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## MPC – MIGRATION POLICY CENTRE

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### ***The European Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis What Next?***

**Philippe Fargues  
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MPC Research Report 2012/14



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**EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE, FLORENCE  
ROBERT SCHUMAN CENTRE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES  
MIGRATION POLICY CENTRE (MPC)**

**The European Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis  
What Next?**

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**MIGRATION POLICY CENTRE (MPC)  
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### Mission statement

The Migration Policy Centre at the European University Institute, Florence, conducts advanced research on global migration to serve migration governance needs at European level, from developing, implementing and monitoring migration-related policies to assessing their impact on the wider economy and society.

### Rationale

Migration represents both an opportunity and a challenge. While well-managed migration may foster progress and welfare in origin- as well as destination countries, its mismanagement may put social cohesion, security and national sovereignty at risk. Sound policy-making on migration and related matters must be based on knowledge, but the construction of knowledge must in turn address policy priorities. Because migration is rapidly evolving, knowledge thereof needs to be constantly updated. Given that migration links each individual country with the rest of the world, its study requires innovative cooperation between scholars around the world.

The MPC conducts field as well as archival research, both of which are scientifically robust and policy-relevant, not only at European level, but also globally, targeting policy-makers as well as politicians. This research provides tools for addressing migration challenges, by: 1) producing policy-oriented research on aspects of migration, asylum and mobility in Europe and in countries located along migration routes to Europe, that are regarded as priorities; 2) bridging research with action by providing policy-makers and other stakeholders with results required by evidence-based policy-making, as well as necessary methodologies that address migration governance needs; 3) pooling scholars, experts, policy makers, and influential thinkers in order to identify problems, research their causes and consequences, and devise policy solutions.

The MPC's research includes a core programme and several projects, most of them co-financed by the European Union.

Results of the above activities are made available for public consultation through the website of the project: [www.migrationpolicycentre.eu](http://www.migrationpolicycentre.eu)

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## Introduction

From North Africa to the Middle East, the Arab uprisings of 2011 have brought unprecedented transformations. Unlike the toppled regimes of the Arab Spring, however, the Syrian regime has remained at the helm overseeing a conflict that has shifted from limited protest to all-out political struggle marked with the risks of ethno-sectarian civil war. It has claimed the lives of over 20,000 people and forced almost 400,000 Syrians to flee their homeland. The numbers of those affected is staggering: approximately 3 million persons have been affected by the crisis, 2.5 million are in need of assistance, and 1.5 million have been displaced.<sup>1</sup> Thousands of Syrians flee the country every day, and numbers who suffer continue to rise.

These gruesome statistics are known. They are repeated by the United Nations where the Syrian crisis is almost debated daily; by the media who update the world minute-by-minute as to the situation on the ground; by humanitarian and opposition groups alike who seek to garner support to assist those affected and to raise awareness about their cause and the situation; and by national governments who attempt to address the situation in line with each countries' humanitarian, and domestic and foreign policy objectives.

How have countries responded to the mounting refugee crisis? Neighbouring countries of Syria, except Israel, have by far assumed the bulk of the refugee burden. As in all conflict-induced population movements, people fleeing Syria sought refuge as close as possible from their home, and in the first instance they rushed through the nearest border to countries neighbouring Syria. In the case of Syria however, out of five neighbours: one (Israel) remains inaccessible because it is still at war with Syria and the border between them is sealed; three (Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon) are not signatories of the Refugee Convention of 1951 and, whilst offering protection to Syrians, they consider them as guests not refugees; and only one (Turkey) is party to the Convention but with the geographical limitation restricting its application to "persons who had become refugees as a result of events occurring before 1st January 1951" (Foreword of the Convention). What then has been the response of more distant states, in particular those of the EU?

The Syrian refugee crisis is just one among several crises that have occurred in the EU's neighbourhood over the last few decades. Other massive population displacements took place in Lebanon during the civil war of 1975-1990; in the Balkans –Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo— during most of the 1990s; in Algeria in the 1990s; in Iraq during three decades from the early 1980s to the late 2000s; and in Libya in spring and summer 2011. While many refugees of the oldest waves (until the end of the 1990s) could reach Europe where they were hosted under a variety of statuses (as refugees or migrants, temporary or long-term), only a tiny proportion of those fleeing conflicts in the 2000s were admitted in Europe. What can explain this trend? Has Europe become less welcoming? Or are there other concerns, perhaps the economic recession, the subsequent increase in anti-immigration sentiments and the prevalence of right-leaning political parties, the growing concern for terrorist activities, or perhaps a declining sense of solidarity? In light of these challenges, how will Europe respond to the new humanitarian crisis in its neighbourhood?

This paper will examine the EU's political and humanitarian responses to the Syrian refugee crisis. First, it will provide a review of facts: a historical review of displacements from Syria, the numbers, and the route of travel for Syrian refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers to Europe. This will be followed by a review of European political and humanitarian responses to the Syrian crisis. Finally, it will conclude with some recommendations for addressing the Syrian refugee crisis. In short, the EU

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<sup>1</sup> The Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department of the European Commission, ECHO. *Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP) Syrian Crisis* (17 September 2012). Retrieved from: [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/funding/decisions/2012/HIPs/syria\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/funding/decisions/2012/HIPs/syria_en.pdf)

could consider: establishing a Regional Protection Programme (RPP) with a large increase of Syrian refugee resettlement as a required component; increasing refugee resettlement for those who have been affected by the Syrian crisis and are the most in need; continue positive asylum procedures throughout the EU, and grant prima facie recognition including provision of sufficient assistance to Syrian asylum seekers; encourage visa facilitation and family reunification for Syrians; and continue to work with its international partners to find a political and humanitarian solution to the Syrian crisis.

The EU is linked to the region through Association Agreements in the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, a process designed to create “a common area of peace and stability” (Barcelona Declaration of 1995). Although Syria has withdrawn from such agreements following EU sanctions and its dismissal from bilateral programs, Syria’s neighbouring countries (except Iraq) remain engaged with the EU in maintaining this Barcelona *acquis* - creating a region of peace, stability and prosperity for all – and continue to build links with Europe [through the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument (ENPI), cooperation on the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM), and implementation of Mobility Partnerships, amongst a few].

Amidst this backdrop, the EU must now make a strong response to the Syrian refugee crisis. The EU should grasp this situation as an opportunity to show its responsibility to burden sharing and to its commitment of mutually improving the lives of peoples on both shores of the Mediterranean.

## 1. Population displacements from Syria

“17 February - Crammed into the stinking hold of a rusting Cambodian-flagged freighter beached by its crew on the rocks of southern France, were hundreds of illegal migrants, (...) up to 1,000 Kurds, including four babies born during the crossing from Turkey.”<sup>2</sup>

This story happened in 2001, ten years before revolt broke out in Syria. Claiming to be Iraqis – a nationality that in 2001 would make it easier for them to be recognised as refugees— the migrants were actually found to be Syrians. Two years earlier, a Turkish ship had been caught disembarking 850 Kurdish, mostly Syrian, migrants on the shore of Southern Italy, from where they would try to reach Germany through France, prompting several members of the German parliament to call for the reinstatement of border controls within the Schengen area.<sup>3</sup>

### *A long history of politically motivated emigration*

Syria has a long history of politically motivated, often forced, emigration. Starting a few years after Syria gained its independence (1946), political instability and the succession of military coups incited large segments of the bourgeoisie to leave the country in the early 1950s, mainly for neighbouring Lebanon. In the 1960s, after perhaps as many as 100,000 Kurds were deprived of their Syrian nationality under the pretext they (or their parents) had arrived from Turkey after the independence when nationality was defined with reference to the territory, a continuous stream of emigration of stateless people from Northern Syria took place. In 1982, the massacre of thousands of people, when the military crushed the Islamist insurrection of Hama, triggered a new stream of Syrian forced emigration, mainly to Lebanon.

On the eve of the 2011 revolts, more than 400,000 Syrians were estimated as living abroad, including 120,000 in the Gulf States; 112,000 in the EU; and 80,000 in North America and Australia (Table

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<sup>2</sup> Beaumont, P. and Henley, J. (18 February 2001). On the golden coast of the Riviera, a modern exodus is washed ashore, *The Guardian*.

<sup>3</sup> Guiraudon, V. (1 January 2002) *Immigration policy in france, u.s.-france analysis*. The Brookings Institution, New York. Retrieved from [http://www.unc.edu/depts/europe/francophone/brookings\\_immig.pdf](http://www.unc.edu/depts/europe/francophone/brookings_immig.pdf)

Appendix 2).<sup>4</sup> Out of them, 28,216 were recorded as persons “of concern for UNHCR”, including 18,452 refugees and 9,764 asylum seekers.<sup>5</sup> Syrians established abroad were to become a resource for people fleeing the country starting from the spring 2011, facilitating their travel and establishment abroad without necessarily passing through the burdensome procedures of asylum seeking.

Syria is not only a source of refugee movements, but also a destination for massive waves of refugees. Having been in 1948 one of the main recipients of the Palestinian exodus –whose survivors and descendants enumerated as living in Syria were 495,970 in 2010–<sup>6</sup> Syria became in the 2000s by far the most important receiver of Iraqi refugees fleeing their country under US occupation, when Jordan closed its doors in response to bombings perpetrated by Iraqis in Amman in November 2005. Iraqi refugees in Syria were never counted and numbers that were commonly circulated at that time – ranging from 1.2 to 1.5 million in 2008<sup>7</sup> –seem considerably overestimated.<sup>8</sup> At the end of 2010, a population of 1,307,918 persons of concern for UNHCR would have been living in Syria, comprising 1,005,472 refugees, 2,446 asylum seekers and 300,000 stateless persons.<sup>9</sup> While retrospectively the number of refugees seems largely exaggerated,<sup>10</sup> it remains that refugees in Syria form a vulnerable group that may be exposed to a high level of risk due to the crisis.

### *Displacements gaining momentum in response to growing danger*

The cycle of revolts and repression claimed a large number of lives before producing refugee waves. In the first three months of the revolt (March-May 2011) 1,402 persons were killed but only 53 recorded as refugees, i.e. a daily average of 16 deaths and less than 1 refugee. Then the balance started to reverse: while the daily death toll continued to dramatically increase –from 18 in June-August 2011; 21 in September-November 2011; 54 in December 2011-February 2012; 64 in March-May 2012; 147 in June-August 2012; and 131 in September-October 2012– a considerable wave of refugees started to build up with a daily average of 80 in June-August 2011, 36 in September-November 2011, 234 in December 2011-February 2012, 451 in March-May 2012, 1,296 in June-August 2012, and 1,719 in September -October 2011 (Figure 1, Table Appendix 1).

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<sup>4</sup> Stock of Syrian migrants: 416,745 around 2010. di Bartolomeo, A., Jaulin, T., Perrin, D. (2012) *CARIM-migration profile syria*, Migration Policy Centre, EUI, Florence. Retrieved from [http://www.carim.org/public/migrationprofiles/MP\\_Syria\\_EN.pdf](http://www.carim.org/public/migrationprofiles/MP_Syria_EN.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> UNHCR. *UNHCR statistical yearbook 2010*. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/4ef9c7269.html>

<sup>6</sup> Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. (2010) *Number of registered palestinian refugees by sex and country*. Retrieved from [http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/\\_Rainbow/Documents/PalDis-REFUGEE-2010E.htm](http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_Rainbow/Documents/PalDis-REFUGEE-2010E.htm)

<sup>7</sup> Al-Khalidi, Ashraf, Sophia Hoffmann & Victor Tanner 2007, *Iraqi Refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic: A Field-Based Snapshot*, Occasional Paper, Brookings Institution—University of Bern. Retrieved from: <http://www3.brookings.edu/fp/projects/idp/200706iraq.pdf>

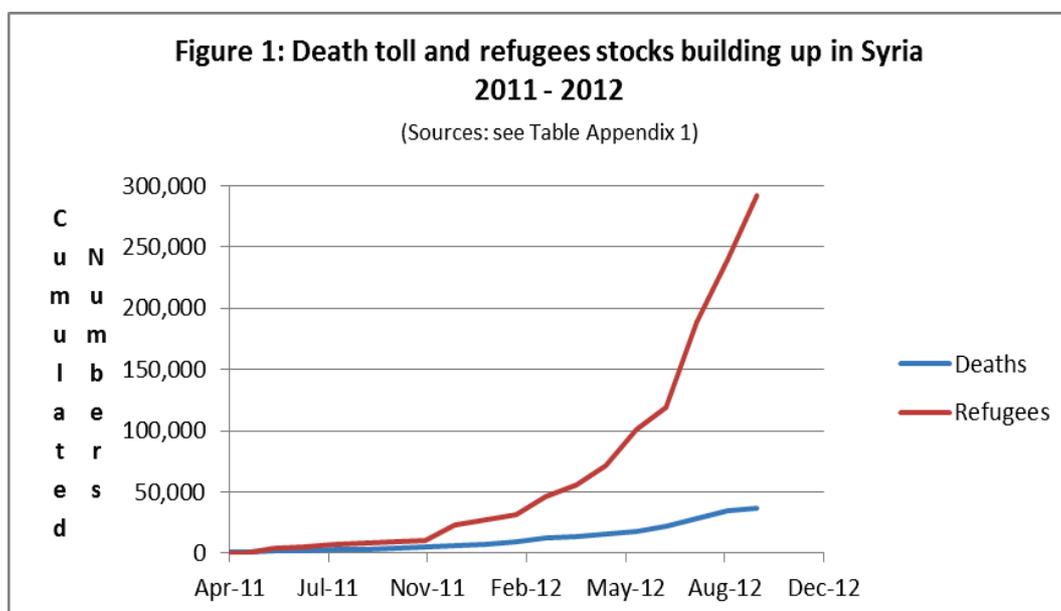
<sup>8</sup> Most Iraqi refugees —80% to 90%— were living in the greater Damascus urban area (Weiss Fagen, Patricia 2007, *Iraqi Refugees: Seeking Stability in Syria and Jordan*, Institute for the Study of International Migration, Georgetown University). Admitting that they were 1 million would mean that one out of every three persons a visitor would have met in the capital city of Syria was an Iraqi refugee: this seems a very unlikely situation. For a discussion, see Fargues P.2009, *Work, Refuge, Transit: An Emerging Pattern of Irregular Immigration South and East of the Mediterranean*, *International Migration Review*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (Fall 2009):544–577.

