The Great Exodus
Refugee Crisis
Refugee vs Migrant

- Refugee: Defined by the 1951 Refugee Convention as a person who is owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, social group, or political opinion and is outside the country of his nationality.

- Migrant: Anyone moving from one country to another is considered a migrant unless specifically fleeing war or persecution. They may be seeking better job opportunities or to join relatives.
Definitions

• Internally Displaced Person: Persons who have been forced to leave their home in order to avoid armed conflict, violence, or violations of human rights and who have not crossed international borders.

• Asylum Seeker: Individuals who have sought international protection and whose claims for refugee status have yet to be determined and are awaiting approval.

• Stateless Person: Persons defined under international law as not considered as nationals by any state.

• UNHCR: The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees mandated to protect and assist refugees at the request of governments or the UN.
Refugee Statistics

• Total number of refugees, internally displaced, asylum seekers, and stateless people reached 65.3 million people in 2015, the highest number since World War II.
  • Over 21.3 million refugees.
  • 10 million stateless people.
  • Over 33.3 million internally displaced.
  • Over 50% of these refugees are under the age of 18.

Source: UNHCR Mid-Year Trends 2015
http://www.unhcr.org/56701b969.html
Rise in Refugees

- 10.4 million refugees in 2012.
- By mid-2015 the refugee population had grown to 15.1 million.
- Over the last three and a half years the refugee population has grown by 4.7 million people or +45%.
- Not counting the Syrian refugees, the growth would have only been 500,000 people or +5%.
Where do the refugees come from?

54% of refugees worldwide came from three countries:

- Somalia: 1.1m
- Afghanistan: 2.7m
- Syria: 4.9m
Fig. 2 Where do the world’s refugees come from?

(in millions)

Syrian Arab Rep.
Afghanistan
Somalia
South Sudan
Sudan
Dem. Rep. of Congo
Myanmar
Eritrea
Iraq

mid-2015
end-2014
mid-2014
end-2013

Fig. 3 Major refugee-hosting countries

(in millions)

*Turkey
Pakistan
Lebanon
Iran (Islamic Rep. of)
Ethiopia
Jordan
Kenya
Uganda
Chad
Sudan

mid-2015
end-2014
mid-2014
end-2013

* Refugee figure for Syrians in Turkey is a Government estimate.
Why are the refugees leaving their homes?
1. VIOLENCE

“Five years since the conflict began, more than 450,000 Syrians have been killed in the fighting, including nearly 16,000 children. More than 1 million have been injured and over 12 million Syrians (half the country's prewar population) have been displaced from their homes”
2. COLLAPSED INFRASTRUCTURE

Within Syria, healthcare, education systems, and other infrastructure have been destroyed; the economy is shattered.
3. CHILDREN’S SAFETY

Syrian children — the nation’s hope for a better future — have lost loved ones, suffered injuries, missed years of schooling, and witnessed violence and brutality. Warring parties forcibly recruit children to serve as fighters, human shields, and in support roles.
Rights of the Refugees

International Law:

• UN Refugee Convention of 1951 states that refugees have the right “to seek and be granted asylum in a foreign territory”. The law provides protection and assistance for asylum-seekers and refugees, regardless of their country of origin.

Core Issue: The convention did not define how States determine whether an individual meets the definition of a refugee. Instead, it is left to each State to develop.

• This has resulted in disparities among different States as governments craft asylum laws based on their different resources, national security concerns, and histories with forced migration movements.
From 2015 to the present, which nations have chosen to accept refugees? Which have not?

