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How effective can be the European Union's policy in order to overcome the Syrian refugee issue in the Mediterranean region.

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Abstract

The Syrian Civil War in 2011 emerged the refugee issue in the Mediterranean region, especially in south-eastern. In 2014, the civil war and violent actions expanded in the country and a significant number of people decided to immigrate. These influxes have reinforced the complications that countries are facing, such us economical or security. EU took a number of measures to reduce and manage the refugee inflows. The most critical issue that is discussing in the EU is the refugee crisis and the outspread of terrorism. So, the central argument is how efficient can be EU's strategy in order to encounter the crisis. How effective can be the European Union's policy in order to overcome the refugee issue in the Mediterranean region and to host the refugees? The method that is going to be used is through primary and secondary sources that are based on official data by institutions and governments in the Mediterranean. Subsequently, via international relations field, it is important to note EU's role in this crisis and if EU can exploit in the best way its capabilities to find a solution.

Keywords: refugee crisis, EU, immigration policy, Syrian refugees, Mediterranean

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The outcome of the Syrian civil war

The crisis that emerged in Syria in 2011 forced millions of people to leave their homeland. Rebels and government are in an evolving conflict which is not clear how and when it will end. Violence by both sides worsened the situation in the country and people were in deadlock. The main opposition is the Free Syrian Army that Syrians joined in order to dethrone Assad but was fragmented. Nevertheless, Bashar al-Assad Assad did not relinquished and used more violence against opposition to retain his power. External actors assisted protestors hoping to stop the war as soon as possible weakening the government. Also, armed rebels supported military by international actors and as a result thousands people died. The launch of ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) deteriorated the forcible actions in Syria and people fled because they wanted to protect themselves and their families from dying by the extremist organization. Syria was in crisis concerning all the aspects and people did not have another choice but to leave. The majority of Syrians moved to Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey that roughly were 4 million. As these countries could not afford hosting other refugees Syrians fled to Europe to gain back their life. Refugees used either the Central Mediterranean route or the Eastern Mediterranean route.

1.2 The refugee crisis in Europe

In 2015, thousands of Syrians fled from their country to Europe to regain a chance in life. The number of people increased dramatically and this mass influx is compatible with Second World War. The number of people who drowned in Mediterranean Sea shocked the European community that decided to take swift actions to cope with the crisis. First of all, the vital measure was to rescue people from dying crossing the sea. The development of Frontex (European Border and Coast Guard Agency) in Mediterranean coasts, especially in Italy and Greece, assisted the attempt to rescue refugees. The creation of Hotspots in the frontline countries was a crucial factor that enhanced Relocation and Resettlement in Europe[1]. By implementing these principles Europe has attempted to share the burden among all Member States concerning their capacities separately. This contributed to an effective management of the crisis but there is still the need of unceasing efforts which will be more efficient and successful dealing with the crisis. For example, the security of external borders is crucial for reducing criminal activities such as smuggling or terrorism. What EU should do is to overcome its differences and acting up on a common migration policy to tackle any threat or pressure as occurred in 2015. The research will rely on primary and secondary sources to conclude in a thorough inference for immigration policy from the beginning of refugee crisis until mid 2017.

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[1] European Commission. (2015). *Progress Report on the Implementation of the hotspots in Greece*, pp. 2-3

CHAPTER 2

SYRIAN CRISIS BRIEF

2.1 Introduction

With the outbreak of the Arab Spring in January 2011, protesters began to organize peaceful demonstrations in many Arab states and the most significant occurred in Tunisia on January 14, in Egypt on January 25 and on Libya on February 17[2]. In few months, Arab Spring swept from North Africa to Middle East, from Tunisia to Syria. The aim of these protesters was to overthrow their dictators in order to improve their living conditions. Youth population was very frustrated due to poverty and the limited opportunities among young educated people[3]. The spark which led to "Arab Spring" was the self-immolation of the Tunisian Mohamed Bouazizi on December 17 2010. As a result, in January 14 demonstrators organized a general strike against unemployment, poverty and corruption and Ben Ali forced to leave. This revolution affected also other Arab countries and demonstrations emerged in Egypt on 25 January and in Libya on February 17[4]. The new generation was more educated than the previous and they wanted to exploit any chance in order to live under better conditions according to West way of life. Nevertheless, the political instability in these countries did not allow them to improve their lives and so they took the decision to protest and to vindicate their right to a better and a free life. Their leaders made use of repression to retain their power. A major factor that mobilized people to revolt against repression is education. The more educated a person is, the more possible is to participate in political actions because of situation's awareness[5]. Rapidly, the need for revolution expanded in Syria and people started to protest.

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[2] Lesch, A.,M. (2014). Troubled Political Transitions: Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. *Middle East Policy*, 21(1), p. 62
[3] Campante, F. R., Chor, D. (2012). Why was the Arab world poised for revolution? Schooling, economic opportunities, and the Arab spring. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*. 26, (2), p. 167
[4] Lesch, A. M. (2014). Troubled Political Transitions: Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. *Middle East Policy*. 21, (1), p. 62
[5] Campante, F. R., Chor, D. (2012). Why was the Arab world poised for revolution? Schooling, economic opportunities, and the Arab spring. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*. 26, (2), p. 174

2.2 "Arab Spring" in Syria

On January 26, a Syrian burned himself emulating the young Tunisian and demonstrations started in provinces. By late March 2011, the revolution had expanded in the cities and Bashar al-Assad Assad's regime used violence in order to stop the revolution and to maintain its power[6]. For instance, regime began, with army's support, to violate mosques, shoo believers and force detainees to manifest[7]. Thus, a number of protesters were killed by military and security forces. The civil war emerged when thousands of soldiers, especially Sunni, started to desert and Assad lost a part of his power. Many of defectors created the Free Syrian Army aiming to overthrow Assad and to gain the power using violence[8]. In October 2011, the Syrian National Council (SNC) was the dominant opposition to the regime and many believed that could represent the country internationally like Libya's Transitional National Council which was willing to Western army interference[9]. Nevertheless, in few months SNC lost its credibility due to the fact that was not able to embody a secular form. Also, according to public opinion it was motivated by Muslim Brotherhood and in November 2012 SNC integrated into the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces which was the primary opposition from 2012[10].

The sectarian factor contributed to Syria's civil fragmentation. Roughly 11% of Syrians are Shiites, especially Alawites, and 75% are Sunnis. Considering the fact that Assad is Alawite, it is easy to understand Alawites' power in the society as they consist 90% of the military[11]. Syrian uprising occurred at first in provinces such as in Daraa, Hamah, Homs, Jisr al-Shughour, Rastan, Idlib, and Dayr az Zawr. The most violent demonstrations happened in the third large city Homs, because of its population which is 2/3 Sunnis, 1/4 Alawites and 1/10 Christians[12]. This division did not give the chance to revolts to be united and to overthrow Assad and the revolution

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[6] Nepstad, S. E. (2013). Mutiny and nonviolence in the Arab Spring: Exploring military defections and loyalty in Egypt, Bahrain, and Syria. *Journal of Peace Research,* 50(3), p. 344
[7] Ajami, F. (2012). The Arab Spring at One - A Year of Living Dangerously. *Foreign Affairs*, 91(2), p. 3
[8] Ibid.
[9] Anything But Politics: The State of Syria's Political Opposition. *International Crisis Group Middle East Report N°146* (2013), p. 3
[10] Ibid, p. 4
[11] Nepstad, S. E. (2013). Mutiny and nonviolence in the Arab Spring: Exploring military defections and loyalty in Egypt, Bahrain, and Syria. *Journal of Peace Research,* 50(3), p. 344
[12] Ajami, F. (2012). The Arab Spring at One - A Year of Living Dangerously. *Foreign Affairs*, 91(2), p. 2

transformed to civil war[13]. The definition about civil war is detached because it can be an intrastate conflict, an insurgency and counterinsurgency, an uprising, a genocidal action or genocide and general mislaying of domestic power vis-à-vis the legitimate use of force[14]. Government was trying to retrieve its control but the large number of Sunni armed rebels transformed the city into siege. Nevertheless, because of the ethnic heterogeneity neither Assad nor rebels achieve to conquer the city as their base and the rigid government posed people to be with opposition[15]. Assad's regime remained harsh, political convicts were released and demonstrations escalated due to public's displeasure. He had promised to civilians a number of reforms in order to satisfy them but he proved incapable of implementing these reforms and so people decided to proceed to revolution[16]. Due to rebels' decentralization and the inadequate military training, the opposition was not capable of changing the regime and conquering Syrian territory. So, they were distributed in three forces; the Free Syrian Army which created by defectors, the Turkey-based Syrian National Council and the Damascus-based National Council of Coordination[17]. They couldn't find a common ground and to unite countering Assad and he continued using ferocity. The fact which led the conflict to civil war in spring 2012 was the limited but significant support from international and regional actors (UN, Arab League and US) to protestors, financial and military aid, in order to consolidate against Assad[18]. The aim of this support was to limit the period of the civil war and to reduce the violent atrocities by government.

