

On the Move – Latest migration news

MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN BELGIUM

5/04/2022-10/05/2022

- Belgium [rejected](#) the asylum claims of hundreds of Afghans asylum-seekers who are now at risk of deportation, as Belgian authorities believe the situation in Afghanistan has improved.
- Belgium is facing difficulties to deal with the arrival of [600 unaccompanied minors](#) from Ukraine, because they need a legal guardian to start the administrative procedures according to Belgian regulations, but there are not enough legal guardians available. Right now about 900 minors are waiting to be assigned one.
- While the Belgian reception system has been under pressure for many months now, there are [evident differences](#) in the treatment received by non-Ukrainian and Ukrainian asylum-seekers. The latter have access to the temporary protection that was activated by the European Commission, and they are hosted in a shelter while waiting to submit their application. Non-Ukrainian asylum-seekers instead must wait for days without shelter while queuing to try and secure a spot in the centres.

22/03/2022-05/04/2022

- On 31 March 2022, different collectives of undocumented people [launched](#) a new revendication by planting tents at the Ninove Gate in Molenbeek, Brussels, asking for regularization, proper accommodation and the same treatment of asylum seekers, migrants and refugees without discrimination.
- On 25 of march, [The Telegraph](#) revealed that Britain is paying Belgium £10 million for security and surveillance measures to deter Channel migrants, with the numbers crossing having trebled in three months.

08/03/2022 - 22/03/2022

- Belgium is [expecting](#) 200,000 refugees from Ukraine, amid challenges in the reception system.

22/02/2022-08/03/2022

- Crossborder Forum produced a [report](#) of a [conference](#) held in November 2021 titled “Deconstructing the border and building bridges: Towards a critical collective analysis of the French-British-Belgian border”. The report addressed four topics: a historical perspective on border controls and the

externalisation of the British border; criminalisation and containment; funding the border and the delegation of control to non-state actors; pathways for action and advocacy.

08/02/2022 - 22/02/2022

- On 22 February 2022, **Frontex** will face a [hearing](#) in the Federal Parliament in Brussels concerning pushbacks at the EU's external borders. The Flemish branch of CNCD 11.11.11, Amnesty International, the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights of Migrants Felipe González Morales, Refugee Support Aegean and The Centre for European Policy Studies will also be present at the hearing.
- The Belgian government [demanded](#) to ensure durable solutions to the **Syrian refugees**, specifically *"quality protection and local integration in neighboring countries; the creation of the conditions for a safe, voluntary and dignified return in Syria; and resettlement to third countries"*.

11/01/2022 - 25/01/2022

- The Brussels Court of First Instance [condemned](#) the reception agency Fedasil and the Belgian State for their failures in the reception of asylum-seekers. The reception system has reached saturation, and authorities refused to register many asylum-seekers, breaching international obligations. The Court sentences the Belgian state to a penalty of 5,000 EUR per day, as long as it refuses to register the application for asylum of at least one person. The same penalty is addressed to the Fedasil agency if it does not provide a reception place. This sentence is the result of the actions taken by ten organisations, which demanded a legal action to the court. [Here](#) is the call of the signatories' organisations.

14/12/2021-11/01/2022

- European Asylum Support Office (EASO) will [support](#) Belgium in its reception crisis. It is the first time that EASO supports a member state that is not located at EU's external borders. In the meanwhile, the Belgian reception system has reached [saturation](#) and, for over two months, asylum-seekers were forced to sleep on the streets.

30/11/2021 - 14/12/2021

- Asylum seekers are left on the [streets](#) in cold temperatures in front of the asylum-reception centre in Brussels. To denounce the inadequacy of the Belgian reception system, 40 [activists](#) protested in front of the office of the Secretary of State for Asylum.
- On 10 December 2021, a new transit centre for asylum seekers was [opened](#) in Brussels with approximately 70 places. People will have access to food, medical assistance and clothes.

- The movement of undocumented people in Brussels launched the campaign “[In my name](#)” for a proposal for a citizen’s law. For the proposal to be passed, [25,000 signatures](#) from residents in Belgium are needed. Several human rights networks and organisations, including EuroMed Rights, and Members of the European Parliament published a [call](#) for the regularisation of undocumented migrants in Belgium and beyond. On 10 December 2021, the Belgian Federal Parliament held an [Exchange of views](#) with the Secretary of State for Asylum and Migration, the Director General of the Aliens Office and the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons on the “regularisation of hunger strikers”.

16/11/2021 – 29/11/2021

- Belgium, together with France, has [appealed](#) to Frontex to help with aerial surveillance of migrant boats to the UK.

25/10/2021 – 15/11/2021

- Since the 1st of November, 140 migrants have [occupied](#) the **Beguinage Church in Brussels**. Most of them are the same people who went on hunger strike during the summer. They felt betrayed by the first decisions of the Immigration Department on the regularizations of the hunger strikers.

05/10/2021 – 25/10/2021

- The staff of the [Petit Château](#) migrant reception centre in Brussels started a 24 hours [strike](#) on 18 October 2021, denouncing their degrading working conditions and their impossibility to take care of the people hosted there with dignity.

23/09/2021 – 05/10/2021

- On 3 October 2021, several hundred people [demonstrated](#) for the regularisation of undocumented migrants in Brussels, in the framework of the “We are Belgium too” campaign. *Listen to [EuroMed Rights’ last podcast episode](#) on Afghan refugees and their living conditions and rights in Belgium with Abdul-Azim Azad, spokesperson of the undocumented Afghani Collective in Belgium.*

6/09/2021 – 22/09/2021

- Local NGOs, including Médecins Sans Frontières and Médecins du Monde, [raise concerns](#) on the increased number of unaccompanied minors living in Brussels and the conditions they are forced to live.

27/07/2021 – 19/08/2021

- On 16 August 2021, just a few days after declaring to continue the deportations of Afghan refugees to Afghanistan, the Belgian Secretary of State on Migration and Asylum, Sammy Mahdi, [stated](#) that no asylum seeker should be returned to Afghanistan right now.

5/07/2021 – 27/07/2021

- The movement for the regularisation of undocumented people in Belgium's capital continues, with more than 400 people on hunger strike for more than 50 days in the VUB and ULB universities and the Beguinage Church in Brussels. There are around 150 000 undocumented people living and working in Belgium. On 15 July 2021, several renowned Belgian figures [signed a letter](#) addressed to the government, "*Dying for papers?*". On 21 July 2021, the migrants [reached an agreement](#) with the government, after the green and left parties threatened to withdraw from the government coalition. The deal will probably speed up regularisation procedures, on a case-by-case basis, for the strikers.
- On 16 July 2021, 22 asylum seekers were [transferred](#) from Greece to Belgium.

21/06/2021 – 05/07/2021

- More than 400 migrants have been on [hunger strike](#) since 23 May 2021 at the Free Universities in Brussels (VUB and ULB) and the Beguinage church (Brussels). Four among them [sew](#) their lips in protest, as the government has still not responded to their asks. Civil society organisations raised serious concerns on their health conditions.