

Forum: Fourth Committee of the General Assembly

Topic: Establishing systematic plans for the African Refugees in Europe

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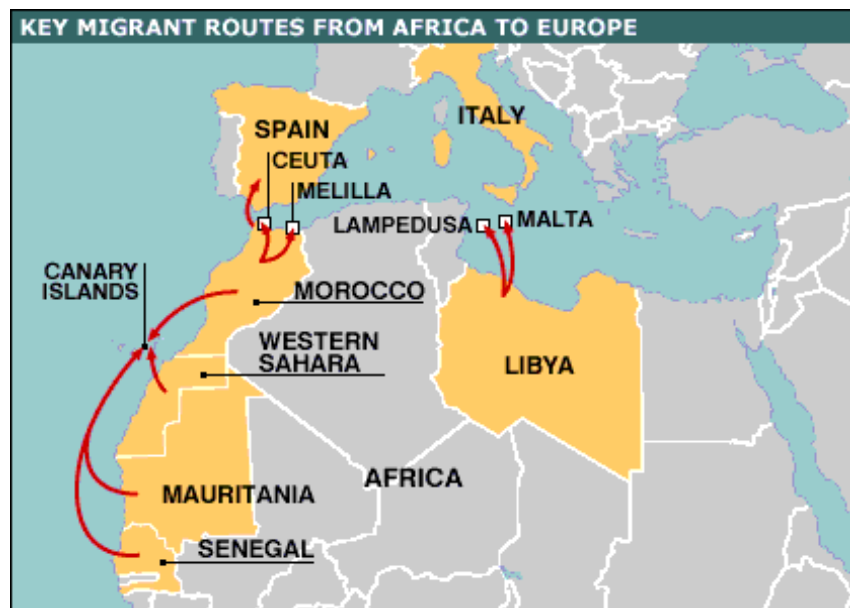
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Description of the problem:

Lots of refugees from Africa flee to Europe every year. The escape reasons are different: some flee because of the bad economic situation, others because of political and/or religious persecution or because of war. Altogether we can say they flee because they are searching for a better life in Europe.

In 2013 more than 58.000 African refugees came to Europe. The refugees from Africa are using mostly two routes on their escape to Europe: the West Coast Route, which is from Western Africa to the Canary Islands, or via Morocco to the Spanish mainland or the Spanish exclaves Ceuta and Melilla. The other route is the Libya Route, which is via Libya or Tunisia to Malta or to the Italian islands Lampedusa and Sicily.



Most of the refugees are leaving Africa with boats from the West and North African coast and cross the Atlantic Ocean (in case of the West Coast Route) or the Mediterranean Sea (in case of the Libya Route). These escapes are very dangerous, because the refugee boats are often broken and crowded. Consequently lots of people die on their allegedly safe trip for a better future. A further problem is the European asylum and refugee policy. One reason is that every European country can decide on their own how many refugees they want to gather, in addition to that are

the refugees only allowed to claim asylum in the European country which they entered first. This means that if the refugees enter another European country that they can be pushed off the country, back to their first entered European country.



