

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002125/26
to the Commission
Marieke Ehlers (Pfe)
(22 May 2026)**

Subject: Conclusion of the 10th European Migration Forum (EMF)

At the 10th European Migration Forum (EMF), it was concluded that migrants make a positive economic contribution ⁽¹⁾. However, this contradicts the facts regarding asylum migration specifically.

For example, Statistics Netherlands (CBS) reports an increase in dependency on social assistance among people born outside Europe ⁽²⁾. In addition, research by Dr Jan van de Beek (published as ‘Grenzeloze verzorgingsstaat’/‘Borderless Welfare State’) indicates that the average cost to the Treasury per asylum seeker over their lifetime amounts to EUR 800 000 owing to low employment rates and high reliance on the welfare state ⁽³⁾.

The following questions arise in this regard:

1. How does the Commission explain the EMF conclusion regarding a ‘positive economic contribution’ in light of the CBS figures on increasing assistance-dependency among non-European migrants?
2. What is the Commission’s assessment of Van de Beek’s findings that, on balance, each asylum seeker costs Member States EUR 800 000?
3. Does the Commission acknowledge that, overall, asylum migration does not generate a single cent, but costs the welfare state a considerable amount of money? If not, what specific, independent figures — relating specifically to asylum seekers — can it cite to substantiate the contrary? Is it willing to undertake (further) research to determine the costs incurred per asylum seeker?

Submitted: 22.5.2026

**Answer given by Mr Brunner on behalf of the European Commission
(31 August 2026)**

The report of the European Migration Forum (EMF) reflects, among other things, the main take-aways from the EMF roundtable sessions, including that ‘people with migrant backgrounds make a positive economic and social contribution in the EU’.

This can refer to EU citizens who are either EU-born but with at least one foreign-born parent, foreign-born EU citizens, or it can also include third-country nationals more broadly.

Regarding asylum seekers specifically, the Commission does not comment neither on individual research nor on figures without any reference regarding the estimated fiscal costs respectively benefits per asylum seeker over their lifetime.

The recast Reception Conditions Directive ⁽¹⁾, which needed to be fully transposed into national law by 12 June 2026, aims to promote self-sufficiency of asylum applicants by providing clear rules on access to labour market.

More broadly, the Commission is supporting research on migration via the Horizon Europe 2021-2027 Programme ⁽²⁾ and Eurostat’s work on migrant integration indicators.

¹ Verslag 10e Europees Migratieforum.

² CBS (2024/48), ‘Toename bijstand onder mensen geboren buiten Europa’.

³ J. van de Beek, Grenzeloze verzorgingsstaat/Borderless Welfare State.

⁽¹⁾ Directive (EU) 2024/1346 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection (recast), https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L_202401346.

⁽²⁾ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en.