

HISAR SCHOOL

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**“Globalization: Creating a Common Language”**

**Advisory Panel**

*Ensuring the safe resettlement of Syrian refugees*



**RESEARCH  
REPORT**

Recommended by:



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# RESEARCH REPORT

## Forum: Advisory Panel

## Issue: Ensuring the safe resettlement of Syrian refugees

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### Introduction

In 2011, the inner conflict in Syria led to the start of a brutal civil war. The fight between the Assad regime and the opposition groups has led to a violent and a chaotic environment for the Syrian citizens. The civil war is the reason why 13.5 million Syrians require humanitarian assistance, why 6 million citizens are internally displaced within the country and why 5 million refugees seek residences outside Syria.

Many countries neighboring Syria have acted generously, hosting more than 85% of the Syrian refugees. Currently, the numbers of Syrian refugees hosted in the region are as follows: Turkey (3,554,072), Lebanon (976,065), Jordan (666,596), Iraq (251,157), and Egypt (129,737).

Millions were forced to leave their homes in Syria and are now spreading throughout the Middle East. Forces such as the Islamic State of Syria and Iraq and Levant (ISIL) and Al-Qaeda terrorise refugee camps, creating safety concerns for host countries. The rise of tension in camps threaten the whole region by creating unrest and a chaotic atmosphere between the citizens.

#### Most displaced Syrians are in the Middle East, with about a million in Europe

Estimated number of displaced Syrians, 2017



Map of displaced Syrians per country on 2017

### Definition of Key Terms

**Refugee:**<sup>1</sup> A refugee is someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war or violence.

<sup>1</sup><https://www.unrefugees.org/refugee-facts/what-is-a-refugee/>

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**Resettlement:**<sup>2</sup> Resettlement is the transfer of refugees from an asylum country to another State that has agreed to admit them.

**Humanitarian aid:**<sup>3</sup> Delivering life-saving assistance to those in need, without any discrimination.

**Asylum:**<sup>4</sup> Protection or safety, especially given by a government to people who have been forced to leave their own countries for their safety or because of war.

**Host nation:**<sup>5</sup> A country where a company that is based in another country has business activities.

**Immigrant:**<sup>6</sup> A person who comes to live permanently in a foreign country.

**Migrant:**<sup>7</sup> A person who moves from one place to another in order to find work or better living conditions.

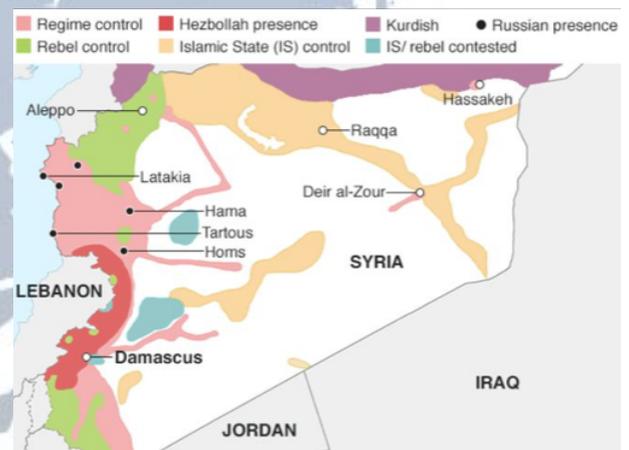
**Alien:**<sup>8</sup> Belonging to a foreign country.

### General Overview

In March 2011, 15 boys wrote graffiti on a street wall and they were brutally tortured, one 13-year-old boy being killed. After the incident, peaceful protests erupted in Syria. The Syrian government responded to the protests by imprisoning and killing hundreds of activists. The response of the government made the protestors extremely angry, and they asked for the resignation of President Bashar al-Assad, who expectedly refused this request.

In July 2011, officials from the military announced the establishment of a rebel group called the Free Syrian Army, aiming to eradicate the government and Syria began to slide into civil war. Along with the interference of other countries, this turned Syria into an open battle field. With Russia and Iran being the biggest supporters of the Syrian government, the United States, Turkey and Saudi Arabia continues to support the rebels. The controversies between the interfering forces has started to create international concerns considering the power they each possess.