Crowded boat – full of African refugees

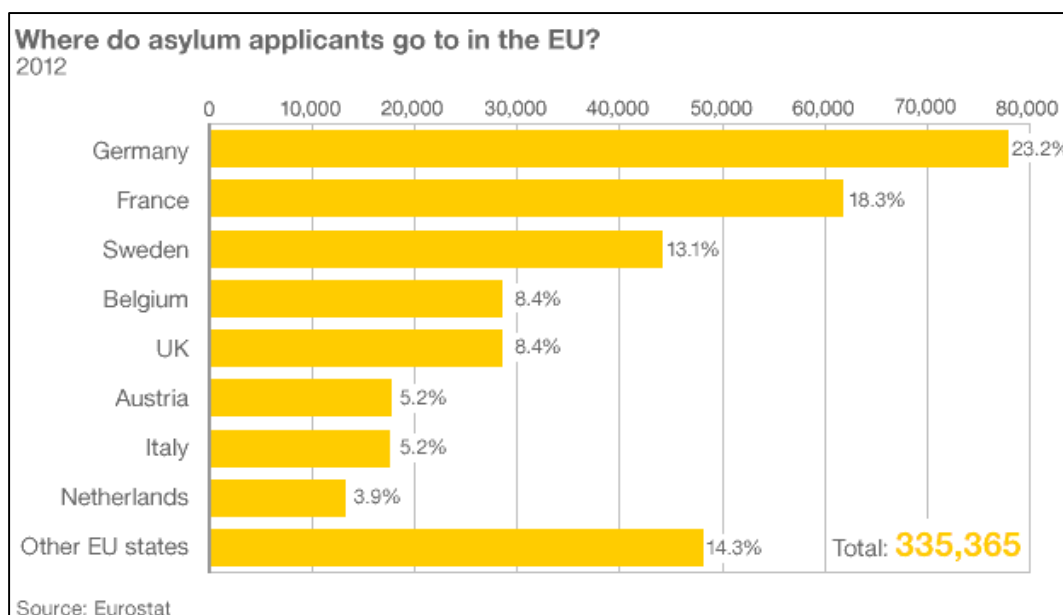
Background information:

The first European refugee laws were formed by the precursor of the European Union (EU) with the *Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (CRSR)* which was initiated by the UN. The *CRSR* passed on the 28th of July 1951 and defines what refugees are and contains the rights of refugees, which are amongst others the protection against discrimination because of race, state of origin or religion. The *CRSR* was enlarged on the 13th of January 1967. In 1985 came the *Schengen Agreement* into affect and helped to develop the asylum and refugee laws in the EU e.g. with saying that it is allowed to cross the inner EU borders without any controls, furthermore it was helpful to introduce new treaties such as, but not limited to: the *European Convention on Nationality*, which was signed in Strasbourg on the 6th of November 1997. The *European Convention on Nationality* shall define which nationality a human does have e.g. in case of marriage, in addition to that it does have articles concerning discrimination. The *Dublin Regulation* replaced the *Dublin Convention* in 2003 and is an EU law which defines the EU member state which is responsible for an asylum procedure. The *Dublin Regulation* should stop the “asylum shopping”, which means that an asylum seeker applies in several states for asylum and consequently regulating that an asylum seeker can only apply for asylum in one EU member. Furthermore are the asylum seekers only allowed to claim for asylum in their first entered EU

member state. A part of the Dublin Regulation is the European Dactyloscopy (EURODAC). EURODAC is a fingerprint database which identifies asylum seekers and illicit border-crossers. The *Dublin Regulation* was enlarged in 2013.

Treaties such as the *Dublin Regulation*, the *CRSR*, the *Schengen Agreement* or the *European Convention on Nationality* are very important, because more refugees and asylum seekers enter the European Union every year. However, there are lots of treaties and laws, there are always new problems with refugees and asylum seekers, as you can see it in the northern German town, Hamburg. 300 African refugees arrived in March 2013 in Hamburg, lots of them already implemented an asylum procedure in Italy and some others did not. Despite some of them did not implement an asylum procedure, each of them received 500 Euros and a permission to stay in the Schengen area by the Italian authorities. The Italian authorities contravened consequently against the *Dublin Regulation*, because they did not prove the asylum rights of these refugees. To establish future plans for African refugees in Europe, it is important that every involved country respects the existing treaties and laws but also realizes future agreements.

The European country which has the most asylum applicants in total is Germany, with nearly 80.000, but Germany is not the country which does have the most African asylum applications: this is Italy. Since the Italian island Lampedusa is the first entered European territory for lots of African refugees. Although there are lots of asylum applications in the EU, only a few applications are approved by the member states.



