main countries of origin	Afghan (649) Kosovar (211) Pakistani (121)	Afghan (880) Pakistani (327) Kosovar (226)	Kosovar (6,212) Pakistani (3,081) Afghan (2,328)	Kosovo (21,453) Afghan (8,796) Syrian (6,857)	Syrian (64,587) Afghan (46,227) Kosovar (24,454)	Afghan (11,052) Syrian (4,979) Kosovar (3,873)	Afghan (1,432) Iraqi (812) Syrian (577)
Refugee	52	87	198	240	146	154	106
Subsidiary Protection	139	328	217	236	356	271	1,110
Tolerated Stay	14	47	4	7	6	7	75
Rejection	740	751	4,185	4,553	2,917	4,675	2,880
Termination	623	1,110	11,339	23,406	152,260	49,479	2,049

Asylum applicants 2011-2017

Abstract

Hungary has developed one of the most restrictive asylum regimes in the EU. This poster summarizes Hungarian asylum and border control policy, reception policy and their effects on asylum seekers. We carried out our research in Hungary between January 2018 and December 2019. The research locations were Budapest, Szeged and at both sides of the Hungarian-Serbian border.

References

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Introduction

The Hungarian research within RESPOND brings together legal, policy research on immigration and asylum, the migration and border control practices, reception policy, and ultimately the Hungarian government's approach to the project of Europeanisation. In the past decade, Hungary has become a notoriously anti-immigrant Member State that rejected migration policies set by the European Commission.

Main Results

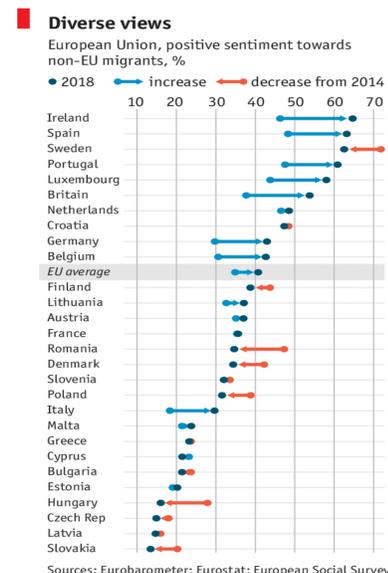
Starting with 2015, the Fidesz-KDNP government systematically dismantled the asylum system in Hungary. Due to numerous amendments to the Asylum Act, the relevant legislations and the Constitution, the sole purpose of the current legislative and political framework has become to exclude and discriminate, rather than to protect. Not only asylum seekers, but also those with humanitarian concerns, members of NGOs that work with and protect asylum seekers and refugees have been criminalised.

The Hungarian government actively pursued its own humanitarian policy that is selective for Christians and borders Islamophobia. The notorious border fence, migration control practices that are at times brutal, the dire circumstances in the reception centres and transit zones, the controversial and ever changing admission and asylum procedures have all led to a significant drop in the number of asylum applications. The Commission has launched numerous infringement procedures against Hungary on a wide range of asylum related issues and to date none of which has resulted in any improvements in Hungarian policies.

The governing party coalition has exploited asylum seekers for electoral purposes. The large-scale and continuous anti-immigrant campaign waged a considerable impact on Hungary turning it into one of the most xenophobic member states of the EU.

Methods and Material

- Analysis of the legal framework and policy.
- Analysis of dominant political narratives.
- Ethnographic research on both sides of the Hungarian-Serbian border: Subotica, Szeged and the surrounding villages.
- Semi-structured interviews with 10 Hungarian stakeholders and 20 individuals who were granted protection status in Hungary.



Sources: Eurobarometer; Eurostat; European Social Survey
The Economist
<https://www.economist.com/graphic-detail/2018/07/25/european-xenophobia-reflects-racial-diversity-not-asylum-applications>

Lessons Learned

- The Hungarian government should safeguard complete adherence to its international obligations including accountability and transparency.
- In order for both migrants and NGOs to enjoy much deserved stability and support, the EU should also make sure that the Hungarian government is held accountable. So far it has been the European Parliament that took a stance against Hungary. What is needed is the European Commission coming more to the fore and becoming more responsive to the demands of the EP as well as independent oversight agencies. Infringement procedures should be taken more seriously and without being affected by political and national interests.