<sup>9</sup> UNHCR. *UNHCR Statistical Yearbook 2010*. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/4ef9c7269.html>

<sup>10</sup> End of 2010, the number of Iraqi refugees present in Syria was estimated by UNHCR at 1,000,000, of whom 135,205 UNHCR-assisted persons. Retrospectively these numbers appear to be considerably inflated, given the small number of returns recorded in Iraq. Actually, the cumulated number of recorded Iraqi returnees since the beginning of the crisis in Syria till 10 October 2012 was 44,883. If there had been one million Iraqi refugees on the eve of the crisis, this would mean that some 950,000 are left in Syria at the time of writing, which is very unlikely. On returnees to Iraq, see UNHCR, *Syria Situation Weekly Update No.21 4 - 10 October 2012*, at: [http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/documents\\_search.php?Page=1&Country=103&Region=&Settlement=0&Category=2](http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/documents_search.php?Page=1&Country=103&Region=&Settlement=0&Category=2)

As usually occurring with refugee movements, the vast majority of people fleeing life-threatening conditions in their own country stop at the first safe point they can reach on the other side of the border. Most refugees from Syria are indeed sheltered in one of Syria's neighbouring countries. At the time of writing (Oct. 30<sup>th</sup>), Turkey was the largest receiver with 101,834 Syrian refugees, followed by Lebanon (74,720), then Jordan (60,098), Iraq (44,772), and finally with smaller numbers registered across North Africa (7,577) representing together a total of 363,722 refugees registered, or the in the process of being registered, with UNHCR.<sup>11</sup> Smaller numbers of Syrians have also recently been fleeing to Egypt, where ca. 4,800 had registered with the UNHCR by mid-October 2012<sup>12</sup> (even though Egyptian officials claim there are as many as 150,000 Syrians in the country)<sup>13</sup> and even as far as Algeria, where 12,000 Syrian refugees were claimed to be sheltered by August 1<sup>st</sup> 2012.<sup>14</sup>

UN statistics do not include individuals and families who settled in these countries without being registered as refugees or asylum seekers, because they were either able to take care by themselves of their establishment, or accommodated by relatives or friends. It is noticeable that apparently no refugee from Syria sought asylum in Israel. The border between Israel and Syria is under high control of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) and "according to IDF regulations, any attempt to disrupt security related institutions, for example the border fence, is considered a violation of border sovereignty, as is entering the buffer zone between Israel and Syria (...) The assumption is that anyone who reaches the fence and sabotages it is not peaceful."<sup>15</sup>



In much smaller yet significant numbers, Syrian nationals fleeing the conflict were recorded as applying for asylum in non-neighbouring countries, including North America and more importantly Europe (Appendix, Table 2). Asylum applications, however, reflect only part of the movement of people fleeing Syria to Europe.

<sup>11</sup> UNHCR. *Syria Regional Refugee Response*. Retrieved from <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>

<sup>12</sup> Fick, M. (2012, October 18). Un: 150,000 syrian refugees have fled to egypt. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/feedarticle/10488910>

<sup>13</sup> UNHCR. *Syria situation regional roundup*. (2012, October 23). Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/search?page=search&docid=50866f729&query=syriansegypt>

<sup>14</sup> TV5 Monde, August 1st, 2012 Réfugiés syriens en Algérie : un retour aux sources? Retrieved from <http://www.tv5.org/cms/chaine-francophone/info/Les-dossiers-de-la-redaction/Syrie-2012/p-22560-Refugies-syriens-en-Algerie-un-retour-aux-sources-.htm>

<sup>15</sup> Cohen, G. (2012, August 04). Idf troops fire at man attempting to breach syria-israel border fence. *Haaretz*

### *Three routes to the European Union*

By contrast with those crossing the land border to Jordan, Lebanon or Turkey, people fleeing the conflict in Syria can take three different routes to Europe, each of them corresponding to a likely status while in Europe:

- **Land route to Greece or Bulgaria:** they travel through Turkey—a country Syrians enter without a visa—from which the point of entry in the EU is Greece or Bulgaria. Once in Europe, they are either ordinary travellers or irregular migrants, according to whether they have a visa or not.<sup>16</sup> If they don't have one, they can either apply for asylum or stay in an irregular situation, and either remain in the first country they reach in Europe or continue their travel to another country. Out of all those who reach the EU by land, only those applying for asylum and those detected as irregular migrants will be reflected in statistics.
- **Air route directly to any EU member state:** as ordinary travellers originating from a third country, Syrians are registered at the external border; however, no statistics of ordinary travellers is routinely produced at EU level by country of origin, so that one cannot know how many Syrians actually use this way to reach Europe.
- **Sea route across the Mediterranean to Greece, Cyprus, Malta or Italy (and possibly France and Spain):** only those lacking regular entry documents take this route to Europe, which they therefore enter as irregular migrants before some of them lodge an asylum claim and join the category of asylum seekers.

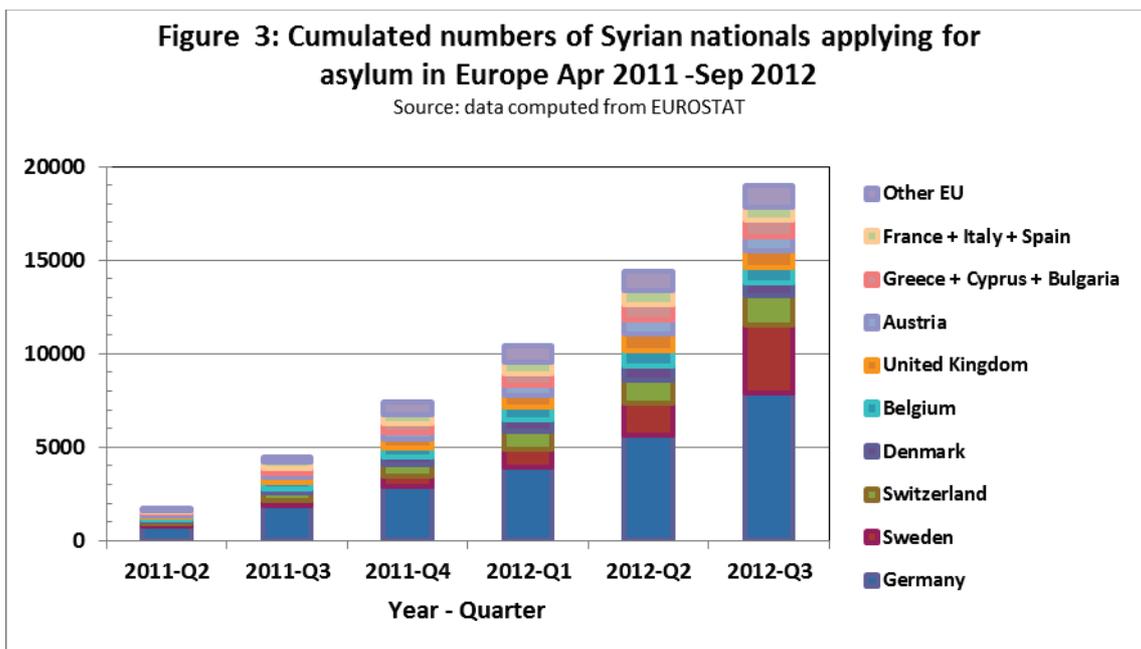
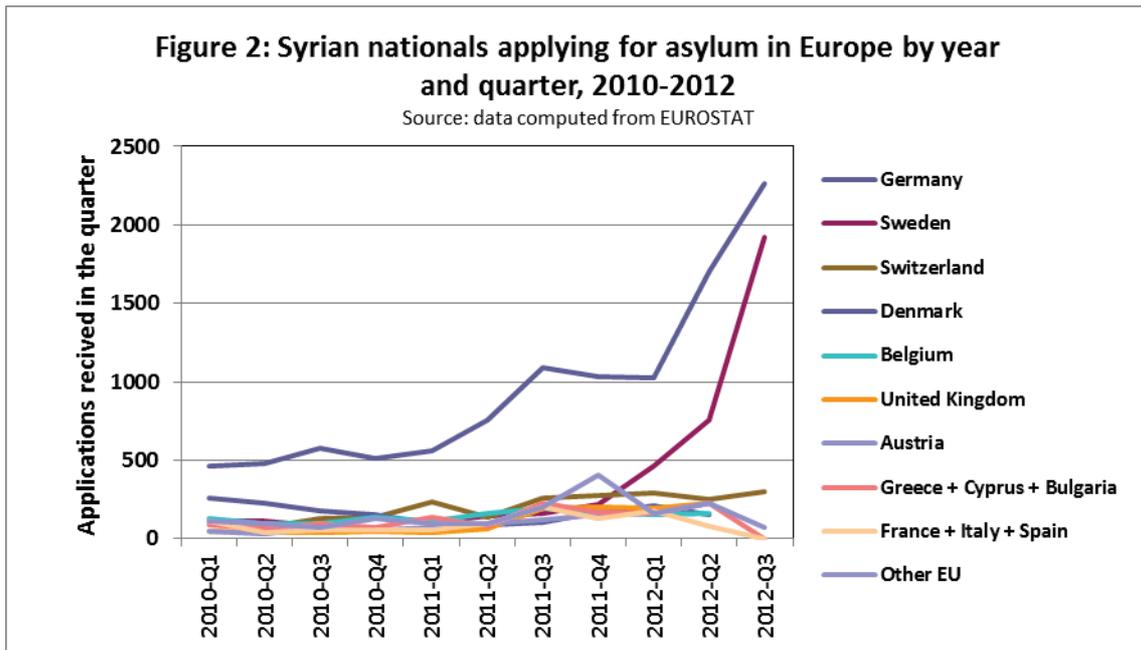
In the absence of surveys among persons fleeing Syria, one can only assume that different routes correspond to distinct backgrounds. People who have already relatives or friends in the diaspora may use these connections to find a shelter outside Syria. They can simply apply for a tourist visa, then a temporary residence status, and be accommodated on their own. They can be assumed to go where the diaspora is, and their distribution by countries of destination to be proportionate with the distribution of the Syrian diaspora (Appendix, Table 2). Those with no pre-existing connection abroad rather go to the nearest land border to reach a neighbouring country from which some will apply for asylum in a further country (e.g. Europe) or even try to reach that country without the needed documents. Once in Europe, they become asylum seekers or irregular migrants. Their distribution by country can be assumed to vary, not in proportion with the size of the Syrian diaspora as much as with the openness of the receiving country to asylum seekers, or its geographic accessibility.

While Syrians who find shelter in the EU belong to three categories— asylum seekers, ordinary travellers or irregular migrants— statistics available at EU level cover only the first category. Between the beginning of the conflict and the last statistical update (June 30<sup>th</sup> 2012) a total of 14,423 asylum claims have been lodged in the EU27 by Syrian nationals, a number that is expected to grow to 18,983 by September 30<sup>th</sup> on the basis of partial statistics for the third quarter of 2012. As stressed by UNHCR, this number is small given the magnitude of the refugee crisis in Syria.<sup>17</sup> The progression of numbers of asylum seekers and their distribution by country in the EU are provided on Figure 2 and 3.