Moreover, Saudi Arabia and Qatar in coordination with the Supreme Military Council (SMC) helped armed rebels, mostly local, to collaborate in urban territory and to be more efficient[19]. Nevertheless, their funding is based on independent expeditions which are organized by Salafi clerics from Gulf. For instance, rebels, and especially jihadi groups, have gained control of oil and gas resources, significant routes on borders, have captured regime weapon stations and have

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[13] Bhardwaj, M. (2012). Development of Conflict in Arab Spring Libya and Syria: From Revolution to Civil War. *Washington University International Review,* 1, p. 77
[14] Ibid, p. 77
[15] Ibid, p. 86
[16] Ibid, p. 85
[17] Ibid, p. 86
[18] Ibid, p. 90
[19] Anything But Politics: The State of Syria's Political Opposition. *International Crisis Group Middle East Report N°146* (2013)*,* p. 12

destroyed private ownership[20]. Thus, through these several and steady funds the armed opposition, especially Salafi and Salafi-Jihadi factions such us ISIS and Jabhat al-Nusra, has been liquid and pluralistic creating allies upon financial and military resources. In 2012, a significant effort made by Kofi Annan as mediator in order to find a solution but neither Assad nor the opposition wanted to compromise and to reach in an agreement[21]. According to the control-collaboration model, the armed rebels are estimating the vital role that civilians play in a civil war and in order to control the territory it is necessary locals' participation to achieve that[22]. The major method that violent actors usually use is forcible means, such us extinguishing civilians if they are not sufficient as a strategic resource. There is a distinction vis-à-vis the indiscriminate and the selective violence. The first is referring to the use of violence in the case that rebels' control over territory is uncertain and the selective when they have the overall control[23]. In discriminate violence the victims of casualties are usually women and children so as rebels gain the territorial control. As Thucydides said, a civil war is a war of all against all[24]. So, armed rebels are capable of killing anyone that will be useful for their sovereignty in a location. It is important to note that civil war in Syria forced a large number of people to leave from their country or from their homes in order not to die.

Another internal factor which contributed to Syrian influx in neighbor countries and in Europe is poverty and economic desperation. The political fragmentation in Syria caused economic crisis due to country's uncertainty. The war has direct impact on economy's productive activity through consumer activity that has reduced importantly in Syria[25]. Until the Arab Spring Syrian economy had a stable development roughly 5 percent every year under Assad regime. Nevertheless, the uprising deteriorated Syrian GTP approximately -18, 8% in 2012[26]. Until then, the extremist groups have not entered the conflict. Also, an external factor is that unemployment has increased and the foreign investors do not find Syrian environment appropriate for

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[20] Ibid, p. 13
[21] Hinnebusch, R., I. William Zartman, et al. (2016). UN Mediation in the Syrian Crisis: From Kofi Annan to Lakhdar Brahimi. *International Peace Institute*, p. 10
[22] Tyner, E., (2016). Do Territorial Control and the Loss of Territory Determine the use of Indiscriminate Violence by Incumbent Actors? An Examination of the Syrian Civil War in Aleppo over 45 weeks. *Journal of Terrorism Research*. 7(1), p. 52
[23] Ibid, p. 53
[24] Ibid, p. 61
[25] Cohen E. (2016), From Arab Spring to Economic Winter – examination of the relationship between politics and economics as evident in the Syrian civil war during 2011-2015, *Journal of International Studies*, 9(1), p. 10
[26] Ibid, p. 16

investments. In addition to that, government needs to spend a lot of money in military services to overcome any challenge by rebels and neighborhoods[27].

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[27] ibid. p. 10

2.3 Emergence of the Islamic State

In 2014, the civil war escalated with ISIS foundation, a radical religious organization with insurgency and totalitarian characteristics. The evolving destabilized and uncertain environment in Syria paved the way for ISIS to expand in Syria and to conquer its territory[28]. The violence in country escalated and the majority of victims were innocent locals. The conflict transformed into a humanitarian crisis that should be confronted mostly by international and external actors. According to the Commission on Human Security, it is important to protect human life in way that promotes freedom and evolution[29]. It is vital to protect people from risky threats for their life. According to the Arab Human Development Report (AHDR) human and state security are interrelated because without human security there is no possibility for state security[30]. A number of people forced to leave Syria so as to protect themselves and their families from several and constant violent action by ISIS.

In 2011, Jabhat al-Nusra, ISIS branch, achieved to obtain popular support against Assad's repressive regime and in 2013 the group decided to fight against ISIS and Assad due to its corporation with al-Qaeda[31]. It is estimated that in 2014 ISIS had conquered a territory approximately similar to Great Britain's size and consisted of 31,500 militants. This portrays the significant power that the jihadi group in the Middle East and was superior from other smaller extremist groups. Also, ISIS was attractive to foreign fighters who were eager to return in their homeland and integrated into ISIS[32]. Most of them belong to second-generation that have been born in Europe and have been raised according to western standards. These people are the real threat for human violations and not the refugees. Furthermore, ISIS gains important earnings from oil revenue, approximately 2 million dollars per day and from institutional services due to government's incapacity[33]. In addition to that, Syrian civil war, especially from 2014, has local, regional and global impact considering actors' involvement, such us USA's and Russia's. For instance, Russia begun airstrikes in December 2015 not only defeating ISIS but also confirming

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[28] Louw, L.A., Lubbe, H.J. (2017). Threats to Security Posed by ISIS in Syria: A Human Security Approach. *Journal of Human Security,* 13(1), p. 16
[29] Ibid, p. 17
[30] Ibid.
[31] Ribeiro, G.C.B, Guimarães, L.S. (2016). Refugees' crisis: caught between the advance of isis and the harsh reality of human rights violations. *Americas Model United Nations*, p. 261
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid, p. 262

Assad's regime will not lose its power. Syria's population is 22 million people. With Islamic State's proclamation the situation deteriorated, fragmentation in civil society increased and internally displaced persons have reached roughly 7 and a half million people[34]. According to United Nation:

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are "persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border"[35].

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[34] Ibid, p. 264
[35] United Nations. (1998). *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement* , p. 2

2.4 Conclusion

To sum up, the unsafe environment which derived from the Arab Spring led to civil and political disintegration in Syria. The harsh regime forced people, especially young and educated people, to revolt against Assad in order to improve their life. Assad's reaction was to use his military and security forces to cease the uprising. The violent actions both by Assad and the protestors enhanced and a number of people decided to leave the country which does not give them any opportunity. Also, revolts could not collaborate and to form an efficient opposition to overthrow Assad and gain the power. This distribution in society created a number of revolting and extremist groups against regime and Alawite minority. Subsequently, ISIS has worsened the ferocity within people and has increased refugees' influx in Mediterranean. These people want to protect their families and to live in a safe environment. For these reasons, so many people have decided to leave Syria in order to move in Europe that is the "paradise" for them at that moment. Until 2014 Egypt seemed to be the best route to reach in northern Europe and granted with asylum and permanent stay. Nevertheless the restrictions that imposed in 2014 forced Syrians to explore another way; Eastern Mediterranean route and Greece. A pathway that is cheaper and faster without relying upon smugglers.

