

Define, Rescue and Settle-Human Rights of the War Refugees

Study Guide

General overview of the topic

Briefly, a refugee is a person who has fled his or her country to escape war or persecution, and can prove it. The 1951 Refugee Convention, negotiated after World War II, defines who can be called a refugee. Refugees are entitled to basic protections under the 1951 convention and other international agreements. By law, refugees cannot be sent back to countries where their lives would be in danger. The concept of a refugee was expanded by the Convention's 1967 Protocol and by regional conventions in Africa and Latin America to include persons who had fled war or other violence in their home country.

Syria, for example, has become a war-torn country since a popular uprising spiraled into a civil war in 2011. Every 15 seconds, a Syrian becomes a refugee because of the endless civil war. The United Nations' refugee agency said on September 2 that the number of Syrians who have fled their war-ravaged country has now risen to more than 2 million. A year ago, that number was 230,671. The agency warned that there is "no sign of this tragic outflow ending." Also disturbing is that many of the refugees are escaping only to find themselves in a different sort of danger- death, robbery and rape. "Syria has become the great tragedy of this century -- a disgraceful humanitarian calamity with suffering and displacement unparalleled in recent history," said Antonio Guterres, the United Nations' high commissioner for refugees. The overwhelming majority of the refugees who leave Syria end up staying in countries in the surrounding region, and the UNHCR said it has less than 50% of the funds it needs to meet their basic needs. That places a heavy strain on the infrastructures, economies and societies of those host countries, the United Nations said. The four biggest recipients of Syrians registered as refugees or awaiting registration are:

Lebanon -- 716,000

Jordan -- 515,000

Turkey -- 460,000

Iraq -- 168,000

Government ministers from those four countries met with the UNHCR in Geneva in an effort to generate greater international support for dealing with the refugee exodus. As part of the emergency response, UNHCR urged states to consider a number of solutions that can provide secure, urgent and effective protection for these people. Such solutions could include resettlement, humanitarian admission or individual sponsorship. States could also offer other kinds of solutions, including programs that enable Syrian relatives to join family members; scholarships for Syrian students in order to prevent a "lost generation" of young people; and medical evacuation for refugees with life-threatening health conditions.

Among those crossing the Mediterranean in the first half of 2015, the greatest numbers came from Syria, Afghanistan and Eritrea. Syrians are widely presumed to be refugees because of civil war there, according to the United Nations refugee agency. Many Afghans have been able to make the case that they are fleeing conflicts, the agency added, and Eritreans can generally argue that they would face political persecution at home in Eritrea, which is ruled by one of the most repressive regimes in the world. The surge of desperate migrants from the Middle East and Africa has put unprecedented pressure on EU countries, especially Italy, Greece and Hungary. Though declarations and international laws make themselves clear dealing with the refugees, the financial crisis in Europe has forced the nations to hold different thoughts to this issue. Hungary - a gateway to the EU's passport-free Schengen zone, in July alone, had been flooded in by 34,000 migrants. Faced with that influx, Hungary has built a controversial 175km (110-mile) razor-wire fence to keep migrants out. It plans to fortify it over the coming weeks. It has also urged EU partners not to send back migrants who have travelled on from Hungary. After hundreds of migrants crowded onto trains bound for Austria and Germany at a central Budapest station the

Hungarian authorities decided to close it to migrants on 1 September. Bulgaria - not in Schengen - has also put up a razor-wire fence on its border with Turkey, to keep migrants out. Spain's small territories of Ceuta and Melilla in North Africa are similarly fenced off. The UK's investment in extra border security at Calais, in northern France, is less controversial, as the UK is not in Schengen and migrants have been risking their lives jumping on to lorries and trains.

Key Definition

1. Asylum seeker

An asylum-seeker is someone who says he or she is a refugee, but whose claim has not yet been definitively evaluated. On average, about 1 million people seek asylum on an individual basis every year. In mid-2014, there were more than 1.2 million asylum-seekers. National asylum systems are there to decide which asylum-seekers actually qualify for international protection. Those judged through proper procedures not to be refugees, nor to be in need of any other form of international protection, can be sent back to their home countries.

2. Refugee

Refugees are persons fleeing armed conflict or persecution. Their situation is often so perilous and intolerable that they cross national borders to seek safety in nearby countries, and thus become internationally recognized as "refugees" with access to assistance from States, UNHCR and other organizations. They are so recognized precisely because it is too dangerous for them to return home, and they need sanctuary elsewhere. These are people for whom denial of asylum has potentially deadly consequences.

