



# ECOFIN STUDY GUIDE

**COMMITTEE-** *Economic and Financial Committee (Ecofin)*

**AGENDA-** *Analysing and evaluating the socio-economic consequences of the refugee crisis*

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE-**

The Economic and Financial Committee, also known as ECOFIN is the second of the six committees of the United Nations General Assembly. It was formed with the rest of the General Assembly when the UN was established after the Second World War in 1945. The committee first met in London in January 1946. Since then, the committee meets once every year in October for a 4 to 5-week session. Its chief roles include addressing issues related to economic growth and development with specific regard to macroeconomic policy on international trade and external debt sustainability, securing financing for sustainable development, poverty eradication and globalization and interdependence.

## **MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS-**

ECOFIN has facilitated many developing countries with financial assistance through times of crisis and development in order to increase growth and prosperity. Through its foreign aid programs, ECOFIN has set goals in lowering poverty and decreasing economic strain on countries facing large amounts of debt or countries that are in need of financial reconstructing.

Most recently, ECOFIN has taken a definitive stance on one of the key issues in the Middle East: Israel and Palestine. ECOFIN has demanded that Israel end its occupation of Arab lands in Syria and cease its violation of human rights laws in accordance with the Palestinian people due to the evident economic impact that the political, military, and social situation in the area has on the people affected by this crisis.

# ECOFIN STUDY GUIDE

## INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC-

A refugee is someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. Most likely, they cannot return home or are afraid to do so. War and ethnic, tribal and religious violence are leading causes of refugees fleeing their countries.

Over the past few years, the number of refugees has sky rocketed. By the end of 2019, 79.5 million individuals were forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of conflict, human rights violations, violence or persecution. That is an increase of nearly 9 million people over the previous year, and the world's forcibly displaced population remained at a record high. This includes:

- 45.7 million internally displaced people;
- 26.0 million refugees in the world—the highest ever seen;
- and
- 4.2 million asylum-seekers.

New displacement remains at a sky-high. One person becomes displaced every 3 seconds –which is considerably less than the time it takes to read this sentence. That's about 20 people who are newly displaced every minute. In 2019, there were over 30,000 new displacements each day.

*The most forced displacements have been from these countries-*

### **1. Syria — 6.7 million refugees and asylum seekers**

Most Syrians who are refugees because of the Syrian civil war remain in the Middle East. Turkey hosts 3.6 million, the largest number of refugees hosted by any country in the world. Syrian refugees are also in Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq. During 2018, 1.4 million refugees returned home to Syria. Returnees face a daunting situation, including lack of infrastructure and services and danger from explosive devices. About 6.2 million Syrians remain displaced inside the country.

### **2. Venezuela — 4.5 million refugees, asylum seekers, and people displaced abroad**

Years of economic and political instability in Venezuela caused millions of Venezuelans to leave the country between 2014 and the end of 2019. They migrate to seek food, work, and a better life, most of them to nearby countries. Many Venezuelans on the move lack legal status and need international protection and aid.

## **ECOFIN STUDY GUIDE**

### **3. Afghanistan — 2.7 million refugees**

Nearly 2.7 million people from Afghanistan are existing as refugees, representing the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest refugee population in the world. Pakistan hosts about 1.4 million, including some 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup>-generation Afghan refugees who have never subsisted in their home country. Some of them have been coerced to return home from neighbouring countries, however increased violence in Afghanistan since 2015 has resulted in a new surge of asylum seekers. Over 4 million Afghans are displaced within the country due to drought, conflict, and other natural disasters.

### **4. South Sudan — 2.3 million refugees**

The protracted conflict in South Sudan is in its eighth year. About 1.5 million people have been displaced within the country, in addition to 2.3 million who fled to neighbouring countries. An estimated 80% of the refugees are women and children. And about 50,000 of the children are orphaned or unaccompanied.

### **5. Myanmar – 1.1 million refugees**

Nearly 1.1 million people who identify as members of the Rohingya ethnic group have fled their homes in western Myanmar's Rakhine state. Around 700,000 have been displaced to Bangladesh since August 2017. Aid providing agencies are unable to satisfactorily serve people who are dependent on aid, including those in local communities.

