

Press Release

New EMN inform highlights governance models for accommodation of international protection applicants

The governance of accommodation for international protection applicants is a critical issue faced by European Migration Network (EMN) Member (EU Member States except Denmark) and Observer Countries (NO, GE, MD, UA, ME, AM, RS). With fluctuating asylum applications, limited housing capacity, and community relations at stake, effective governance is necessary. According to the 2024 recast of the Reception Conditions Directive (RCD), EU Member States are mandated to ensure an adequate standard of living for applicants, including housing, despite unpredictable influxes.

Brussels, Belgium

Most EMN Member and Observer Countries¹ adopt a centralised governance model, where a single authority is primarily responsible for the reception of applicants for international protection. This is typically managed by the Ministry of the Interior or a specialised executive agency. Centralised governance is particularly beneficial in terms of consistency in planning, coordination, and accountability.

In contrast, several countries² employ a mixed governance model, wherein responsibilities are shared between national, regional, and local authorities. This approach allows for more flexibility in addressing the specific needs of applicants in different regions.

Germany, for instance, stands out as the only country among the EMN Member and Observer Countries that operates under a fully decentralised model. This system allows for a more tailored response to the varying needs of applicants across regions but requires robust coordination mechanisms to ensure that the system remains cohesive and effective.

The volatile nature of migration flows necessitates well-structured contingency planning. The majority of EMN Member and Observer Countries³ have developed preparedness plans to accommodate sudden increases in demand for housing. These plans are typically developed and implemented with input from a wide range of stakeholders, including government ministries, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), civil society organisations (CSOs), and private contractors.

According to Article 32 of the 2024 recast RCD, each EU Member State is required to submit a contingency plan by April 2025 to the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA). These plans are designed to ensure that reception centres can handle disproportionate influxes while maintaining adequate living conditions. The plans highlight the importance of multi-stakeholder engagement in accommodating international protection applicants and ensuring a rapid response to emerging needs.

One of the challenges faced by EMN Member and Observer Countries is managing staffing levels in reception centres and accommodation facilities. Governing bodies employ a mix of civil servants, NGO employees, and staff from independent agencies to manage these facilities. EU Member States are required under Article 33 of the RCD to provide training to those implementing the Directive, ensuring that staff are equipped to meet the specific needs of applicants, including minors. Despite this, many countries struggle to allocate sufficient resources to manage staff and ensure high-quality accommodation services.

The accommodation systems for international protection applicants are largely funded through state budgets, with additional support from EU funding streams. The state

¹ BG, CY, CZ, EE, EL, ES, FI, HR, HU, IE, LV, MT, PL, PT, SE, SI, SK, and RS.

² AT, BE, FR, IT, LT, LU, NL, and NO

³ AT, BG, CY, CZ, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PL, SE, SI, SK, and NO, RS.

budget generally covers the core costs of accommodation facilities, while EU funds are often allocated for specific projects aimed at improving the reception conditions. EU funding mechanisms such as the Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund (AMIF) have played a significant role in supporting EU Member States' efforts to enhance their accommodation infrastructure.

Under the provisions of the RCD, EU Member States have significant flexibility in organising their reception systems. Articles 7 to 9 allow for applicants to be allocated to specific accommodation centres or geographical areas, with residency restrictions applied when necessary for public order or to prevent absconding.

The inform:

- Title: 'Governing the accommodation of international protection applicants'
- Subject: Discover how EMN Member and Observer Countries manage accommodation for international protection applicants, exploring centralised, decentralised, and mixed governance models amid fluctuating asylum demands.

The EMN

The European Migration Network (EMN) is a Europe-wide network consisting of [National Contact Points \(NCPs\)](#) in the EMN Member (EU Member States except Denmark) and Observer Countries (NO, GE, MD, UA, ME, AM, RS), the European Commission and is supported by the EMN Service Provider, providing information on migration and asylum. The EMN was set up in 2008 by the European Commission on behalf of the European Council to satisfy the need for a regular exchange of reliable information on migration and asylum related issues on a European level.

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