CHAPTER 3

THE IMPACT OF THE REFUGEE CRISIS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

3.1 Introduction

It is a fact that the majority of Syrians have moved to neighboring countries (Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey). Nevertheless, the emergence of the Islamic State and the increase of tortures and violence in Syria have led to the mass influx of thousands Syrians in Europe in 2015. In order to reach Europe, they have to travel via Mediterranean choosing between two routes. The first route is the eastern; from Turkey to Greece. The second is the central; from Libya to Italy. However, Greece and Italy were not prepare adequately in order to receive thousands refugees and EU's assistance was necessary. Refugees want to reach Greece or Italy in order to travel again for Germany or Northern Europe as their final destination. Germany has received the most asylum requests in Europe since 2015. Only in 2015 applications were about 1 million. On the other hand many countries in Balkan decided not to host any refugee and to "protect" their country. Despite the protracted conflict in Syria, the influx of refugees in Europe reduced in both 2016 and 2017.

3.2 The beginning of the refugee crisis

Both the Syrian Civil War and the ISIS forced million of people to go either in the neighboring countries or in Europe. It is estimated that in 2015 roughly 3.2 million Syrians fled to other countries, like Jordan or Lebanon, and 1.7 million of them were children[36]. These numbers are the indicators that the Syrian crisis continued without any resolution. Many of Syrians became internally displaced persons two or three times. It is significant to note the fact that Syrian's neighboring countries (Lebanon, Jordan) have limited capabilities to support refugees and so the majority of refugees live in poor areas under miserable conditions[37]. They had not enough opportunities to integrate in the society and they are still vulnerable. Governments have to collaborate with international organizations so as to assist people who are in need of home and food; basic needs. Especially, Jordan and Lebanon have not a stable political system to plan a program which is based to refugees' necessities[38]. For instance, the key mediator that provides fund to Lebanon to help Syrian refugees is the international humanitarian organizations. Through these agencies local resources are boosted by NGOs to improve the living conditions not only for Syrians but also for Lebanese who live under poverty[39]. Some of the international actors are: the U.N. Development Program (U.N.D.P.), the European Union, U.S Agency for International Development (U.S.A.I.D.) and the U.K. Department for International Development (DFID)[40]. It is estimated that in 2014 70% of Lebanese were living under poverty with less than $4 per day and the unemployment raised above 20% among young people with no education. In 2015, poor Syrians refugees reached to 30 percent in Lebanon[41]. The government in collaboration with the local communities is supporting through hospitality the refugees.

It is recommended that international actors assist Lebanon in order to enhance its capabilities and to create the better conditions for refugees. These people need humanitarian support so as to increase the negative consequences such us criminality or terrorism. So, Syrians are feeling dependent from the Lebanese state as they cannot find a solution and to live normally in the

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[36] United Nations. (2015). *Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan 2015-2016: Regional Strategic Overview*, p. 5
[37] ibid, p. 12
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Geha, C. (2016). The Syrian Refugee Crisis and Lebanon's Endemic Deadlocks: Trading Reform for Resilience. *Middle East Institute*.
[41] Ibid.

country. For example, many of them are working illegally because Syrians have not granted the permission from the Lebanese government to work[42]. It is important to note the military superiority of the Hezbollah in a con-sociational state that both the government and Hezbollah have impacted on the security strategy. Also, the religious minorities are supposed to provoke demographic problems in the country boosting the existing conflicts[43]. The regime has decided to provide humanitarian aid and to collaborate with international actors in order not to be repeated the Palestinian experience. Hezbollah has followed a mainly neutral approach aiming not to worsening the situation and to risk its political and military force in Syria[44.] Also, the several Lebanese factions impose constraints to the LAF (Lebanese Armed Forces) in order to implement their own political interests[45]. As a result, this has weakened the Lebanese army to retain the control especially in the vulnerable communities. Taking these into consideration, local communities in collaboration with international actors should help indigent people to reconstruct their living despite how difficult it is especially in a poor country such as Lebanon or Jordan.

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[42] Raad, D. A. (2016). Lebanon strains under weight of refugees. *Catholic News Service*.
[43] Doar, K., Krauss, J. (2013). Return to fatahland? Syria's refugees in Lebanon's conflict. *The institute for middle east studies,* p. 20
[44]ibid, p. 21
[45]Ibid, p. 23

How they get there

London
Amsterdam
GERMANY
Brussels
Frankfurt
Paris
Vienna
FRANCE
ITALY
Bucharest
Marseille
Rome
Sofia
Istanbul
SPAIN
Madrid
Lampedusa
Athens
TURKEY
ATLANTIC OCEAN
Algiers
Tehran
Ceuta
Melilla
Malta
Crete
SYRIA
Hatay
Beirut
Baghdad
IRAN
Canary Islands
MOROCCO
Sabratha
Tripoli
Benghazi
JORDAN
IRAQ
Zawiya
Misrata
Alexandria
ALGERIA
Garabouli
Sebha
Cairo
EGYPT
SAUDI ARABIA
Tamanrasset
LIBYA
Jazan
MALI
Gao
Khartoum
Asmara
YEMEN
SENEGAL
Bamako
ERITREA
SUDAN
NIGERIA
Addis Ababa
GHANA
Accra
Lagos
ETHIOPIA
SOMALIA
Mogadishu
KENYA
Nairobi

Mediterranean Sea routes
West
Central
East

Other routes
By migration levels
Major
Minor
Schengen area

Illegal border crossings
Detected by Mediterranean route, '000

Western   Central   Eastern

75
50
25
0

Q1 2 3 4 | Q1 2 3 4 | Q1 2 3 4 | Q1 2 3 4 | Q1
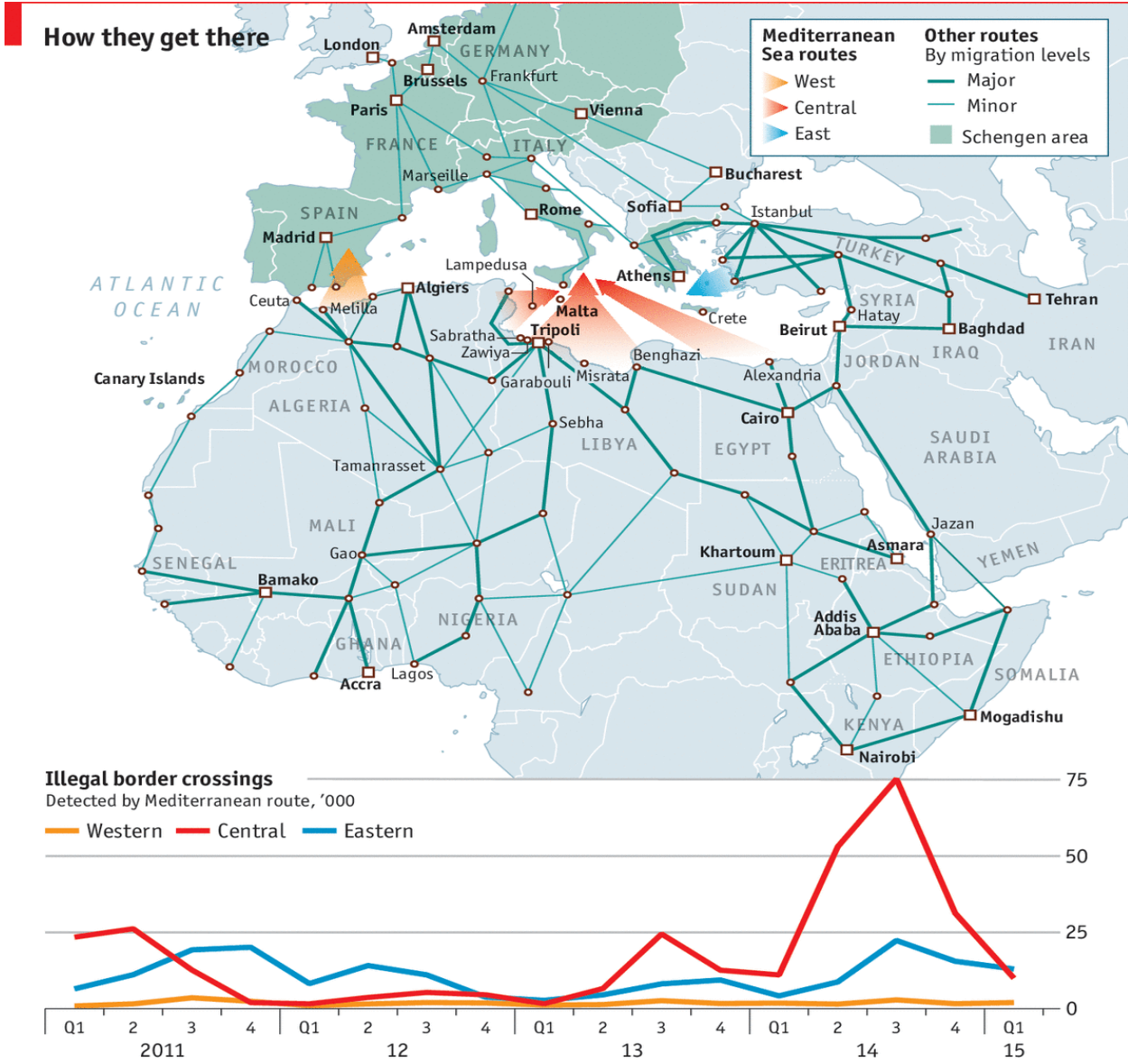2011   12   13   14   15

