

10th Campion School Model United Nations | 8 th - 9 th October 2022

Committee: Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

Topic: Implementing measures to ameliorate the societal integration in response to the influx of refugees

Student Officer: Emmanouil Kalathakis

Position: Deputy President

Personal Introduction

Dear Delegates,

My name is Manos Kalathakis, I am 16 years old and by the time you read this, I will be attending the 11th Grade at the American College of Greece. I am greatly honored to serve as one of the Deputy Presidents of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) at the upcoming CSMUN 2022 Conference. I have been involved in multiple MUN Conferences as a delegate for the past two years, and this will be my second time chairing.

I have always been a firm believer that MUN offers everyone a valuable opportunity to get informed about political situations, address and discuss important current issues, meet new people with similar interests, and generally create unforgettable experiences and memories.

During this conference, you will have the chance to discuss, collaborate and debate upon a vital topic, with that being: "Implementing measures to ameliorate societal integration in response to the influx of refugees". It's not a secret that we are experiencing one of the biggest refugee crises in the history of humanity.

This Study Guide will provide you with principal information, that will assist you to understand in detail the aforementioned topic. However, it definitely shouldn't be your only piece of research and it should just be the basis of your preparation. I strongly



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encourage you all to conduct further research independently, as well as to be fully aware of your country's policy on this issue.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me at any time through my email, which you can find below. I wish you all the best with your preparation and your research. My excitement for this conference cannot be described, as I am confident that it will be a remarkable experience.

I look forward to meeting you all!

Yours truly,

Manos Kalathakis

Email: e.kalathakis@acg.edu

Topic Introduction

All over the world, millions of people are directly or indirectly forced to abandon their homes in order to avoid the inequalities and violence that plague their homeland. In 2015, according to the Migration Policy Centre, the economic issues and the issues related to unemployment were replaced by migration as the main priority of the European political leaders.¹The worldwide refugee crisis however, has got even worse than it was. Currently, the ongoing influx of Ukrainian refugees all over Europe is statistically the largest refugee movement since World War II.²

There is a plethora of reasons that can cause a severe refugee crisis, with the most important being: human rights violations, persecutions, war and civil war, climate

¹ Ford Foundation. "An Influx of Refugees Brings Not Only Challenges, but Opportunities." *Ford Foundation*, Ford Foundation, 14 Apr. 2017, www.fordfoundation.org/news-and-stories/stories/posts/an-influx-of-refugees-brings-not-only-challenges-but-opportunities/

² Dickinson, P. (2022, April 20). *UN: Ukraine refugee crisis is Europe's biggest since WWII*. Atlantic Council. Retrieved July 9, 2022, from <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/un-ukraine-refugee-crisis-is-europes-biggest-since-wwii>



change, and, generally, environmental issues and economic hardship. The speculation that the influx of refugees can only negatively affect the host community, is not accurate. The influx of refugees is not solely connected with challenges and obstacles. If the refugees are properly integrated into the society, then future opportunities could be created for the host country. An example of that is the financial aspect of a country. In the short-term, the influx of refugees might lead to “rising costs”, that are caused by the need to provide food, first aid, and a sustainable shelter to the refugees. However, in the long-term, the influx of refugees might be beneficial for the economy, since the working abilities of the refugees could assist with innovation, GDP growth, and most importantly the reduction of unemployment.

Even though the social integration of refugees, is a really important issue, the refugees or the migrants aren't mentioned enough in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) from the 2030 Agenda set by the United Nations in 2015. In order to achieve the improvement of social integration of refugees, equal effort from both the refugees and the host country is essential. The refugees need to adapt to the new circumstances, while also keeping their cultural identity and the host country should prepare to “meet the needs of a diverse population”.

Concluding, the amelioration of the integration of refugees into society is a necessity, as it can improve the social and economic circumstances of the host community.



Definition of key Terms

Refugee

“A refugee is a person fleeing war, violence, or other conflict or peril into another country because they are unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin for fear of persecution or danger.”³

Influx

“An arrival or entry of large numbers of people or things.”⁴ In this topic, the word “influx” is used to describe the arrival of refugees into a host country.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

“Gross domestic product (GDP) is the total monetary or market value of all the finished goods and services produced within a country's borders in a specific time period.”⁵

Social Integration

“Social integration is the process during which newcomers or minorities are incorporated into the social structure of the host society”⁶

³ “What Is a Refugee and What Is a Refugee Crisis?” *What Is a Refugee and a Refugee Crisis?* | World Vision UK, <https://www.worldvision.org.uk/about/blogs/what-is-a-refugee-and-what-is-a-refugee-crisis/>

⁴ “Influx: Meaning & Definition for UK English.” *Lexico Dictionaries | English*, Lexico Dictionaries, <https://www.lexico.com/definition/influx>.

⁵ “Gross Domestic Product (GDP).” Investopedia, www.investopedia.com/terms/g/gdp.asp ⁶ “What Does Habitat Destruction Mean?” Definitions.net,

⁶ “Rethinking Assimilation Theory for a New Era of Immigration.” *International Migration Review*, SAGE JOURNALS , <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/019791839703100403>



Refugee Crisis

“A refugee crisis can refer to difficulties and dangerous situations in the reception of large groups of forcibly displaced persons. These could be either internally displaced, refugees, asylum seekers, or any other huge groups of migrants.”⁷

Migrant

“A person that travels to a different country or place, often in order to find work”⁸

Hardship

“Hardship is a situation in which your life is difficult or unpleasant, often because you do not have enough money.”⁹ In the topic’s context, the word “hardship” is always linked to “economic hardship”. It directly forces many people to become refugees, since they can not provide themselves or their families with the essential goods.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is an agenda that includes 17 goals set by the United Nations (UN), to achieve and promote sustainable development, by 2030.

