

## “The Boat People”

World cooperation has been a prerogative for the western world since the league of nations' first attempt at international coagulation. Despite many shortfalls the world persisted in forming the United Nations; which is aimed at maintaining world order, helping the planet, and preventing harm to humanity. In order to uphold these timeless international values it is essential that any nation which is able, takes action to positively impact the lives of those who suffer.

It is a political, moral, and humane obligation to help these people. By changing required quotas the European Union will help solve crisis now and in the future. The world has seen a great many tragedies, and a number of them could have been avoided by simple humanitarian effort. Most notably, of course, is the current topic of Syrian refugees. "The fundamental right to asylum for the politically persecuted knows no upper limit; that also goes for refugees who come to us from the hell of a civil war" (German Chancellor Angela Merke October 30, 2015). It is clear that European countries have taken the steps needed to solve the crisis at hand both now and in previous situations. "Europe has spawned mass movements of refugees in the not-too-distant past — 700,000 from the breakup of Yugoslavia in 1993, 1.1 million from Eastern Europe as the Iron Curtain was torn down in 1989" (New York Times, October 31, 2015). The World Summit in 2005 was directed at addressing the human abuse in Sudan; however, it laid precedence to all actions taken by members of the United Nations in the future. It is in this way that an increase in the quota for the European Union will be beneficial: prominently in the present, but even more important in the future. From former German foreign minister, Joschka Fischer on October 30, 2015: "At the same time, this is only the beginning of the crisis, because the conditions inciting people to flee their homelands will only worsen."

It is the responsibility and duty of the developed world to protect those rights that are abused, and prevent as much suffering as possible. In 2005, United Nations President Kofi Annan set forth a prerogative aimed at combating the poor tactics regarding mass human rights issues at a World Summit; this updated policy is known as *The Responsibility to Protect* "The international community has a responsibility to encourage and assist States in fulfilling [the responsibility to protect]... [and] has a responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other means to protect populations from these crimes" (United Nations Outcome Document of the World Summit 2005). There is an obvious need for protection of refugees, but Europe is not following through with the international mission to aid those in need, "If Lebanon can host one million Syrians, despite being the size of Maryland, a region the size of Europe should be able to host millions" (Alexander Bett, Oxford Center for Refugee Studies 2015). In other words, Europe is not doing enough.

The European Union can increase its diversity and reap the benefits. Generally speaking, the EU has a very poor record of diversity. However, it has taken steps to improve on this shortfall. "Managing diversity and promoting inclusion increasingly form part of the business world's strategic agenda in response to a more diversified society, customer base, market

structure and overall business environment” (European Commission July 22, 2015). Diversity, especially within and between cultures, is of strategic importance. “Diversity is critical for organization’s ability to innovate and adapt in a fast-changing environment.... Diversity is essential to growth and prosperity of any company: diversity of perspectives, experiences, cultures, genders, and age. Why? Because diversity breeds innovation” (Forbes Jan 14, 2014). While the European Union has a nominal amount of policies regarding this issue on a small scale, for example the recently published audiovisual progressive, these small policies only increase cultural experience by miniscule amounts, over a long period of time. Right now, Europe is very uniform in each of its respected nations. “It is perhaps this very element of internal difference within the national majority that can offer the starting point for a self-reflexive re-consideration of national identity which by starting to recognise the diversity in its origins and in its constitution (including native minorities where relevant) can start to consider how to open up its diversity spectrum” (Jan Dobbernack and Tariq Modood, writers for the European University Institute 2011). What Europe needs is a renovation, a cultural revolution of sorts, this can be achieved easily and completely through a new refugee policy.

The largest argument at present is one of moral standing, and recognising that this is extremely important, there must also be a focus on the economic benefits in addition to those that will ultimately affect society. Europe is suffering a very low reproductive rate. “By 2060 the government expects the population to plunge from 81 million to 67 million, a decrease that is being accelerated by depressed areas in both eastern and western parts of the country that are hemorrhaging large numbers” (The Guardian October 30, 2015). By welcoming refugees the EU will boast a greater population growth in the coming years. This is a benefit due to the dramatically low, and falling, rates we see today. Europe is losing its people, its workers, and its internal influence. Should the EU accept all the proposed refugees it would experience an influx of generally lower skilled workers, which would allow Europe to diversify its economy from a solely tertiary structure to a more production centric secondary and tertiary one.

The EU is not the only entity with a stake in this crisis. The effects of rendering a higher quota will be felt across the board, especially between member states of the European Union. “Despite the rooted distrust between the European Union and Turkey, the current refugee crisis appears to have forced both sides to find common ground and work together closely on issues ranging from giving momentum to Turkey's long-stalled EU membership process to finding a solution to the Syrian conflict” (Today’s Zaman, Oct 24, 2015). Not only will the internal relations be improved, but, additionally, the interactions between nations around the globe and nations in Europe will benefit immensely. Refugees are coming from a variety of places, and as we can see from history an outside involvement leads to later diplomacy between the associated nations. As was previously mentioned, Lebanon, as well as a large portion of the Middle East, is contributing more than its fair share of humanitarian aid. Over one fourth of the Lebanese population is from Syria (United Nations Human Rights Council 30 September 2015). By increasing the volume of refugees it adopts, the European Union will be taking substantial

pressure off the Middle East, which will in turn promote good diplomatic relations and cooperation in the future.

There exists desperate need for humanitarian aid in the world, and, by increasing the amount of refugees the European Union requires its members to take in, the whole of humanity will benefit. Not only is this problem one that affects a large mass of people, but it is one that demands a solution. The answer is glaring Europe in the face, and can no longer be ignored. From Luxembourg President Jean-Claude Juncker: "It is high time to act to manage the refugee crisis. There is no alternative to this...Do not underestimate the urgency." There is a void, and we need to fill it.