Table 3.1

Source: Economist

3.3 The mass influx of refugees in Europe

According to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in 2015 approximately 4 million Syrians decided to leave their homeland and to be hosted mostly by neighboring countries and Europe. It is the hugest refugee influx in Europe since the Second World War. In 2014, it is estimated that 219,000 migrants traveled to Mediterranean[46]. This number risen to 137,000 migrants that attempted to reach Europe in the first six months of 2015. The outcome was to drown in the first six months approximately 479 refugees and according to UNHCR in April 2015 1,308 refugees and migrants lost at Mediterranean shores[47]. This was the peak of the refugee crisis. Only in 2014 and 2015 1.2 million people crossed the Mediterranean region using leaking boats[48]. The deterioration of the Syrian civil war and the mass influx of refugees activated European leaders and institutions to take more vigorous measures. In 2015, more than 850,000 refugees left from Turkey aiming to reach in northern Europe via Balkan route[49]. This number seems to be nothing comparing with the total population of Europe that is roughly 500 million (about 0.2 percent). In addition to that, approximately 630,000 asylum applications were made in 2015 in EU and apart from the individual men the 13% of new arrivals were women and the 18% children[50]. Most of them are arriving by sea trying to flee from war, persecution or conflict at their countries or at host countries that living conditions are deteriorating. In 2014 1/3 of the refugees from Libya to Italy was Syrians that haven't been yet informed about the Eastern Europe[51]. Also, it is known that Syrians have more money that Africans so the pay more money for their journey from Libya to Italy so as to travel safer than the others and reach to Italy. Their choice since 2015 is the eastern Mediterranean route, especially from turkey to Greece due to visa restrictions for Syrians in Egypt and the civil war in Libya. In Greece, the 85% of the arrivals were from countries which experiencing civil war and conflict; Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia[52]. From Greece they cross Balkans in order to reach their final destination Northern Europe. Italy is the foremost destination for Eritreans,

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[46] UNHCR. (2014). World at War. *Global Trends*, p. 5
[47] UNHCR. (2015). *The sea route to Europe: The Mediterranean passage in the age of refugees*, p. 2
[48] UNHCR. (2015). *Refugees/Migrants Emergency Response-Mediterranean*.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Metcalfe-Hough, Victoria. (2015). The migration crisis? Facts, challenges and possible solutions. *Overseas Development Institute (ODI)*, p. 2
[51] Kingsley, P. (2016). The New Odyssey: the story of Europe's Refugee Crisis. *The Guardian*, p.62
[52] UNHCR (2015). *The sea route to Europe: The Mediterranean passage in the age of refugees*, p. 3

Somalis and other from sub-Saharan region. The number of refugees who moved from Greece to Balkans was increasing every day since June 2015; 1.000 people were crossing every day contrary to 200 many weeks ago[53]. The challenges that these people are facing ever day is the risk of the journey, the exploitation of the smugglers and the close borders in Hungary. According to UNHCR << *EU countries hosted a relatively small share of that number. At the end of 2014, the world's top refugee host was Turkey, followed by Pakistan, Lebanon, Iran, Ethiopia and Jordan. Lebanon hosted by far the largest number of refugees by population, 232 per 1,000 inhabitants. Worldwide, 86 per cent of the refugees under UNHCR's mandate lived in developing countries[54]*. >>

Concerning the asylum seekers, Germany is the country that has received the most asylum applications in Europe. In 2014 roughly 200,000 people claimed for asylum but in 2015 the number of applicants raised to more than 800,000 and just in July 218,000 refugees had filed[55]. Regarding Visegrad countries, Hungary, Poland and Austria are still reluctant to take any action about refugees[56]. Based on UNCHR data, in 2016, in Mediterranean arrived by sea roughly 362,753 people while 5,096 refugees were dead or missing[57.] Hungary has constructed a 4 - meter-high fence along its boundaries with Serbia. Czech Republic since August 2016 has not relocated any person who is in clear need of protection. The only aid from Czech Republic and Slovakia was the relocation of only 28 persons from Greece[58].

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[53] Ibid.
[54] UNHCR. (2014). World at War. *Global Trends*, p. 3
[55] Ziebarth, A. (2015). The Refugee Crisis: Perspectives from Across Europe and the Atlantic. *The German Marshall Fund of the United States*, p. 2
[56] Boldizsár, N. (2017). Sharing the Responsibility or Shifting the Focus? The Responses of the EU and the Visegrad Countries to the Post-2015 Arrival of Migrants and Refugees. *Global Turkey in Europe*, p. 8
[57] UNHCR. (2017). *Mediterranean Situation*.
[58] Ibid.

Where Syrian Refugees Seek Asylum in Europe

Asylum applications by Syrians lodged in 2015 (January through August unless noted otherwise)

Legend: 0-99 | 100-999 | 1,000-2,499 | 2,500-4,999 | 5,000-9,999 | 10,000+

#	Country	Applications
1	Serbia and Kosovo	65,763
2	Germany	49,368
3	Hungary	46,195
4	Sweden	14,451
5	Austria*	9,945
6	Netherlands	6,073
7	Bulgaria	4,575
8	Belgium	3,565
9	Spain**	3,160
10	Denmark	3,095
15	UK*	1,314

Table 3.2

Source: UNHCR (2015)

3.4 The current situation

In 2017, the arrivals in Europe by sea until September were 144,799 and deaths or missing were 2,784 refugees and Syrians consists the 9.7% of refugees[59]. Until June 2017 from eastern Mediterranean route crossed 12,549 refugees, from central route to Italy 83,752 and from the western route to Spain 9,507 people[60]. Until September in greece arrived 5.750 refugees and in Italy 5.600[61]. The journey for refugees continues to be dangerous for their lives including violence, kidnappings and detention for most of them. Refugees are using fake passports and visas by smugglers so as to travel in Europe believing that they will integrate more easily than they do[62]. The situation continues to set refugees' life at risk travelling with unsafe boats in unsafe waters. Smugglers are the main source of refugees' hope to live in Europe and find a job along with their families (children, wife, siblings etc). Smartphone is the basic material for refugees because they communicate both with homeland and other refugees in Europe so as to be aware of what is happening[63]. Using GPS they can understand exactly their location and they can plan their moves without relying on smugglers. Germany and Sweden continue to be the top destinations for refugees due to their helpful immigration and asylum policies.

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[59] Ibid.
[60] UNHCR. (2017). *Desperate Journeys*, p. 1
[61] Frontex (2017). *Migratory flows in September: Arrivals in Italy lower than a year ago, more departures from Tunisia and Algeria*
[62] UNHCR. (2016). *From a Refugee Perspective*, pp. 22-23
[63] Ibid, pp. 24-25.