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<sup>16</sup> According to a FRONTEX report “In terms of secondary movements from Greece, Syrians were also detected on exit from Greece and on entry to German, Belgian and Dutch airports using counterfeit EU residence permits and forged Greek and Bulgarian travel documents.” Frontex. (2012, October 03). *Situational update: migratory situation at the greek-turkish border*. Retrieved from <http://www.frontex.europa.eu/news/situational-update-migratory-situation-at-the-greek-turkish-border-HATxN9>

<sup>17</sup> UNHCR. *Syria Crisis: UNHCR urges European Union states to honour their asylum system principles*. Retrieved from: <http://www.unhcr.org/507d4c586.html>



Two remarks on asylum seekers must be made:

- While the influx of Syrian asylum in Europe had pre-existed the current conflict, numbers steadily increased starting from the winter 2011-2012: an average of 1,394 applications by quarter was observed in 2010, growing to 1,510 in the first quarter of 2011 (Q1-11) and 1,725 in Q2-11, then jumping to 2,750 in Q3-11 and 2,935 in Q4-11, 3,000 in Jan-Mar 2012, 4,013 in Apr-Jun 2012 and 4,560 in Jul-Sep 2012.
- The increase in the number of Syrian asylum seekers since the beginning of the conflict concentrated on a few countries: five in the EU (Germany, with 8,435 asylum seekers recorded in 2011 and the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters of 2012; Sweden: 3,780; Belgium: 955; the United Kingdom: 915; and Austria: 825) and two outside the EU (Switzerland: 1,745) and Canada: 6,664). All other countries, including those with sizeable Syrian communities like

France and the United States, have most likely received less than 500 asylum claims from Syrians since the beginning of the crisis.

Apart from asylum seekers, how many Syrians did enter Europe as simple travellers since the beginning of the crisis? For lack of appropriate data -travellers statistics are not provided by country of origin at EU level- the question cannot be fully answered. Two series are available, each of them dealing only with a tiny part of all travellers. The first series provides newly registered immigrants: 7,829 Syrians applied for a first permit of residence in 2010 and 8,106 in 2011. The increase in the first year of the crisis (data for 2012 are not available at the time of writing) is almost negligible (277 individuals), indicating that applying for immigration in the EU has not been an access route to Europe for Syrians, at least in the first year of the crisis. Data from Sweden –the only country providing statistics for 2012— suggest that a change may have recently occurred: first residence permits granted in Sweden to Syrian nationals were 140 per month in average in 2010, 167 in 2011, but 274 in 2012 (January – June), almost twice their number before the crisis.

The second series provides numbers of visas obtained from embassies in Syria. The partial statistics available at the time of writing relate to only five EU member states (Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom)<sup>18</sup> showing a steady decrease from 26,608 visas in 2010 to 21,463 in 2011 (data for 2012 are not available), a fact which may be attributed to many consulates and embassies closing down in Syria in the course of 2011.

If apparently few Syrians used official channels to reach the EU, how many were those entering irregularly? By nature, they are never all counted as only those who fail to enter, or are apprehended at, or after, entry, are observed. Quarterly data on detected irregular entrants in the EU show a steady increase in absolute and relative numbers of Syrians starting from the summer 2011 (Figure 4). While the total number of detections at the EU external borders has continuously decreased from 41,237 individuals in the second quarter of 2011, to 38,530 in Q3 2011, 28,325 in Q4 2011 and 13,635 in the first quarter of 2012 (data for Q2 2012 unavailable at the time of writing), the number of Syrians has continuously increased –with respectively 274; 602; 614; and 715.<sup>19</sup> However, it is only in the summer 2012 that numbers started to soar.

The European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (Frontex) recently stated that “without question in Q2 2012, the most significant development in terms of irregular migration to the EU was increased detections of migrants from Syria [...] Syrians showed the highest rate of increase in detections of illegal border-crossing, and they were increasingly detected as illegal stayers, in both cases these indicators were almost exclusively reported by Greece [...]”<sup>20</sup> Greek data actually show that 6,210 irregular Syrian migrants were apprehended at the border in 2012 out of a total of 61,567 migrants of all nationalities apprehended (until September), including 6,141 at the Evros border and 69 at sea, making Syrians the 5th largest group after Afghanistan, Pakistan, Albania and Bangladesh. This same data showed that smuggling networks facilitating access to Europe also contained Syrian nationals as 28 out of 486 smugglers apprehended in Greece were of Syrian origin.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Data obtained directly from the national statistical offices of the concerned countries.

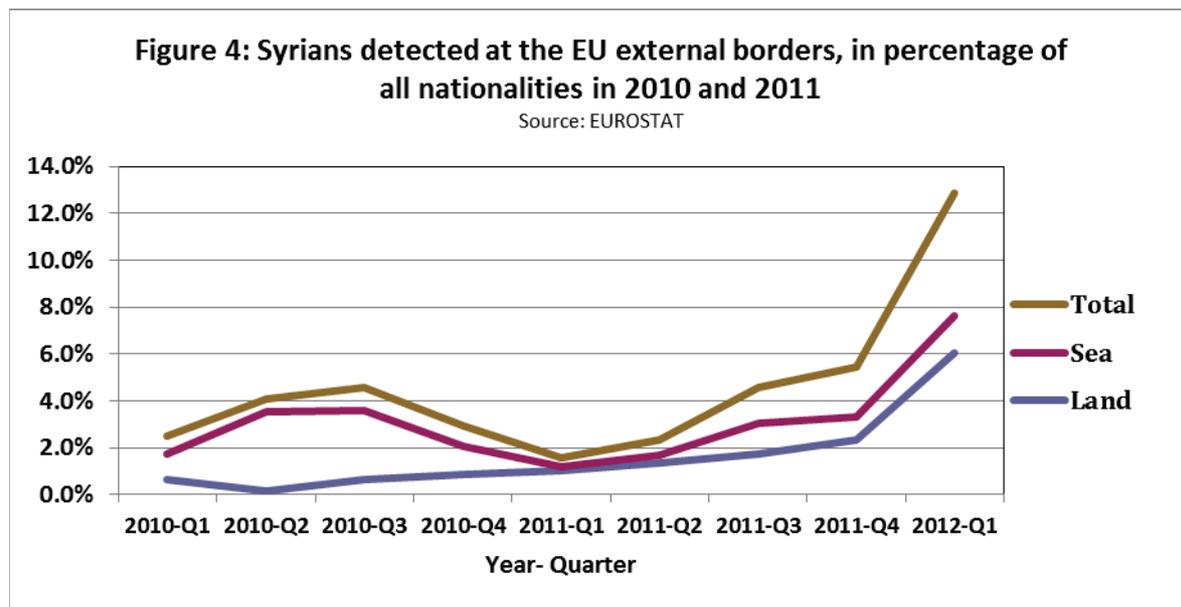
<sup>19</sup> Frontex. FRAN Quarterly Report, various issues. Most recent, FRAN Quarterly Issue 2, April–June 2012, retrieved from: [http://www.frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk\\_Analysis/Fran\\_Q2\\_2012\\_.pdf](http://www.frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk_Analysis/Fran_Q2_2012_.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> Frontex. (2012, October 3) *Situational update: migratory situation at the greek-turkish border*. Retrieved from: <http://www.frontex.europa.eu/news/situational-update-migratory-situation-at-the-greek-turkish-border-HATxN9>

<sup>21</sup> Thanos Maroukis, ‘Greece and its border control policies’, power point presentation at the Consultation between the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights of Migrants, Civil Society, and Academia, Migration Policy Centre, EUI and Open Society Foundations, EUI, Florence, 3rd October 2012.

Finally, it must be noted that Greece is not the only destination of Syrians arriving at sea in Europe. Increasing, yet small, numbers are recorded in Italy as well.<sup>22</sup>

To summarise data, overall numbers of Syrians reaching the EU since the beginning of the crisis – all statuses together, from asylum seekers and regular migrants applying for a visa to irregular migrants detected at the border—are very small compared with those crossing the borders of Syria. Unless many Syrians could reach Europe unnoticed, as simple travellers escaping routinely published statistics, this shows that Europe does very little to actually open its doors in response to the major refugee crisis unfolding in its direct neighbourhood.



## 2. Europe’s response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis

Since 24 October 2012, the EU and its Member States have provided approximately €230 million in humanitarian and other assistance to those affected by the Syrian crisis, both inside and outside the country, making the European Union the leading international donor. According to the European Commission, this amounts to more than 53% of the international response.<sup>23</sup> Switzerland and Norway have likewise contributed considerable humanitarian assistance (€10.7 million as of 4/9/12,<sup>24</sup> and €2.95 million 24/2/12, respectively<sup>25</sup>), placing Europe’s total monetary contribution well over a quarter of a billion Euros.

<sup>22</sup> The following numbers of irregular arrivals at sea of Syrian Nationals were recorded in Italy between 2001-2012\* (\* For 2012, data refer to the period 1st January - 30th September):

2001	11	2004	10	2007	49	2010	100
2002	8	2005	48	2008	21	2011	328
2003	12	2006	36	2009	40	2012	389

Source: Ministry of Interior

<sup>23</sup> European Commission Press Release. (2012, October 24). *Justice and home affairs council: 25-26 october 2012* . Retrieved from [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_MEMO-12-807\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-12-807_en.htm)

<sup>24</sup> Swiss Broadcasting Corporation. (2012, September 04). *Swiss to send more support for syrian civilians*. Retrieved from [http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/politics/foreign\\_affairs/Swiss\\_to\\_send\\_more\\_support\\_for\\_Syrian\\_civilians.html?cid=33449014](http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/politics/foreign_affairs/Swiss_to_send_more_support_for_Syrian_civilians.html?cid=33449014)

<sup>25</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (2012, February 24). *Norway provides nok 22 million in emergency relief to syria* . Retrieved from [http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/ud/press/news/2012/emergency\\_syria.html?id=673492](http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/ud/press/news/2012/emergency_syria.html?id=673492)

The provision of aid, however, is only part of the EU's response to the Syrian refugee crisis - which is at the same time a political and humanitarian crisis. The EU has also worked to bring about a political transformation in Syria – i.e. the removal of Assad and the transition from authoritarianism to pluralistic and representative democracy – as the EU considers this approach to coincide with the interests of the Syrian people and is one of the solutions to the humanitarian crisis. EU High Representative, Catherine Ashton, has steadfastly affirmed this approach in a statement on 11 September 2012 by stating: “We have to do everything we possibly can to find ways to promote a political transition. And we have to be ready for the post-conflict moment and the period of transition towards what we want to see, which is, of course, democracy.”<sup>26</sup>

This multi-layered approach can also be differentiated by external and internal responses. Externally, the EU response is to address immediate and future needs while also containing the crisis within its regional boundaries. European nations have been assisting the Syrian people by providing humanitarian assistance whilst contemplating the implementation of a Regional Protection Programme to address the Syrian refugee crisis (a programme that includes resettlement in the EU yet focuses mainly on addressing the crisis at a regional level). Internally, the response of EU Member States is, on the one hand, to increase border security, while on the other, to grant asylum to a rising number of Syrians and to refrain from forcibly returning those ineligible for asylum status.

*External actions: hasten a peaceful political transition and provide humanitarian aid*

Currently, EU and Member States' external responses to the Syrian refugee crisis are to end the violence and support efforts to bring about political change in Syria while simultaneously provide immediate humanitarian assistance to refugees and internally displaced. These two measures, one political and the other humanitarian, are related and both, directly or indirectly, assist the Syrian people by concurrently addressing their immediate and future needs – the former being life sustaining aid and the latter being a viable nation to return to once the conflict subsides.

Regarding the political response, the European Union has pressured the Syrian state to end the violence and start transition to democracy<sup>27</sup> through implementation of economic sanctions and other restrictive measures, and by terminating EU-Syrian bilateral cooperation. Commencing in May 2011 - before the refugee crisis evolved, but continuing as refugees began crossing borders en masse - seventeen rounds of EU restrictive measures were implemented throughout 2011 and 2012.<sup>28</sup> In addition, the EU is funding relevant political concerns intended to generate changes within Syria such as democracy promotion and support to civil society, especially to “enhance the role of civil society in the transition context.”<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, the EU, several of its MS and Norway have actively and openly

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<sup>26</sup> European Commission. (2012, September 11). *Statement by high representative/vice president catherine ashton on the situation in syria*. Retrieved from <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/12/599&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

<sup>27</sup> In *Frequently Asked Questions on EU restrictive measures against the Syrian regime*, the European External Action Service states that EU restrictive measures against Syria were motivated by ending the violence and aim at bringing about a democratic transition. Retrieved from [http://www.eeas.europa.eu/syria/docs/faq\\_en.pdf](http://www.eeas.europa.eu/syria/docs/faq_en.pdf)

<sup>28</sup> In May 2011, the EU imposed sanctions and suspended EU bilateral cooperation: bilateral under MEDA (Euro-Mediterranean partnership) and ENPI (Neighbourhood policy) (May 2011), regional cooperation (September 2011), EIB loans and technical assistance (November 2011). For a detailed list of all sanctions in force as of 24 July 2012, see: [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/128379.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/128379.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) has been providing approximately €4.5 million for various projects throughout Syria, such as: protecting internet freedom of independent bloggers, writers and journalists which work to maintain an information flow from Syria; supporting human rights defenders inside the country to monitor and spread information outside Syria, see: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/12/820&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en> Furthermore, on 8 June 2012, the Commission passed a €23 million Special Measure that reserved €12.6 million

supported Syrian opposition movements to prepare the country for Assad's transition (See Table Appendix 3 for detail of EU Member States' actions regarding the crisis).

