Beat: Politics

Migration challenges are best tackled at EU level

Says Eurobarometer poll

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USPA NEWS - Immigration and terrorism are EU citizens´ fastest-growing concerns, according to the latest Eurobarometer poll, commissioned by the European Parliament and published on Wednesday. The majority are favour letting the EU decide.

An EU average of 66% of respondents said that more decisions on migration should be taken at EU level, rather than by national governments alone, but the survey found marked differences among countries on all the issues addressed. The survey, of 28,150 Europeans aged over 15, took place between 19 and 29 September, a period when refugee arrivals at EU borders and tragic migrant deaths were being widely reported in the media.

On migration issues, an EU average of 66% of respondents said that decisions should be taken at EU level, rather than by national governments alone. The survey nonetheless found marked national differences, with those in favour of more EU decision-making making up between 79% and 81% of respondents from Cyprus, Germany, Spain, Luxembourg and The Netherlands, but only 40% in Estonia, Poland and the Slovak Republic.

EU citizens were similarly divided on the issue receiving asylum-seekers. An EU average of 78% of respondents said they should be shared among EU countries. Most in favour were the Germans, at 97%, and least in favour were the Slovaks and the Czechs with 31%. Of the 78% who favoured distributing asylum-seekers among EU countries, 75% also favoured doing so according to binding quotas decided by the EU.

Concerns about immigration and terrorism, already high in past surveys, showed the biggest increases compared to 2013. For 47% of respondents, immigration is the greatest challenge facing the EU and its member states, up from 14% in 2013. Concerns about terrorism were cited by 26% of respondents, up from 11% in 2013. The Eurobarometer survey also addresses the issues of legal migration and EU financial support to EU border countries and, in a second section, economic prospects and reactions to the economic and financial crisis.

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