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4.2.1 Decisions on outgoing Dublin requests

In 2020, 95,000 decisions were issued in response to outgoing Dublin requests, according to provisional data which are regularly exchanged between EASO and 28 EU+ countries.[xix] This represented a decease by one-third compared to 2019. The data cover all persons included in decisions received by the reporting country in response to a request to have a partner country take responsibility for the asylum application. This does not mean that the transfer was necessarily carried out, but the partner Member State replied to the request, whether accepting or rejecting, within the time limit or there was an implicit acceptance due to the expiration of the time limit.

The drop in decisions on Dublin requests was in line with the scale of the decrease in the number of asylum applications lodged in 2020. Thus, fewer applications received meant that fewer new applicants were identified to fall under the responsibility of another Member State. While the pandemic may have affected the implementation of a transfer, it did not preclude authorities from assessing and deciding on where an application should be processed. However, remote working arrangements for Dublin units and associated technical difficulties might have affected the capacity of processing Dublin cases. The ratio of received Dublin decisions to lodged asylum applications was 20%, which is similar to 2019. This implies that secondary movements have continued during the pandemic, although some Dublin cases concerned family reunification.

At the country level, France and Germany continued to receive the most decisions on their requests for another country to take responsibility (see the left side of *Figure 4.6*), jointly accounting for over three-fifths of the EU+ total. Nonetheless, both countries received fewer responses than in 2019. In fact, the majority of Dublin Member States received a decreased number of responses in 2020. Exceptions were Bulgaria and Greece, which received a similar number of decisions in 2019 and 2020, as well as Croatia, Slovenia, Slovakia and Spain, which received considerably more decisions.

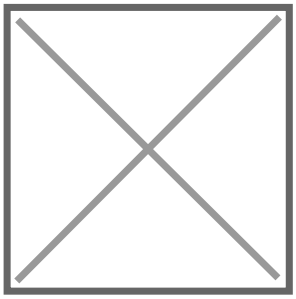
Germany and France received most decisions on Dublin requests, while Germany and Italy responded to most requests

Figure 4.6: Decisions on Dublin request by selected countries receiving a decision (left) and responding a request (right), 2020

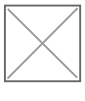
Note: The selection includes the Top 10 countries receiving requests and Top 10 countries responding to requests.
Source: EASO.

As was the case in 2019, Italy issued the most decisions on Dublin requests, followed closely by Germany, Greece, Spain, and at some distance, France (see the right side of *Figure 4.6*). In addition, each of these countries – and most other partner countries – responded to fewer requests than in 2019. Exceptions were only Croatia, Romania and, to a lesser extent, Hungary. In fact, there was a notable increase in decisions taken by Romania (+129%), which peaked particularly in November and December 2020. More than one-half of all decisions in the last 2 months of the year concerned Afghans and Syrians.

The National Directorate General for Aliens Policing in Hungary signalled that it started to receive more requests from Germany and Austria in the second part of the year and added that this was possibly due to the fact that only two applicants remained in the country from the approximately 280 persons who were previously held in the transit zones that were closed at the end of May 2020 *(see Section 4.1)*.



[xxi] For 13% of the cases, the citizenship could not be reported.



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