

# THE PERSPECTIVE OF REFUGEES



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## BEFORE WE BEGIN, HERE ARE TWO POEMS I WROTE ABOUT REFUGEES:

### 1) Refugee thoughts

All I want  
Is to live,  
All I ask for is  
to see my family

All I wanted to see  
Is the world in peace  
All I wanted to be  
Is anything but a refugee

All I wanted to tell  
Is that my soul I won't  
sell  
But well,  
Life's not fair

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I abandoned it all,  
Took my wife and my son  
Ran for days and months  
And we stayed in junkyards  
To be treated like that

Then sailed on a boat  
With 200 more  
And it tilted and it sank  
And to Milos we swam  
To be treated like that.

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And we reached a city  
With no home or medicine  
In this brand new world  
Helpless and alone.

In a box now we live  
Starving and thirsting  
Begging down in the streets  
Of the Greek Metropolis.

## 2)A Journey to remember

Fear

War

Loss

Should I abandon It all for this?

Gunshots

Screams

Pain

There's a long journey ahead. I should get going.

Raids

Bombardments

Torture

I will be out of here by night. They won't get me.

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Hunger

Thirst

Malady

I should seek shelter and medicine.

Tiredness

Anger

Poverty

I gave all of my belongings to enter this boat. I  
hope it doesn't sink.

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Hate

Deprivation

Ignorance

Is that all I get for my 3000 mile journey?

Where I Almost died in a war

Where I Almost starved to death

Where I Almost got killed by illness

Where I Almost sank in the Mediterranean

Where I Almost gave up on my entire life?

Schools

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For

Refugees

Those 3 words did I only hear and I knew it:

That was my chance. My chance to be someone again.

Hope

Life

Trust

That's what I feel every night I go to sleep.

Now I am part of something. Now my life has a point.

Hope

Life

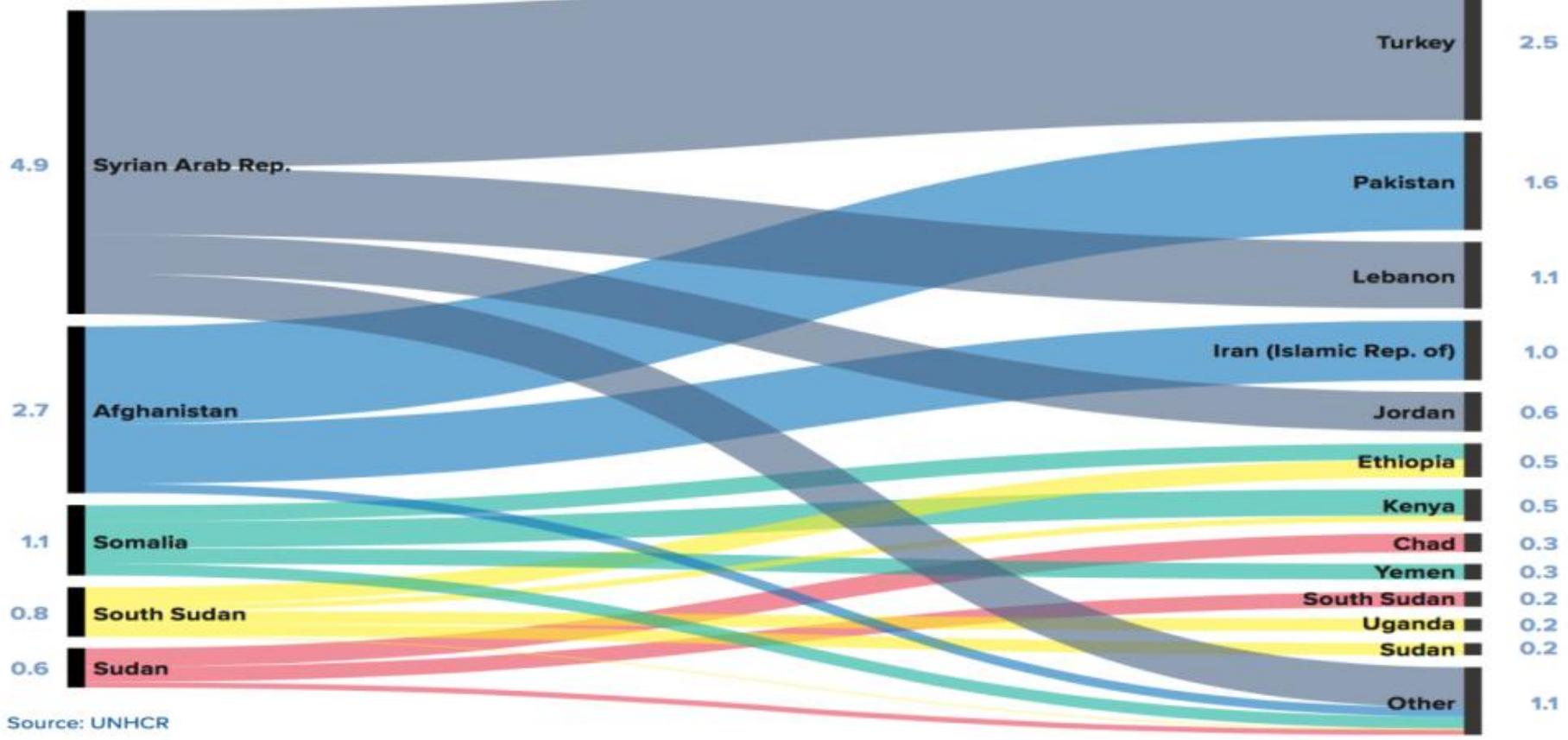
Trust

...