Persecution

“Unfair or cruel treatment over a long period of time because of race, religion, or political beliefs”¹⁰

⁷ “Refugee Crisis.” *Wikipedia*, Wikimedia Foundation, 13 June 2022, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Refugee_crisis

⁸ “Migrant.” *Cambridge Dictionary*, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/migrant>

⁹ “Economic Hardship Definition and Meaning: Collins English Dictionary.” *Economic Hardship Definition and Meaning | Collins English Dictionary*, HarperCollins Publishers Ltd, <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/economic-hardship>

¹⁰ *Persecution*. Cambridge Dictionary. (n.d.). Retrieved July 9, 2022, from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/persecution>



Religious Persecution

“Religious persecution can be defined as the systematic hostility or ill-treatment encountered by an individual or group because of their religious beliefs.”¹¹

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

“Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a mental health condition that's triggered by a terrifying event — either experiencing it or witnessing it. Symptoms may include flashbacks, nightmares and severe anxiety, as well as uncontrollable thoughts about the event.”¹²

Background Information

Causes of the influx of refugees

Persecution

Persecution is considered to be the most common cause of the worldwide refugee crisis that plagues the world. It can be divided into several different categories, primarily into social, religious, racial and political category. However, nowadays, the most common forms of persecution are religious and political.

Religious persecution

First and foremost, religious persecution is a very common form of persecution that forces many people to become refugees. Religious oppression cases can be noticed when a community views some specific religious beliefs as dangerous to the

¹¹ “Religious Persecution.” *Joint Public Issues Team*, <https://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/issues/religious-persecution/>

¹² Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research. (2018, July 6). *Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)*. Mayo Clinic. Retrieved July 11, 2022, from [https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/post-traumatic-stress-disorder/symptoms-causes/syc-20355967#:~:text=Post%2Dtraumatic%20stress%20disorder%20\(PTSD\)%20is%20a%20mental%20health.uncontrollable%20thoughts%20about%20the%20event](https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/post-traumatic-stress-disorder/symptoms-causes/syc-20355967#:~:text=Post%2Dtraumatic%20stress%20disorder%20(PTSD)%20is%20a%20mental%20health.uncontrollable%20thoughts%20about%20the%20event)



community's interests and security. There are multiple examples of ongoing religious persecution all over the world. Christians are persecuted in the Central African Republic, Hindus in Pakistan and Muslims in Myanmar. Especially in Myanmar, the numbers are very concerning. Since 2017, more than 900.000 people have left the country, because they were persecuted for their religious beliefs.¹³

Political persecution

Political persecution is another form of persecution that can be observed globally. This type of persecution occurs in countries, where political figures want to maintain their political power and to ensure that they illegally restrict the citizens ability to participate in the political life. Every citizen that is opposed to the aforementioned, is persecuted and thus, the only option is to flee the country. Even though political oppression affects every individual, it's important to emphasize that multiple public figures have become refugees, because of political persecution. Some of them are Gloria Estefan who fled the Castro regime in Cuba and Alexander Ginsburg who fled the Kremlin during the Cold War. Usually, people that are persecuted are tortured and imprisoned, their property is destructed, and in some cases, they are executed.

War

War among different countries or civil war has been a significant factor contributing to the influx of refugees. The first major international refugee crisis was generated by the most severe war in history, World War II. During that period, more than 50 million people were classified as refugees.¹⁴ However, even in our days war is a major cause of massive refugee movements. A perfect example of that is the ongoing

¹³ *Biggest causes of a refugee crisis.* Epimonia. (n.d.). Retrieved July 10, 2022, from <https://epimonia.com/blogs/news/biggest-causes-of-a-refugee-crisis>

¹⁴ "Biggest Causes of a Refugee Crisis." *Epimonia*, <https://epimonia.com/blogs/news/biggest-causes-of-a-refugee-crisis>



refugee crisis in Syria. The refugee crisis in Syria was up until March 20, 2022,¹⁵ the biggest refugee crisis in the world and it's a direct result of the war that has negatively affected the country for the last decade. More than 5 million people have left the country, while 6.3 million people have been internally displaced.¹⁶ Currently, the largest refugee crisis in the world is the Ukrainian crisis, caused by the Russian invasion in Ukrainian territory. From February 2022, almost 9 million refugees have left Ukraine. ¹⁷ Considering that the war has not even ended yet, this statistic is more than concerning.

Human rights violation

Many countries are exposed to human rights violations or in other words, inadequate human rights protection. There are multiple human rights that are violated and constitute a major cause to refugee movements. First of all, the predicament regarding the violation of women's' rights are prominent¹⁸. Furthermore, people on many occasions aren't allowed to take part in the political life of their country and as a result the democratic regime is catalyzed. The above-mentioned human rights that are violated cause multiple refugee crises globally. In some cases, not only are the governments not trying to protect the citizens rights, but they are even the ones violating them. It's not a secret that human rights are disregarded on many occasions, because of the avidity of the people that hold key positions in the government. It is important to add that human rights are violated way more frequently in LEDCs. Based on the report¹⁹ released by the

¹⁵ Ramsay, George. "A Quarter of Ukrainians Have Fled Their Homes. Here's Where They've Gone." *CNN*, Cable News Network, 21 Mar. 2022, <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/03/21/europe/ukraine-russia-conflict-10-million-refugees-intl/index.html>

¹⁶ "Biggest Causes of a Refugee Crisis." Epimonia, <https://epimonia.com/blogs/news/biggest-causes-of-a-refugee-crisis>

¹⁷ Wikimedia Foundation. (2022, July 10). *2022 Ukrainian refugee crisis*. Wikipedia. Retrieved July 10, 2022, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2022_Ukrainian_refugee_crisis

¹⁸ Canwach. (2020, November 16). *Violence against women: 6 ways women's human rights are violated around the world*. CanWaCH. Retrieved July 10, 2022, from <https://canwach.ca/article/violence-against-women-6-ways-womens-human-rights-are-violated-around-world>

¹⁹ Freedom house reveals world's worst human rights abusers. (2010, June 3). IFEX. <https://ifex.org/freedom-house-reveals-worlds-worst-human-rights-abusers/> .