Top refugee hosting countries

- 56% of the world's 21 million refugees are being hosted by just 10 countries - all in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia.
- 86% of refugees are hosted by developing countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country and refugee population</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Jordan (2.7 million)</td>
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<td>2. Turkey (2.5 million)</td>
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<td>3. Pakistan (1.6 million)</td>
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<td>4. Lebanon (1.5 million)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Iran (979,400)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Ethiopia (736,100)</td>
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<td>7. Kenya (553,900)</td>
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<td>8. Uganda (477,200)</td>
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<td>9. Democratic Republic of Congo (383,100)</td>
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<td>10. Chad (369,500)</td>
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Top hosting countries

- Jordan: 664,100
- Ethiopia: 736,100
- Islamic Republic of Iran: 979,400
- Lebanon: 1.1m
- Pakistan: 1.6m
- Turkey: 2.5m
Europe Bound Refugees

• Many refugees head towards European nations in search of greater economic opportunities, security, and political freedoms.

• The European nations that have accepted the greatest number of refugees include:
  • Germany
  • Sweden
  • France
  • Italy
New Receiving Nations

- Many countries such as Canada have changed their perspectives on accepting refugees. As of March 2016, 26,200 refugees have arrived in Canada and are going to accept an additional 10,000.

- South American countries have also opened their doors to the refugees: Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Chile
Nations that refuse to accept refugees

- Wealthy Middle-Eastern nations such as Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have refused to formally accept Syrian Refugees.

- Thus far, America has resettled 14,333 Syrian refugees. However, the Trump administration plans to reduce the number of refugees admitted to the US in 2017 from 110,000 to 50,000.

- European nations that have completely closed their borders to the refugees include: Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania, Denmark
  - The EU may be proposing fines to nations that do not accept refugees.
What are the refugees’ most immediate needs as they enter a receiving country?

What are their long-term needs?
Immediate Needs

Water, food, medical care, and housing are the four immediate needs of refugees

- German officials have put the immediate tab of caring for refugees at nearly $14,000 per head.
- Last year, Germany spent $2.7 billion on housing, feeding, and clothing over 203,000 migrants; the cost of accepting as many as 800,000 migrants this year is estimated to rise to $11 billion.
Many nations are quick to accommodate the Syrian refugees coming in.

• Germany is currently training some refugees to work as opticians, electricians, mechanics, metal workers, and floor fitters.
• Canada is providing healthcare, social security, and a pathway to citizenship for refugees.
• Some teachers in Sweden are offering refugees Swedish language lessons.
What are the long-term challenges refugees face with resettlement?
1. LEARNING A NEW LANGUAGE

When moving to a new country, a refugee’s first complication can come in understanding the language of the new nation they seek refuge in. In order to obtain help and live more comfortably refugees seek to learn the new language.
One of the biggest obstacles refugees and immigrant parents report is raising their children in a new, unfamiliar culture. Parents often find that their children quickly assimilate which may be at odds with their own culture.
Additionally, refugees and immigrants are easy victims for discrimination and exploitation in the workplace. Some employers recognize the sense of urgency and desperation among these groups to keep their jobs, so they will have them take the less desirable and even dangerous roles.
Each year, finding affordable and adequate housing is a key concern of refugee communities.

- Many nations use public areas--auditoriums, military barracks, tent centers in open space etc. to meet the needs of new refugees.

More permanent housing is an even greater challenge for refugees. They lack knowledge of the rental history in the receiving nation and language barriers arise when families are competing for a limited number of affordable rental properties.
Many refugees face a variety of cultural barriers including differences in religion, education, political orientation, and daily habits.

- In Germany, anti-Islam protesters (also known as Pegida) rally against Germany’s acceptance of refugees.
- Because of Japan’s ethnonationalist society, there are policies in place that discriminate against foreigners.
Refugees will avoid seeing the doctor or reaching out for services like legal guidance when they’re badly needed.

- Many times, refugees and have been exposed to violence, rape, even torture- but they may not know how to seek help.

- Accessing mental health issues is especially problematic. Furthermore, they can be taboo in many cultures, creating an additional barrier for those in need.
Obtaining a driver’s license is extremely difficult for a variety of reasons. For those who don’t speak the native language, a translator is needed and they aren’t easy to come by. Also, the driver must be literate in order to pass the written exam.
What if you were a refugee?

People of nowhere: https://vimeo.com/144857118