Refugee crisis: How do European countries' attitudes differ on refugees?

People's search habits online reveal how different countries in Europe are reacting to the refugee crisis

Protestors attending a pro-refugee march in central London on September 12, 2015. Pro-refugee demonstrators demand the UK government to help more refugees fleeing Syria Photo: LNP

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The response to the refugee crisis varies significantly among the people in Europe, according to the questions they ask on Google.

There are key differences in what the top search questions about "migrants" are across Europe, with people in the UK, France and Germany all reacting differently.

Questions relating to the definition of the terms "migrant" and "refugee", where they are coming from and what people can do to help are all popular searches, according to data released by Google Trends.

Interest in the refugee crisis has spiked in recent days - with Germany dominating searches related to the topic. It dwarves search interest in "refugees" in other countries including Syria, the UK and the US.
This coincides with the country's decision to temporarily reinstate border controls in order to deal with the influx of people arriving.

The top five questions Googled about "migrants" in each European country over the last seven days reveal interesting differences - with people in Germany, Hungary and Italy seeming more willing to help than British, French or Greek people.
# WHAT IS EUROPE ASKING ABOUT "MIGRANTS"?

## United Kingdom
1. What is the difference between a migrant and a refugee?
2. What is an asylum seeker?
3. What is an economic migrant?
4. Why is there a migrant crisis?
5. How many people attended the migrant march in London?

## Germany
1. Where are the refugees coming from?
2. How to volunteer to help migrants?
3. Why do migrants go to the UK?
4. When is a refugee really a migrant?
5. What will happen in Europe after the migrant crisis?

## France
1. What does the European migrant crisis mean for travellers?
2. What are the Somalian refugees fleeing from?
3. What is a migrant advocate?
4. What is a migrant?
5. What is the migrant situation in Europe now?

## Hungary
1. How should Christians respond to the migrant crisis?
2. What happens to refugees without passports?
3. Where did Aylan Kurdi’s body wash up?
4. How many migrants do Germany have?
5. Where are migrants distributed globally?

## Sweden
1. What is the definition of a migrant?
2. What is an asylum seeker?
3. Is the migration issue an invasion?
4. How much money do migrants send home?
5. How many refugees do

## Greece
1. Why is it called a migrant and not a refugee crisis?
2. What is the solution for the migrant crisis?
3. What is a migrant?
4. What does Germany stand to gain from the migrant crisis?
Questions that people in the UK ask about the refugee crisis reveal anxiety and confusion about the issue, with the top questions including "Why is there a migrant crisis?" and "What is the difference between a migrant and a refugee?"

There is little interest in helping to ease the situation - unlike in Germany, where the top two questions are "Where are the refugees coming from?" and "How to volunteer to help migrants?"

Germans' apparent willingness to take to Google to help refugees is mirrored by people in Hungary and Italy.
A refugee takes a selfie with German Chancellor Angela Merkel outside a refugee camp in Berlin. Photo: REUTERS

In Hungary, the top question on Google is "How should Christians respond to the migrant crisis?", while people in Italy have been asking "How to adopt a Syrian orphan child?"

This contrasts their government's harder lines, such as Hungary's decision to close its border to refugees.

People in France, on the other hand, seem more concerned about how the refugee crisis will affect their travel plans, with the top question in the country being "What does the European migrant crisis mean for travellers?"

The data from Google Trends reveals varied reactions to the thousands of refugees seeking a home in Europe, with a significant proportion of questions simply trying to understand the crisis.

Among the 21 countries surveyed, the most popular questions were "what is a migrant?", "what is the difference between a migrant and a refugee?" and "what is the definition of a migrant?"

Google searches also revealed anxiety about the refugee crisis and what Europe can do to help.

The top question in both Lithuania and Croatia refer to the amount of male migrants there are.

The top question in Belgium is simply "How to stop migrants?", while people in Luxembourg are searching for the "consequences of letting migrants into Europe".