Internationally, the EU is supporting several initiatives, including: recurrent UN statements and resolutions which condemn the regime's actions and call for a cessation of violence; support for the UN Syrian Observer Mission, first led by Kofi Anan and now by Lakhdar Brahimi, in the efforts to try to find a political solution; support for and attendance at Friends of Syria Group's meetings; calls for documentation and investigation of the human rights abuses committed by the Syrian regime, and advocating for the results of such investigations to be used to hold the regime accountable.<sup>30</sup>

At the regional level, the EU is coordinating actions with the League of Arab States (LAS) in its political responses to the Syrian crisis by: supporting the LAS observer mission commencing in Dec 2011; commending imposition of LAS sanctions; supporting the Arab Plan of Action; and applauding LAS demands to Assad to end the violence and step aside.

Humanitarian support for refugees and internally displaced forms the second component of the EU's response to the Syrian crisis. The bulk of EU aid responds to the immediate needs of the hundreds of thousands of affected people (Syrians, but also Palestinian and Iraqi refugees<sup>31</sup>) through the provision of food, water, shelter, and medical assistance, both within Syria and neighbouring host countries. Benefiting from such aid are more than 1.5 million people in Syria and a large proportion of the almost 400,000 Syrians who have fled to Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq, and to some 500,000 Palestinian refugees and the tens of thousands of Iraqi refugees who live or previously resided in Syria.<sup>32</sup>

Working to facilitate cooperation for the disaster response, the European Commission's Civil Protection Mechanism has coordinated the allocation of pooled EU funds to respond to the Syrian crisis.<sup>33</sup> The EU Civil Protection Mechanism was activated twice, once in April 2012 to help Turkey cope with the influx of refugees, and once in September 2012 to assist Jordan. The European Commission channels most EU aid through the United Nations (including UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP) and through the Red Cross/Red Crescent and non-governmental organisations. At the international and supranational levels, the EU also coordinates with the UN-backed Syria Humanitarian Forum -which brings together over 350 participants from Member States, regional organizations, international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and UN humanitarian agencies - to mobilize the necessary resources to provide assistance to the hundreds of thousands of people uprooted by the conflict.

Within Syria, this assistance provides the internally displaced with medical emergency relief, protection, food-nutritional items, water, sanitation, shelter and psychosocial support. Access within Syria is limited, however, as the Syrian government and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent have strict approval over all organisations allowed to work inside the country.<sup>34</sup> Outside Syria, this aid provides refugees with shelter, food, hygiene kits, emergency medical services, and legal assistance.<sup>35</sup>

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of ENPI funds to assist the Syrian people to cope with the unrest and to "enhance the role of the civil society in the transition context," see: <http://europa.eu/geninfo/query/resultaction.jsp?Page=2>

<sup>30</sup> For more information, see: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/12/556&type=HTML>

<sup>31</sup> As the EU recognises that Syria hosts Palestinian and Iraqi refugees, it also approved a €10 million Special Measure and increased the humanitarian budget for the Syrian crisis by €2 million. See: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/12/820&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en> Part of the 7 September 2012 increase in humanitarian funds (of €50 million) will also be allocated for these populations.

<sup>32</sup> European Commission. (n.d.). *Violence raging in syria*. Retrieved from [http://ec.europa.eu/commission\\_2010-2014/georgieva/hot\\_topics/violence\\_raging\\_syria\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/georgieva/hot_topics/violence_raging_syria_en.htm)

<sup>33</sup> The Civil Protection Mechanism is operated by the European Community Humanitarian Office within the European Commission and works, at the request of any country within or outside the EU that needs emergency assistance, to prepare and respond to crises (in addition to providing disaster training and serving as a disaster alert system).

<sup>34</sup> The Syrian Arab Red Crescent has granted formal approval to 8 INGOs to work in Syria (namely Action Contre La Faim, Première Urgence, Danish Refugee Council, International Medical Corps, Help, Institut Européen de Coopération et de

Beginning in February 2012, by the time UNHCR had registered approximately 19,000 Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries, the EU allocated €3 million for protecting medical missions; provision of medical assistance; and protection to those who fled their homes. This aid was increased by €7 million in March 2012. By the first week of June 2012, numbers of Syrians registered by the UNHCR more than tripled. In response, the EU supplied a €23 million Special Measure from the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument for a rapid response to assist those within Syria as well those who fled to Lebanon and Jordan. As the refugee crisis only intensified over the following months, whereby millions became displaced and hundreds of thousands fled the country, the EU increased its humanitarian funding in September 2012 by €50 million. This additional funding responded to immediate needs, such as: food, water, shelter, medical needs and sanitation.<sup>36</sup>

Given the humanitarian needs, coupled with “migratory pressures and [...] a significant rise in the number of asylum applications” within Europe,<sup>37</sup> the EU has also discussed establishing a Regional Protection Programme (RPP) in cooperation with UNHCR. Such a programme would focus on: increasing reception capacity and improving protection in host countries; provision of humanitarian assistance; return of displaced persons; integration; and resettlement<sup>38</sup> The creation of the RPP will only be possible if EU Member States “show willingness to contribute to financing and implementing its [the RPP’s] activities.”<sup>39</sup>

#### *Internal Actions: Secure the Borders and Provide (limited) Protection to Asylum Seekers*

While the external actions of the EU regarding the Syrian crisis can be regarded as one of ‘assist and contain,’ EU internal actions can be viewed as a policy of ‘maintain and protect.’ In light of the numbers of Syrians in an irregular situation detected at EU borders more than tripling, and with the rising numbers of Syrian asylum applications within Europe (see above), the EU and its Member States have taken various measures to simultaneously maintain and secure European borders from Syrians attempting to enter while granting protection – albeit limited and uneven - to Syrians who have already made their way into the EU.

As border security policy remains within the realm of Member States’ authority, and as EU Member States are exposed to varying degrees of refugee flows, EU Member States have been implementing several forms of border control and asylum protection based on their individual national security needs. In a country such as Greece, where the majority of Syrians enter Europe through the Greek-Turkey border crossing, (83% in Q2 2012<sup>40</sup>) and where economic destabilization is a pressing

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Développement (IECD), Secours Islamique France, Terre des Hommes- Italy), and the UN and the Government of Syria have recently agreed to extend authorization to work in Syria to local NGOs (to be chosen on a list of 90). Information from *ECHO factsheet syria* of 8 November 2012, retrieved from:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/syria\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/syria_en.pdf)

<sup>35</sup>The Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department of the European Commission, ECHO. (8 November 2012). *Echo factsheet syria*. Retrieved from: [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/syria\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/syria_en.pdf)

<sup>36</sup>The Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department of the European Commission, ECHO. (2012, September 17). *Humanitarian implementation plan (hip) syrian crisis*. Retrieved from:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/funding/decisions/2012/HIPs/syria\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/funding/decisions/2012/HIPs/syria_en.pdf)

<sup>37</sup>Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union. (2012, October 24). *Press release - common european asylum system and regional protection programme for syria on the agenda of jha*. Retrieved from <http://www.cy2012.eu/index.php/en/news-categories/areas/justice-and-home-affairs/press-release-common-european-asylum-system-and-regional-protection-programme-for-syria-on-the-agend>

<sup>38</sup>Euroactiv.com and Reuters. (2012, July 24). *Eu considers syrian refugee protection*. Retrieved from <http://www.euroactiv.com/global-europe/eu-considers-syrian-refugee-prot-news-514079>

<sup>39</sup>European Commission. (2012, October 24). *Op. cit.*

<sup>40</sup>The vast majority of Syrians (83%) were detected at the land border between Greece and Turkey. Retrieved from: [http://www.frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk\\_Analysis/Fran\\_Q1\\_2012.pdf](http://www.frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk_Analysis/Fran_Q1_2012.pdf)

concern, several pre-emptive steps have been taken to guard Greek borders in light of a possible inflow of Syrian refugees and migrants.

In July 2012, Greece dispatched an additional 1,800 border guards to the Greek-Turkey Evros border and placed 26 floating barriers along the river that divides the countries in an attempt to keep out a potential wave of Syrians fleeing the country. In solidarity with its Member State Greece, the European Commission prepared a mission with the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) and Frontex, in order to support the Greek government with the deployment of the additional border guards. According to Frontex, the total numbers of migrants crossing the Greek-Turkish land border dropped from over 2,000 a week in the first week of August to little over 200 in the second week, and that this was “the direct effect of increased surveillance and patrolling activities by the Greek authorities, which included the deployment of an additional 1,800 officers along the Evros river.”<sup>41</sup>

Despite the decrease in numbers of migrants entering through Greece, Greek Prime Minister Antonios Samaras expressed his deep concern that Syrians entering Greece would destabilize the country. In a 14 September interview with the *Washington Post*, Samaras stated that: “We are a pivotal part of the European Union. Any destabilization of Greece would totally rock the boat. I wake up every morning and say, ‘Has anything happened to Syria today?’ If something happens in Syria, thousands of people would be flowing into Greece. Illegal immigrants are already a very big problem for us. We are already taking big steps to disallow illegal immigrants from coming in. Imagine if that number is multiplied by 10.”<sup>42</sup>

Amidst these fears, Greece has taken several actions to protect the country from possible inflows and deal with migrants already inside the country. In October 2012, discussions between the EU and Greece were on going to provide shelter, if necessary, for 20,000 Syrian refugees on the islands of Crete and Rhodes.<sup>43</sup> A plan to turn Greek empty barracks into holding centres for migrants, that could include Syrians, was also underway.<sup>44</sup> For undocumented migrants who have already reached Greece, those of which could include Syrians, Greek police authorities implemented operation ‘Xenios Zeus’ on 2 August, around the same time that extra border guards were dispatched. The aim of the operation was to arrest undocumented migrants and place them in detention centres pending deportation. Public order minister Nikos Dendias said that the entry of undocumented migrants into Greece brought the country “to the brink of collapse,” and that the “What is happening now is [Greece's] greatest invasion ever.”<sup>45</sup>

(It is notable that within this context one of the European Asylum Support Office’s (EASO) main priorities for 2013 is to provide operational emergency support to the asylum system of Greece and other Member States in need.<sup>46</sup>)

Although Greece receives the majority of Syrian migrants at its land borders, other EU Member States have also been receiving Syrians – albeit through a rise in Syrian nationals applying for asylum.

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<sup>41</sup> Frontex. *Situational update: migratory situation at the greek-turkish border*. Op. cit.

<sup>42</sup> Weymouth, L. (2012, September 14). An interview with antonis samaras, greek prime minister, on austerity and unrest. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from [http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/an-interview-with-antonis-samaras-greek-prime-minister-on-austerity-and-unrest/2012/09/14/f80887dc-fdb4-11e1-a31e-804fccb658f9\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/an-interview-with-antonis-samaras-greek-prime-minister-on-austerity-and-unrest/2012/09/14/f80887dc-fdb4-11e1-a31e-804fccb658f9_story.html)

<sup>43</sup> UNHCR. (2012, October 11). *Greece to accommodate syrian refugees on tourist islands*. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.se/en/media/baltic-and-nordic-headlines/2012/october/12-16-october-2012.html>

<sup>44</sup> Ekathimerini and Agence France Presse. (2012, October 11). *Greece readies plans to shelter 20,000 Syrian refugees on islands*. Retrieved from: [http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/\\_w\\_articles\\_wsite1\\_1\\_11/10/2012\\_465736](http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/_w_articles_wsite1_1_11/10/2012_465736)

<sup>45</sup> Thousands of illegal immigrants rounded up in greece. (2012, August 7). *The Independent* . Retrieved from: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/thousands-of-illegal-immigrants-rounded-up-in-greece-8010219.html>

<sup>46</sup> European Asylum Support Office, EASO. (2012, October 10). *Easo publishes its 2013 work programme* . Retrieved from <http://www.easo.europa.eu/>

Throughout the EU, Syrian asylum applications are granted the highest percentage of positive decisions out of the top 30 nationalities applying for asylum in the EU, (EUROSTAT reported that in Q2 2012 4,390 out of 4,765 applications were positively granted protection - 1,595 refugee status and 2,755 subsidiary protection – meaning that almost all were granted some form of protection).<sup>47</sup> Syrian asylum seekers, however, are not granted the same protections and rights across Europe as a whole. Adrian Edwards, the spokesperson for the UNHCR, noted: “that while most countries are processing claims and granting protection to Syrians, the approaches to protection and the type of status and entitlements vary considerably.”<sup>48</sup>

As noted above, Germany and Sweden experienced the highest numbers of Syrian asylum applications, by far, out of all countries in Europe since the beginning of the conflict. In Germany, the vast majority of Syrians who apply for asylum are granted protection, mainly subsidiary protection. Moreover, as the Swedish Migration Board has stated that as the vast majority of Syrians are exposed to general violence in the country, most Syrians who apply for asylum when they reach Sweden will automatically be granted a temporary residence permit for three years “to ensure that an asylum seeker can live safely and securely in Sweden until the situation in Syria improves.”<sup>49</sup> Those Syrians with individual grounds for need of protection will be granted a permanent residence permit (except possibly for families with children, who may be granted permanent residence permits regardless of individual grounds).