Organization Freedom House, that identified the “world’s twenty most flagrant human rights abusers”, six out of the seven countries with the most human rights violations were LEDCs.²⁰ Raising awareness for human rights violation incidents is an essential step to solving the mass influx of refugees.

Climate change

Even though climate change is not the first aspect that comes to our mind regarding the causes of the influx of refugees. It is estimated that almost 21.5 million people have fled their countries due to climate change’s disastrous effects.²¹ The UNHCR officially recognizes climate change as a major cause of the massive refugee movements. In particular, in the UN General Assembly meeting in 2018, it was mentioned that “climate, environmental degradation and disasters increasingly interact with the drivers of refugee movements”.²² The ongoing humanitarian crisis, directly associated with the refugee crisis, caused by climate change, has been rapidly growing, especially after the drought in Somalia, where 49.000 people were indirectly forced to flee their country, because of the lack of water and food.²³ It’s very concerning that climate change hasn’t been recognized as an official reason for asylum seekers, something that has to change considering the dangerous climate and generally the environmental conditions that prevail all over the world.Economic Hardship

Economic hardship plays a crucial role when it comes to the global influx of refugees. Even though economic hardship constitutes the main cause of migrant

²⁰ *The Least Free Places on Earth: 2010*. Human Rights House Foundation. (2010, July 10). Retrieved July 10, 2022, from <https://humanrightshouse.org/articles/the-least-free-places-on-earth-2010>

²¹ “Climate Refugees: The World's Forgotten Displacement Crisis.” *Concern Worldwide*, 3 May 2022, <https://www.concernusa.org/story/climate-refugees-explained/#:~:text=Whatever%20you%20call%20it%2C%201.5,a%20major%20driver%20of%20displacement>

²² United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (n.d.). *Climate change and disaster displacement*. UNHCR. Retrieved July 10, 2022, from <https://www.unhcr.org/climate-change-and-disasters.html#:~:text=It%20recognizes%20that%20%E2%80%9Cclimate%2C%20environmental,strike%20is%20not%20an%20option.%E2%80%9D>

²³ “Biggest Causes of a Refugee Crisis.” *Epimonia*, <https://epimonia.com/blogs/news/biggest-causes-of-a-refugee-crisis>



movements, it can also be a reason for a refugee crisis. The migrants choose to flee their homelands because of unstable employment and the lack of job opportunities, while the refugees are indirectly forced to leave their countries, since they found themselves in complete poverty, without the essential human needs. An example of the effect that the economic hardship has is “the Venezuelan Refugee Crisis”. In the last seven years, there have been more than 4 million Venezuelan refugees, because they were unable to afford the basic human needs.²⁴ The prevention of the migrant movement and the influx of refugees, because of economic hardship can be addressed in the same way, with that being the reduction of unemployment and the increase of the payment in the labor market.

Consequences of the influx of refugees

Negative impact on the host country

The influx of refugees has some severe effects on the host country. First of all, there is immense pressure on public services. All public services are in a very challenging position when a massive refugee movement occurs. In public schools, way more children are enrolled, exceeding the limit of capacity and thus, the lessons become less productive and more chaotic. To be more precise, it's really difficult for a teacher to control more students than normally. To add on top of that, the students of the host community and the refugee children might be in a different academic level and thus an educational co-existence would be very challenging. Also, healthcare systems have to deal with way more patients than usually. This happens, because although a larger number of individuals occupy the public services, the financial resources provided by the government remain the same. Secondly, there is an increased pressure on natural resources. Nature is overexploited for the goods it produces on a daily basis, and that exploitation is increased even more in refugee crisis cases. In particular, in order to make products and to provide shelter and food to the refugees, there is an overexploitation of

²⁴ “Biggest Causes of a Refugee Crisis.” *Epimonia*, <https://epimonia.com/blogs/news/biggest-causes-of-a-refugee-crisis>



natural resources and thus, the environment is indirectly harmed even more. It is worrying that an immediate solution to the overexploitation issue does not seem to exist, since the products that are provided to the refugees are essential for their survival and they cannot be reduced. In addition, the mass influx of refugees in specific regions can result in the overcrowding of an area. The overcrowded area might not be able to sustain that many people and as a result, both the refugees and the population that already lived in the area would collapse in a variety of ways, with the main ones being economically and psychologically. The attitude of the local population alters from an overcrowded area to another one. There are cases where the local population understand this issue, but they do not blame the refugees, as they are supportive towards them. On the other hand, on multiple occasions the locals do not treat the refugees with the proper respect, because they believe that the refugees are the cause of the overcrowding issue. They are prejudiced towards them, and they often express their negativity to the refugees in a verbal or in a physically violent way. Finally, the refugee movements can create cultural obstacles. The difference in the language of the refugees and the population of the host country might lead to a lack of communication.

Positive impact on the host country

The influx of refugees can be beneficial for the host countries. The influx of refugees can address the “aging population” issue. In MEDCs, the amount of people that work after the age of 65 is rapidly increasing. As a matter of fact, “it’s growing at one of the fastest rates in history”.²⁵ That has a natural effect on positions in social and public services that need to be replaced. That need can be easily mitigated by the refugees. Moreover, the influx of refugees could bring overall economic growth. Refugees increase the demand for goods, they create, and cover jobs and they pay taxes. That money significantly increases a host country’s GDP. Therefore, it can be said that the influx of refugees and their integration into the economy could be a profitable investment.

²⁵ “Are Refugees Bad or Good for the Economy?” *The International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC)*, 23 Sept. 2020, <https://www.icmc.net/2020/07/14/refugees-good-or-bad-for-economy/>



However, frequently the local population feels threatened by the refugees, as they believe that the jobs that the refugees cover should have been assigned to them. This belief increases the feeling of dissatisfaction of the locals, that they express on multiple occasions, making the symbiosis even more challenging. Lastly, the influx of refugees can positively affect the cultural diversity of the host country. Even though the culture of the refugees can be a barrier in some situations, it can also be beneficial for the host community. The refugees are people that most of the time have a different cultural background, different traditions, and different perspectives. Thus, the cultural interaction of the refugees and the local population can break down negative stereotypes about different groups. Not only that, but it can generally create a more open-minded society to difference, that will allow to both the local population and the refugees to excel at various aspects of their lives.

