

Denmark no longer to automatically accept UN refugee quota

Denmark will no longer automatically accept a quota of refugees under a U.N. resettlement program after passing a law on Wednesday that enables the government to determine how many can enter each year.

Since 1989, Denmark has agreed to take 500 refugees a year selected by the United Nations under a program to ease the burden on countries that neighbor war zones. But after the European migration crisis in 2015 brought almost 20,000 claims for asylum, Denmark has refused to take any U.N. quota refugees.

Under the new law, the immigration minister will decide how many refugees will be allowed under the U.N. program, with 500 now the maximum except in an “exceptional situation”.

“It is hard to predict how many refugees and migrants will show up at the border to seek asylum, and we know it may be hard to integrate those who arrive here,” Immigration and Integration Minister Inger Stojberg said last month when her ministry proposed the law, according to Reuters.

The opposition Social-Liberal Party said opting out of the U.N. program would increase pressure on countries already accommodating large numbers of refugees, and the move could encourage other countries to follow suit.

Last year, more than 6,000 people claimed asylum in Denmark. Between January and November this year just over 3,000 people did.

Regarding the crisis over migration among the European countries, eastern states have been opposed ever since other EU states adopted by majority the quotas in 2015 as a form of solidarity with frontline states Greece and Italy. Under the plan, asylum seekers are relocated to other members of the bloc in a temporary exception to the so-called Dublin rules, which requires countries where they first land to process them.

EU President Donald Tusk and European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker

nonetheless tried to defuse a row that had even divided them when they opened talks with the bloc's 28 leaders on Thursday. "Mandatory quotas remain a contentious issue although its temperature has decreased substantially," Tusk told a press conference ending the last European Union summit of 2017, as reported by AFP. "Will a compromise be possible? It appears very hard," the former Polish premier said. During two hours of debate, the leaders of Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia all stood firm against refugee quotas, participants said.

Source: <https://www.dailysabah.com/europe/2017/12/22/denmark-no-longer-to-automatically-accept-un-refugee-quota>

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