Norway and Denmark are also granting ‘tolerated stay’ to Syrians entering the respective countries. However, other countries, like Greece and Eastern European states have higher rejection rates of Syrian asylum claims when compared to the rest of Europe.<sup>50</sup> This uneven provision of protection and the inconsistencies of asylum rates throughout Europe have led the UNHCR and other aid agencies to encourage the EU to uphold the principles of the EU’s Common European Asylum System.

EU MS are reviewing their asylum policies in regards to Syrian nationals, and most EU Member States have refrained from forcibly repatriating Syrians back to their country.<sup>51</sup> Although certain EU Member States have been sharing the burden by granting Syrians asylum, and most EU MS have refrained from returning Syrians back to their country, the EU has not publicly acknowledged the need for Syrian resettlement and has instead focused on providing assistance to those host countries that are bearing the burden, and by providing varying levels of protection throughout Europe.

### 3. Possible responses to the growing refugee pressures

The Syrian crisis has been intensifying over the last 20 months, and refugee flows from Syria can be expected to continue. The outcome of the conflict is unknown, and the fall of Assad does not necessarily equal a return to safety and stability. Surely, the conflict will not recede overnight, and depending upon the outcome, further violence and instability could ensue leading to greater waves of refugees fleeing the country, while any peace settlement would need to be firmly established before

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<sup>47</sup> EUROSTAT. (2012, October 23). *Asylum applicants and first instance decisions on asylum applications: second quarter 2012*. Retrieved from [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY\\_OFFPUB/KS-QA-12-012/EN/KS-QA-12-012-EN.PDF](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-QA-12-012/EN/KS-QA-12-012-EN.PDF)

<sup>48</sup> UNHCR. (2012, October 18). *Syria crisis: Unhcr urges eu states to uphold common asylum system principles*. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr-centraleurope.org/en/news/2012/syria-crisis-unhcr-urges-eu-states-to-uphold-common-asylum-system-principles.html>

<sup>49</sup> Migrationsverket. (12 August 2012). Due to the current violence in Syria, many people will be allowed to stay in Sweden. Retrieved from [http://www.migrationsverket.se/info/5833\\_en.html](http://www.migrationsverket.se/info/5833_en.html).

<sup>50</sup> UNHCR. (2012, October 18). Op. cit.

<sup>51</sup> According to Frontex, “Syrians were not returned in large number (less than 300 persons), but while the numbers were rather stable in most Member States, Greece reported a sharp increase in returns of Syrians as of June 2012” (about 125 people). Frontex. (2012, October). *Fran quarterly issue 2*. Retrieved from: [http://www.frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk\\_Analysis/Fran\\_Q2\\_2012\\_.pdf](http://www.frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk_Analysis/Fran_Q2_2012_.pdf)

refugees start returning to their homes. Will neighbouring countries keep their borders open? Will conditions of asylum there remain acceptable as relief organizations and host governments scramble to meet the needs of the ever-growing refugee population? Will the number of refugees trying to reach Europe increase? What could be the response of the EU and its MS?

The European Union must make a strong response to the Syrian refugee crisis. The nation of Syria has been thrown into civil war, over 3 million people have been affected, and the patience and resources of neighbouring host countries are running thin. The EU must continue to address the situation and could consider taking further action. There are several possible EU responses to the growing refugee crisis, some of which are already being entertained by the EU as potential actions. In short, the EU could consider the following:

- Establish a Regional Protection Programme (RPP) with a large increase of Syrian refugee resettlement as a required component;
- Increase refugee resettlement for those who have been affected by the Syrian crisis and are the most in need;
- Continue positive asylum procedures throughout the EU, and grant prima facie recognition including provision of sufficient assistance;
- Encourage visa facilitation and family reunification for Syrians;
- Continue to work with its international partners to find a political and humanitarian solution to the Syrian crisis.

#### *Establishing a Regional Protection Programme: Resettlement as a required component*

The possibility for a Regional Protection Programme (RPP) is currently being considered as an EU response to the Syrian refugee crisis. As this option was discussed during the Justice and Home Affairs Council meeting on 25-26 October 2012 and no sources have been published in regards to the outcomes of these meetings, the exact components of the RPP and means of its implementation in the Syrian context are unknown. There are many questions. For example, would the RPP be established regardless of the situation in Syria (while Assad and the opposition forces are still embattled in civil war, or would it wait for a transition to see if refugees return or do not return)? How would the creation of a RPP additionally assist countries as opposed to continuing the current humanitarian efforts of the EU? These answers are unidentified, and therefore a complete analysis of the EU's proposed RPP for Syria becomes difficult.

What are known, however, are the reasons which warranted the EU to discuss implementation of such an instrument: 1) migratory and refugee pressures within Syria and the region; and 2) migratory pressures and a significant rise in the number of asylum applications within Europe.<sup>52</sup> The first reason seems to address the known needs of the millions affected by the crisis within Syria and the region. The second reason seems to have less justification as, noted above, the EU has witnessed a very minimal impact at its doorstep and within its borders. Provision of assistance and containment, therefore, become the pillars of the RPP, as opposed to offering broader solutions such as increasing resettlement placements in Europe, which, given the limited numbers of Syrians actually entering Europe, would be of minimal burden to EU Member States.

An RPP which justifies its creation on mainly these two points (assistance and containment) without a large increase in access to resettlement suggests to neighbouring countries that the EU is reluctant to share the burden and that it expects neighbouring countries to handle the territorial burden alone. This will perhaps give the EU less weight in encouraging receiving countries to keep their borders open in light of Syrian refugee flows and for them to continue providing for the needs of the displaced. Increased resettlement can be a useful tool in diplomacy as it dually achieves humanitarian

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<sup>52</sup> Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union. (2012, October 24). Op cit.

goals while encourages States to receive or continue to receive refugees. The so-called ‘strategic use of resettlement’ can help to negotiate improved protection conditions in the host country, and can help to unlock other durable solutions (return and integration).<sup>53</sup> The lack of resettlement could also call into question EU statements regarding its solidarity with the Syrian people. Finally, a RPP without increased access to resettlement potentially denies protection in a third country for the most desperate of Syrian refugees. In the spirit of responsibility and burden sharing, on-going EU discussion regarding the creation of the RPP could also press for the need of greatly increased resettlement placements of the most needy within Europe.

### *Increase Resettlement*

EU Member States with refugee resettlement programs could be encouraged to formally increase the number of Syrian refugees in need of resettlement. During the Iraq War crisis, certain EU Member States temporarily increased the numbers of resettlement places for Iraqi refugees. Currently, Australia has increased the number of resettlement places for those affected by the Syrian crisis by 1,000 placements for 2013. Furthermore, at the time of the Iraqi refugee crisis and other refugee crises, the EU provided financial incentives to States that resettled refugees from EU-designated priority areas. The EU could consider implementing increased funding for those States that increase resettlement. Regardless of the outcome of the RPP, Europe could increase resettlement of those affected by the Syrian crisis as it has done for other nationalities in the past and as other nations are currently increasing resettlement.

### *Prima facie recognition and provision of sufficient assistance to Syrian asylum seekers*

As mentioned above, most European States have placed a moratorium on forced returns and most have been providing Syrians with protection (especially high numbers in the case of Germany and Sweden), albeit in various forms. This practice must continue and all Member States should be encouraged to provide Syrians with protection.

As Syrian asylum applications are currently granted the highest percentage of positive decisions, European States should be commended for their acknowledgement and protection of Syrian asylum seekers. However, the uneven provision of protection and the inconsistencies of asylum rates throughout Europe for Syrian asylum seekers should be analysed by the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) in order to be rectified upon the basis of a report comparing the policy of EU Member States. The EU Member States could consider granting prima facie recognition to all Syrians within the EU without prejudice to procedures for the identification of the nationality of persons in case of doubt.

The EU and its Member States should ensure that those granted refugee status or subsidiary protection be provided with sufficient assistance. This paper is in agreement with the statement made to the EU Presidency in an open letter from Amnesty International, the Churches’ Committee of Migrants in Europe, and the European Council on Refugees and Exiles, that “treatment of Syrian asylum applicants varies considerably across the EU, creating an unequal situation where Syrian nationals in similar circumstances receive different levels of protection depending on which EU country they are in,” and therefore there is a need for “fair and effective asylum determination procedures to all Syrian asylum-seekers who arrive in the EU.”<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> UNHCR. (2010, July). *Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement Geneva, 6-8 July 2010, UNHCR Position Paper on the Strategic Use of Resettlement*. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/4c0d10ac2.pdf>

<sup>54</sup> Joint statement by Amnesty International, Churches' Committee for Migrants in Europe, and European Council on Refugees and Exiles. (2012, October 24). *The syrian refugee crisis and the role of the european union*. Retrieved from [http://www.amnesty.eu/content/assets/Doc2012/Letter\\_to\\_Cyprus\\_Presidency\\_-\\_Syrian\\_Refugee\\_Crisis\\_241012.pdf](http://www.amnesty.eu/content/assets/Doc2012/Letter_to_Cyprus_Presidency_-_Syrian_Refugee_Crisis_241012.pdf)

*Visa facilitation*

Europe could also consider relaxing current visa restrictions, especially for family reunification, to allow Syrians increased access to protection and to reunite families that have been separated due to the crisis.

*Continue work towards a political and humanitarian solution to the crisis*

As soon as a genuine democratic transition in Syria begins, “the EU is ready to develop a new and ambitious partnership with Syria across all areas of mutual interest, including by mobilizing assistance, strengthening trade and economic relations and supporting transitional justice and the political transition.”<sup>55</sup> Before the EU can place emphasis on future relations, however, the need now is to place all resources in serving the needs of the Syrian people by continuing EU policies of: pressuring the Syrian regime through sanctions and other EU and international restrictive measures; continuing work to organise the Syrian opposition in the event that the regime falls, and ensuring that parties respect representative and democratic reforms and that the rights of minorities are protected; and continue to encourage Member States to increase humanitarian support and provide funding to neighbouring countries that are carrying the bulk of the burden.

The political and humanitarian responses work hand-in-hand to address to the immediate and future needs of the Syrian people, and the EU must continue its support in both avenues. Humanitarian support, including the provision of aid in addition to protection within EU borders through granting refugee status or subsidiary protection, is required to assist those affected by the Syrian crisis in obtaining the most basic of needs: food, water, shelter, and safety. The political response addresses these same needs, yet in a pre-emptive way, by ensuring that a future Syria exists that can provide for the needs of the Syrian people who will some day return to their homeland.

As a final note, it should be reasserted that all countries involved in the conflict –except Iraq, and previously including Syria – are acutely linked to the European Union, not only through Association Agreements, but also through its participation in a progression towards a more peaceful, stable, and prosperous region. At a time when unprecedented changes are occurring in the region, the EU could grasp this situation as an opportunity to show its responsibility to burden sharing and to its commitment of mutually improving the lives of peoples on both shores of the Mediterranean.

