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European Policy DIALOGUE FORUM

The Network for Dialogue
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The Network for Dialogue
Empowering Interreligious and Intercultural Action for the Social Inclusion of Refugees and Migrants.

www.network4dialogue.eu

networkfordialogue@kaiciid.org

NETWORK FOR DIALOGUE

Overview Document on Policy Briefs #4, #5 and #6

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Key terms

Dialogue is a secure means of communication between individuals or groups aimed at the exchange of views, knowledge, understandings, impressions and perceptions each person carries on any given topic, in order to reach a common understanding of the subject matter at the heart of a given dialogue… Dialogue is closely connected to learning, whether learning about others or about ourselves. The power of dialogue is to reduce misunderstandings, break stereotypes and prevent hate speech. It can strengthen tolerance, peace and respect for each individual or community[1].

"Interreligious" or **"interfaith" dialogue** can be defined as a means of bringing people of different religious identities together who seek to come to a mutual understanding that allows them to live and cooperate with each other despite their differences.

"Intercultural" dialogue is when participants come from different cultural backgrounds and gather to talk through their explicitly stated cultural identity lenses to create a better understanding of certain challenges. If the dialogue occurs among people who have identified with the same culture for the purpose of the dialogue, we can call it "intracultural" dialogue. Its objective is to enable us to live together peacefully and constructively in a multicultural world and to develop a sense of community and belonging. Intercultural dialogue can also be a tool for the prevention and resolution of conflicts by enhancing respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

The 1951 Refugee Convention defines a **refugee** as "someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion"[2].

A **first-time applicant for international protection** is a person who lodged an application for asylum for the first time in a given EU Member State and therefore excludes repeat applicants (in that Member State) and so more accurately reflects the number of newly arrived persons applying for international protection in the reporting Member State[3].

According to the International Organization for Migration, the word **migrant** is an umbrella term, not defined under international law, reflecting the common lay understanding of a person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons[4].

Integration is a two-way process of mutual adaptation between refugees and migrants and host societies into the social, economic, cultural and political life of the community[5].

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1 These definitions of dialogue and intercultural and interreligious dialogue are taken from pp. 13–14 in Network for Dialogue (2019): Inclusion through Dialogue: Promising Practices for Integration. https://www.kaiciid.org/publications-resources/inclusion-through-dialogue-promising-practices-integration

2 https://www.unhcr.org/uk/what-is-a-refugee.html

3 https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Asylum_statistics#Number_of_asylum_applicants:_decrease_in_2020

4 https://www.iom.int/who-is-a-migrant

5 https://unitedkingdom.iom.int/iom-uk-integration-hub

Key information about migrants in the EU in 2019[6]

— Around 2.7 million people immigrated to the European Union (EU) from non-EU countries and about 1.2 million people left the EU for a country outside the EU

— The top 10 nationalities of first residence permits were Ukraine, Morocco, India, China, Brazil, Syria, Russia, Turkey, United States and Belarus.

— The main grounds for issuing first residence permits to immigrants arriving in the EU were work (41%), family (27%) and education (14%).

— The EU countries that received most immigrants were Germany (886,300), Spain (750,500), France (385,600) and Italy (332,800)[7].

— In January 2020, out of 447.3 million people living in the EU, 23 million were non-EU citizens (5.1% of the EU's total population) and almost 37 million were born outside the EU (8.2% of all EU inhabitants).

Key information about asylum applications and refugees in the EU in 2020[8]

— 416,600 refugees applied for first-time asylum in the European Union. This number was significantly lower than when the number of applications peaked in 2015 (1.3 million) and 2016 (1.2 million) but also lower than the 631,300 first-time asylum applicants that arrived in 2019. This difference was mainly due to the outbreak of COVID-19, which led many countries to restrict movement across borders and temporarily interrupt the asylum application process in 2020. The number of refugees is likely to increase again.

— The asylum applicants came from almost 150 different countries. The largest groups came from Syria (15.2%), Afghanistan (10.6%), Venezuela (7.3%) and Colombia (7%).

— The EU countries that received the most first-time applications were Germany (102,500), Spain (86,400), France (81,800), Greece (37,900) and Italy (21,200).

— 141,000 asylum applicants were under 18 years old and 13,500 were unaccompanied children.

— Around 280,000 people were granted some sort of protection in the EU in 2020.

— At the end of 2019, 10% of the world's refugees lived in the EU, where they constituted 0.6% of the total population.