### **6. Somalia — 948,000 refugees and asylum seekers**

Most Somali refugees have settled in Kenya, Ethiopia, or Yemen. Some have lived in massive refugee camps for years. About 85,000 have returned to the country since 2015, largely due to the Kenyan government's intent to eventually close Dadaab, which at one time was the world's largest refugee camp. But the widespread humanitarian need continues as a result of conflict and recurring and severe drought inside Somalia. Within Somalia, an estimated 2.6 million people are displaced because of insecurity.

### **7. Democratic Republic of the Congo — 900,000 refugees and asylum seekers**

Many people from the DRC have fled conflict and food insecurity. About 5 million are internally displaced, and more than 900,000 people live in neighbouring countries as refugees and asylum seekers. Violence also hampered containment of an Ebola outbreak that started in May 2018.

## ECOFIN STUDY GUIDE



As COVID-19 has reached the DRC, it has become an added burden to a health system already stretched to the breaking point by Ebola infections and a measles outbreak starting in early 2019 that sickened more than 300,000 people and killed at least 6,000.

### ***CAUSES OF FORCED DISPLACEMENT-***

Predominant causes of migration and flight range from economic, political and social asymmetries to wars over destabilized regions. They make people search for a way for survival and for secure living conditions. Although the majority (86 percent) seek sanctuary in neighbouring countries, many families and individuals take dangerous risks to find secure destinations in far-away countries. The pathways to security and better living conditions coerce thousands of people to travel either in decrepit boats across the Mediterranean Sea, as human cargo in congested and stifling trucks or as stowaways on train routes such as the infamous “La Bestia”, carrying Central Americans from southern to northern Mexico. In recent years the industrialized countries of Europe and North America have pursued politics of compartmentalization (e.g. the Dublin Regulations stipulating that asylum seekers can only apply for asylum in the first EU member state they enter) and of installing restricted border regimes, resulting in a lethal refugee smuggling business. Lately, these policies have been partially revised but no articulate framework

has been established so far. The numerous reasons why people are coerced to migrate and take flight are multiple and relate to a multifaceted system of interrelated economic, institutional, social, environmental, cultural and political processes and causalities. Corresponding to the International Association for the Study of Forced Migration, climate change and environmental degradation are important causes of migration. People leave their homes temporarily or permanently to escape from environmental disturbance, often caused by climate change, pollution, land use changes, and over-exploitation of natural resources that can cause natural disasters like droughts, floods, hurricanes, etc. Refugees along with internally displaced people who flee for environmental reasons are frequently and erroneously identified as economic refugees – which is an argument used in the host countries to de-legitimize their reasons for taking flight. Moreover, people moving due to hunger and climate change do not fall under the 1951 Refugee Convention. Nevertheless, they should be sheltered in the same way as marginalized



## ECOFIN STUDY GUIDE



groups belonging to a certain religion, race, nationality, or political or social group. This point was likewise emphasized in the context of the lately ratified Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), wherein a target under goal 10 (reduce inequality) states: “Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of

people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies”. Furthermore, the world community is appealed to take decisive and urgent action to combat climate change (SDG 13) and to protect the environment (SDG 15).

### MIGRANT ACCEPTANCE INDEX, BY REGION

REGION	MIGRANT ACCEPTANCE INDEX
OCEANIA	8.02
NORTHERN AMERICA	7.27
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA	6.47
GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL	6.11
EUROPEAN UNION	5.92
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN	5.89
EAST ASIA	5.29
NON-EU EUROPE	4.89
SOUTH ASIA	4.88
NORTHERN AFRICA	4.59
SOUTHEAST ASIA	4.48
MIDDLE EAST	3.70
COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES	3.26
NOTE: BASED ON 138 COUNTRIES SURVEYED IN 2016; TOP POSSIBLE SCORE IS 9.0	
GALLUP WORLD POLL	

## ECOFIN STUDY GUIDE

(See <https://news.gallup.com/poll/216377/new-index-shows-least-accepting-countries-migrants.aspx> for your delegation's exact score)

### **INTERNATIONAL TREATIES & LEGISLATURE-**

#### **THE 1951 REFUGEE CONVENTION-**

The 1951 Refugee Convention is the predominant key legal instrument that forms the premise of our work. Ratified by 145 State parties, it defines the term 'refugee' and stipulates the rights of the displaced, also as the legal obligations of States to safeguard them.