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<sup>55</sup> The Council of the European Union. (2012, February 27). *Council conclusions on eu priorities at the un human rights council*. Retrieved from [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/128162.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/128162.pdf)

**Table Appendix 1. Casualties and refugees in Syria by month, 2011-2012**

Month/year		Cumulated numbers (end of month)		
		Deaths 1/	Refugees in bordering countries 2/	Asylum seekers in Europe 3/
2011	March	120		
	April	844	16	
	May	1,402	31	
	June	1,931	2,479	1,725
	July	2,374	2,650	
	August	3,065	3,417	
	September	3,585	3,711	4,475
	October	4,155	4,687	
	November	4,958	5,536	
	December	6,068	15,455	7,410
2012	January	7,251	19,484	
	February	9,779	23,010	
	March	12,134	36,270	10,410
	April	14,112	44,737	
	May	15,551	59,838	
	June	18,210	87,198	14,422
	July	22,518	104,228	
	August	28,817	171,397	
	September	34,265	220,122	18,982
	October	36,686	263,476	

Sources:

1/ <http://syrianshuhada.com/Default.asp?lang=en&a=la&p=DeathMonth&v=3&ppp=DeathYear&vvv=2011;>

2/ UNHCR ; 3/ EUROSTAT

**Table Appendix 2. Migrants and refugees from Syria in Europe, North America and Australia**

Country/area of residence	Migrant stock 2010	Applications for asylum		First permits of residence		Visas	
		2010	2011-12*	2010	2011	2010	2011
<b>European Union, Norway &amp; Switzerland</b>	<b>112,130</b>	<b>5,575</b>	<b>20,493</b>	<b>7,829</b>	<b>8,106</b>	<b>26,608</b>	<b>21,463</b>
Austria	2,661	205	825	185	504	-	-
Belgium	1,809	455	955	620	0	-	-
Bulgaria	615	50	150	33	51	-	-
Cyprus	20	95	415	569	0	-	-
Czech Republic	540	15	43	76	65	-	-
Denmark	2,024	815	820	97	549	-	-
Estonia	1	0	0	0	2	-	-
Finland	384	50	180	24	71	-	-
France	15,510	205	220	560	579	-	-
Germany	31,583	2,030	8,435	1,540	1,514	8,702	4,930
Greece	5,747	170	445	454	50	-	-
Hungary	816	20	130	79	151	-	-
Ireland	154	0	5	29	23	-	-
Italy	3,880	45	340	597	520	7,048	4,729
Latvia	22	0	15	3	5	-	-
Lithuania	20	0	0	0	0	-	-
Luxembourg	33	20	10	2	1	-	-
Malta	25	5	175	47	74	-	-
Netherlands	6,946	155	195	205	114	-	-
Norway	1,346	120	380	88	179	-	-
Poland	689	5	20	88	0	-	-
Portugal	25	0	0	4	3	-	-
Romania	7,541	15	95	164	290	-	-
Slovakia	79	5	5	12	17	-	-
Slovenia	35	5	10	1	1	-	-
Spain	4,941	15	185	184	242	3,902	4,998
Sweden	19,646	450	3,780	1,329	2,020	1,432	1,065
Switzerland	871	460	1,745			-	-
United Kingdom	4,167	165	915	839	1,081	5,524	5,741
<b>North America</b>	<b>71,312</b>	<b>5,214</b>	<b>6,738</b>			<b>16,672</b>	<b>12,714</b>
US	52,512	48	74	-	-	9,905	10,007
Canada	18,800	5,166	6,664	-	-	6,767	2,707
<b>Oceania</b>	<b>8,953</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>n.a.</b>			<b>n.a.</b>	<b>n.a.</b>
Australia	8,599	-	-	-	-	187	378
New Zealand	354	-	-	-	-	-	-

- Data not available

Sources: Migrant stocks computed from the most recent population census available at the time of writing; see CARIM database, ... Applications for asylum: EUROSTAT for the EU, Norway and Switzerland; Canada, Department Citizenship and Immigration; United States, US Department of Justice - Executive Office for Immigration Review - Office of Planning, Analysis and Technology; Australia, Australian Government - Department of Immigration and Citizenship

**Table Appendix 3. Member States' Responses to the Syrian Crisis**

Member State	Certain Political Positions / Actions Regarding the Syrian State	Actions Regarding Syrian Refugees	
		Amount of Humanitarian Aid (ECHO figures <sup>56</sup> )	Humanitarian Responses (including # of asylum applications, if available)
Austria	Supports HRC and other calls to refer Assad human rights abuses to International Criminal Court for prosecution. <sup>57</sup>	€2,030,000	<p>-February 2012: €250,000 for programmes of the UNHCR and UNHCHR in Syria. The Interior Ministry supplied tents, kitchen sets, and blankets.<sup>58</sup></p> <p>-July 2012: €750,000 to support civilians in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan.<sup>59</sup></p> <p>-September 2012: €1 million - UNHCR received €650,000, and €350,000 for aid projects of Austrian NGOs working in the region.<sup>60</sup></p> <p>-October 2012: Provided 2,000 blankets and 20 special heating units for tents, will be distributed to Syrians in the Zaatari Refugee Camp.<sup>61</sup></p> <p>-ASYLUM: 375 Syrian asylum applications (January through June 2012)<sup>62</sup></p>

<sup>56</sup> The Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department of the European Commission, ECHO. *ECHO Factsheet Syria 1 October 2012*. Retrieved from: [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/countries/factsheets/syria\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/countries/factsheets/syria_en.pdf)

<sup>57</sup> Austrian Foreign Ministry. (2012, March 13). *Cross-regional group statement on syria*. Retrieved from <http://www.bmeia.gv.at/en/austrian-mission/geneva/news/statements-and-speeches/2012/human-rights-hrc-19th-session-statements/cross-regional-group-statement-on-syria.html>

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> <http://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/spindelegger-%E2%80%9Caustria-responds-dramatic-situation-syrian-refugees%E2%80%9D>

<sup>61</sup> <http://jordantimes.com/austria-provides-aid-for-syrian-refugees>

<sup>62</sup> Eurostat [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY\\_OFFPUB/KS-QA-12-008/EN/KS-QA-12-008-EN.PDF](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-QA-12-008/EN/KS-QA-12-008-EN.PDF) and [http://www.emmbelgium.be/sites/default/files/publications/eurostat\\_q2\\_2012\\_0.pdf](http://www.emmbelgium.be/sites/default/files/publications/eurostat_q2_2012_0.pdf).



Denmark	-Working with UN observer mission -Calls for peaceful cessation of violence <sup>70</sup>	€3,422,873	- 13 million kroner to UNHCR and two million to the Danish crisis agency which sends personnel and equipment to Syrian refugees in Jordan. The money will go towards the construction of a camp, sanitation and tents, food and administration (1/9/12) <sup>71</sup> -Tolerated stay given to Syrian asylum applicants: allowed to remain in Denmark, under the label of “tolerated stay”, after the Refugee Appeals Board has stopped forced repatriation to Syria. <sup>72</sup> and. <sup>73</sup> No forceful return to Syria if negative asylum decision but still obligated to leave. ASYLUM: From January to end of April 261 Syrian asylum applicants. (210 in Q1. <sup>74</sup> )
Estonia	Participated in the UN Syrian Observer Mission Calls for an end to the violence, and a political transition. <sup>75</sup>	€150,000	

(Contd.) \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>69</sup> UNHCR. (2012, October 18). Op. cit.

<sup>70</sup> Denmark Ministry of Defense. (2012, April 18). *Denmark contributes to un monitoring mission in syria*. Retrieved from <http://www.fmn.dk/eng/news/Pages/DenmarkcontributestoUNmonitoringmissionSyria.aspx>

<sup>71</sup> Agence France Presse. (2012, September 1). *Denmark to give 2 mn euros for syria refugees: report*. Retrieved from <http://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/denmark-give-2-mn-euros-syria-refugees-report>

<sup>72</sup> Saker, Y. *Suffering of syrian refugees continues, long after they flee the violence in their country*. (2012, September 10). Retrieved from <http://cphnews.mediatjungle.dk/archives/823>

<sup>73</sup> Stanners, P. (2012, June 26). Syrians not given automatic asylum, despite plea. *The Copenhagen Post*. Retrieved from <http://cphpost.dk/news/international/syrians-not-given-automatic-asylum-despite-plea>

<sup>74</sup> EUROSTAT. (2012, August). *Asylum applicants and first instance decisions on asylum applications: first quarter 2012*. Retrieved from: [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY\\_OFFPUB/KS-QA-12-008/EN/KS-QA-12-008-EN.PDF](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-QA-12-008/EN/KS-QA-12-008-EN.PDF)

<sup>75</sup> Estonian Foreign Ministry. (2012, September 26). *Foreign minister urges paet: Those who have fled from violence in syria must receive international aid*. Retrieved from <http://www.vm.ee/?q=en/node/15451>

<p>France</p>	<p>-Germany, France, and UK make joint for Assad to stand down (13/8/12).<sup>76</sup>                  -Called on Syrian opposition to form a transitional government and pledges support once formed. (27/8/12)<sup>77</sup>                  -France/UK Foreign Ministers call on Syrian officials to defect as soon as possible from Assad regime and reaffirm Assad and his “clan” should be held accountable for their crimes at ICC.<sup>78</sup> (30/8/12)                  -Working with opposition for a transition plan and providing direct aid/money to rebel-controlled areas (revolutionary councils) of Syria. Since August 31, France has mobilized almost €1.5 million for 15 civilian committees.<sup>79</sup></p>	<p>€11,089,000</p>	<p>-Providing material/financial support in the form of medical and surgical equipment and food aid, delivered through local solidarity networks.                  -French food aid more than 100,000 people (after July 6 able to send food aid to more than 10,000 people inside the country and to allocate a specific amount for emergency medical aid)                  -Nearly 450,000 euros sent to the Union of Syrian Medical Relief Organizations. This partnership covers the shipment of medical supplies and directly supports both doctors who are treating victims of the crackdown and health-care facilities on the ground.                  -Supports major international humanitarian organizations (the ICRC, UNICEF, etc.) and NGOs (MDM, Handicap international, etc.) in efforts to provide aid, both to Syrians inside the country and to refugees.<sup>80</sup>                  -ASYLUM: 255 between January and July 2012.<sup>81</sup></p>
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<sup>76</sup> Foreign and Commonwealth Office. (2012, August 18). *Uk, germany and france call for president assad to stand down*. Retrieved from <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=PressS&id=645689682>

<sup>77</sup> Foreign and Commonwealth Office. (2012, August 18). Op. cit.

<sup>78</sup> United Nations Press Conference. (2012, August 30). *Press conference by foreign ministers of france, united kingdom on syria*. Retrieved from [http://www.un.org/News/briefings/docs/2012/120830\\_Syria.doc.htm](http://www.un.org/News/briefings/docs/2012/120830_Syria.doc.htm)

<sup>79</sup> France Diplomatie. (2012, October 17). *Syria - meeting in support of the civilian revolutionary councils - speech by laurent fabius*. Retrieved from <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/syria-meeting-in-support-of-the-civilian-revolutionary-councils>

<sup>80</sup> France Diplomatie. (2012, August 15). *Laurent fabius's visit to jordan, turkey and lebanon*. Retrieved from <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/jordan/visits-2446/article/laurent-fabius-s-visit-to-jordan>

<sup>81</sup> UNHCR. (2012, August 31). *Syria crisis: Malta grants syrian nationals protection*. Retrieved from [http://www.unhcr.org/mt/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=599:syria-refugee-outflow-continues&catid=91:north-africa-situation-2&Itemid=160](http://www.unhcr.org/mt/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=599:syria-refugee-outflow-continues&catid=91:north-africa-situation-2&Itemid=160)

Finland	-Calls for documentation of war crimes for purposes of prosecution: War crimes must be investigated and those responsible must be brought to justice (24/8/12) <sup>82</sup>	€2,800,000	-€1.5 million targeted for persons in need of assistance, both within/outside Syria channelled through the Finnish Red Cross, the World Food Programme (WFP) and UNICEF, the United Nations Children’s Fund. -€1.3 million channelled through the UNHCR, ICRC and the WFP. <sup>83</sup> -ASYLUM: 80 Syrian asylum applications from January through June 2012. <sup>84</sup>
Germany	-Working with Syrian opposition (SNC/Syrian Business Forum) to develop strategies for economic/political reconstruction of Syria. Created/co-chairs Working Group on Economic Recovery and Development of the Friends of the Syrian People. <sup>85</sup> Gave €600,000 to Secretariat in Berlin to support Working Group on Economic Recovery and Development.(4/9/12) <sup>86</sup> -FM said Syria needs an alternative government formed by the opposition – “an alternative to Assad, predicated on ethnic and religious pluralism” <sup>87</sup> -Germany, France, and UK make joint statement for Assad to stand down (13/8/12). <sup>88</sup>	€11,084,201	-Assistance includes food, medical care and water in/outside Syria; -To Zaatari refugee camp Jordan, German Federal Agency for Technical Relief installing entire water supply for the camp, prepare the refugee camp for the winter and install community kitchens <sup>89</sup> which will be able to accommodate up to 120,000 refugees (through UNHCR); -€5 million euros of humanitarian assistance available to help refugees in Syria and in neighbouring countries. In addition to medical care, the focus will be on preparing for the forthcoming winter. German aid organizations as well as

<sup>82</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland. (2012, August 24). *Foreign minister tuomioja at the syria seminar of the un association of finland: We need a political solution for the protracted conflict*. Retrieved from <http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=255819&nodeid=17532&contentlan=2&culture=en-US>

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> EUROSTAT. (2012, August) and EUROSTAT. (2012, October). Op. cit.