3. Migrant

Migrants choose to move not because of a direct threat of persecution or death, but mainly to improve their lives by finding work, or in some cases for education, family reunion, or other reasons. Unlike refugees who cannot safely return home, migrants face no such impediment to return. If they choose to return home, they will continue

to receive the protection of their government.

4. UNHCR

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), also known as the UN Refugee Agency, is the world's leading organization aiding and protecting people forced to flee their homes due to violence, conflict and persecution. UNHCR provides shelter, food, water, medical care and other life-saving assistance to refugees around the world. The dream of most refugees is to return home. When possible, UNHCR helps refugees return to their homeland. When refugees can't go back home, we work to find opportunities for them to rebuild their lives in another country. Since its formation by the United Nations General Assembly in 1950, UNHCR has helped an estimated 50 million refugees restart their lives and has twice received the Nobel Peace Prize. Today, UNHCR's committed staff of 8,600 work in more than 125 countries—saving and protecting lives and building a better future for 16.7 million refugees, 33.3 million internally displaced people and 1.1 million asylum-seekers.

5. 1951 Convention(Geneva convention)

Any person who: owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.

6. 1967 Protocol


The concept of a refugee was expanded by the Convention's 1967 Protocol and by regional conventions in Africa and Latin America to include persons who had fled war or other violence in their home country. European Union's minimum standards definition of refugee, underlined by Art. 2 (c) of Directive No. 2004/83/EC, essentially reproduces the narrow definition of refugee offered by the UN 1951 Convention; nevertheless, by virtue of articles 2 (e) and 15 of the same Directive, persons who have fled a war-

caused generalized violence are, at certain conditions, eligible for a complementary form of protection, called subsidiary protection. The same form of protection is foreseen for people who, without being refugees, are nevertheless exposed, if returned to their countries of origin, to death penalty, torture or other inhuman or degrading treatments.

7. Schengen protocol

The Schengen Agreement led to the creation of Europe's borderless Schengen Area. The treaty was signed on 14 June 1985 by five of the ten member states of the European Economic Community near the town of Schengen in Luxembourg but was not implemented (partially) until 1995. It proposed the gradual abolition of border checks at the signatories' common borders. Measures proposed included reduced speed vehicle checks which allowed vehicles to cross borders without stopping, allowing of residents in border areas freedom to cross borders away from fixed checkpoints and

the harmonization of visa policies.

- 
- EU member states participating
 - EU member states not participating but obliged to join
 - EU member states with an opt-out
 - non-EU member states participating
 - non-EU member states with an open border
 - non-EU member states de facto participating border

8. Dublin Regulation

The Dublin Regulation (Regulation No. 604/2013; sometimes the Dublin III Regulation; previously the Dublin II Regulation and Dublin Convention) is a European Union (EU) law that determines the EU Member State responsible to examine an application for asylum seekers seeking international protection under the Geneva Convention and

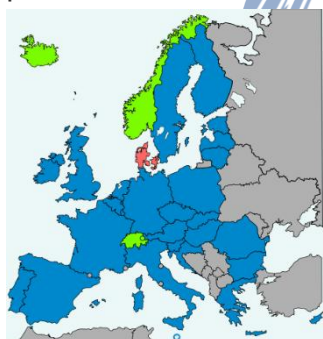
the EU Qualification Directive, within the European Union. It is the cornerstone of the Dublin System, which consists of the Dublin Regulation and the EURODAC Regulation, which establishes a Europe-wide fingerprinting database for unauthorized entrants to the EU. The Dublin Regulation aims to “determine rapidly the Member State responsible [for an asylum claim] and provides for the transfer of an asylum seeker to that Member State. Usually, the responsible Member State will be the state through which the asylum seeker first entered the EU.

States applying Dublin instruments

■ Dublin regulation, EU-Denmark agreement

■ EU-Denmark agreement

■ non-EU member states with an agreement to apply the provisions



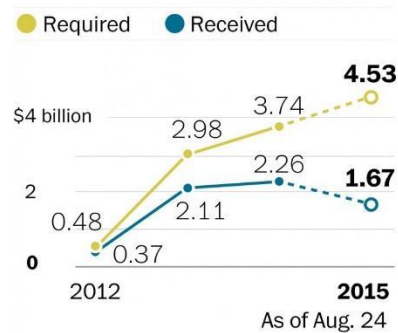
The humanitarian crises to which the Syrian refugees have faced

