

New EMN inform examines Distribution of International Protection Accommodation Centres and Relationship Management with Local Communities

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Overview

The European Migration Network (EMN) has published the inform *on Distribution of international protection accommodation centres and relationship management with local communities*, offering a comparative analysis of how 23 EMN Member Countries and Serbia distribute accommodation centres and engage with local stakeholders.¹ The inform covers developments up to February 2025 and provides insights into national approaches to planning, communication, and community engagement, including good practices and common challenges.

Brussels, Belgium

Managing distribution to support reception and integration

The inform analyses two distinct types of distribution: the distribution of international protection applicants and the distribution of accommodation centres. Fourteen EMN Member Countries and Serbia distribute international protection applicants according to defined criteria,² while 17 EMN Member Countries and Serbia distribute accommodation centres within their territory.³ Criteria include regional demographics, infrastructure, proximity to services, and individual needs assessments such as health conditions, family status, and vulnerability.⁴ Examples include the use of population-based distribution keys in France and tax-based allocation systems in Germany.

Some countries have introduced algorithmic matching tools to support more effective distribution and integration outcomes.⁵

Community engagement varies across countries

¹ Based on contributions from AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, EE, ES, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PL, SE, SI, SK and RS.

² AT, BE, BG, CZ, DE, ES, FI, FR, HR, LU, LV, NL, PL, SE, and RS.

³ AT, BE, BG, CZ, DE, ES, FI, FR, HR, IE, LU, LV, NL, PL, SE, SI, SK, and RS.

⁴ BE, CZ, DE, EE, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, LT, LU, NL, PL, SE.

⁵ Countries using algorithmic or formula-based distribution systems include DE (EASY system), FR (regional distribution key under SNADAR) and NL (socioeconomic score-based allocation under the Dispersal Act).

Only five countries⁶ have formal communication plans to support the opening of new centres. Others rely on guidance or case-by-case outreach. Despite this, most responding countries engage with local authorities and elected representatives before or upon opening new accommodation centres. Sixteen⁷ also engage directly with local communities during this process.

In Belgium, for example, the national reception agency distributes flyers to local residents, holds information sessions with stakeholders, and appoints contact persons ahead of the centre's opening.⁸ Outreach activities more broadly range from town hall meetings and newsletters to dedicated contact points and open house events. In Ireland, local outreach is structured around community integration forums, while the Netherlands has issued national guidelines to support municipal engagement and manage public information.

Local services and NGOs receive additional support in some countries

Seven⁹ reported mechanisms for allocating additional resources to local services, including funding for healthcare, education and public transport. Ireland, for instance, has introduced three dedicated funding streams to support NGOs and community groups. Croatia and the Slovak Republic channel support through projects funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF).

Challenges persist, but good practices are emerging

The inform highlights that most responding countries face challenges in engaging with local stakeholders, particularly in areas with limited prior experience of multicultural communities. Common issues include resistance from local residents and elected officials, lack of political will, and political tensions.¹⁰ A smaller number of countries reported delays in communication¹¹ and complex coordination mechanisms.¹² These challenges can affect not only the opening of accommodation centres but also their successful integration into local communities.

A range of good practices can be grouped into five categories:

- measures to support the opening of accommodation centres;¹³
- measures to foster community engagement and integrate centres into municipal life;¹⁴
- financial support to municipalities hosting accommodation centres;¹⁵
- clear, transparent and proactive communication with stakeholders;¹⁶
- coordination mechanisms after opening.¹⁷

⁶ AT, LU, NL, PL, SE.

⁷ AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, EE, ES, FR, IE, LU, LV, NL, PL, SI, and RS.

⁸ Countries reporting structured community engagement activities prior to opening accommodation centres include BE, IE, NL.

⁹ BE, CZ, IE, LV, NL, SE and RS.

¹⁰ AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, EE, FI, HR, IE, LU, LV, NL, PL, SI, and RS.

¹¹ IE and SK.

¹² DE, ES, IE.

¹³ BE, FR, NL.

¹⁴ AT, EE, HR, IE, NL.

¹⁵ BE, EE, NL, and RS.

¹⁶ BE, CZ, DE, EE, FI, FR, IE, LV, LU, NL, PL, SE, SI.

¹⁷ AT, BG, CZ, NL.

Supporting informed, inclusive policy development

This inform contributes to a growing body of EMN work examining the reception and integration of applicants for international protection. By offering a comparative overview of how accommodation centres are distributed and how relationships with local communities are managed, it aims to provide a valuable resource for policymakers, local authorities, civil society organisations and other stakeholders seeking to promote balanced, inclusive and sustainable approaches to reception across Europe.

About 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, MK, AL), the European Commission and is supported by the EMN Service Provider, providing information on migration and asylum.

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