3.5 Conclusion

The inflow of refugees in the Mediterranean and Europe started due to the fact that Syrians did not have another choice but to leave from Syria protecting their life. The civil war and the terrorism that expanded in the country forced them to move in neighboring countries or to pass through Mediterranean in Europe. Their influx in 2015 via Mediterranean route had an important impact on northern Europe that was unprepared to host thousands of people in many months. The economic crisis in Greece, for instance, posed a number of impediments in integrating refugees and granted them asylum to move on northern. Also, the journey from Syria to Greece or Italy was very dangerous that a significant percent of people drowned in Mediterranean Sea. The Balkan route is also crucial for Syrians because provides them the opportunity to reach northern, Germany or Sweden, and to be granted with asylum in order to improve their life. Nevertheless, many countries, such as Hungary, were reluctant to react according to European immigration policy that until now has been shown that has been influenced by internal policies and short-term solutions. The unity of the continent was at risk and a common policy based on solidarity and the fair responsibility was more than ever necessary. Despite the fact that have been a lot of positive steps, there is need of a continuing attempt to manage the crisis.

Chapter 4

The role of the European Union

4.1 Introduction

The mass influx of people in south-eastern Mediterranean forced Europe to take immediate actions to response to the challenge that emerged. First of all, the major measure that has been taken by EU was to save people from drowning in Mediterranean and Frontex is the institution which activated firstly. The second significant step was the Relocation of refugees in member states in order to activate a fair distribution. The other crucial activity was the Resettlement to integrate legally refugees in Europe and to protect those who are in real need of protection. Until now, according to Dublin System, refugees have to claim asylum in the first country[64]. Moreover, through hotspots Europe assists frontline countries, in economical and civilian aspect, to avert situation's deterioration. Borders security was also an important action to prevent irregular immigration and create save and legal pathways for refugees. A determined step for encounter the illegal immigration was EU-Turkey agreement that reduced the irregular inflows from Turkey to Greece. Lastly, EU decided to enhance security measures in Schengen zone and to integrate smoothly refugees in their society and to benefit from them. Key factors that assisted vulnerable people in practice where volunteers and under-resourced local authorities.

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[64] Kingsley, P. (2016). The New Odyssey: the story of Europe's Refugee Crisis. *The Guardian*, p.155.

4.2 The first attempts

In 2015, the need for a common European response to the refugee challenge was more instant than ever. Any response should be in compliance with the European legislation, for instance the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the EU treaties. Greece, due to the economic crisis, could not afford refugees' economic and humanitarian assistance without EU's aid. Unfortunately, refugees who passed through Turkey to Greece were obligated to travel again illegally via Balkans to northern Europe. The measure that European Union took in June 2015 was the support to reception and first reception services in frontline member countries, Relocation and fair distribution of arrivals in member states relying on Annex criteria such us GDP, population, unemployment etc. This could contribute to a most effective managing of mass influx. According to European Commission: "*Relocation: Emergency response mechanism to assist Italy and Greece: The European Commission is proposing to use the emergency response mechanism under Article 78(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. This provision, which is being activated for the first time, will be used to set up an emergency relocation scheme to assist Italy and Greece. This scheme will apply to Syrian and Eritrean nationals in need of international protection that arrived in either Italy or Greece after 15 April 2015 or that arrive after the mechanism is launched. A total of 40 000 persons should be relocated from Italy and Greece to other EU Member States based on a distribution key (see Annex 1 and 2) over the next 2 years – corresponding to approximately 40% of the total number of asylum seekers in clear need of international protection who entered these countries in 2014. The Commission is ready to do the same if other Member States – such as Malta – also face a sudden influx of migrants. Member States will receive €6,000 for each person relocated on their territory*[65]."*

In addition to that, Frontex intensified European border control through its technical facilities and additional protection to EU member states that faced this challenge. Triton joint operation hosted by Italy and brought under coordination border security and funds from 25 European countries[66]. In beginning Frontex had not enough ships to activate its actions but in few months

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[65] European Commission. (2015). European Commission makes progress on Agenda on Migration. *Press Release Database*

[66] European Commission. (2015). *How does Frontex Joint Operation Triton support search and rescue operations?*

ships increased. Frontex main mission is to arrange member states' vessels, helicopters and aircrafts in order to identify boats that carry refugees and to rescue them. Then in collaboration with Italian authorities they proceed to asylum process. Also, Frontex, through the Frontex Return Office, assists to refugees' return so as to achieve an effective exchange of information in Schengen area[67]. Saving lives at sea was the main measure that Europe took immediately in order not to die other people. Moreover, Frontex, in coordination with Europol, developed profiles of vessels so as to identify smuggling in partnership with third countries to overcome not only illegal migration but also their internal problems[68]. Another pillar that should be reformed was the asylum and visa policy so as to reduce irregular migration and stay in Europe[69].

In addition Italy and Greece were not capable of providing the appropriate humanitarian assistance because they were unprepared to manage the arrival of thousands refugees. What governments did first was to "protect" and "secure" their boarders by improving IT systems and technologies without considering that apart from fences were people who needed help[70]. These systems are Eurodac (administration of asylum), Visa Information System (visa applications) and the Schengen Information System (sharing of information about refugees)[71]. Nevertheless, most of refugees did not have visas or humanitarian visas to travel safely and claim for asylum in a third country. One tool that European countries can use to assist refugees is resettlement by a resettlement scheme of 20,000 places based on Annex[72]. According to UNHCR "*Resettlement involves the selection and transfer of refugees from a State in which they have sought protection to a third State that has agreed to admit them - as refugees - with permanent residence status. The status provided by the resettlement State ensures protection against refoulement and provides a resettled refugee and his/her family or dependents with access to civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights similar to those enjoyed by nationals. Resettlement also carries with it the opportunity to eventually become a naturalized citizen of the resettlement country.[73]*" There are 37 countries that implemented Resettlement to help refugees; Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Czech Republic,

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[67] European Commission. (2015). *Towards an effective return policy*.
[68] European Commission. (2015). *A European Agenda on Migration*, p.4
[69] Ibid, p.6
[70] International Rescue Committee. (2015). *The Refugee Crisis in Europe and the Middle East*, p.3
[71] European Commission. (2015). *A European Agenda on Migration*, p.11
[72] Ibid, p.5
[73] UNHCR. *Information on UNHCR Resettlement*.

Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uruguay[74]. Last but not least, EU operated the Return Directive for those who were staying irregularly and were not in need of protection. This measure should be taken in accordance with fundamental rights and the principle of non-refoulement[75]. In addition, in summer 2015 Hugary and Macedonia decided to close their borders to refugees preventing another mass influx. But this was not a solution. Instead, this reaction reinforced the inflow. Refugees found out another route to go in Germany or Sweden which was Croatia.

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[74] Ibid.
[75] European Commission. (2015). *A European Agenda on Migration*, p.10

4.3 EU-Turkey Agreement

On October 2015, EU and Turkey decided to cooperate in order to reduce the illegal migration from Turkey to Greece. So, in 29 November 2015 implemented the EU-Turkey Joint Action Plan[76]. The main aim was to confront the existing threat and to protect refugees relying on human dignity. A number of measures had been taken from both sides to manage the challenge. First of all, a significant amount of fund was to deliver to Turkey to support vulnerable people in collaboration with Turkish authorities[77]. Also, well-organized communities and provinces which hosted them were necessary to deal with the problem not only in Turkey but also in Syria's neighboring countries where the majority of Syrians live. This could lead in reducing the inflows in Europe by Turkey. Furthermore, Turkey, according to the agreement has to protect refugees and help them integrate into society. Secondly, both sides had to collaborate and to reduce smuggling and irregular migration from Turkey to Europe[78].

