

EMN

European Migration Network



NATIONAL CONTACT POINT - MALTA

Newsletter

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Malta relocated

168

*asylum seekers from
Italy and Greece*

The Relocation Experience

An innovative mechanism of solidarity

By mid-September 2017, over 27,695 persons (19,244 from Greece, 8,451 from Italy) have been relocated. Nonetheless, additional efforts are necessary from all stakeholders. The Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland remain in breach of their legal obligations, and have not relocated a single person (Hungary and Poland). For this reason, on 26 July 2017, the Commission moved its infringement procedures forward and sent reasoned opinions to these Member States. On 6th September 2017, the European Court of Justice ruled that validity of the second Council Decision on relocation and dismissed the actions brought by Slovakia and Hungary. ECJ judges remarked that the EU institutions were legally correct when they adopted quotas. Despite its implementation problems the emergency relocation quotas have been an important

innovative policy. Malta, the smallest member state with the second highest rate of asylum applications as per million inhabitants, fulfilled its allocations for both Italy and Greece by 3rd October 2017. In fact, by this date, Malta relocated 168 asylum seekers from Italy and Greece. Other member states such as Finland, Lithuania, Luxembourg and Sweden will reach their commitment targets soon. The success of Malta portrays that the sharing of responsibility of asylum-seekers among member-states is possible. At a policy level, particularly during the Presidency of the European Council, Malta also emphasised the importance of fair sharing of responsibility and negotiated deals to push through on migration legislation, such as on the establishment of the EU Agency for Asylum and visa liberalization for Georgia and Ukraine.



Making the needs of migrant learners a priority

Over the past few years, Maltese schools have seen a rapid increase in the number of migrant learners. In July 2017 the number of migrant learners in our schools was 3,731 from a total population of 32,624 students. This means that more than 10 percent of the learners in Maltese primary state schools are currently non-Maltese.

Migrant learners come from all sort of different backgrounds and some of them do not speak Maltese nor English, our languages of schooling. The Migrants' Learners Unit, within the Ministry of Education and Employment, offers an induction course to newcomer learners who cannot communicate in Maltese and English, and who would therefore be unable to cope with the mainstream curriculum. The first objective of the unit is to ensure the emotional well-being of these children who have gone through

such a major change in their life. The second is to equip them with the linguistic skills that will enable their integration in the community. Induction classes are held on the same school premises of Maltese schools and the induction course is offered to all newcomer students and lasts for approximately one year.

Competence in the language of schooling is a precondition not only for integration but also for educational attainment. The induction programme thus acts as a form of intervention. It takes place for a limited period of time and is discontinued as soon as the learner is considered able to cope in the mainstream classroom.

In the near future the Unit plans to extend its services to areas such as the provision of additional language support to migrant learners who are already in mainstream schools and the possibility to attend social

activity classes where cohorts of Maltese and non-Maltese learners are invited to participate even during after school hours.

Intercultural education goes beyond passive coexistence. To create a truly inclusive education, a school must strive for equal opportunities and the right to participation for all. The Migrant Learners' Unit wants to equip migrant learners with the appropriate skills and language tools to be able to make use of these opportunities and access these rights.

The work being conducted by the Unit is made public via internet on migrantlearnersunit.gov.mt or the Facebook page Migrant Learners' Unit Malta.

Contributions and suggestions are welcome.



The Estonian EMN Annual Conference 2017

The Maltese National Contact Point of the European Migration Network took part in a two-day EMN Annual Conference organized by the Estonian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The Conference was titled “The EU in the Global Race for Talents: Challenges and Solutions in Strengthening the EU’s Competitiveness” and the key question was whether the European Union can compete for immigrants with talent and skills on an international level. Speakers emphasised that the demand for talented and skilled immigrants is growing across the world and all major economic powers are doing their best

to attract the best of international brain power. The discussion was furthermore narrowed down on how to attract and retain talent and skills as well as the facilitation of immigration procedures for foreign students, foreign workers and start-up founders. There was a common understanding by speakers and participants that talented and skilled professionals are becoming more mobile and their destination and reason for such a choice are drastically changing.