Future plans for the African refugees in Europe:

However, the African refugees are searching for a better life in Europe their living conditions are not better, when they arrive in Europe. Until they can apply asylum, only some of the refugees are living together in displacement camps, nearly without medical or humanitarian help. But especially medical help is very important because it is easy for diseases to spread in displacement camps. Another problem is that only some refugees get a place in these displacement camps, because there are too many refugees and too less places in displacement camps. During their asylum procedures some refugees are living in asylum-seekers' hostels, the rooms are very small and the refugees are still not allowed to work until they get asylum or a work permit, which means that they do not have money. To secure the life of the refugees it is important that every EU member state provides free medical help for refugees, also when they do not start to apply for asylum. Furthermore, do the refugees need humanitarian help, such as psychological help, since they flee from their homelands, maybe they lost their families or they had other horrible experiences, and had a dangerous trip on the broken and crowded boats. Another consideration is to change treaties like the *Dublin Regulation*, to make it easier for the refugees and also for the EU member states to apply for or rather to approve asylum. In addition to that should the EU determine how many refugees/asylum applicants which country should gather.



Displacement camp

Asylum-seekers' hostel



Timeline of events:

- **1951:** Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (CRSR)
- **1952:** creation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), with the Treaty of Paris → signatories: Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and (West-) Germany
- **1958:** Treaty of Rome → extended ECSC; created the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM); the ECSC, the EEC and the EURATOM shared the same courts and the same assembly
- **1967:** Merger Treaty → combined the ECSC, the EEC and the EURATOM (together also known as European Communities (EC)); enlargement of the CRSR
- **1973:** Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom joined the EC
- **1979:** first European Parliament elections
- **1981:** Greece joined the EC
- **1985:** Schengen Agreement
- **1986:** Spain and Portugal joined the EC; the community began to use the European flag
- **1993:** Maastricht Treaty, also known as Treaty on European Union (TEU) → created the European Union (EU)
- **1995:** Finland, Austria and Sweden joined the EU
- **1997:** European Convention on Nationality
- **2002:** the Euro replaced national currencies in 12 of the 15 member states
- **2003:** Dublin Regulation; Treaty of Nice → amended the Treaty of Maastricht
- **2004:** Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Hungary and Cyprus joined the EU; the Euro is used in 18 of the 25 member states
- **2007:** Bulgaria and Romania joined the EU
- **2009:** Treaty of Lisbon → reformed former EU treaties

- **2012:** the EU received the Nobel Prize for “contributed to the advancement of peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe”
- **2013:** Croatia joined the EU; enlargement of the Dublin Regulation

Important documents:

- 1951: Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (CRSR)
http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/1951_Refugee_Convention
- 1985: Schengen Agreement
- 1997: European Convention on Nationality
<http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/QueVoulezVous.asp?CL=ENG&NT=166>
- 2003/2013: Dublin Regulation
2003:
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:050:0001:0010:EN:PDF>
2013:
<http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:180:0031:0059:EN:PDF>

Questions for the delegates:

If your country is a member of the European Union (EU)

- How many refugees does my country gather?
- How many of them are from Africa?
- How much asylum applications does your country get and how many of them does it approve?
- What has your country done for refugees? → donating money, building asylum-seekers' hostels

If you are representing an African country

- How many refugees does my country have?
- Reasons of the escapes?

If your country is not a member of the EU neither an African one

- How does your country treat refugees?
- How many refugees flee to your country? → How many asylum applications does your country have?

Helpful links and sources:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asylum_in_the_European_Union

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dublin_Regulation

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_European_Union

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Convention_Relating_to_the_Status_of_Refugees

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3583801.stm>

http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/justice_freedom_security/free_movement_of_persons_asylum_immigration/133020_en.htm

<http://www.un.org/en/>

http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=48345#.U_EmKGORtQk

<http://www.unhcr.org>

Picture sources:

http://newsimg.bbc.co.uk/media/images/42029000/gif/42029904_africa_migrants2_map416.gif

<http://www.abendblatt.de/img/ausland/crop108260935/8448722059-ci3x2l-w620/fluechtling-HA-Bilder-Fotogalerien-Lampedusa.jpg>

http://news.bbcimg.co.uk/media/images/70652000/gif/70652424_where_to_eu_624.gif

http://www.wz-newsline.de/polopoly_fs/1.1458825.1382376489!/httpImage/onlineImage.jpg_gen/derivatives/landscape_550/onlineImage.jpg

<http://images.zeit.de/politik/ausland/2012-10/fluechtlinge-kilis/fluechtlinge-kilis-540x304.jpg>