in millions

### Major Asylum Countries of Refugees

### Major Source Countries of Refugees



Source: UNHCR

Source: UNHCR

# MOST PEOPLE SAY THAT THIS



17 REFUGEES ARRESTED, TENSION  
CONTINUES AT MANDAPAM CAMP

**IS WHAT REFUGEES  
ARE**

OR ARE THEY?

TELL ME,



**IS THIS**



**WHAT YOU THOUGHT**



**REFUGEES ARE?**

BUT YOU PROBABLY STILL HAVEN'T  
UNDERSTOOD THE REASON WHY I'M  
TALKING ABOUT THIS



THIS IS AHMED

Ahmed survived the disaster, but he can't find a reason for his life any more. He lost eight members of his family at sea, when on October 11, 2013 their boat sank shortly after it has left Libya and just over hundred kilometers away from the Maltese coast with hundreds of Syrian refugees on board. Three dozen people died in the tragedy.

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**THIS IS JIHAN**

Nine months ago, she fled Damascus with her husband, Ashraf, 35, who is also losing his sight. Together with their two sons, they made their way to Turkey, boarding a boat with 40 others and setting out on the Mediterranean Sea. They hoped the journey would take eight hours. There was no guarantee they would make it alive.

After a treacherous voyage that lasted 45 hours, the family finally arrived at a Greek island in the Aegean Sea, called Milos – miles off course. Without support or assistance, they had to find their own way to Athens. The police detained them for four days upon their arrival. They were cautioned to stay out of Athens, as well as three other Greek cities, leaving them stranded.

“We came here for a better life and to find people who might better understand our situation,” she says. “I am so upset when I see how little they do [understand].”



**HOSEIN WITH HIS MOTHER FATME (52) AND HIS SISTER SHOKOUFEH (23), WHEN NO ONE COULD PREDICT WHAT WAS GOING TO FOLLOW. ZEY TIN BURNU, ISTANBUL, JUNE 2014, TAKEN BY A PASSER-BY.**

**“I am sure my mother and sister are alive”**

**Hosein is an Afghan Civil Engineer student. He was born in Iran and along with his mother and sister, they sailed off from the Turkish coast heading for Samos Island in Greece. Their boat sunk at high seas on 11 July 2014 and his mother and sister are missing. Hosein and his three other sisters, two in France and one in Germany, have left no stone unturned in trying desperately to find a clue that would lead them to their beloved ones.”**

**BUT THESE AREN'T THE ONLY ONES**

# Marwan, south Latakia

When we reached a makeshift hospital, one and half hours later, I lost consciousness. Doctors tended to my wounds and removed a piece of shrapnel from my left eye. There was nothing more they could do there, they said.

But I refused to give up. Along with two good friends, we entered Turkey and I was hospitalized in Antakya. I was willing to travel anywhere I could receive treatment for my eye and a prosthetic limb.

We were determined to cross into Greece, but we lacked passports and money to pay the smugglers. Then we took a big decision. We would swim to the island of Kastellorizo.

“My dream is to be able to start a new life in safety, to work, to get married, to live.”

# Hussein

“My name is Hussein. Before the war in Syria, I had a normal life, living with my family. I was a university student and had many friends. My country and my life changed radically when the war broke out. I watched relatives and friends leave Syria while I and many others stayed behind, fearing for our lives every day. I didn’t want to leave my country. I heard stories about those who fled and how difficult their journey to Europe was. They didn’t know what to expect in other countries and how people would treat them. These thoughts scared me. I had heard stories about other Syrians who got lost or risked their life at sea on their way to find refuge in Europe. Women, children, and men on an overcrowded unseaworthy boat – on a journey of hope with an unknown destination and uncertain future.”

‘Be the change you want to see in the world’  
Mahatma Gandhi

# Sources:

- ❖ <http://stories.unhcr.org/hoseins-story-greece-p13163.html>
- ❖ <http://stories.unhcr.org/jihans-story-greece-p60087.html>
- ❖ <http://stories.unhcr.org/marwans-story-greece-p5395.html>
- ❖ <http://stories.unhcr.org/husseins-story-greece-p4885.html>
- ❖ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=avM8IICWq60>
- ❖ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TPe0xdTARIQ>
- ❖ + <http://lyricstranslate.com/en/-clandestine.html> (Lyrics)