Problems faced by refugees

Racism and discrimination

The most common issue that the refugees have to face when moving to a host country, is attitudes of racism and discriminative acts by the citizens, which occur most of the time because of some stereotypical beliefs of the local population. Racism behaviors towards the refugees make them feel uncomfortable, unsafe and they do serious damage to their mental health. Not only that, but they also feel unwanted in the host country and that makes the ultimate goal of ameliorating the integration of the refugees into the society even more difficult. Fortunately, the UNHCR has condemned on multiple occasions racism acts towards refugees, with the most recent one being against the Ukrainian refugees. In particular, the UNHCR Chief himself said: “They reported disturbing incidents of discrimination, violence, and racism. These acts of



discrimination are unacceptable, and we are using our many channels and resources to make sure that all people are protected equally.”²⁶

Mental health issues

When moving to a host country, it's very likely that the refugees are going to face some severe mental health issues. Aside from the racism and the discriminative acts, that will affect their psychology, the separation from family members, the unemployment, the socioeconomic circumstances, and the uncertainty of their future are all factors that could lead to serious mental health issues, such as depression. Recently research was conducted that showed that refugees and asylum seekers are almost five times more likely to experience mental health issues than the general population. To be exact, 61% of the refugees will undergo severe mental health issues.²⁷ Nonetheless, the fact that the general population receives significantly more help than the refugees is very concerning. Although there are many countries that offer psychological care to the refugees, there are only a few that provide equal access to mental support programs. Fortunately, more and more countries have recently offered free psychological support to the refugees, and that's something that will definitely increase the credibility of the host nations healthcare assistance in the future.

Finding appropriate employment

It is challenging for the refugees to quickly find a job when they move to a host country, because of the discrimination that they face. Even when they aren't victims of discriminative behaviors, they still might not possess the essential skills to get a job. Nevertheless, in the rare case that they do find a job, usually the payment is inadequate

²⁶ United Nations. (n.d.). *UNHCR chief condemns 'discrimination, violence and racism' against some fleeing Ukraine* | | UN news. United Nations. Retrieved July 11, 2022, from <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/03/1114282>

²⁷ “Mental Health Statistics: Refugees and Asylum Seekers.” *Mental Health Foundation*, 16 Jan. 2020, <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/statistics/mental-health-statistics-refugees-and-asylum-seekers#:~:text=Research%20suggests%20that%20asylum%20seekers,will%20experience%20serious%20mental%20distress.&text=However%2C%20data%20shows%20that%20they,support%20than%20the%20general%20population>



and thus, they are unable to cover the basic human needs of themselves and their families. For example, in Greece an average yearly salary for a Greek construction worker with less than four years of experience is around 16.000 Euros, which is almost half of the average salary for a Greek worker.²⁸ This amount of money is way more than what the refugees receive, so the difficulty to provide their family the essential goods is clear. Aside from construction workers, the refugees also get employed as agricultural workers or as maids and cleaners. There are also, some cases, where companies choose to hire refugees on purpose, in order to pay them the minimum wage, since they know that the refugees will accept anything that would help them ameliorate their poor financial situation. In these cases, most of the times, the refugees don't fully meet the work qualifications.

Education

Frequently, in the areas where poverty, war, and/or violation of human rights prevail, the citizens do not receive sufficient and quality education and that is the cause of several difficulties that they face when they move to the host countries. An important problem caused by the lack of education is that most of the refugees are not capable of speaking English at a sufficient level and thus, the communication between them and the people of the host country might become challenging. The access to education in the host country is really difficult, as well. It's really concerning that the refugee children who are out of school are significantly more than the non-refugee children who are out of school. To be more exact: "At primary level, 63 percent of refugee children are enrolled in school, compared to a global level of 91 per cent."²⁹ "At secondary level, 24 percent of refugees are in school, compared to 84 percent of secondary-age children

²⁸ Institute, E. R. I. E. R. (n.d.). *Construction worker salary Greece*. Salary Expert. Retrieved July 11, 2022, from <https://www.salaryexpert.com/salary/job/construction-worker/greece>

²⁹ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. "Yazidi Women Box Their Way to Recovery." *UNHCR News*, UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency, <https://www.unhcr.org/>



worldwide.”³⁰. “At higher level, the figures are 3 per cent for refugees and 37 per cent for non-refugees.”³¹ The lack of access to education in the host country can happen for various reasons. First of all, the lack of documentation is an obstacle that is hard to overcome. Because of the essential need to flee their homes many refugees leave without the necessary forms of identification, with the most common ones being birth certificates and educational records. However, on multiple occasions even when the refugees possess those documents, the schools in the host community won’t always accept them. This happens, either because the schools have reached the full capacity of the children, or because of a discriminative stance towards refugee children. Also, the lack of access to education happens because of the need of refugee children to assist their families. Refugees are most of the time in extreme poverty and as a result, the children are indirectly forced to get low-payment jobs to economically support their parents. In addition, in some cases the refugee children themselves don’t want to access education in the host-country, because they would feel threatened by exposing themselves to potential racist behaviors against them.

Major countries and organizations involved

Many countries in the world are immensely involved with the influx of refugees and their integration into society. However, it’s very important to emphasize that 69% of all

³⁰ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. “Yazidi Women Box Their Way to Recovery.” *UNHCR News*, UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency, <https://www.unhcr.org/>

³¹ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. “Yazidi Women Box Their Way to Recovery.” *UNHCR News*, UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency, <https://www.unhcr.org/>



refugees in the world come from just five countries³², while 38% of all refugees globally are hosted in just five countries.³³

Syria

Up until early March, when the Ukrainian refugee crisis began, Syria was the main country where citizens were forced to leave the nation and become refugees. To be more precise, 6.8 million people are the refugees³⁴ that were forced to abandon their homeland, mainly because of the civil war that plagued the country over the last decade. Most of the public services in the country are severely damaged, the country faces financial instability and children are not able to attend school, since their parents can not pay the necessary fees. Most of the Syrian refugees are hosted in just four countries, Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, and Germany. Turkey in particular, has hosted almost 4 million Syrian refugees.³⁵ The most worrying fact is that the Syrian government has not made any effort to improve the citizens' lives and thus the Syrian refugee crisis does not seem to end anytime soon.

