European governments are split when it comes to the migrant situation: Some want to accept asylumseekers, others are refusing to take them point-blank. European citizens have a different opinion: They demand a common response to this new challenge and want a fair distribution of the new people.

Majority of the EU citizens wants a fair distribution of refugees

A majority of the EU citizens wants a European response to the refugee crisis and is in favor of fairly distributing the burden amongst all member states. They strongly reject the idea of individual countries acting unilaterally. This is the opinion revealed in our latest survey of the series "eupinions", which regularly analyzes the mood of European citizens on current political issues.

The second edition of the "eupinions" survey sought the opinions of respondents in all 28 EU member states on asylum and migration policies. According to the survey, 79 percent of all Europeans are in favor of a common European asylum and migration policy. 52 percent of those questioned say that...
the EU should assume primary responsibility for this. 27 percent support shared responsibility between the EU and member states and only 22 percent are in favor of migration policy simply being left to their own country. Also 79 percent want a fair distribution of asylum seekers across all countries of the EU. A majority of around 70 percent also supports the demand that those states, which refuse to accept their share of the responsibility, should receive less money from EU coffers.

This shows that on refugee policy a clear majority of Europeans is sending an unambiguous message to the next EU summit, says Aart De Geus, Chairman and CEO of the Bertelsmann Stiftung: Find a European solution based on solidarity, which creates stability and protects freedom of movement.

"The European heads of state and government should take on board the fact that their citizens are clearly calling for a European solution."

Aart De Geus, Chairman and CEO of the Bertelsmann Stiftung

European solidarity in the refugee situation, but also a joint protection of the EU external borders

Furthermore the survey shows: A majority of the EU citizens not only wants a common European asylum and migration policy, but also demands the EU external borders being jointly secured. Nearly 90 percent think that way.

Around 80 percent also want to see the freedom to travel within the EU safeguarded and consider the Schengen area as the European Union's second most important achievement, just behind the internal market.

Refugee situation shows a gap between old and new EU member states

At the same time our survey shows a gulf between the old and the new member states: While a majority of 85 percent in the old EU member states think that the burden of asylum seekers should be fairly distributed, only 54 percent in the new member states support that view. The same can be found in another field: Whereas in the old member states 77 percent demand that those states, which refuse to accept their fair share of asylum seekers, should be subject to financial penalties, only 41 percent of the citizens in the new member states are in favor of such a measure.
The results of the survey indicate that support for a common European policy for asylum and migration is very high. However, it should not be inferred that Europeans have an equally positive view towards recent arrivals. On this issue, as the "eupinions" survey shows, they are divided: 50 percent state that they sometimes feel like foreigners in their own country and 58 percent are afraid of negative consequences for social welfare systems. 54 percent of EU citizens think that the criteria for asylum seekers should not be interpreted too generously.

Please find the complete survey on the right side.

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Weblink

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