<sup>85</sup> Federal Foreign Office. (2012, September 4). *Prospects for a fresh start – international working group on syria meets in berlin*. Retrieved from [http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/sid\\_F4B4AA19E5A2867E22337D5428C6AB99/EN/Aussenpolitik/Laender/Aktuelle\\_Artikel/Syrien/120903-AG-Treffen-Berlin.html?nr=424096](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/sid_F4B4AA19E5A2867E22337D5428C6AB99/EN/Aussenpolitik/Laender/Aktuelle_Artikel/Syrien/120903-AG-Treffen-Berlin.html?nr=424096)

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Federal Foreign Office. (2012, September 8). *Jordan: Alleviating the plight of syrian refugees*. Retrieved from [http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/AAmt/BM-Reisen/2012/09\\_CYP-JOR-ISR/120908\\_Amman.html?nr=424096](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/AAmt/BM-Reisen/2012/09_CYP-JOR-ISR/120908_Amman.html?nr=424096)

<sup>88</sup> Foreign and Commonwealth Office. (2012, August 18). Op. cit.

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			the Federal Agency for Technical Relief are cooperating with the UNHCR to provide refugees with warm clothing, blankets and heaters (18/10/12). <sup>90</sup> -ASYLUM: 2,730 Syrian asylum applications from January through June 2012. <sup>91</sup>
Greece	-1,800 border guards sent to border for potential influx of Syrian refugees (30/7/12) <sup>92</sup> -Preparing for potential influx: Greece must "fortify" itself against illegal immigration, (17/9/12) <sup>93</sup> -Detention centres being built on Rhodes and Crete for possible Syrian inflows.	€50,000	
Hungary		€139,185	-ASYLUM: 78 Syrians have sought asylum between January and September 2012. <sup>94</sup>
Ireland		€1,600,000	

(Contd.) \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>89</sup> Federal Foreign Office. (2012, September 8). Op. cit.

<sup>90</sup> Federal Foreign Office. (2012, October 18). *Germany increases humanitarian assistance for syrian refugees*. Retrieved from [http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/Infoervice/Presse/Meldungen/2012/121018-HH\\_Syrien.html?nn=424096](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/Infoervice/Presse/Meldungen/2012/121018-HH_Syrien.html?nn=424096)

<sup>91</sup> EUROSTAT. (2012, August) and EUROSTAT. (2012, October). Op. cit.

<sup>92</sup> Agence France Presse. (2012, August 1). *Greece to boost border control to ward off syrian influx*. Retrieved from <http://reliefweb.int/report/greece/greece-boost-border-control-ward-syrian-influx>

<sup>93</sup> Middle East Online. (2012, Septemebr 17). *Greece fears new syrian migration wave*. Retrieved from <http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=54413>

<sup>94</sup> UNHCR. (2012, October 18). Op. cit.

<p>Italy</p>	<p>-Held Interministerial Table on Syria to define guidelines of international action,          -Interministerial Working Group was appointed to deal with objectives/means of intervention. The humanitarian emergency in Syria is the priority for Italy (3/9/12)<sup>95</sup>          -Italy would be ready to send military forces to Syria if President Bashar al-Assad is toppled;          -Meeting of Italian Foreign Minister Giulio Terzi and other government officials to make plans for "post Assad" period (5/9/12).<sup>96</sup></p>	<p>€4,265,337</p>	<p>-Aiding Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Jordan, where Italy built a camp hospital and sent medical kits, and Turkey, where it has been airlifting aid.<sup>97</sup>          -Donated to Jordan two kits containing emergency medical supplies sufficient to assist 20,000 people for three months, handed over to the Royal Medical Services. Another six kits of emergency medical supplies in Damascus; three of which are sufficient to provide general treatment for around 30,000 patients for three months, while the other three are trauma kits that can treat gunshot and other war wounds for 300 patients. The aid delivered to Damascus taken over by UNHCR for subsequent distribution by the Syrian Red Crescent. (June 2012)<sup>98</sup>          -Sent 30 tonnes of aid items to Turkey for the Syrian refugees included blankets, tents, cleaning equipment, generators, heaters, and food preparation items<sup>99</sup> and equipment to build 4 new reception camps in Turkey;          -Deliveries of medical and essential supplies to Lebanon, and medical kits to treat patients in Syria, Jordan and Lebanon (August 2012).<sup>100</sup>          -Made a concrete response to UNICEF's request for funding for school attendance programmes for Syrian child refugees in Lebanon and initiatives to protect them from the risk of exploitation and violence. The Foreign Ministry is also supporting an emergency food aid plan for Palestinian refugees living in Syria.<sup>101</sup></p>
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<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Yahoo News. (2012, September 5). *Italy ready to intervene militarily in syria*. Retrieved from <http://in.news.yahoo.com/italy-ready-intervene-militarily-syria-022122284.html>

<sup>97</sup> ANSAMED. (2012, September 3). *Syria: Italy preparing for post-assad reconstruction, terzi*. Retrieved from [http://www.ansamed.info/ansamed/en/news/nations/syria/2012/09/03/Syria-Italy-preparing-post-Assad-reconstruction-Terzi\\_7417625.html](http://www.ansamed.info/ansamed/en/news/nations/syria/2012/09/03/Syria-Italy-preparing-post-Assad-reconstruction-Terzi_7417625.html)

Lithuania		€14,481	
Luxem.		€1,000,000	
Nether.	<p>-Encourage Syrian military personnel and officials to defect (1/4/12).<sup>102</sup></p> <p>-Call for Assad to step down (31/7/12)<sup>103</sup></p> <p>-Encourage stricter sanctions;<sup>104</sup></p> <p>-Support opposition groups/urge to unite: provide communication equipment, training of human rights defenders, unrestricted internet access in Syria, documentation of human rights violations, and post-conflict training (19/6/12);<sup>105</sup></p> <p>-Met with the Syrian National Council (SNC), urging it to work more closely with other opposition groups. He also stressed the importance of respect for minority rights in the free and democratic Syria of the future (7/9/12).<sup>106</sup></p>	<p>€5,450,000</p>	<p>-Red Cross will use the money to provide 200,000 Syrians with food and medical help;</p> <p>-€6 million already donated to the UNHCR and World Food Programme, and annual general contributions to the various aid organisations currently active in Syria.<sup>107</sup></p> <p>-€3 million to improve the reception of Syrian refugees in Jordan.<sup>108</sup></p> <p>-As of July 7th 2012 the Dutch authorities have suspended decision making on Syrian asylum applications for 12 months (a Dutch ‘decision moratorium’ must be renewed every 6 months. The current moratorium took effect on July 7th 2011, was extended for a further 6 months in January</p>

(Contd.) \_\_\_\_\_

- <sup>98</sup> JT. (2012, June 12). Italian medical aid for Syrians to arrive in Jordan. *The Jordanian Times*. Retrieved from <http://jordantimes.com/italian-medical-aid-for-syrians-to-arrive-in-jordan>
- <sup>99</sup> Italy sends 250,000 euros to Turkey for Syrian refugees. (2012, September 14). *The Journal of the Turkish Weekly*. Retrieved from <http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/141893/italy-sends-250-000-euros-to-turkey-for-syrian-refugees.html>
- <sup>100</sup> Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (2012, September 13). *Syria: Humanitarian crisis. Italy responds to Ban Ki-moon's appeal. 250,000 euros from the farnesina for the UN High Commission's initiatives*. Retrieved from [http://www.esteri.it/MAE/EN/Sala Stampa/Archivio/Notizie/Comunicati/2012/09/20120913\\_Siria\\_CrisiUmanitaria.htm](http://www.esteri.it/MAE/EN/Sala Stampa/Archivio/Notizie/Comunicati/2012/09/20120913_Siria_CrisiUmanitaria.htm)
- <sup>101</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>102</sup> Government of the Netherlands. (2012, April 4). *Rosenthal calls on friends of Syria to support defectors*. Retrieved from <http://www.government.nl/news/2012/04/01/rosenthal-calls-on-friends-of-syria-to-support-defectors.html>
- <sup>103</sup> Government of the Netherlands. (2012, July 31). *€1 million extra emergency aid for Syria*. Retrieved from <http://www.government.nl/news/2012/07/31/1-million-extra-emergency-aid-for-syria.html>
- <sup>104</sup> Government of the Netherlands. (2012, July 23). *Netherlands to host international talks on Syria*. Retrieved from <http://www.government.nl/news/2012/07/20/netherlands-to-host-international-talks-on-syria.html>
- <sup>105</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>106</sup> Government of the Netherlands. (2012, September 7). *Rosenthal: Syrian regime faces growing difficulties*. Retrieved from <http://www.government.nl/news/2012/09/07/rosenthal-syrian-regime-faces-growing-difficulties.html>

			2012). Reception conditions are implemented as an asylum seeker whose asylum request is suspended due to moratoria is treated as a 'normal' asylum seeker. This means they have access to the same facilities and are sent to the same centres as other asylum seekers awaiting a decision on their asylum application.
Poland	€527,677		-ASYLUM: 29 Syrians have sought asylum between January and September 2012. <sup>109</sup>
Romania	n/a		-ASYLUM: 195 Syrians including men, women and children have made asylum claims between January and September 2012. <sup>110</sup>
Slovakia	€140,000		-ASYLUM: 3 Syrians have sought asylum between January and September 2012. <sup>111</sup>
Slovenia	n/a		-ASYLUM: 13 Syrians have sought asylum between January and September 2012. <sup>112</sup>
Spain	€1,405,852	-Met with Syrian opposition, and reiterated support for the Syrian opposition groups, adding "the ultimate objective in Syria is a regime change, transition to democracy and free elections." <sup>113</sup>	

(Contd.)

<sup>107</sup> Government of the Netherlands. (2012, July 31). Op. cit.

<sup>108</sup> Government of the Netherlands. (2012, September 16). Op. cit.

<sup>109</sup> UNHCR. (2012, October 18). Op. cit.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> AA. (2012, March 31). Spain to send humanitarian aid to Syrians who took shelter in Turkey, Spanish FM says. *The Journal of the Turkish Weekly*. Retrieved from <http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/133232/spain-to-send-humanitarian-aid-to-syrians-who-took-shelter-in-turkey-spanish-fm-says.html>

	<p>-Called for investigation into HR abuses to bring regime to justice (27/8/12)<sup>114</sup></p> <p>-Encouraged opposition to continue working towards unity/form democratic and pluralistic future Syria (23/8/12).<sup>115</sup></p>		
Sweden	<p>-Warned against creation of safe zones (31/8/12)<sup>116</sup></p> <p>-Met with SNC who asked Sweden to help provide medication, medical supplies and ambulances. (30/8/12)<sup>117</sup></p>	€11,506,354	<p>-No forced returns;</p> <p>-Syrians who apply for asylum are automatically granted 3 year resident permits;</p> <p>-When considering applications by children or families with children, the Migration Board will look at the possibility of granting permanent residence permits even if they do not have individual grounds for protection.<sup>118</sup></p> <p>-Sweden expecting 17,000 Syrians to show up seeking refuge this year and next;</p> <p>-ASYLUM: 1,235 Syrian applications from January through June 2012.<sup>119</sup></p>

<sup>114</sup> Gobierno de Espana. (n.d.). *Government condemns massacre in daraya (damascus) 27 august 2012*. Retrieved from [http://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/idiomas/9/gobierno/news/2012/20120827\\_massacre\\_daraya.htm](http://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/idiomas/9/gobierno/news/2012/20120827_massacre_daraya.htm)

<sup>115</sup> Gobierno de Espana. (n.d.). *State secretary for foreign affairs meets with syrian opposition leader, louay hussein*. Retrieved from [http://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/idiomas/9/gobierno/news/2012/20120823\\_foreignaffairs\\_louayhussein.htm](http://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/idiomas/9/gobierno/news/2012/20120823_foreignaffairs_louayhussein.htm)

<sup>116</sup> Agence France Presse. (2012, August 31). *Sweden gives 2.99 mn euros to syria aid effort: minister*. Retrieved from [http://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/sweden-gives-299-mn-](http://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/sweden-gives-299-mn-euros-syria-aid-effort-minister)

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Migrationsverket. (12 August 2012). *Due to the current violence in Syria, many people will be allowed to stay in Sweden*. Retrieved from [http://www.migrationsverket.se/info/5833\\_en.html](http://www.migrationsverket.se/info/5833_en.html).