The Syrian civil war has left at least 250,000 people dead in the strategic heart of the Middle East and displaced more than 11 million overall, yet there is still no peace process, no discernible solution and no end in sight. Those reaching Europe represent a small percentage of the 4 million Syrians who have fled into Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Iraq, making Syria the biggest single source of refugees in the world and the worst humanitarian emergency in more than four decades. Now, the humanitarian effort is failing, too, ground down by dwindling interest, falling donations and spiraling needs. The United Nations has received less than half the amount it said was needed to care for the refugees over the past four years. Aid is being cut and programs are being suspended at the very

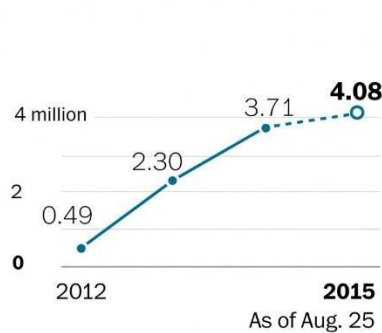
moment when those who left Syria in haste, expecting they soon would go home, are running out of savings and wearing out the welcome they initially received.

Funding to help the displaced is wavering as the number in need continues to grow.

Funds to neighboring countries for Syrian refugees



Syrian refugees in other countries



Source: U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees

THE WASHINGTON POST

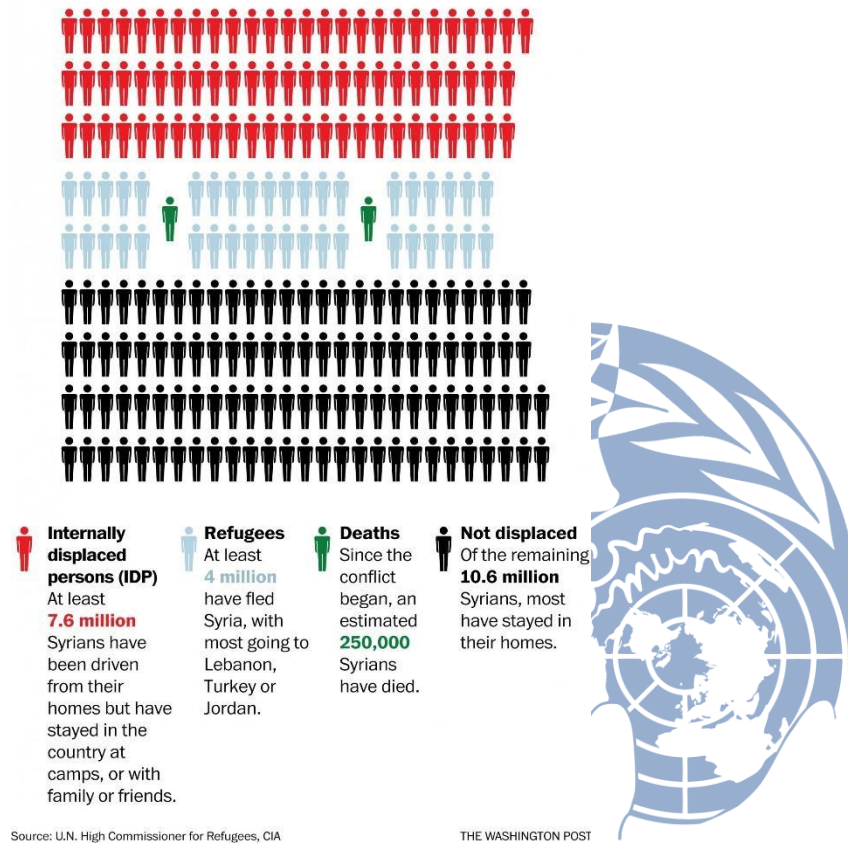
Helpless, destitute refugees are strewn around the cities, towns and farms of the Middle East, a highly visible reminder of the world's neglect. They throng the streets of Beirut, Istanbul, Amman and towns and villages in between, selling Kleenex or roses or simply begging for change. Mothers clutching children sleep on traffic circles, under bridges, in parks and in the doorways of shops. Families camp out on farmland in shacks made of plastic sheeting, planks of wood and salvaged billboards advertising restaurants, movies, apartments and other trappings of lives they may never lead again. Inevitably, those who can are leaving. Families pool their savings and borrow from friends to pay smugglers who demand a fee of \$5,000 or \$6,000 and pile them onto boats crossing the Mediterranean to Europe and the chance of a better life.

There they are duplicating, on a lesser scale, the scenes of misery playing out across the Middle East – camping out on the beaches of Greece, sleeping on the streets of European cities and joining the queue for asylum. A sign of the dangers of their journeys emerged in Austria, when authorities discovered the decomposing bodies of 71 people in an abandoned truck – apparently migrants being smuggled into the country.