In October 2015, the UN has recorded 200,000 migrants crossing from Turkey to Greece only in one month in the hopes of reaching Western Europe. At the end of 2015, half a million migrants had already entered Europe, but they were not welcomed. The European Union closed its borders to migrants, leaving thousands of refugees in Greece. The European Union paid 3 billion euros and promised EU visas to Turkey to prevent refugees from entering Europe. In two years, the number of asylum-seekers trying to



The current forces in Syria

<http://www.unhcr.org/resettlement.html>  
[https://ec.europa.eu/echo/who/humanitarian-aid-and-civil-protection/humanitarian-principles\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/echo/who/humanitarian-aid-and-civil-protection/humanitarian-principles_en)  
<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/asylum>  
<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/host-country>  
<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/immigrant>  
<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/migrant>  
<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/alien>

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migrate to Europe decreased more than 80 percent. Despite this, some refugees were discriminated against in Europe, mainly for their religions and ethnic roots. Especially Muslim migrants were known as criminals and terrorists, which actually led them to be so. In 2015, the attacks which occurred in Belgium and France also increased Islamophobia greatly in European countries.

Since the Syrian civil war officially began, thousands of families have been fighting for their lives under brutal circumstances. The battles in Aleppo and Damascus forced millions out of their homes without having anywhere else to go and/or the necessary financial/humanitarian resources. Almost every neighboring country has taken in refugees, which has led to various challenges such as poverty, financial instability, diseases, over-population, and increasing violence. The conflict has also created international concerns, and the UN and other organizations have been providing help to the region.

Abandoned by their governments, the refugees seek protection in the refugee camps which is a very hard task considering the rise of extremist groups, limited resources, poor conditions and over-population. The lack of education for refugee children, insufficient medical facilities and poor security are vital problems that should be tackled.

### Major Parties Involved and Their Views

#### United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

UNHCR is a United Nations coordinated programme which aims to protect and support refugees, along with internally displaced and stateless people. The UNHCR seeks to provide aid, support and cooperation in Syria, its neighboring states, host states and refugees. Apart from assisting the refugees with humanitarian aid, the institution builds international awareness. UNHCR regularly briefs the media and organizes events to raise awareness.

#### European Union (EU)

In 2015 and 2016, more than 1 million people arrived in the European Union, most of them fleeing from war and terror in Syria. EU is the biggest donator and funder that assists the refugees with about 1.5 billion euros (in November 2013) being used for humanitarian purposes. The EU has also been improving security at borders and offering safe ways for people to legally enter the EU.

#### Lebanon

Lebanon currently houses about 976.065 Syrian refugees. Lebanon continues to host the largest number of refugees relative to its national population, where 1 in 6 people is a refugee. The attacks led by the terrorist organizations and the conflicted past between the Syrian and Lebanese government has made the Lebanese government unwilling to support and protect the refugees which is why no camps are built in Lebanon.

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### Turkey

With 3.554.072 refugees, Turkey is the largest refugee receiver in the conflict. The countries share a long border which thousands of refugees cross every day looking for safety. The Turkish government does not even demand that Syrian citizens have a visa. After giving thousands citizenship, Turkish officials are now disturbed by their presence due to cultural differences and competition for jobs, and so in recent weeks, officials have started urging refugees to go home.

### Jordan

About 666.596 individuals are now seeking refuge in Jordan. Most of them are in the poor and less populated north side of the country. Presently, large refugee camps are being built by the Jordanian government and international institutions. One of the biggest refugee camps in Jordan is the Zaatari refugee camp. Jordan spends about 2% of its GDP (about 851 million USD) already in providing humanitarian assistance to the Syrian refugees.

