EU countries fail to provide same standards in their refugee integration policies, new study shows

A new EU-funded study shows huge differences in the quality of refugee integration policies in European countries, despite standards set by EU and international law.Europe is far from providing a level playing field for refugees to achieve a better life.

The study presents a comparative, indicator-based assessment of the refugee integration frameworks in 14 countries: Czechia, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden. Though Europe's main way to provide global durable solutions to refugees is through long-termintegration, the study written for the "National Integration Evaluation Mechanism (NIEM)" reveals how Member State policies largely fail to deliver on this promise and a lack of harmonisation on refugee integration acrossthe EU. The key findings include:

- Refugees rarely experience fully favourable conditions to integrate in any area of life.
- The health and education sectors are making the greatest efforts to help those in need. Much more needs to be done by public housing, employment and training services.
- Countries are on average better in providing access to rights than in implementing the accompanying policies andmeasures that are actively supporting this integration.
- Administrative barriers are widespread, especially to help refugees access the housing they need.
- One of European countries' greatest challenges is coordinating their policies and getting locals and refugees themselves involved in designing the solution.
- Most national governments do not work in partnership with civil society and local and regional governments to develop and implement their policies.

"*This research provides governments and decision-makers with a tool to easily identify gaps in the legal and policy framework of their country, learn from what is being done in other EU member states and take steps to improve refugee integration*", says **Alexander Wolffhardt**, Integration Policy Analyst of the Migration Policy Group and one of the report's coordinating researchers. "*The more than 150 indicators are designed as a roadmap towards a comprehensive refugee integration policy. With our outreach to authorities, civil society and experts in each of the participating countries, the results will stimulate debate and help to develop evidence-based policies.*"

- The report "**The European benchmark for refugee integration: A comparative analysis of the National Integration Evaluation Mechanism in 14 EU countries**" can be found here.
- Co-authors of the report are Carmine Conte, Thomas Huddleston and Alexander Wolffhardt of the Migration Policy Group (MPG).
- Research was conducted in 14 countries by civil society and university partners of NIEM.
- Results feed policy dialogues on improved refugee integration in participating countries.

- Legal and policy indicators are the focus of analysis, as well as indicators on mainstreaming, coordination and efforts to involve refugees and locals.
- With this report, NIEM launches its regular evaluations of how governments respond to the challenge of long-term integration.
- **For further information on country results for Lithuania, contact Giedrė Blažytė, Diversity Development Group, at giedre@diversitygroup.lt.**
- **For further information on the European comparative results, contact Hind Sharif, Migration Policy Group, at hsharif@migpolgroup.com or at +32 2 230 59 30.**
- **For further information on the NIEM process in participating countries, contact: Ewa Kownacka, NIEM's International Coalition Officer, Migration Policy Programme, Institute of Public Affairs, at ewa.kownacka@isp.org.pl or at (+48 22) 556 42 77.**
- On **5 July 2019 at 11:00** Brussels time a **webinar will present key comparative findings** and will highlight how results feed into the NIEM national coalitions for improved refugee integration, with contributions from France, Hungary and Spain. Register here.

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