Key trends and findings

Several Member States simplified procedures to facilitate the admission of specific groups of legal migrants such as highly-skilled workers, trainees, au-pairs and volunteers.

The majority of Member States and Norway introduced changes to the rights and obligations of persons seeking international protection.

Many Member States intensified the fight against migrant smuggling. While decreasing overall, irregular migration increased significantly through the Western Mediterranean/Atlantic and the Eastern Mediterranean routes.

The majority of Member States revised their national strategic policies to fight trafficking in human beings, also by ratifying key international conventions and focussing on building capacities of their staff to ensure early detection and identification of victims.

Several Member States improved and streamlined procedures to implement swift and effective returns policies, including fostering voluntary returns.

Increasing the effectiveness of border controls was a priority for Member States as they adopted new strategies, reinforced border personnel and also strengthened cooperation with neighbouring and third countries as well as Frontex.

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Almost all Member States revised their inclusion plans and strategies, following the migration crisis, and broadened their integration measures, aiming at empowering migrants to actively become members of their host society.

Several Member States introduced the possibility of revoking citizenship awarded to third-country nationals in case of national security concerns.

Asylum applications in the EU 28: January 2014 – December 2018

Source: Asylum and first time asylum applicants, Eurostat (migr_asyappctzm), extracted on 6 April 2019.

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