<sup>119</sup> EUROSTAT (2012, August) and EUROSTAT (2012, October). *Op. cit.*

<p>United Kingdom</p>	<p>-Five areas for action of Foreign &amp; Commonwealth Office (FCO): 1) Helping to create conditions for a political transition; 2) Humanitarian aid;</p> <p>3) Increasing pressure on the regime; 4) Supporting justice for victims human rights violations; 5) Planning assistance to a future Syrian government.</p> <p>-Increasing the pressure on the regime: trained over 60 Syrian activists in documenting human rights violations; provided support including equipment for 100 Syrian citizen journalists to report on events in Syria. Activists who helped investigate the massacre in El-Houleh were trained by UK;<sup>120</sup></p> <p>-Supporting justice: UK’s expert Human Rights Monitoring works to help improve quality of information/evidence gathered by Syrian human rights activists - may be used in future accountability process.</p> <p>-Planning for future Syrian government: FCO officials are working closely with DFID, MOD and the Stabilisation Unit, and also with allies in the Friends of Syria including regional countries, to develop and coordinate plans for assistance.<sup>121</sup></p> <p>-Germany, France, and UK make joint statement for Assad to stand down (13/8/12).<sup>122</sup></p> <p>-France/UK Foreign Ministers call on Syrian officials to defect as soon as possible from Assad regime (30/8/12).<sup>123</sup></p>	<p>€36,491,978</p>	<p>-In Syria, UK support deliver emergency food aid to 80,000 people a month, shelter for 9,000 families, and urgent medical care for at least 50,000 people across Syria and the region.</p> <p>-In neighbouring countries, UK funding will help to provide trauma support and education for 28,000 children, emergency food rations for over 18,000 people, drinking water, sanitation and hygiene for over 33,000 refugees and basic supplies for mothers and babies.</p> <p>-ASYLUM: 410 Syrian applications from January through June 2012.<sup>124</sup></p>
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<sup>120</sup> British Embassy Damascus. (2012, September 3). *Foreign secretary updates parliament on syria*. Retrieved from <http://ukinsyria.fco.gov.uk/en/news/?view=PressS&id=806183482>

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Foreign and Commonwealth Office. (2012, August 18). Op. cit.

<sup>123</sup> United Nations Press Conference. (2012, August 30). Op. cit.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<p><b>NON-EU</b> Switzer.</p>	<p>-Aligned with EU sanctions; -Swiss initiative for referral of Syrian crisis to the International Criminal Court (1/6/12)</p>	<p>€10.7 million (4/9/12)<sup>125</sup></p>	<p>-For the population in Syria: ICR: CHF 1.75m allocated for the 2011 and 2012 Syria Appeals WFP: CHF 1m for emergency food assistance FAO: CHF 792,000 for emergency assistance for poor herder families in Syria. UNHCR: CHF 500,000 for cash assistance to internally displaced people UNICEF Syria: CHF 165,000 earmarked contribution for psycho-social and physical rehabilitation for refugee and displaced children in Syria UNRWA: CHF 1m for cash assistance to Palestinian refugees; -For Syrian refugees in Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey: UNHCR: CHF 1.55m for the assistance to Syrian refugees (including cash assistance), and deployment of two Swiss shelter experts in Lebanon and Iraq for 6 months each ICR: CHF 1m for supporting Syrian refugees in Lebanon WFP: CHF 190,000 for food assistance OCHA: deployment of a Swiss Humanitarian Affairs Officer seconded to OCHA Regional Office in Egypt for 3 months supporting OCHA operations in Syria UNICEF: CHF 500,000 for child protection and psycho-social support for Syrian refugee children in Jordan Direct Action SDC: CHF 290,000 for a SDC feasibility study for cash assistance and quick impact projects to support communities in Jordan and Lebanon hosting Syrian refugees Direct Action SDC: CHF 1.3m for supporting families and communities in Northern Lebanon hosting Syrian Refugees (cash for shelter) Direct Action SDC: CHF 300,000 for the rehabilitation of 8 public schools in the North of Jordan. (4/9/12)<sup>126</sup></p>
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<sup>125</sup> Swissinfo.ch. (2012, September 4). *Swiss to send more support for syrian civilians*. Retrieved from [http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/politics/foreign\\_affairs/Swiss\\_to\\_send\\_more\\_support\\_for\\_Syrian\\_civilians.html?cid=33449014](http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/politics/foreign_affairs/Swiss_to_send_more_support_for_Syrian_civilians.html?cid=33449014)

<sup>126</sup> Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. (2012, September). *Syria crisis factsheet*. Retrieved from [http://www.swiss-cooperation.admin.ch/middleeast/en/Home/News/News\\_Detail?itemID=214781](http://www.swiss-cooperation.admin.ch/middleeast/en/Home/News/News_Detail?itemID=214781)

Norway	Aligned with EU sanctions	€2.95 million (24/2/12) <sup>129</sup>	<p>-No forced returns for Syrian asylum applicants</p> <p>-ASYLUM: during the first six months of 2012, 777 Syrians applied for asylum.<sup>127</sup> 1,265 asylum applications submitted in the period March 2011 – April 2012<sup>128</sup></p> <p>-Most funds channelled through the ICRC and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent/also support local voluntary groups.</p> <p>-Provide support for Syrian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan through the UN and civil society organisations.</p> <p>-Support will also be provided for internally displaced people in Syria who have been driven from their homes.<sup>130</sup></p> <p>-Syrians granted tolerated stay.</p> <p>-ASYLUM: No forced returns to Syria for asylum seekers. 76 Syrian asylum applications in first 5 months 2012.</p>
Russia	Humanitarian situation becoming more complicated due to the unilateral economic sanctions and restrictions imposed by individual countries and regional organisations. <sup>131</sup>	€6.26 million (14/9/12) <sup>132</sup>	<p>-Donated more than 80 tons of humanitarian aid to Syria only though the Ministry of Emergency Situations (MIES): tents, blankets, utensils and light furniture, baby food, food, was primarily received by the Syrian Red Crescent Society and represented the efforts of the Russian Federation</p> <p>-€3.46 million US dollars to the budget of WFP and €1.15 million to support the UN OCHA.<sup>133</sup></p>

<sup>127</sup> Swissinfo.ch. (2012, September 19). *Syrian refugees arrive in switzerland*. Retrieved from [http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/politics/foreign\\_affairs/Syrian\\_refugees\\_arrive\\_in\\_Switzerland.html?cid=33549622](http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/politics/foreign_affairs/Syrian_refugees_arrive_in_Switzerland.html?cid=33549622)

<sup>128</sup> European Migration Network. (n.d.). *Current humanitarian and migration situation in syria*. Retrieved from [http://emn.gov.pl/palm/ese/719/9289/Current\\_humanitarian\\_and\\_migration\\_situation\\_in\\_Syria.html](http://emn.gov.pl/palm/ese/719/9289/Current_humanitarian_and_migration_situation_in_Syria.html)

<sup>129</sup> Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (2012, February 24). Op. cit.

<sup>130</sup> Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (2012, February 24). Op. cit.

<sup>131</sup> Gaydazhieva, S. (2012, September 14). *Russia releases figures on humanitarian aid to syria*. Retrieved from <http://www.neurope.eu/article/russia-releases-figures-humanitarian-aid-syria>

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

United States	<p>Document HR abuses in order to support future transitional justice processes that might be adopted by the Syrian people.<sup>136</sup></p> <p>-Called on Assad to step down: (1/6/12)<sup>137</sup></p> <p>-Training activists: providing communications gear. Created Syrian opposition TV ads and social media, promoting unity and tolerance, are reaching broader audiences as a result of our support.<sup>138</sup></p> <p>-Support opposition: continue to support the opposition, including with nonlethal assistance.<sup>139</sup></p>	\$167 million (9/11/12) <sup>140</sup>	<p>-€1.65 million to the ICRC.<sup>134</sup></p> <p>-Canned food, baby food, sugar and other types of humanitarian aid Sept. 20, from Ramenskoye airfield near Moscow to Damascus, Syria (20/9/12)<sup>135</sup></p> <p>-Over \$100 million for humanitarian activities inside Syria and in neighbouring countries:</p> <p>\$48.5 million to WFP; \$23.1 million to the UNHCR; \$15 million, approximately, to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); \$8 million to ICRC;</p> <p>\$3 million to UNRWA; \$2.75 million to the UNICEF; \$1 million to IFRC; \$500,000 to the IOM; \$500,000 to OCHA; \$300,000 to the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) for support of humanitarian operations. Detailed breakdown of all assistance see footnote.<sup>141</sup></p> <p>-FY 2011- 29 Syrians 29 were resettled through the resettlement program.<sup>142</sup> In FY2012, a total of 26 Syrians resettled were resettled through the program.<sup>143</sup></p>
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<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> Pravda. (2012, September 20). *Russia sends 38 tons of humanitarian aid to damascus*. Retrieved from [http://english.pravda.ru/news/world/20-09-2012/122216-russia\\_humanitarian\\_aid\\_syria-0/](http://english.pravda.ru/news/world/20-09-2012/122216-russia_humanitarian_aid_syria-0/)

<sup>136</sup> State Department. (2012, September 18). *International support for the syria justice and accountability center*. Retrieved from <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2012/09/197868.htm>

<sup>137</sup> State Department. (2012, June 1). *The human rights council's special session on syria*. Retrieved from <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2012/06/191673.htm>

<sup>138</sup> Letter from US Ambassador Rick Barton to the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (State Department). (2012, September 14). Retrieved from <http://www.state.gov/p/io/rm/2012/12/197845.htm>

<sup>139</sup> State Department. (2012, September 8). *Unga 67 and u.s. multilateral priorities*. Retrieved from <http://www.usaid.gov/crisis/syria>

<sup>140</sup> USAID. (2012, November 9). *Usaid syria*. Retrieved from <http://www.usaid.gov/crisis/syria>

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> *Proposed refugee admissions for fiscal year 2013*. (2012). Retrieved from <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/198157.pdf>

			<p>-In March 2012, Temporary Protection Status for those already in the country before March 29 2012 was granted for 18 months.</p> <p>-ASYLUM: 2012 n/a. For FY2011: 74 applications for asylum.<sup>144</sup></p> <p>-In humanitarian aid - including food, medicines and emergency care for the thousands of families and children that have fled across Syria's borders since fighting began</p> <p>-Providing engineering, logistics and child protection services in the refugee camps on Syria's borders. 13/9/12)<sup>146</sup></p> <p>-Australia claims it will resettle 1,000 Syrian refugees or those fleeing from Syria in 2012-13.<sup>147</sup></p> <p>-Of the \$10 million: \$1.5 million in humanitarian assistance to WFP to feed Syrian refugees, including those in Jordan; \$2 million in medical supplies for Syria to enable more responsive and better treatment of Syrians in need of urgent medical care; and \$6.5 million to help meet Jordan's needs</p>
Australia		\$20.5 million (13/9/12) <sup>145</sup>	
Canada	<p>-Document/prosecute HR abuses (9/6/11)<sup>148</sup></p> <p>-Call for Assad to step down (18/8/12)<sup>149</sup></p>	\$10 million (11/8/12) <sup>150</sup>	

(Contd.) \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>143</sup> State Department. (2012, October 31). *Refugee admissions report as of 31 october 2012*. Retrieved from <http://www.wrapsnet.org/Reports/AdmissionsArrivals/tabid/211/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

<sup>144</sup> Department of Justice. (2012, February). *Immigration courts fy2011 asylum statistics*. Retrieved from <http://www.justice.gov/eoir/eoia/FY11AsyStats-Current.pdf>

<sup>145</sup> Ministry for Immigration and Citizenship. (2012, September 13). *Australia to resettle an additional 1000 refugees from syria*. Retrieved from <http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/cb/2012/cb189822.htm>

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada. (2011, June 9). *Canada condemns violence in syria and supports nuclear agency's findings*. Retrieved from <http://www.international.gc.ca/media/aff/news-communications/2011/157.aspx?lang=eng&view=d>

<sup>149</sup> Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada. (2011, August 18). *Minister Baird to reiterate prime minister stephen harper's statement on syria*. Retrieved from <http://www.international.gc.ca/media/aff/advisories-avis/2011/A-060.aspx?lang=eng&view=d>

<sup>150</sup> Canadian International Development Agency. (2012, October 2). *Humanitarian assistance in 2012*. Retrieved from <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/syria>

<p>in responding to the crisis. To international humanitarian assistance efforts in Syria.<sup>151</sup></p> <p>-ASYLUM: between October 2011 and June 2012 , there have been 213 claims for refugee status from Syrian nationals inside Canada, and 320 since January 2011.<sup>152</sup></p>		
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<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Berthiaume, L. ( 27 July 2012). Syrian refugees seek Canadian asylum, support. *Winnipeg Free Press*. <http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/canada/syrian-refugees-seek-canadian-asylum-support-164116296.html>