More specifically, on 18 March 2016 Turkey and Europe agreed to an EU-Turkey Statement that focused on irregular migration and the measures that should be taken in order to stop smuggling. The new pillar on this agreement was the return of refugees, who do not have a right to international protection, from Greece in Turkey[79]. For one Syrian that is returning to Turkey, a Syrian asylum-seeker will move in Europe. The reward for Turkey is the relaxation of visa limitations for 75 million Turks in Europe (26 countries border-free travel zone) until June and to begin again EU membership conversations[80]. Until June what implemented was the readmission agreement between Greece and turkey but from 1st June activated the EU-Turkey readmission agreement. Regarding the financial aid, EU decided to provide Turkey with 3€ billion so as to manage refugees' protection vis-à-vis health, education, infrastructure, food and other living costs[81]. Nevertheless, the aid was not the solution to the problem and the evidence is that refugees continued to leave from Turkey due to its inertia. In Turkey they could not work legally so their choices were to come in Greece or become smugglers. This deteriorated the situation in Greek islands that could not afford other immigrants and there was not an organized method to

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[76] European Commission.(2016). *EU-Turkey Statement: Questions and Answers.*
[77] European Commission. (2015). *EU-Turkey joint action plan.*
[78] Ibid.
[79] European Commission.(2016). *EU-Turkey Statement: Questions and Answers.*
[80] The Guardian. (2016). *EU-Turkey refugee deal – Q&A.*
[81] Council of the EU. (2016). *EU-Turkey statement.*

copy with the problem. The burden of the management shared to volunteers and NGOs which could not provide enough economic aid in Greek islands because of its cuts. The Greek government was too busy with their economical problems to provide assistance to refugees. Last but not least, EU and Turkey agreed to support Syria's situation not to impair.

4.4 The ongoing management

Except from the EU-Turkey statement, EU enhanced its internal borders on Schengen zone. Due to mass inflows, many EU member-states resolved to reinforced their internal border system to deal with the challenge; "*Austria, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Norway to maintain proportionate temporary border controls for a maximum period of six months, starting from the day of the adoption of this Implementing Decision*[82]." Another major pillar that needed improvement and reform was the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). Until now Dublin system has shown a number of weaknesses and what Commission proposed was a more just and vigorous asylum system that would help member states to provide the appropriate assistance on refugees[83]. Reforming the CEAS Europe tried to deal with refugee crisis and reducing the inflows on eastern and centre Mediterranean. Coordination between Institutions, member-states and countries of origin is necessary to effectively resolve the problem which most of all is humanitarian. Also, European Asylum Support Office (EASO) is responsible for implementing the institutional framework and cooperation between countries[84]. A major difficulty is that the majority of asylum applications have been made in few member states that has caused unequal burden distribution among member-states. So, these countries have decided to reinforce their internal borders controls. Moreover, another measure that should be taken was to reduce the irregular immigration and to prevent the secondary movements within Europe.

In addition, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency increased its equipment and its stuff with at least 1,500 border guards and experts to assist member states on emergency situations[85]. Hotspots that are hosting refugees will collaborate with EASO, Frontex and Europol so as to identify, register and fingerprint migrants that are coming. In that way it will be easier to recognize persons who need international protection and to follow the needed procedure. Also, the funding of frontline countries and key third countries is crucial for the reason that UN has cut its economical assistance due to the economic crisis.

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[82] European Commission.(2017). *Council Implementing Decision*, pp. 10
[83] European Commission.(2016). *Towards a Reform of the Common European Asylum System and Enhancing Legal Avenues to Europe,* p.2
[84] Ibid, p.3
[85] Migration and Home Affairs. (2016). *Securing Europe's external borders: European Border and Coast Guard Agency launches rapid reaction pool of border guards and equipment.*

4.5 Conclusion

Taking these into consideration, it is important to note the need for EU to activate immediately concerning the human factor. EU institutions took major actions in order to prevent human loss in sea. In addition, protecting European territory enhanced their security system via Frontex and CEAS. This conduced to a reduction of arrivals in 2016, especially via Turkey, due to EU-Turkey statement on 2016. The unequal distribution of refugees was a significant factor that reinforced a reformation of Dublin Regulation to a more cohesive and comprehensive system. Relocation and Resettlement led to an equivalent and legal distribution of refugees in member states according to Annex criteria. Summarizing, Europe attempted to deal with the refugee crisis and to confront smuggling but implementing these measures is not adequate to resolve the problem. It is recommended that EU deepen into root causes of the crisis and to find what to do so as to help refugees integrate into society and to cease the civil war in Syria. Until now, the measures that have been taken are not enough to deal with the crisis. A united and decisive Europe without divergences among member-states is needed to find effective and long-term solutions to the problem.

Chapter 5

Europe's future response

5.1 Introduction

Until now there have been made meritorious efforts by EU and its Member States vis-à-vis humanity and solidarity of refugees and asylum seekers. First all, timely and proactive actions should be take regarding the saving of lives in Mediterranean. The responsible institution for this operation is Frontex. Nevertheless there have been many useful attempts, it is crucial to enhance its equipment to make more successful operations in the sea. Secondly, Relocation and Resettlement are significant pillars as they contribute to normal integration of refugees into host countries via the creation of hotspots in frontline countries. Furthermore, it is crucial from European Migration Policy to reform the Dublin system and to construct a more successful and effective Common European Asylum System that will identify quickly persons who have the right to be granted asylum and to return efficiently those who are not in need of protection. This requires the collaboration among EU, Member States and key countries of origin in order to be accomplished. EU's funding to host countries not only in Europe but also in Middle East and North African countries should continue with also NGOS' support in humanitarian and economical term. Last, it is important to mention the need of the efficient integration of refugees so as to be prepared and overcome any threat and any challenges such as terrorist attacks.

5.2 Evaluation of the existing actions

In 2015, on the European Agenda on Migration was noted that: "*The response was immediate but insufficient. This cannot be a one-off response. Emergency measures have been necessary because the collective European policy on the matter has fallen short. While most Europeans have responded to the plight of the migrants, the reality is that across Europe, there are serious doubts about whether our migration policy is equal to the pressure of thousands of migrants, to the need to integrate migrants in our societies, or to the economic demands of a Europe in demographic decline[86].*"According to that, migration still remains a huge issue about Europe because both EU and its Member States were not prepared adequate to respond efficiently to the challenge. It needs a lot of efforts to keep the probity of the CEAS and of the free movement of Europeans within Schengen zone.

The measures that have been taken by EU to reform migration policy resulted in tangible outcomes due to coordinated European reaction. For instance, in 2016 over 720,000 refugees had been resettled or granted asylum in Europe much more than in Australia, Canada and the United States together[87]. The inflows of irregular migrants in 2016 have been reduced to one-third of those in 2015 because of the actions on the Central Mediterranean route[88]. Furthermore, European Union has decided to enhance its relationship with international organizations vis-à-vis migration and refugees. For instance, it continues to fund UNCHR in order to support Greece and overcome any difficulty regarding refugees and migrants: "*The overall amount of emergency funding allocated to the Greek authorities and international organizations operating in Greece now stands at €371.16 million, in addition to the €509.5 million allocated to Greece under the national programmes for the period 2014-2020. Overall, the European Union has mobilised over €1.3 billion of support (until 2020) to Greece to help manage migration and the external borders, through various kinds of funding[89].*"

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[86] European Commission. (2015). *A European Agenda on Migration*, p. 2
[87] European Commission. (2017). *The deliver of the European Agenda on Migration*, p. 2
[88] European Council. (2017). *Malta Declaration by the Members of the European Council on the external aspects of migration: addressing the Central Mediterranean route*.
[89] Migration and Home Affairs. (2017). *Migration: Commission awards €9.3 million in emergency funding to UNHCR to support refugees in Greece.*

Moreover, in June 2017, President Jean-Claude Juncker announced the activation of the new European Border and Coast Guard with over 1,600 coast and border guards to support external borders[90]. The Agency launched on 6 October 2016 but there are still many gaps in human resource and equipment aspect despite the significant efforts that have been made until now. The collaboration among member states to organize return operations it's a significant step to return effectively those who have not right to stay in Europe[91]. In the beginning 2017, Commission proposed the ongoing internal border control in Schengen countries (Germany, Austria, Denmark, Sweden and Norway) for another three months. Although there is an improvement on external border security, there is still need of consolidating the control in Schengen area, one of the greatest achievements by EU[92].

