



Written by [James Murphy](#) on September 16, 2024

The Netherlands Announces New Measures to Control Immigration

On Friday, the Netherlands announced strict new measures to combat an out-of-control immigration situation in the nation. In addition, the country will formally request to opt out of the European Union's lax asylum and immigration policies at a meeting of the European Commission in Brussels next week.

The Immigration Problem

Last year, nearly 50,000 migrants, mostly from Africa and the Middle East, sought asylum in the northwestern European nation, an increase from 35,000 in 2022.



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According to an [announcement](#) from the Ministry of Asylum and Migration (Google translation):

The Netherlands cannot cope with the large numbers of migrants. Asylum reception is overcrowded, procedures take too long and costs are skyrocketing. In addition, the continuing influx of asylum seekers is causing problems in the areas of public housing, health care and education.

To regain control of the situation, this government is implementing the strictest asylum regime ever. ... By limiting inflow, speeding up procedures, taking immediate action against offenders, tightening border control, restricting family reunification options, and focusing heavily on returns, the Netherlands aims to become a leader in Europe regarding admission rules.

"The voters have given a clear mandate. We need to change course and the influx must be reduced immediately. We are taking measures to make the Netherlands as unattractive as possible for asylum seekers. And there is no place here for anyone who abuses our hospitality. I am going for a safer Netherlands," said Minister of Asylum and Migration Marjolein Faber.

Reports of displaced migrants sleeping outside in the cold Dutch winter amid overcrowded intake centers, as well as troubles with the various migrant groups assimilating into Dutch culture, led to a right-wing victory in the general election of November 2023. The new governing coalition, led by Prime Minister Hendrikus (Dick) Schoof, promised action on immigration.

"We cannot continue to bear the large influx of migrants to our country. People are experiencing an asylum crisis," [Schoof said](#).

The Solution?

An emergency law to address the situation would see the government be far more strict on who enters the Netherlands, and would allow the government to reject asylum seekers who don't report to their hearings, another problem reported widely.



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The new law would also allow the government to put a freeze on new asylum applications and, if necessary, forcibly deport migrants without a residence permit. Adult migrants seeking to rejoin family members in the Netherlands may not be able to join their relatives.

Of course, opting out of EU immigration policy is far from a done deal. In fact, it's considered a long shot by most.

"We have adopted legislation. You don't opt out of adopted legislation in the EU," EU spokesman [Eric Mamer said on Friday](#). "That is a general principle."

The same Dutch government voted in favor of all the rules introduced in the EU's new [Pact on Migration and Asylum](#) in May of this year.

So, in the end the question must be asked: Is this an earnest attempt to change the Netherlands' existing immigration strategy, or simply an attempt to look good to the electorate?

The trouble with allowing an external entity like the EU to govern what's acceptable for your nation is that they'll do it — whether you agree with their rules or not.

And then you have to ask yourself — Do we have a nation or not?

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