

Asylum's reconstructed laws in the European Union

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Ukrainian asylum seekers in the Warsaw Central Train Station, March 2022

Jacob Sagers – The European Union's new immigration law has provoked diverging responses, as the 2024 European Union Parliament Elections are less than two months away. The bill gives greater leeway for countries to deport asylum seekers by rapid assessment, alongside increased border assistance from the E.U., to help alleviate the bloc's decade-long struggle with migration. Furthermore, the number of asylee seekers (someone who may be recognized as a refugee and is already within a European country) will be distributed according to a country's size and existing migrant population, with the option for countries to opt out of hosting new migrants by paying for other nations' costs associated with housing, food, and services. Given the rise of far-right parties and anti-immigrant sentiment throughout Europe, the bill serves as a last chance for compromise, to slow their support, and support more centrist parties as boundaries' importance shifts throughout the E.U.

Boundaries, or dividing lines between territorial entities, such as places or states, greatly impact whether someone can be an asylee and their fate. Boundaries are first created by **demarcation**, the process of establishing and gaining foreign recognition, of a boundary around a given territory through various means. The demarcation process then heavily influences asylees' fates, as some countries have higher chances of being approved compared to others. According to the **United Nations**, three countries produce 52% of refugees and asylees, or "a forcibly

displaced person seeking asylum in a different country they are in" – Syria, Afghanistan, and Ukraine. The sheer number of asylee seekers reflects policy, migration trends, and contemporary politics. For example, despite their shared borders, 90% of asylee applications from Syria are recognized and granted asylum throughout the E.U., while only 26% of applications from Iraq are. Despite recent and active conflicts in both countries, Syrians are highly favored due to the country's civil war and humanitarian crisis, even if each asylum seeker is not facing this exact experience. What occurs and is portrayed at the national level, through boundaries, shapes asylee seekers fates.

The new bill's consequences are currently unknown, but it will probably alter how migration and migration numbers operate in the bloc's foreseeable future. The bill also is not without its critics as left-wing groups argue it will complicate the migration process and harm asylum seekers' well-being. **Nationality** is actively used as a variable for determining asylee status in the bill's new rapid screenings, then boundaries will have even more influence on a world facing historic migration levels. The lives of individuals will inadvertently be categorized by issues on a broader scale, not necessarily their lived experiences. As the E.U. faces an election, asylee seekers may face new barriers into Europe.

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