Turkey

Turkey plays a crucial role when it comes to the social integration of the refugees. This is because it hosts the most refugees in the world. 3.8 million refugees are hosted in Turkey³⁶, most of them being Syrians, that are fleeing their country, because of the

³² United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. "Refugee Statistics." *UNHCR*, UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency, <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/>

³³ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. "Refugee Statistics." *UNHCR*, UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency, <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/>

³⁴ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. "Refugee Statistics." *UNHCR*, UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency, <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/>

³⁵ Published by M. Szmigiera, & 23, D. (2021, December 23). *Major Syrian refugee-hosting countries worldwide 2020*. Statista. Retrieved July 11, 2022, from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/740233/major-syrian-refugee-hosting-countries-worldwide>

³⁶ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. "Refugee Statistics." *UNHCR*, UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency, <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/>



last decade's conflict, that had as a natural effect a national economic crisis. Even though Turkey has signed the 1951 Refugee Convention, the government's intentions are against this international treaty. In particular, President Erdogan has publicly expressed his desire to return around 1 million Syrian refugees back to their country.³⁷ Not only that, but the Turkish government has been accused by Greek officials of sending refugees and migrants to Greek islands, violating in this way international laws. However, the Turkish people have tried to actively support the Syrian refugees. They have implemented the Employment Support Project for Syrians under Temporary Protection and Turkish Citizens (ISDEP)³⁸, which provides language and job training, and in some cases, it even places the refugees into the labor market.

Germany

Germany has been one of the countries who have dealt with the influx of refugees somewhat effectively. The country hosts approximately 1.3 million refugees³⁹, half of them being Syrians and it hosts more refugees than any other country in the European Union (EU). Germany has not only accepted refugees, but it has made significant efforts to integrate them into the society. In 2015, German Chancellor, Angela Merkel announced the decision of the government to admit one million refugees and she promised to help them integrate into the society.⁴⁰ In 2022, most of these refugees are employed and they receive different kinds of support. Nonetheless, improvements can still be made since refugees usually work in lower-paid jobs, which were also reduced,

³⁷ "Erdogan Announces Return Scheme for One Million Syrians." *InfoMigrants*, 4 May 2022, <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/40274/erdogan-announces-return-scheme-for-one-million-syrians>

³⁸ *10 years on, Turkey continues its support for an ever-growing number of Syrian refugees*. World Bank. (n.d.). Retrieved July 12, 2022, from <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2021/06/22/10-years-on-turkey-continues-its-support-for-an-ever-growing-number-of-syrian-refugees>

³⁹ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. "Refugee Statistics." *UNHCR*, UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency, <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/>

⁴⁰ Sekou Keita and Helen Dempster, et al. "Five Years Later, One Million Refugees Are Thriving in Germany." *Center for Global Development | Ideas to Action*, <https://www.cgdev.org/blog/five-years-later-one-million-refugees-are-thriving-germany>



because of the COVID-19 effects on employment. It is important to emphasize that the country's economy has actually benefited from the integration of refugees , since they have covered the needs of the German labor market.

Greece

Greece is a crossroad of three continents: Asia, Africa, and Europe. The geographical position of the country has been the main cause for the influx of refugees in Greece. In 2015, Greece was the “main entry point” of more than 1 million refugees⁴¹ who fled their countries, because of conflicts and situations of complete poverty. Most of these refugees were seeking safety in several different countries of the EU. Over the last decade, most of the refugees of the Middle East start risky “sea crossings” from Turkey in order to reach Greek islands. However, the Greek authorities constantly blame the Turkish government for sending refugees in Greece on purpose. There have recently been multiple incidents, where Greek authorities are keeping refugees and asylum-seekers away from the Greek borders, frequently by using violent means. Police brutality towards refugees is a common phenomenon, which is noticed mainly in the Greek borders. In 2020, Greece illegally “suspended access to asylum in response to a Turkish ploy to send refugees into the European Union.” Right now, Greece hosts around 50.000 refugees.⁴² The International Rescue Committee (IRC) has guaranteed that they are going to be kept safe. Also, it provides them with necessary mental health support and with job training. Greece has recently implemented two National Strategies for Social Integration. The first one was released in 2013, but it did not last very long. After it was modified, the Greek Ministry of Migration & Asylum released in July 2019 the second

⁴¹ *Issue brief: Blocked at every pass: How Greece's policy of exclusion harms asylum seekers and refugees - greece.* ReliefWeb. (2020, November 24). Retrieved July 12, 2022, from <https://reliefweb.int/report/greece/issue-brief-blocked-every-pass-how-greece-s-policy-exclusion-harms-asylum-seekers-and>

⁴² “Greece.” *International Rescue Committee (IRC)*, <https://www.rescue.org/country/greece#:~:text=Greece%20currently%20hosts%20approximately%2050%2C000,they%20can%20rebuild%20their%20lives>



National Strategy for Social Integration. It aimed to promote cultural and social diversity, to include the refugees and the migrants in the economic and the social amelioration of the country, and to create a socially open-minded nation that treats all individuals with respect, and it protects their human rights. It is too early to tell if the Greek national scheme would work, but it certainly is a step in the right direction.