### Assad Government

Since the civil war broke, the Syrian government has lost thousand of citizens with 465.000 Syrians killed in the conflict and over half a million injured. The citizens who still remain in the country, terrified from the government's brutal and cruel attitude hardly wins 2 dollars per day. By Russia and Iran being Syria's biggest supporters the Assad government continues to fight and resist towards the rebellion forces, ISIS and other countries like the United States.

### Timeline of Events

Date of Event	Description of Event
March 2011	<i>The conflict between the government and opposition groups soon develops into a civil war that starts the refugee crisis.</i>
May 2011	<i>Syrian citizens begin abandoning their homes. The first refugee camps open in Turkey.</i>
July 2012	<i>Jordanian government and UNHCR open Zaatari refugee camp.</i>
January 2013	<i>Lebanon starts registering refugees.</i>
March 2013	<i>The number of refugees reaches a million.</i>
April 2013	<i>UNHCR needs more fund to support Syrian refugees in countries like Jordan and Lebanon.</i>

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<b>June 2014</b>	<i>Nearly half of Syria's population of 22 million needs humanitarian aid.</i>
<b>July 2015</b>	<i>The number of Syrian refugees reaches 4 million.</i>
<b>September 2015</b>	<i>UNHCR teams with Greece to offer protection and support to those arriving in Europe in search of safety.</i>
<b>July-August 2016</b>	<i>The battle for Aleppo, Syria's largest city, displaces thousands.</i>
<b>March 2017</b>	<i>The number of refugees reaches 5 millions.</i>
<b>December 2017</b>	<i>60% of refugees in Lebanon live in poverty earning 2.87 US dollars per day.</i>

### Treaties and Events

- United Nations Security Council Resolution 2139 calls on all parties in the Syrian Civil War to allow free access to humanitarian aid for the citizens.
- At 2014 UNHCR launches the Regional Response Plan for Syria with the US fund of 4.2 billion dollars in order to support Syrian refugees, those sheltering in camps, urban and rural areas and their host communities.
- The Geneva Conventions consists of four treaties defending human rights during war time. The first protects wounded and sick soldiers, the second one protects sick or wounded military at sea during war, the third one is valid to the prisoners of war and lastly the fourth Geneva convention defends the protection of civilians.
- The Dublin Regulation has been activated on the 1st of January 2014, which clarifies the state responsible for evaluating the asylum request from the people who entered Europe.

### Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

The UN and the UNHCR have been working with various non-governmental organizations in order to create international awareness and obtain fundraising. The biggest humanitarian aid is obtained from the European Union, yet all the organizations prove insufficient when it comes to housing refugees.

Countries like Turkey and Jordan have opened their borders to the refugees and built camps for them. As new refugees arrive at the camps, new problems arise from over-population, diseases, the unrest

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between the citizens or various reasons. For example, the over-population creates problems like unemployment, criminality or poverty.

### Possible Solutions

With millions of people forced to flee Syria, governments, along with international bodies, should be able to protect the lives and basic human rights of refugees. One major cause for the death of refugees has been drowning while trying to escape, and this is caused by countries who deny them the chance to enter their borders legally. Instead of trying to tackle this crisis by banning refugees, governments should instead be helping them by providing temporary places to shelter and fulfill their basic needs like nutrition depending on their financial and social status. Another big mistake which the governments keep doing is blaming the refugees for every economic and social problem in the country. This can be explained by the cultural issues and ethnic discrimination rooting xenophobia in the country. Instead of blaming the refugees they should combat all kinds of xenophobia and racial discrimination in the country by creating awareness or educating the youth.



Refugees on a boat trying find an asylum country

All countries should be reminded of the treaty they have signed after World War II at 1951. Most countries agreed to protect refugees through the Refugee Convention and through UN organizations like the UNHCR. All refugees should be shared with the willing countries equally to prevent a massive number of refugees living in poverty only in one country. For example, 3.5 million refugees, most of them being unemployed, lives in Turkey in dreams of finding a job. The refugees should not remain only in the Middle East but also in Europe and other continents. European countries should give visas to the refugees and every country should be communicating in order to tackle this issue worldwide.

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