The main principle is non-refoulement, which stipulates that a refugee shouldn't be returned to a state where they face serious threats to their life or freedom. Currently this is considered a rule of customary international law.

UNHCR functions as the 'guardian' of the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol. According to the legislation, States are expected to cooperate with us in ensuring that the rights of refugees are respected and guarded.

#### **1967 PROTOCOL RELATING TO THE STATUS OF REFUGEES-**

The 1967 Protocol regarding the Status of Refugees is an international treaty. It is to be read alongside the 1951 Convention concerning the Status of Refugees (known also as Refugee Convention).

The Refugee Convention was drafted during the aftermath of World War II, which saw many millions of people displaced across Europe. It was applicable only to those people who had been displaced as a consequence of events occurring before 1 January 1951. When ratifying (becoming a party to) the Convention, countries could opt to restrict its application even further so that it applied only to refugees displaced by events within Europe before 1 January 1951.

After 1951, new refugee situations arose, and these new refugees didn't fall within the scope of the Refugee Convention. This protection gap nudged governments to form the 1967 Protocol, as they felt it 'necessary that equal status should be enjoyed by all refugees who have been covered by the definition in the Convention, regardless of the dateline of 1 January 1951' (Protocol Preamble).

#### **LEGAL PROTECTION-**

**(To fully understand the legal aspect, we urge you to read-**

**<https://ijrcenter.org/refugee-law/>**)

*International and regional instruments relating to refugees include:*

**[1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees](#)**

**[1967 Optional Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees](#)**

## ECOFIN STUDY GUIDE

[Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (art. 14)  
[American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man](#) (art. 27)  
[American Convention on Human Rights](#) (art. 22)  
[Cartagena Declaration on Refugees, Colloquium on the International Protection of Refugees in Central America, Mexico and Panama](#) (Cartagena Declaration)  
[African \[Banjul\] Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights](#) (art. 12)  
[OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of the Refugee Problem in Africa](#)  
[Arab Charter on Human Rights](#) (art. 28)  
[Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam](#) (art. 12)  
[European Convention on Human Rights](#) (arts. 2, 3, and 5)  
[Council Regulation EC No 343/2003 of 18 February 2003 establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an asylum application lodged in one of the Member States by a third country national](#)  
[Council Directive 2004/83/EC of 29 April 2004 on minimum standards for the qualification and status of third country nationals or stateless persons as refugees or as persons who otherwise need international protection and the content of the protection granted](#)  
[Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment](#) (art. 3)  
[African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa](#)  
[Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) (art. 22)



## ***ECONOMIC RAMIFICATIONS OF ACCEPTING REFUGEES-***

### ***POSITIVE ECONOMIC IMPACTS-***

Refugees can often bring positive economic impacts to the countries that receive them. The existing literature discusses a number of ways in which this can occur, five of which are discussed below. First, provisions designed and implemented explicitly for refugees can often lead to broader utilization by the host country's population. In Uganda, which saw an influx of refugees from Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the late 1990s and early 2000s, this can be seen in the education sector. Specifically, schools built explicitly for refugee children have served local students—who might not otherwise go to school at all—as well. The presence of refugees ensures enrolment stability, thereby helping to keep the schools open and functioning for all children; this in turn encourages continued investment and can improve the educational infrastructure of the country and boost long-term economic productivity. Aside from educational institutions, governments and international aid organizations may, because of the crisis, often invest in other infrastructure developments (such as medical clinics, housing developments, and roads to access refugee camps) that can be maintained and used for the population at large when the refugee crisis subsides. These temporary structures—originally built to support refugees—can persist beyond the crisis and bolster the host country's infrastructure and development prospects. In this sense, these short-term negative economic shocks that refugees provide to the system can give way to a longer-term positive economic

