

EU Asylum Policy

Course: Canadian and International Law (CLN4U), Canadian and World Issues (CGW4U)

Briefing:

For many asylum seekers, the European Union is an attractive destination. This is not merely because the EU states a commitment to uphold democratic values and basic principles of human rights. The EU is an ideal destination for asylum seekers because it is seen to offer economic opportunity in terms of employment and social services.

Responding to the influx of asylum seekers is a challenge the EU faces today. The Schengen Treaty, which eliminated border controls between most Member States of the EU, increases the number of people, including asylum seekers, moving around the territory of the EU. This makes it imperative that the EU speaks with a unified voice in issues of asylum policy. However, agreeing on an asylum policy between all Member States is not an easy task. The Member States have different laws regarding asylum seekers, and many European politicians would like to maintain control over asylum policy of their own countries.

Questions related to this topic:

- Where are the asylum seekers coming from? Through which routes?
- Which EU country receives the most number of asylum seekers?
- How do asylum policies among EU countries differ? Select 2-3 countries, and compare and contrast their asylum policies.
- Which areas of asylum policy have the EU agreed to harmonize? Why?
- What are the main reasons Member States give for opposing a harmonized asylum policy?
- Does the EU need a harmonized asylum policy?

Links:

Web Sites:

- [Asylum](#), European Commission
- [EU Asylum Developments](#), European Council on Refugees and Exiles
- [EU Asylum and Immigration Policy](#), Statewatch Observatory
- [Illegal immigration, asylum and border control](#), EURactiv
- [Irish Refugee Council](#)
- [Family Reunification FAQ](#), Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service
- [EU Asylum](#), Migration News
- [Europe's Asylum 'Soft Touch.'](#) special report by BBC News on asylum seekers in Europe
- [EurAsylum Portal](#)

Books (Available at Carleton University Library):

- Boccardi, Ingrid. Europe and Refugees: Towards an EU Asylum Policy. New York: Kluwer Law International, 2002.

- Lavenex, Sandra. The Europeanisation of Refugee Policies: Between Human Rights and Internal Security. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2001.

Documents:

- [European Commission Documentation Centre](#)
- [Common EU Asylum and Migration Policy](#), European Parliament Committee on Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs
- Council of Europe: [Recommendation Rec\(2003\)5 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on measures of detention of asylum seekers](#)

News:

- ["EU toughens asylum policy."](#) BBC News
- ["EU develops joint asylum policy."](#) BBC News
- ["Ministers Reach Breakthrough on EU Asylum Policy."](#) DW-World
- ["Germany revisits controversial idea of asylum centres outside EU."](#) Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty
- ["UNHCR issues commentary on key EU asylum law."](#) UNHCR