Zambia

Zambia is considered to be the most successful country in the Southern African region when it comes to the socioeconomic integration of the refugees. Zambia's history of hosting refugees goes back to the end of World War II when Zambia offered to the Polish refugees a permanent shelter. Since then, it has hosted many refugees from many different African countries, mainly from Angola, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In 2017, Zambia made a valuable effort for the social integration of the 85.000 refugees⁴³ that were living in the country, with the adoption of the 7th National Development Plan and the "Refugees Act". The 7th National Development Plan has as its theme "Accelerating Development Efforts Towards Vision 2030 Without Leaving Anyone Behind". It strives for the socioeconomic development of the country with the inclusion of the refugees and the migrants in this effort. The "Refugees Act" provides overall support to the refugees. It protects their basic human rights, so they are not exploited, and it assists in their socioeconomic integration. It's important to emphasize that all refugees in Zambia have access to basic social services on the same level as Zambians.

⁴³ *Welcome: The global compact on refugees: Digital platform*. The Global Compact on Refugees | Digital platform. (n.d.). Retrieved July 12, 2022, from <https://globalcompactrefugees.org>



United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is a specialized agency of the UN, which was founded on December 14, 1950. Its main objective is the protection of the refugees, asylum-seekers, and migrants human rights. It has helped over 50 million of refugees⁴⁴ since the end of the second World War. It has provided them with basic human needs, such as shelter, food, water and in some cases, it even helps them get employed. The UNHCR raises awareness for all refugee problems by providing concerning stats and by making active interventions in refugee crises all over the world. The 1951 UN Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol are the basis of the organization's work. The 1951 Refugee Convention has defined crucial terms, such as "refugee", "migrant", etc. It constitutes the foundation of every following UN or national attempt in the world for the protection of the refugees and their integration into the host society. 149 countries have signed this Convention.⁴⁵ The UNHCR works in order to ensure that this legal document will be followed by all parties of the Convention. All UN members are obliged to collaborate with the UNHCR for any refugee problems.

⁴⁴ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (n.d.). *History of UNHCR*. UNHCR. Retrieved July 12, 2022, from <https://www.unhcr.org/history-of-unhcr.html>

⁴⁵ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (n.d.). *The 1951 refugee convention*. UNHCR. Retrieved July 12, 2022, from <https://www.unhcr.org/1951-refugee-convention.html>



European Union (EU)

The Russian invasion in Ukraine has already affected the countries of the European Union, when it comes to the influx of refugees, and it will continue to do so. In particular, there is an ongoing refugee crisis since millions of people are fleeing Ukraine in order to find safety and stability in the European region. Fortunately, the European Union has been making significant efforts to achieve the social integration of the refugees. To be more specific, over the last years, it has adopted very comprehensive schemes to integrate the refugees in the European societies, with them being the “IntegrAction plan”, the “2016 action plan on the integration of third-country nationals and the “Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027”.⁴⁶ All of the aforementioned strategies have ultimately the same goal, which is none other than the social integration of the refugees. It is important to emphasize that all three of those attempts complement each other.

International Rescue Committee (IRC)

The International Rescue Committee is a nongovernmental organization, which was founded in 1933. The organization provides essential short-term and long-term support to all refugees, who were forced to flee their homelands due to war, persecution, or natural disasters. It’s currently cooperating with 40 different countries all over the world. This committee mainly focuses on restoring the refugees’ poor financial conditions, providing them with adequate access to education and supporting their physical and mental health. In 2016, 26 million people benefited from IRC actions. ⁴⁷

⁴⁶ “Action Plan on the Integration and Inclusion.” *Migration and Home Affairs*, https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/migration-and-asylum/legal-migration-and-integration/integration/action-plan-integration-and-inclusion_en

⁴⁷ *International Rescue Committee (IRC) annual report 2016*. International Rescue Committee (IRC). (n.d.). Retrieved July 12, 2022, from <https://www.rescue.org/international-rescue-committee-irc-annual-report-2016>



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Special IRC integration programs have been formed all over the world, in order to make sure that opportunities will be provided to the refugees, in order for them to actively contribute to the host country's economy, society and culture.

Timeline of events

<u>July 24, 1933</u>	The International Rescue Committee is founded.
<u>September 2, 1945</u>	After the end of WWII, more than 50 million people are classified for the first time as refugees.
<u>December 14, 1950</u>	The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is founded.
<u>July 28, 1951</u>	The Refugee Convention is adopted.
<u>January 31, 1967</u>	The Protocol of the Refugee Convention is adopted.
<u>2015</u>	Migration replaces the economic issues and the issues related to unemployment as the main priority of the European political leaders.
<u>August 2015</u>	A new German policy on the refugees is implemented and thus, Germany accepts 1 million refugees.
<u>June 7, 2016</u>	The EU "Action plan on the integration of third-country nationals" is adopted.
<u>September 19, 2016</u>	The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants is signed.



<u>April 13, 2017</u>	Zambia adopts the national “Refugees Act”.
<u>2018</u>	The UNHCR officially recognizes climate change as a major cause of multiple refugee movements.
<u>July 2019</u>	Greece adopts the “National Strategy for Social Integration”
<u>October 1, 2019</u>	The European Union implements the IntegrAction project.
<u>2021</u>	The European Union implements the “Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027”
<u>March 20, 2022</u>	9 million Ukrainian people flee their country after the Russian invasion, making the Ukrainian refugee movement, the biggest refugee crisis in Europe since the end of WWII.

Previous attempts to solve the issue

National Attempts

The National Strategy for Social Integration ⁴⁸

The “National Strategy for Social Integration” is Greek national plan created in July 2019, as a complete modification to the “National Strategy for Social Integration of 2013”. This strategy aims for a peaceful and productive co-existence between the Greek

⁴⁸ “Ελληνική Πολιτική Ένταξης.” Υπουργείο Μετανάστευσης Και Ασύλου, 10 Dec. 2021, <https://migration.gov.gr/en/migration-policy/integration/politiki-entaxis-se-ethniko-epipedo/#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20National%20Integration,manner%20that%20ensures%20social%20equality>



residents and the refugees, “social cohesion and respect for diversity”. The Greek ministry of Migration & Asylum with this strategy has many specific goals, with the most important ones being: To create and in the long-term preserve a Greek community that respects cultural and social diversity, “to ensure social equality” and to encourage all people (Greek citizens and refugees) to care about the common good and to actively contribute to the socioeconomic development of the country in many different areas. This plan suggests that the integration of the refugees into the society will be achieved with the provision of access to essential services and goods, such as healthcare systems and accommodation, to the refugees. In addition, if this project is effective, then the refugees will have access to education, they will receive the proper language training and they will be provided with multiple opportunities to participate in the Greek political scene. It is too early to tell whether this national strategy has been successful. However, it certainly is a massive improvement from the last Greek strategy related to the protection and the social integration of the refugees.