outcome. Second, it is also important to consider the demographics of the refugees themselves. Many of the factors that drive refugee crises—especially war or terrorism—are relatively indiscriminate to class. Because of this, refugees can often come from skilled and educated backgrounds. In South Africa in the early 2000s, for example, only 3 percent of refugees were unemployed prior to fleeing their home versus 24 percent once they arrived in South Africa; it would not have been unheard of for someone who was a lawyer or engineer in their home country to be forced into homelessness in South Africa. Similarly, in the 1990s, Jewish refugees from the Soviet Union who settled in the United States were highly skilled and often more educated than Americans, leading to quick economic integration, high labour force participation rates, and high average incomes. More recently, this phenomenon can be seen in Canada, where 77 percent of refugees arrive with a university or vocational degree. When examining the current refugee crisis, the demographics of the refugees continues to be an important determinant in the ultimate economic impact that they will have. Due to the contemporary nature of the crisis, data is scarce on the skill and education level of refugees. However, with Syrian refugees in Europe, researchers have found that the proportion of refugees with higher education was comparable to the local population (21 percent vs. 23 percent). Given that refugees are often skilled and underemployed, they may—if given the opportunity via proactive policy—possess



## ECOFIN STUDY GUIDE



the capacity to boost their host nation's economic output. Intuitively, as skilled and educated workers, they may also integrate more easily into the formal labour markets of more developed economies. However, a limiting factor is the transferability of qualifications that often necessarily come with skilled occupations; licenses, certifications, and other credentials recognized by the refugees' nation of origin may not be recognized by the host nation. This process, particularly in highly developed countries such as the United States, can be a time-consuming and expensive proposition. In the US, the result has been underemployment for roughly half of the skilled refugee populous; naturally, when scientists are driving taxicabs and doctors are working in restaurant kitchens as a result of lacking proper certification, the potential economic boon they could provide to the host nation is blunted. Another demographic factor to consider is the age of refugees. In this sense, the situation of the European Union with respect to the current refugee crisis provides an illustrative snapshot of a situation in which refugees have the potential to be an enormous economic asset. Eurostat estimates that 81 percent of refugees seeking asylum in the EU in 2015 were younger than 35 and 55 percent were between the ages of 18 and 34. To Europe, these comparatively younger refugees could help alleviate an increasingly bleak demographic crisis. Nations in Eastern, Southern, and Central Europe are facing a precipitous population shrinkage, lower fertility, and aging citizens. For example, Germany—a country often at the centre of discussions regarding refugees—is expected to lose 20 million citizens and have one third of its population older than 65 by 2060. An aging population threatens to weaken economic activity through,

among other things, a smaller labour force; the EU countries need only to look to present-day Japan for evidence. Additionally, pensioners and other dependents of social programs rely on a steady base of workers paying into and supporting the program. For countries—whether in the EU or not—who face these kinds of daunting demographic issues or social program shortfalls, refugees may represent a significant economic opportunity. Third, labor market disruptions, although often viewed as a negative, may be positive. The oft-cited view that refugees will drain the economy by taking jobs that would've otherwise been taken by locals may be driven more by rhetoric than fact. In reality, refugees often take jobs that native citizens are unwilling to take, such as in construction or low-wage agriculture. For example, researchers in southern Turkey found that 40-100 percent of Syrians who lost their jobs blamed their outcome on the influx of Syrian refugees to the region. However, it is noted that the perception of many Turkish business leaders was that "Syrian refugees are not stealing jobs from the locals; rather, they are filling needed positions for unskilled labour" that the local Turks were not. Further, refugees do not necessarily concentrate in and compete for one specific type of job; rather, they pursue a multitude of diversified employment opportunities, and competition is therefore diffused. However, when refugees do drive out competition for lower-skilled jobs, it can push natives (particularly younger and more inexperienced workers), by necessity, into increasingly specialized jobs and lead to long-run wage increases for natives on average. Essentially, the authors find that the increased competition doesn't hang native workers out to dry, but rather forces them to develop a set of complementary—