Syria: The gutting of a nation

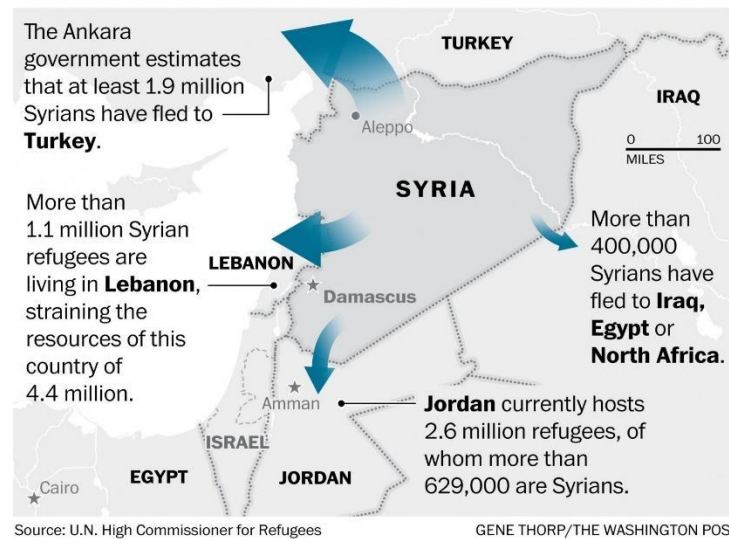
Syria's population was estimated to be 22.4 million in 2011 when the uprising against the Assad regime began. In nearly 4½ years, more than half the population has been killed, was displaced or fled the country.

 = 100,000 people



For most refugees, there is no escape from the squalid settlements, the humiliation of panhandling or the quiet despair of waiting out the war in the camps set up by governments or the United Nations. The UNHCR estimates that two-thirds of the refugees in Lebanon and Jordan live in absolute poverty.

At least 4 million Syrians have fled their homeland since 2011. Most have gone to neighboring countries.



Nations' attitudes and responses

1. Turkey

In Turkey, the only country in the Middle East that has made a point of welcoming the refugees, some Syrians are allowed to work, attend school and receive medical care. The Turkish government has already warned Turks to prepare for the eventuality that the presence of 1.9 million Syrians in their country of 75 million may be permanent.

2. Lebanon

In Lebanon, memories of the role played by Palestinian refugees in triggering the country's 1975-1990 civil war have deterred government action to improve the lives of the 1.1 million Syrians registered as refugees with the United Nations. The Lebanese government has refused to allow the construction of camps for the Syrians, so the refugees are left to fend for themselves. New government restrictions have made it harder for Syrians to work or renew their residency papers. Some Lebanese towns have imposed curfews on Syrians.

3. Jordan

The Zaatari refugee camp was set up three years ago in just nine days. It has grown as the Syrian conflict has worsened. It is now the largest refugee camp in the Middle East. Only about 45 people a day now enter Jordan from Syria because Jordanian officials are limiting the number of refugees;

meanwhile a growing number of refugees are returning to Syria because it is too difficult to survive in Jordan.

4. The United States of America

After Turkey, which says it has spent \$6 billion taking care of refugees, the United States is the largest single donor to the Syrian humanitarian effort, with \$4 billion provided so far to refugees as well as the people displaced inside Syria.

5. Germany

Germany announced on earlier September that it will grant temporary residence to all Syrian refugees arriving there and predicts an influx of more than 800,000 by the end of 2015. The United Nations is urging countries worldwide to grant asylum to 130,000 Syrians in the coming year.

6. European Commission

The European Commission tried unsuccessfully to persuade member states to accept a mandatory quota system for taking in 40,000 Syrians and Eritreans over the next two years. They agreed in July to accept 32,500 on a voluntary basis.

7. UK and Ireland

The UK opted out of any quota, exercising a right it had negotiated; however, the UK is to provide resettlement to "thousands" more Syrian refugees in response to the worsening humanitarian crisis, David Cameron has announced. Ireland could have opted out too, but chose not to.

8. France, Germany and Italy

But the quota plan has not gone away. France, Germany and Italy are pushing for it. The Commission is set to unveil a permanent EU mechanism for distributing asylum seekers across the 28-nation bloc. Quotas would only apply to Syrian and Eritrean refugees, however, so the mechanism would not solve the crisis.

References

<http://learningenglish.voanews.com/content/refugee-camp-in-jordan-is-biggest-in-middle-east/2902262.html>

<http://immigrationineurope.com/refugee.html>

<http://edition.cnn.com/specials/middleeast/syrian->

[refugees/index.html](#)

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-34148913>

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34105989>

http://www.worldlibrary.org/articles/War_refugee

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34139348>



2015
CCMUN