Refugees Act-Zambia ⁴⁹

The “Refugees Act” is a project adopted by the Zambian government on April 13, 2017. This plan was adopted in the national legislation of the country, in order to recognize and protect all of the refugees that the country hosts. However, it has a detailed analysis of the government’s target to integrate the hosted refugees into the national economy, and into the society in general. The effects of the scheme will be shown in the long term yet, at least, it is a solution that the Zambian government provided in response to the influx of refugees, especially from the DRC.

The German Policy ⁵⁰

⁴⁹ *The Refugees Act, 2017 - National Assembly of Zambia.* <https://www.parliament.gov.zm/sites/default/files/documents/acts/The%20Refugees%20Act%20No.%201%20of%202017.pdf>

⁵⁰ Sekou Keita and Helen Dempster, et al. “Five Years Later, One Million Refugees Are Thriving in Germany.” *Center for Global Development | Ideas to Action*, <https://www.cgdev.org/blog/five-years-later-one-million-refugees-are-thriving->



In 2015, the German government and especially the Chancellor of the country, had a really important decision to make, with that being whether they were going to accept thousands of refugees that desired to cross the German borders. At the end, the German government accepted one million refugees, implementing a policy, which would end up being really beneficial for the government. A cooperation between the refugees and the locals was promoted and rapidly most of the refugees got employed mainly in the public sector. Also, the German government managed to send the refugee children to schools and universities, sometimes by financially supporting their families. In addition, it provided to the refugees that lived in refugee camps the essential human needs, such as water, food, and clothing. To be more precise, after the acceptance of this number of refugees the German government created a strong basis for an early access to all national integration services. It provided to the refugees equal access into the labor market, it increased the funding that was being provided to the job centers and lastly, it helped the refugees to learn the German language, by implementing language support measures. In 2022, the German economy has improved with the active contribution of the refugees.

European Union Attempts

IntegrAction ⁵¹

The IntegrAction plan is an EU strategy that aims to integrate refugees and asylum-seekers into the society and the economy of the EU countries. The project is implemented mainly through 4 partners, member states of the Union, with them being: Italy, Finland, Greece, and Germany. First of all, this plan addresses the barriers and the acts of racism that the refugees have to deal with, when accessing the labor market

[germany#:~:text=Germany%20has%20maintained%20high%20levels,the%20right%20thing%20to%20d](#)
[o](#)

⁵¹ "IntegrAction: Socio-Economic Integration of Refugees and Asylum Seekers." *European Website on Integration*, https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/integration-practice/integracion-socio-economic-integration-refugees-and-asylum-seekers_en



and the affordable housing. Also, it addresses the unequal access of the refugees to the labour market and to any form of education and the inadequate knowledge of the refugees when it comes to the language of the host country. This project seeks to ameliorate the language abilities of the refugees, as this would help them to integrate into the society way more easily. Also, it targets to get the refugees employed and this would happen with the improvement of their entrepreneurship abilities. Finally, it aims for the active participation of the refugees in the host communities and their collaboration with the locals. This would be achieved only through “mutual understanding initiatives”.

2016 action plan on the integration of third-country nationals⁵²

The “2016 Action plan on the integration of third-country nationals” is a scheme, which provides assistance to all countries of the EU, who are making actual efforts to improve their national integration policies. It takes some specific measures to achieve what was aforementioned. First of all, it focuses on education. It describes the necessity of the future EU actions that will have as a target the development of the language training that will be provided to the refugees and especially to the refugee children and the participation of the refugee children from a very young age to the host’s country’s education. Also, it provides vocational training that will assist the refugees to have multiple opportunities to get employed in the future. In addition, this scheme will provide equal access to all refugees, when it comes to public services, such as public healthcare systems. Lastly, it strives for the integration of the refugees into the society by taking actions to tackle all forms of racism and discrimination towards the refugee population.

⁵² “Action Plan on the Integration and Inclusion.” *Migration and Home Affairs*, https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/migration-and-asylum/legal-migration-and-integration/integration/action-plan-integration-and-inclusion_en



Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027⁵³

The EU recently established a legal framework called “Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027”. This scheme works as a supportive plan to the national legislative measures that the member states of the EU have taken. There are 4 main actions that this plan includes. First of all, access to education for all refugee children from a very young age until higher levels of education. Also, constant language training for all refugees, that will allow them to maximize the job opportunities in the host country. It’s important to say, that this type of training is going to be funded by the EU. Secondly, the amelioration of employment opportunities and the recognition of the refugees’ skills. The EU will promote the refugees’ integration into the labor market, and it will assist entrepreneurship. Also, there will be a refugees’ job skills assessment in order for the countries to benefit from the refugees integration into the labor market. Thirdly, access to healthcare services will be provided, including mental health support, since most of the refugees have experienced a disastrous situation that caused their movement into the host country. There will be special support to the women during and after their pregnancy. Lastly, access to affordable housing will be provided, which will be “funded through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), European Social Fund Plus (ESF +), Asylum and Migration Fund (AMF)”.