Until now, the response to the crisis had a positive outcome for EU with actions that taken in managing the external borders, reducing the irregular migration via Eastern Mediterranean and reforming the asylum policy[93]. For instance, the main issue in EU was rescue at sea. So, activating Triton and Poseidon Operations and the Frontex Rapid Border Intervention in Aegean Sea achieved to scan over 1 million irregular migrants and to arrest over 900 suspicious smugglers in 2015[94]. Also, the support to the Western Balkans route was very important to manage the crisis. For example, hotspots in Greece in 2015 were very efficient because improved the previous asylum procedure that was unprepared for a mass influx[95]. Furthermore, hotspots enhanced the capacity on identify, fingerprint, register third-country nationals that was a very important step to manage the arrivals[96]. Member states started comprehended that collaboration was the only way to manage the problem. Activating EASO, Frontex, Europol and Eurojust contributed to the effective procedure by hotspots[97].

Another significant measure which contributed to reduce irregular migration is the EU-Turkey statement that implemented on 18 March 2016. Implementing this action EU could control

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[90] European Commission. (2017). *Securing Europe's External Borders. A European Border and Coast Guard.*
[91] Ibid.
[92] Migration and Home Affairs. (2017). *Back to Schengen: Commission proposes that the Council allows Member States to maintain temporary controls for another three months.*
[93] European Commission. (2016). *The State of Play of Implementation of the Priority Actions under the European Agenda on Migration,* pp. 2-3
[94] Ibid, p. 4
[95] European Commission. (2017). *Deliver of the European Agenda on Migration*, p. 4
[96] European Commission. (2015). *Progress Report on the Implementation of the hotspots in Greece*, pp. 2-3
[97] European Commission. (2017). *Preserving and strengthening Schengen,* p. 6

inflows from eastern Mediterranean route and to protect those who are in need of protection. This joint operation created safe and legal pathways to Europe and accommodated the process of return of irregular migrants[98]. Moreover, the EU-Turkey statement mentions: "*once the allocated EUR 3 billion are about to be used to the full, and provided all commitments have been met, the EU will mobilize additional funding for the Facility of an additional EUR 3 billion up to the end of 2018[99].*" As a result, the Resettlement of Syrian refugees from turkey to Europe should continue so as to overcome the difficulties.

Since the beginning of the Syrian Crisis the EU Regional Trust Fund has assisted vulnerable people inside and outside Syria; over 2.5 million Syrians have been supported in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and the western Balkans[100]. In addition, it is crucial to note that Europe has increased since 2014 its assistance to the Trust Fund about the Syrian Crisis. The EU regional Trust Fund has been taken over 1€ billion to support Syria and its neighbored countries; Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, the Western Balkans, and Armenia[101]. Now, a new project has been adopted 275€ million which emphasized on education, healthcare, local community, equality and integration into society[102]. Also, the investment of AMIF (Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund), Internal Security Fund (ISF) and the relevant EU agencies increased to 70% in order to help Member States deal with the crisis. Until 20 September 2017, roughly 28.500 people have been relocated in Europe and this proves the good outcome of the first EU-wide resettlement scheme which implemented in July 2015[103].

Another deficiency was in the criminal activities by smugglers and traffickers who are involved in migrant smuggling due to a beneficial source of income. Collaboration between Interpol and Europol was very useful to be made joint operations in 2016 via European Migrant Smuggling Centre at Europol and to identify the roots which led to smuggling[104]. Until now the centre has achieved to arrest 167 people and to detect 830 vessels that are possible of transferring irregular

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[98] European Commission. (2017). *Deliver of the European Agenda on Migration*, p. 4
[99] Council of the EU. (2016). *EU-Turkey statement.*
[100] European Commission. (2017). *Deliver of the European Agenda on Migration*, p. 5
[101] Migration and Home Affairs. (2017). *EU Syria Trust Fund: new assistance package to support Syrian refugees and host communities crosses €1 billion mark.*
[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Europol., Interpol. (2016). *Migrant Smuggling Networks*, p. 5

migrants[105]. Centre's assistance to Member States is crucial to identify and encounter this criminal activity in Mediterranean. Also, it is important to note the need of information sharing and exchanging between institutions and Member States and among neighboring Member States through EU civilian and sometimes military interferences[106]. For example, via Operation Sophia 25 Member States coordinated to identify the problem and deal with security threats[107].

Regarding the return procedure EU was not so efficient to return third-country nationals due to differences between EU and Member States using a policy that has not fully advanced in practice. For instance, in 2016 only 226.000 irregular refugees left from EU[108]. Due to that fact, EU decided to encounter undeclared work which enhances their stay in EU countries through labor inspectors and the launch of the European Platform Tackling Undeclared Work on May 2016 and the Platform's 2-year Work Programme for 2017-2018[109].

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[105] European Commission. (2017). *Deliver of the European Agenda on Migration*, p. 7
[106] European Commission. (2017). *Commission Staff Working Document*, p. 18
[107] CSDP. (2016). *Missions and Operations Annual Report*, p. 25
[108] Commission. (2017). *Deliver of the European Agenda on Migration*, p. 9
[109] European Commission. (2017). *European Platform Undeclared Work Work Programme 2017-2018*, pp. 1-5

5.3 Proposals on EU migration policy

Although the significant efforts that have been made improving migration policy, there is a need of continuing overcoming any obstacle or difficulty and developing efficient measures. First of all, it is important to deepen EU cooperation, especially in the area of resettlement, and the funding assistance to Member States' attempts. Next EU steps should focus on developing the CEAS, increasing the legal routes to Europe and reduce the irregular migration, improving the return process and collaborating both with Member States and with Syria to manage more effective the migration challenge.

First of all, it is important to develop a resilient asylum system so as to be prepared on any unforeseen situation that may emerge. This means that national systems should collaborate narrower than in Dublin System in order the new system to be trustful, fair and cohesive. As President Jean-Claude Juncker pointed: "*The Commission's proposals to reform our Common Asylum System and strengthen rules on the Posting of Workers have caused controversy, I know. Achieving a good result will need all sides to do their part so they can move towards each other. I want to say today: as long as the outcome is the right one for our Union and is fair to all its Member States, the Commission will be open to compromise.*[110]" So, all EU parts and all Member States should cooperate to deploy a more affective asylum system in Europe. It is suggested that the system be effective confronting migratory stress and secondary movements in accordance with international law[111].

Another pillar that needs improvement is Resettlement. This tool should develop in compliance with solidarity and responsibility of refugees. For instance EU has recommended the resettlement of roughly 50.000 persons in need of protection providing EUR 500 million[112]. Moreover, this implies the resettlement from Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon and North-African countries. By creating legal pathways to Europe this will contribute to tackle irregular migration and facilitating readmission and return of people who are not in need of international protection. EU institutions and Member States should recognize the inevitability of the problem and to

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[110] European Commission. (2017). State of the Union Address. *Press Release Database.*.

[111] European Council. (2017). *Conclusions.*
[112] Commission. (2017). *Deliver of the European Agenda on Migration*, p. 18.

develop an organized mass resettlement. Also, the role of public-private sector it is important to detect the priorities of EU labor markets and to combat irregular arrivals[113].

In addition, a more efficient return procedure is needed to protect effectively refugees who are in real need with the help of Frontex and cooperation with third countries to implement the obligation of readmitting their nationals. It is proposed that Frontex be dedicated and to develop action operations and a proactive procedure of return via the Return Department within the Agency. More, through hotspots EU can organize more swiftly and effectively the process of return and to identify people who are real vulnerable[114].

A measure that could be beneficial for EU is the integration of well-skilled and educated youth into labor market and society. This will help EU to be more competitive and to construct a cohesive system that will provide opportunities both to Member States and to third-country nationals[115]. It is recommended that integration should be implemented in different aspects, such as education, employment, culture and entrepreneurship, in order to be successful for both sides. It is significant for EU to take proactive measures in coordination with Member States to be prepared for refugees' arrival. For example, sponsorship programs, knowledge exchange via projects (Facilitating resettlement and Refugee Admission) and information to key third countries for their arrival in EU[116]. Also, it is important to support children integrate into schools and youth into universities because education is the most powerful tool to benefit from refugees in the near and far future[117]. A more effective European Blue Card will be an incentive for high-skilled employees that EU needs[118].