One must say that the difference in realities within the migration aspect between Southern, Western and Central European member-states on the one

hand and other members-states on the North Eastern periphery of the European Union such as Estonia on the other hand is very evident. Whilst the former category of member-states is struggling to cope with the influx of unskilled immigrants, the latter category is focused on the struggle to attract and retain immigrants with talent and skills. From a Maltese perspective, this imbalance should be dealt with through solidarity and cooperation between EU Member States as attested by Malta’s own discourse on migration during its 2017 Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

MR JEAN CARL CHIRCOP Ministry of Education and Employment

Upskilling for better integration of Third Country Nationals

Over the last few years, a number of Member States have experienced increasing migration, in particular from third countries. As a result, European societies and the composition of the EU’s population have experienced changes such as an ageing population and increasing diversity. Successful integration of third-country nationals into the host country is a key aspect to maximise the opportunities of migration. A holistic approach which targets the economic, social, political and cultural dimensions of integration should be adopted.

Labour market integration and the acquisition of basic skills is the foundation for further learning and

the gateway to employment and social inclusion. It also contributes to becoming part of the host country’s social and economic life. Against this background, Jobsplus, the Maltese Public Employment Service offers a number of services to all those who want to access the labour market. Jobsplus offers labour market related information and advice for individual jobseekers including career guidance and information on learning opportunities. Third-country nationals can access these services according to their ‘*qualification status*’.

Additionally, third country nationals are entitled to participate in employment-related education opportunities, which include short courses, traineeships, work



exposure, as well as trade testing. Such initiatives cover a variety of skills, such as employability and life skills, as well as manual skills and career-specific courses. These employment-related education opportunities aim to further increase employability and aid in the integration process by equipping participants with necessary skills to help make daily and working life run more smoothly, as well as strengthening communication and building an improved social life.

The EU Justice and Home Affairs Council

September 2017

The EU Justice and Home Affairs Informal Ministerial Council was held in Brussels on the 14th and 15th September 2017. Needless to say, migration was at the top of the agenda. EU Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris Avramopoulos confirmed the flows have gone down by 81% during last August, compared with the situation one year ago. However, he emphasized that there is still much more to do, by building on what has been achieved so far. He highlighted the importance of working and cooperating together with the African countries and to support Libya without neglecting the Eastern Mediterranean. He continued remarking that the situation is much better than it was before. That said, all member states should deliver on their commitments, particularly under the EU-Africa Trust Fund. It is also important to mention that numbers went down due to the cooperation and continuous implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement.

Regarding return policy, actual return transfers need to be stepped up for those who do not have the right to stay, while enhancing legal pathways for those who want to come to Europe. As an excellent means of legal entry, resettlement has to be stepped up especially in respect of vulnerable asylum seekers. More resettlement places had to be created and the number proposed is approximately 40,000 persons.

The same reasoning was adopted by the Estonian Minister of Interior who also underlined that changes were witnessed in the Eastern and Western Mediterranean routes. He continued saying that under the circumstances EU member states must keep working together to enforce a return policy, in cooperation with third countries together with the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement and relocation.

In relation with cooperation with third countries, there was relative success, since

an agreement with Bangladesh is to be signed on standard cooperation and identification. Moreover, President Juncker and Italian Minister Minniti, have both emphasized that stopping of immigration flows in the centre of the Mediterranean, relies on sufficient financial support. Different possibilities for such financial support exist through the EU Trust fund which will send a rapid signal to Libya that this area is our priority, prioritising the fact that reception capacity and conditions in Libya for migrants need to be improved as much as possible.

In conclusion Commissioner Avramopoulos highlighted the enormous progress which has been carried out on migration management and improving security, however, it is now time that EU member states and the European Commission take the work to the next level collectively.

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