Relevant UN Resolutions, Events, Treaties and Legislation

The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants⁵⁴

In September 2016, in the UN summit, the “New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants” was adopted. This treaty was unanimously signed by all 193 UN member

⁵³ “Action Plan on the Integration and Inclusion.” *Migration and Home Affairs*, https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/migration-and-asylum/legal-migration-and-integration/integration/action-plan-integration-and-inclusion_en



states. In this declaration, some commitments related to the societal integration of the refugees, are included. First of all, refugee children will be provided with immediate access to education. To be more precise, within the first few months of their arrival. Also, this declaration condemns all forms of discriminative and racist behaviors, especially xenophobia against refugees, and raises awareness by supporting a global campaign, that deals with these issues. In addition, it commits on increasing the positive socio-economic contributions of the refugees in the host communities. Lastly, it aims to "find new homes for all refugees", who are officially recognized by the UNHCR, as "needing resettlement". This declaration has a positive effect on all refugees globally, as it has boosted the recognition of the refugees' rights and it has supported their social inclusion.

The 1951 Refugee Convention ⁵⁵

The 1951 Refugee Convention was adopted on July 28, 1951. The WWII had ended just a few years later and millions of people were classified as refugees. However, there was neither a universal term for the word "refugee", nor a recognition for the refugees' rights. This changed with the adoption of this Convention. It is the "centerpiece" for all the United Nations resolutions that followed related to the protection of refugee rights, as well as to the social integration of the refugees. The Convention wasn't always applicable to everyone. To be exact, the Convention was originally applicable only to persons, who abandoned their homelands in order to avoid persecution in Europe. This altered with the adoption of the 1967 Protocol, which made the Convention applicable on a worldwide scale. Currently, there are 146 parties to the Convention and there are 147 parties to the Protocol. It's important to emphasize that

⁵⁴ "New York Declaration | Refugees and Migrants." *United Nations*, United Nations, <https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/declaration#:~:text=The%20New%20York%20Declaration%20for,countr y%20will%20implement%20these%20commitments>

⁵⁵ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. "The 1951 Refugee Convention." *UNHCR*, UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency, <https://www.unhcr.org/1951-refugee-convention.html>



the United States of America is one of the three parties that have only adopted the 1967 Protocol. The Convention has been successful since it has ensured the protection of the refugees' rights. However, there are many people who tend to believe that because of the “complex” refugee relationships all over the world, there should be a new treaty that effectively tackles the current, evolving refugee issues.

2010/12-Promoting social integration⁵⁶

The “2010/12-Promoting social integration” UN resolution was adopted by the UN General Assembly on July 22, 2010. This resolution basically recognizes the importance of providing social assistance in order to achieve social inclusion. It indirectly effects the refugees, as it is mentioned multiple times that the integration of all people into the host society is essential. In clause no.4 of the resolution the importance of the protection and the promotion of all human rights is stressed out. This clause, as well as the resolution as a whole, promotes the “respect for diversity”, the “equality for opportunity” and the essential participation of all people into the social and the economic development of the country. However, it is important to highlight that even though everything that was mentioned in the resolution is of great significance, the resolution does not propose solutions that with their implementation, the social integration of all people, including the refugees, can be achieved.

Possible solutions

There's no doubt that the social integration of the refugees is a very challenging “two-way process”, that requires significant and mutual effort by both the refugees and the host communities. The refugees need to rapidly adapt to the host community, without having to abandon their identity. The host communities need to welcome the refugees and be willing to collaborate with them. There are measures that, if implemented, can improve the integration of refugees into society.

⁵⁶ “Economic and Social Council.” *United Nations*, United Nations, <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/home>



Creation and provision of integration services to the refugees

The integration services could train the refugees in a variety of ways, in order to help them get ready to live in the host country. There could be language training by experts and the refugees could develop linguistic competence, that would assist them in communicating with the host population way more easily. Additionally, these integration services could provide the necessary job training that the refugees are in need of, in order for them to be able to find a job and in some cases, even a quality job, that would restore the financial problems of their families. These integration services could be formed with the proper funding of the host government. For the proper functioning of them, the support from Non-Governmental Organizations is essential. Generally, these services could be really beneficial if utilized correctly for the amelioration of the integration of the refugees into the host society.

Amelioration of the special education programs for the refugee children

As it was mentioned before, the refugee children do not always possess the essential documents that allow them to attend school in the host country, or they are simply unwilling, since they are afraid of being victims of racism acts against them. But it is imperative that their interrupted education will be continued until they are able to go to a school on a daily basis in the host region. With some special education programs, the refugee children would continue their education with the constant assistance of professionals. This would keep the children educated, and safe and they would not be exploited, as it would probably happen if they worked in a low-payment job. These education programs would work as a small school. A few refugee children would form a class that would be guided by a professional teacher. It's really important that they gain knowledge that would assist them in living a quality life in the future.

Assisting the refugees to get employed

After a thorough evaluation and development of the refugees' work skills, the host countries could utilize them in the labor market. By doing this, both the refugees and the host countries would benefit. The refugees would be in a better financial condition than



before, and the host countries would benefit since some of the gaps in the workforce could be filled with the refugees' abilities. In order to achieve what was aforementioned, the host country has to develop a policy, in which the employment of the refugees is promoted. This can happen through the governmental assistance of the companies when they hire refugees. To be more exact, if the companies hire the refugees, then they would receive funding from the government. By doing that, the refugees would get employed and the locals would financially benefit.

Mental health support

Most of the time, the refugees flee their homelands, because of a disastrous incident. Thus, they present mental health issues, with the most dangerous ones being depression and PTSD. It's really important for the host countries to tackle this issue and support the refugees. By providing them with psychologists and other experts, the mental health issues that had occurred would gradually mitigate. This could be achieved with the necessary discussions and the essential therapies that would mentally support the refugees and they would assist them to gradually find stability in places, where they usually feel like outsiders.

Provision of equal access to all public services of the country

The inadequate access to the public services of the country, is an issue faced frequently by the refugees. Even though there are countries which actually provide refugees equal access to that of the local population, most of the time that's not the case. Access to healthcare systems is necessary, especially considering the traumatic experiences that the refugees have to deal with before moving to the host countries. Also, access to education is essential since education constitutes the main chance of the refugee children to rebuild their lives. Lastly, access to adequate housing should be provided since it arguably is the most important human need. Everything that was aforementioned can be achieved only through the appropriate funding by the countries and by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)



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