

EMN ad-hoc query on allocation of refugees to municipalities for integration purposes - Summary -

Question 1. Does your Member State regulate the dispersal of refugees and other persons that have been granted protection to municipalities once they have received a residence permit?

If **YES**:

- a) Please specify how (through law, economic incentives, information, etc.)
- b) What support does the state provide to the individual refugees and/or the municipalities that receive them?
- c) What obligations are placed on the individual refugees and the municipalities that receive them?

If **NO**:

- d) How does the settlement of refugees take place once they have received a residence permit?

In most Member States the dispersal of refugees is not regulated which means that the refugees, after getting a residence permit, are free to live where they want in the country (or stay in the municipality or region where they were accommodated while seeking asylum). Several countries state that most of the refugees prefer to live in, or close to, the major cities.

In the countries that have regulated the dispersal it is in several cases done by voluntary agreements between the municipalities and the central government. One exception in this respect seems to be NL that has an obligatory system where the municipalities are given, by the Ministry of Security and Justice, a “quotum” of refugees that should be housed by that municipality. The participation in this housing program is obligatory for the municipalities and the quotum is calculated as an even distribution based on the population in different municipalities.

In many Member States without a regulated system the economic support, for housing etc., is to a large degree directed directly to the refugees who then rent housing on their own or through municipalities. There is however some Member States where the municipalities get a specific grant for settled refugees.

In many countries the refugees are supposed to take part in various integration programs, stretching over different time spans. After a certain period of time, which varies from country to country, they have access to the same benefits as any national.

Question 2. Does your Member State share the Swedish experiences of a general shortage of available housing for newly arrived migrants?

A majority of the Member States state that they have the same problem as Sweden in terms of having problems finding available housing for newly arrived migrants. In many countries there is a general shortage of available housing that are affordable for newly arrived migrants (and sometimes also other groups with low income). This problem is often bigger in, or close to, the larger cities.

Some countries state that they also have problems providing financial aid to the refugee population. Other countries state that the situation is made harder by the fact that the number of refugees is hard to predict, and in some countries the refugees are free to move where they want, which may also complicate the situation. There are also examples where programs are aimed at promoting geographical mobility for refugees from the big cities to more rural areas where the housing situation often is better.

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