EU asylum rules: reform of the Dublin system

The influx of migrants and asylum seekers to Europe in recent years has shown the need for a fairer, more effective European asylum policy. Check out our infographic for more.
Although the record migratory flows to the EU witnessed in 2015 and 2016 have subsided, Europe - due to its geographic position and stability - is likely to remain a destination for asylum seekers and migrants amid international and internal conflicts, climate change and poverty.
There is need for an overhaul of EU asylum rules, and of the Dublin system in particular, in order to increase the EU’s preparedness for receiving migrants and asylum seekers and to ensure greater solidarity and a fairer sharing of responsibility among EU countries.

What are the Dublin rules?

The cornerstone of the EU asylum system, the Dublin regulation determines which EU country is responsible for processing applications for international protection. On 6 November 2017, the European Parliament confirmed a mandate for inter-institutional negotiations with EU governments on an overhaul of the Dublin rules. Parliament’s suggestions for a new Dublin regulation include:

- The country in which an asylum seeker first arrives would no longer be automatically responsible for processing the asylum application.
- Asylum seekers with a genuine link to a particular EU country should be transferred there.
- Those without a genuine link to an EU country should be shared fairly among all member states. Countries refusing to participate in the transfer of asylum seekers could lose EU funds.
- Security measures should be stepped up, and all asylum seekers must be registered upon arrival with their fingerprints checked against relevant EU databases.
• Provisions on minors should be strengthened and family reunification procedures accelerated.

Although the Parliament has been ready since November 2017 to enter negotiations on an overhaul of the Dublin system, EU governments have been unable to reach a position on the proposals.

Learn more about Parliament's suggested amendments in the infographic above and in this background note.

13.6 million

The number of new people forced to flee their home in 2018