

Expert meeting on pull factors in asylum seekers' choice of the Netherlands as country of destination.

Summary

This report contains a summary of an expert meeting on pull factors in asylum seekers' choice of the Netherlands as country of destination, that took place in May 1999 in the Netherlands. In reaction to a motion in parliament in which it was noted that the Netherlands had a disproportionate share in the burden of asylum seekers, a group of experts identified such pull factors.

They noted that a distinction has to be made between those asylum seekers who travel without aid from traffickers, those who travel aided by traffickers, and young underage asylum seekers without parental supervision (the so-called AMA's). The AMA's are not considered further because of their special background and presumably special motives.

Those who travel independently often have vague intuitive notions about the Netherlands as a kind, democratic, aliens-friendly country with good social services. The presence of family and friends in the Netherlands is also considered a pull-factor for this group. In general, the push-factor is considered more important than the pull-factor for this type of asylum seeker.

With those who are smuggled by professional organisations, the trafficking organisation often makes a very well and calculated choice with regard to the country of destination. The duration of the procedure, the quality of care, the high success rate and the fact that the Netherlands can be characterised as a transport nation, are considered important. Good money is to be made in the trafficking of human beings, and the penalties are considered low. A range of trafficking organisations are active, varying between very smoothly and professionally organised to amateurish.

Further research should focus on these trafficking organisations. Shortening the length of the procedure is considered an effective and safe measure, as shortened procedures are considered beneficial for the individual asylumseeker, and unfavourable for professional smugglers.

Motieven van asielzoekers om naar Nederland te komen; verslag van een expert meeting

C. Bijleveld, A.P. Taselaar

The Hague, WODC, 2000

Onderzoeksnotities, nr. 2000/2