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[113] Ibid, p. 19.
[114] Ibid. p, 20.
[115] European Commission. (2016). *Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals*, pp. 4-5
[116] Ibid, p. 7
[117] Ritzen, J., Kanahen, M. (2017). *A sustainable immigration policy for the EU*, IZA, No. 126, p. 21
[118] Commission. (2017). *Deliver of the European Agenda on Migration*, p. 15.
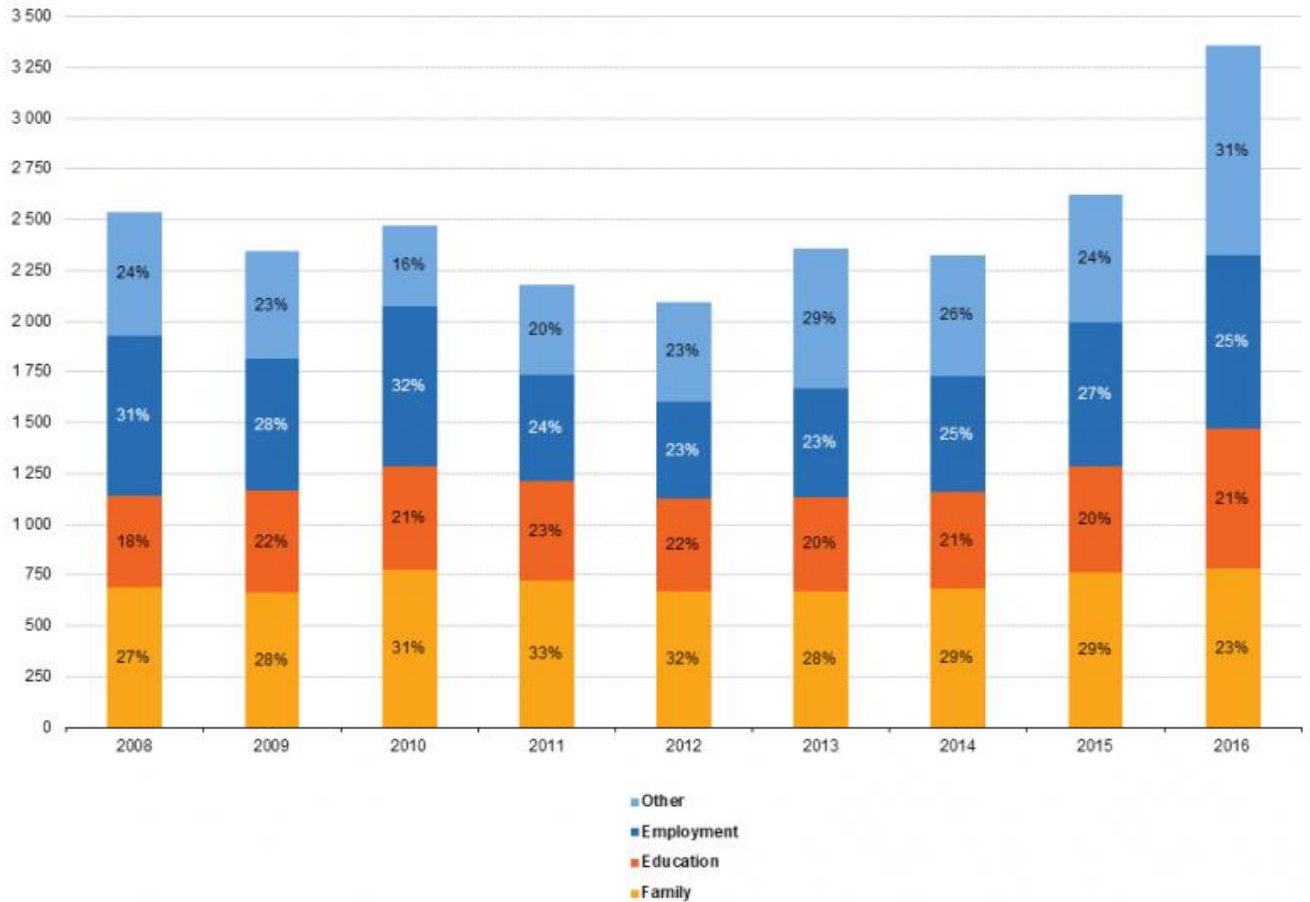
Table 5.1

Source: Eurostat

The implementation of these measures gradually will reduce the irregular immigration and will force EU institutions to take more efficient and practical actions in collaboration with Member States and not active separately[119]. Moreover, the threat of terrorism due to irregular migration has increased in Europe and that should contribute to strengthen Schengen's control and use the appropriate and efficient tools to increase security in the area[120]. For instance, two of the nine assaulters of the Paris attack in November 2015 had probably reached in Europe via Greece[121].

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[119] Osterloh, M., Frey B.S. (2017). Migration Policy: Lessons from Cooperatives. *CESifo Working Paper*, No. 6364, p. 9

[120] European Commission. (2017). *Preserving and strengthening Schengen,* p. 11.

[121] Kingsley, P. (2016). The New Odyssey: the story of Europe's Refugee Crisis. *The Guardian*, p.9.

All Member States should take responsibility of finding practical long-term solutions for refugees and not provide them only money. The key to organize better the influx is the proactive collaboration with these people before they come.

5.4 Conclusion

To sum the things up, EU made considerable efforts to deal with refugee crisis from 2014-2015 until now. These efforts were the reform of the CEAS in order to clarify those who are in need of protection and to help them. Relying on the principles of Relocation and Resettlement EU tried to integrate refugees into society and to share fair the burden among Member States. This relieved the situation which had created in Mediterranean countries as in Greece and Italy but did not solve the chaos. EU assisted economically and humanly these countries in coordination with NGOS and UNHCR. Apart from these countries Europe provided funding to key third countries in Middle East and North African such as in Syria but has been proved that this aid is inadequate. In addition, the launch of Frontex enhanced securitization in external borders and contributed to rescue lives in Mediterranean. Due to these attempts the inflows reduced in 2016 and 2017. Nevertheless, EU countries should persist on minimize their national differences and create a common migration policy and treat refugees in the same way. Solidarity and coherence are two factors that should affect any member states' action to confront threats by migration arrivals like terrorist attacks or criminal activities (trafficking).

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The crisis that emerged in Syria due to violent attacks by Assad and then ISIS led million Syrians leave their country moving to neighboring countries or move inside Syria being internally displaced persons. Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan did not afford, economically and humanly, to host other refugees in their countries due to deterioration of their internal policy. Approximately 4 million Syrians were hosted by these three countries. So, in 2014-2015, Syrians assumed that the safest environment to move on was Europe and actually Northern Europe. The two basic routes that Syrians crossed were Eastern and Central Mediterranean. Both journeys were dangerous and risky for refugees. Most of smugglers use wooden and leaking dinghies make it more possible to sink. In 2014 and 2015 roughly 1.2 million people crossed Mediterranean with more than 850.000 refugees crossing the Eastern Mediterranean route and that was a challenge for Eastern Europe[122]. So EU started military operations in Central Mediterranean in order to rescue refugees from drowning. The development of Frontex conduced to an important number that competent rescued but an also progress on the equipment is needed to be more effective. The reform of the Dublin System to a Common European Asylum System, succeed in creating a friendly environment among Member States to collaborate in managing the problem but still is needed a more efficient system. National authorities should continue work with EU and with key-third countries to identify, fingerprint and register refugees who are in need of international protection and return those who have entry irregular and have not right to grant permission to stay. Moreover, the additional patrol of the external borders and Schengen zone achieved to reduce the inflow of irregular migrants but it is necessary to continue insuring that EU is prepared for pressure similar to that of 2015. Providing a legal and safe path to refugees will result in the decrease of irregular flows and a successful managing of the entries. Resettlement and Relocation should continue and create a fair system in EU sharing the burden according to annex criteria that still has not achieved so sufficiently. This will enhance cohesion and trust among European countries. Lastly, through education and work EU will more easily integrate refugees into society that is very useful for EU's future. It is proposed that EU should

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[122] Ibid, pp. 4-6.

cooperate with NGOs to assist vulnerable people and to show solidarity concerning firstly human. Because the signs of ending the civil war in Syria are not so positive, a proactive immigration policy is necessary in order to prevent another crisis. In my opinion, education of children and legal work are key factors to deal with the crisis, familiarize with refugees and to limit the fear that are terrorists in Europe.

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