

**Forum:** Security Council

**Issue:** Dealing with the Global Refugee Crisis

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## **Introduction**

In 2015 around 1 million refugees arrived in Europe and that caused the worst migration crisis since World War II. It seems impossible to announce accurate numbers, because people often cross borders illegally. The term “crisis” towards refugees and migrants was used for the first time in April 2015 after series of maritime disasters in Mediterranean Sea. Within a very short period of time (13<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of April) at least 5 boats wrecked and sunk on the way to Europe. Accidents claimed the lives of more than 1200 migrants from Africa.

## **Background information**

During the first 9 months of 2015, the European Union Member States received 812,705 new asylum applications. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the top three nationalities of the Mediterranean Sea arrivals in 2015 were Syrian (49%), Afghani (21%) and Iraqi (8%). Most of the refugees were adult men (58%). Basing on the statistics the most popular countries among the refugees are: Germany (31%), Hungary (13%), the USA (11%), and Turkey (9%).

Since April 2015, the EU has struggled to cope with the crisis, increasing funding for border patrol operations in the Mediterranean, devising plans to fight migrant smuggling, launching Operation Sophia, and proposing a new quota system to relocate and resettle asylum seekers among EU states and alleviate the burden on countries on the external borders of the Union. Individual countries have at times reintroduced border controls within the Schengen Area, and rifts have emerged between countries willing to accept asylum seekers and others trying to discourage their arrival. Many people say that one of the reasons for strengthening of the crisis is the Dublin regulation. By default (when no family reasons or humanitarian grounds are present), the first member state that an asylum seeker entered and in which they have been fingerprinted is responsible for him. If the asylum seeker then moves to another member state, they can be transferred back to the member state they first entered. This has led many to criticize the Dublin rules for placing too much responsibility for asylum seekers on Member

States closer the EU's external borders (like Italy, Greece and Hungary), instead of devising a burden-sharing system among EU states.

The key reasons of the increase in the number of refugees in 2015 are the armed conflicts in the Middle East, religious clashes in Nigeria, and the extension of the territories controlled by terrorist organizations.

The immediate causes of the Refugee Crisis in Europe are:

- Lack of funding (the budgets of the European countries were drawn up without taking in account costs of maintaining the large number of migrants)
- Lack of a unified concept of the distribution of refugees in EU countries
- Lack of free accommodation (refugees in EU countries can't live in campgrounds, because of the low temperatures)
- Lack of staff (not enough personnel for the registration of refugees, border control officers, medical staff and translators)

### **Major countries and organizations involved**

More economically developed countries, which are the final destinations of refugees: Germany, France, the UK, the USA, and Sweden.

Countries the borders of which are usually crossed illegally: Turkey, Greece, Italy, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Slovakia.

Countries where refugees come from: Syria, Eritrea, Afghanistan, Kosovo/Serbia, and Ukraine.

Organizations: International Refugee Organization (IRO), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), American Refugee Committee, European Council on Refugees and Exiles, World Relief

Document: Refugee Convention of 1951

### **Possible solutions**

There 8 ways to solve the crisis proposed by Amnesty International:

- 1) Opening up safe routes to sanctuary for refugees is one important solution. That means allowing people to reunite with their relatives, and giving refugees visas so they do not have to spend their life savings and risk drowning to reach safety.
- 2) It also means resettling all refugees who need it. Resettlement is a vital solution for the most vulnerable refugees – including torture survivors and people with serious

medical problems. But so far, the world's wealthiest nations are offering to resettle less than 10% every year.

3) World leaders also need to put saving lives first. No one should have to die crossing a border, and yet almost 7,000 people drowned in the Mediterranean alone in the two years since the first big shipwreck in October 2013. States can stop this by investing in search and rescue operations and immediately helping people in distress.

4) And whether they travel by land or by sea, people fleeing persecution or wars should be allowed to cross borders, with or without travel documents. Pushing people back and putting up massive fences only forces them to take more dangerous routes to safety.

5) All countries should investigate and prosecute trafficking gangs who exploit refugees and migrants, and put people's safety above all else.

6) Governments also need to stop blaming refugees and migrants for economic and social problems, and instead combat all kinds of xenophobia and racial discrimination.

7) Wealthy countries quite simply aren't keeping their high-profile promises to fund aid for refugees abroad. People are dying while governments spend billions on border control. They urgently need to guarantee full funding to alleviate refugee crisis worldwide.

8) Setting up strong refugee systems: allowing people to apply for asylum, treating their refugee claims fairly, resettling the most vulnerable of all, and providing basics like education and healthcare.