

European Migration Network (EMN)

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The Commission presents a report taking stock of the progress made by the European Migration Network (EMN), which was established by Council Decision 2008/381/EC. The EMN's purpose is to provide up-to-date, objective, reliable and comparable information on migration and asylum, with a view to supporting policymaking in the European Union in these areas. The report considers progress, as well as how the EMN should evolve in the context of the next multiannual financial framework beyond 2013.

An external evaluation was undertaken in the latter half of 2011.

Findings of the external evaluation: overall, the EMN was considered to be performing well, providing useful information to support policymaking at the EU and Member State level. Less positive were the limited readability of the information it produced (e.g. too long) for policymakers and the lack of visibility or awareness of the EMN amongst other practitioners as well as policymakers, particularly within the EU institutions.

Some 30 recommendations to improve further the functioning of the EMN were identified.

Indeed, even whilst the evaluation was underway, the EMN took on board several recommendations in the development of its annual work programme for 2012, in particular in relation to ensuring that information provided was more relevant, up-to-date and with concise summaries of findings for policymakers in particular.

Future development of the EMN: noting that the EMN is now firmly established in the landscape of asylum and migration and is highly regarded, the Commission outlines how it sees the further development of the EMN within the context of the [Asylum and Migration Fund](#), although some of the changes proposed can be implemented before the latter Regulation enters into force.

The EMN has already demonstrated its flexibility to evolve and adapt to better meet the expectations of policymakers in particular. A key factor in this respect is the pro-active involvement of and strong partnership between the Commission and the EMN National Contact Points, which constitute the essential building blocks upon which the EMN is built.

The continuation of the EMN, along with its objectives and tasks, is set out in Article 23 of the proposed Asylum and Migration Fund Regulation. Council Decision 2008/381/EC will be repealed. The objectives would be:

- to serve as an Union advisory council for migration and asylum through coordination and cooperation at both national and Union level with representatives of Member States, academia, civil society, think-tanks and other Union/international entities;
- to meet the migration and asylum information needs of Union institutions and of Member States by providing up-to-date, objective, reliable and comparable information on migration and asylum, in order to support policymaking in the European Union in these areas and to provide information to the general public.

Role of the EMN: the development of a common EU migration policy increasingly requires comparative, factual information. Clearly, it would be advantageous for there to be a common European source where policymakers, both nationally and from the EU institutions, could access or request reliable information,

including statistics, in a factual, user-friendly, objective manner in order to inform their deliberations. The EMN is ideally placed to meet this need and to fully meet the expectations of policymakers. The strength of the networking between EMN NCPs also serves to demonstrate that a common culture of knowledge has developed whereby the situation in one Member State can be understood in others and within the Commission.

Changes required of the EMN:

- the EMN should **extend its scope of information sources** in two respects: (i) through its national networks and (ii) through its links to other relevant EU/international bodies. This would require the role of the EMN NCPs to be enhanced further so that they are each able to act as the national hub for information gathering and analysis;
- the EMN should further **improve the relevance and manner in which it provides information**. Specifically, the synthesis reports should be less descriptive and more analytical with key messages and policy implications highlighted more clearly for the target group;
- the EMN must **improve the manner in which it presents its outputs to inform the wider public**. There are good examples at Member State level of presenting information in a user-friendly, objective, impartial manner. This is currently missing at EU level and the EMN should thus take on this role by using modern communication means (e.g. via social media, interactive website) to give concisely the factual situation on a particular theme targeted at the media and other information multipliers;
- **relations with other EU agencies**, particularly EASO and Frontex should be further developed. Collaboration should be strengthened to avoid duplications, ensure coherence and complementarity;
- **sufficient resources must be made available** in Member States for any EMN NCP who currently is not able to fully participate in and contribute to all EMN activities;
- certain aspects of the **EMN Steering Board** should be adapted, with the latter focussing more on providing strategic guidance to further ensure that the EMN's activities are of direct relevance to policymakers.

The report states that with the perspective of the next multiannual financial framework, the further enhancements identified in this report would enable the EMN to perform its important role even better. Building on the solid base established so far, the Commission has every confidence that the EMN will once again adapt to meet these new challenges.