6 European Commission (2000): Statistics on migration to Europe. https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/promoting-our-european-way-life/statistics-migration-europe_en and Eurostat (2021): Migration and migrant population statistics. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Migration_and_migrant_population_statistics#Migration_flows:_Immigration_to_the_EU_from_non-member_countries_was_2.7_million_in_2

7 2020 population – Germany 83.8 million, Spain 46.8 million, France 65.3 million, Italy 60.5 million, Greece 10.4 million

8 European Commission (2000): Statistics on migration to Europe. https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/promoting-our-european-way-life/statistics-migration-europe_en and Eurostat (2021): Asylum Statistics. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Asylum_statistics#Number_of_asylum_applicants:_decrease_in_2020

Key information about volunteering (data from 2010)[9]

— 92–94 million (22–23%) adults were involved in volunteering in the EU.

— In Austria, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK over 40% of adults were involved in carrying out voluntary activities. In Denmark, Finland, Germany and Luxembourg it was 30–39% of adults and in Estonia, France and Latvia it was 20–29%. Volunteering was less popular in Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Ireland, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Romania, Slovenia and Spain (10–19%) and in Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Lithuania it was less than 10%[10].

— In most countries, men and women either participated equally or men participated more because the sport sector attracts most volunteers and more men than women volunteer in sport.

— An individual's educational level is positively correlated to volunteering and people who are employed are more likely to volunteer than those who are unemployed

— In most countries, sport is the most popular volunteering sector followed by social, welfare and health activities, religious organizations, culture, recreation and leisure, and education, training and research.

Key information about the engagement of migrant- and refugee-led organizations (data from 2021)[11]

— In the EU, 130 migrant- or refugee-led organizations were involved in policymaking at the national level and 31 were working at the local or regional level.

— Refugee-led organizations were the rarest, constituting 12% at the national level and 13% at the local level. Migrant-led organizations were the most prevalent with 43% at the national level and 32% at the local level. Migrant-women-led organizations constituted 12% at the national level and 19% at the local level. Second generation/youth constituted 19% at both levels.

— Only 24% of the migrant-led organizations were represented through umbrella organizations at the EU level.

— In traditional migration destinations in Northern and Western European countries, the prevalent migrant-let organizations were led by multi-ethnic migrants and focused on diverse interests, whereas in Central, Eastern and Baltic countries, most migrant-led organizations were led by and focused on the interest of one religious or ethnic group.

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9   GHK (2010): Volunteering in the European Union. https://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/doc1018_en.pdf#:~:text=An%20analysis%20of%20the%20national%20surveys%20and%20reports,over%2015%20years%20are%20engaged%20in%20voluntary%20work

10   Due to discrepancies in the national survey tools, these findings should be treated with caution.

11   European Website on Integration (2021): Mapping key migrant-led organisations across the EU. https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/special-feature/mapping-key-migrant-led-organisations-across-eu_en

Key information about access to formal compulsory education (data from 2019)[12]

— In Europe, a total of 83,272,636 children and adolescents were of school age (5–19 years old) as of January 2019.

— 2,160,145 (2.6%) were children born in another EU+ State, while 3,487,701 (4%) were born outside the EU+. Among the latter group, 25% were aged 5–9 and 30% were aged 10–14.

— Most of the foreign-born school-age children and adolescents born outside the EU+ were hosted by Germany (688,669), the UK (569,308), France (555,192), Spain (492,520), Italy (389,180) and Sweden (215,601).

— In terms of overall proportion, foreign-born children constituted 4–5% across these countries, except for Sweden where they represented 9% of all school-age children.

Key references

European Commission (2000): Statistics on migration to Europe. https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/promoting-our-european-way-life/statistics-migration-europe_en

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Worldometer (2021): European Countries by population. https://www.worldometers.info/population/countries-in-europe-by-population/#:~:text=European%20Countries%20by%20population%20%282021%29%20%20%20,%20%20143%2C783%20%2022%20more%20rows%20

Also available from the Network for Dialogue:

— **Policy Brief #1:** Supporting Teachers in the Use of Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue in Inclusive Education for Refugees and Migrants
— **Policy Brief #2:** Building Trust Through Dialogue in Local Communities: A Key Ingredient for Social Cohesion
— **Policy Brief #3:** Reshaping Narratives on Migration Through Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue
— **Policy Brief #4:** Helping Migrants and Refugees Volunteer
— **Policy Brief #5:** Engaging Migrant and Refugee-led Organizations in Policymaking in Europe
— **Policy Brief #6:** Ensuring Migrant and Refugee Children's Access to Formal Education in Europe

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12 UNHCR, UNICEF and IOM (2019): Access to Education for Refugee and Migrant Children. https://www.unhcr.org/neu/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2019/09/Access-to-education-europe-19.pdf

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The Network for Dialogue brings together European faith-based, secular organizations and other experts to jointly promote interreligious and intercultural dialogue for the social inclusion of refugees and migrants.