## ECOFIN STUDY GUIDE



and usually higher skilled— contributions to the labour force. Further, the authors found that these wage increases and movement toward more skilled labour for natives was not accompanied by an increase in unemployment for these low-skilled native workers. Despite these findings, conventional wisdom suggests that, invariably, some lower skilled workers will see drastically dampened wages. However, a study by the Bank of England and Oxford University found that a 10 percent rise in immigrants led to only a 2 percent fall in wages. It is worth noting, however, that this study looked at immigrants as a general population rather than refugees specifically. Of course, the ease with which labour market integration occurs has a significant effect on the economic consequences for a country and its workforce. For example, the IMF estimates that successful labour market integration for current refugees in Europe

could boost EU GDP by 0.5 percent and GDP in the most heavily impacted host countries (e.g. Germany) by up to 1.1 percent. What constitutes “successful” integration is another question, one which can be driven by policy decisions and which this paper will discuss in further detail in later sections. Fourth, refugees can boost growth by serving as productive consumers and producers in their host country. From a consumer perspective, refugees possess enormous purchasing power due to their sheer volume. Consequently, many local producers see refugees as a significant new consumer market for their products. Tanzania, for example, has seen many of its local farmers “export” their food surpluses to the considerable number of refugees from Rwanda and Burundi that the country hosts. Specifically, the influx of refugees from Rwanda and Burundi in the late 1990s caused food demand and prices to increase, thus benefiting local farmers.

### **NEGATIVE ECONOMIC IMPACTS-**

Refugee crises may also bring negative economic consequences. Although this view is commonly heard in political punditry, existing academic literature has also identified many mechanisms in which these consequences occur, three of which are discussed below. Firstly, refugees can put pressure on the services systems of host countries. These strains occur in the task of processing and receiving refugees as well as integrating them into the host country. Examples of expenses include housing, healthcare, education, food, water, and utilities. Understandably, the quality of a specific service may go down as it becomes strained to accommodate more people. For example, in Turkey, increases in Syrian refugees have been associated with declines in quality of education and healthcare services. Similarly, in Europe, the IMF

estimates that refugees will cost EU countries nearly 0.1 percent of GDP on average. The heavy amount of literature (on the 1990s Balkan crisis, for example) that discusses “burden-sharing”—the cooperative process of one state taking responsibility for refugees that would usually fall under the purview of a different, but currently resource-strained, state—also suggests that this public service strain is a serious and relevant concern. Similarly, in today’s crisis, those countries facing the largest strain 17 from refugees (for example, Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon) have called upon the international community for more support and

## ECOFIN STUDY GUIDE



diffusion of financial responsibility. And while this paper earlier highlighted that some public expenditures may strengthen the long-term infrastructure of a country, this does not come without the short-term cost, namely increased taxation to pay for the project as well as the opportunity cost of foregoing other potential investment opportunities. Second, and related to strained services, is the issue of overcrowding in the host nation. When hundreds of thousands of refugees arrive in a concentrated area, disease can quickly break out. The UN has reported that overcrowding has turned refugee camps—in South Sudan, for example—from a welcoming refuge to a squalid encampment teeming with outbreaks of Hepatitis, cholera, malaria, and jaundice. This has immediate negative economic effects, but can also have long-term economic effects by negatively impacting maternal and early childhood health. In line with this idea of a lack of physical space, refugees may also crowd out natives in local economic markets—from food to housing—and distort prices. Turkey, for example, has seen exponential increases in rental prices for housing as a consequence of the refugee crisis. In some cases, unscrupulous—but opportunistic—landlords have kicked out lower income Turkish tenants in favour of Syrians, many of which may have a higher willingness and capacity to pay. Additionally, while the aforementioned study of refugees

from Rwanda and Burundi in Tanzania showed that an increase in food prices benefitted local producers, it hurt local net-consumers of food, often requiring them to rely heavily on food aid from organizations such as the UN World Food Programme. Further, overcrowding can lead to environmental degradation, which has become a serious concern in areas faced with a large influx of refugees. The UNHCR concedes that refugee-affected areas may face increased issues of “deforestation, soil erosion, pollution, and depletion of water resources”. Jayna Smith notes that these environmental consequences also have spill over effects, stating that “In a refugee situation, excessive damage to the environment not only causes deterioration of refugees' welfare but also leads to competition with local communities over scarce resources”. This idea of competition can lead to a toxic “us against them” mentality, which is the kind of social strife that the next paragraph of this paper seeks to address. A third concerning insinuation for refugee crises is the unsettling negative economic impact that can emerge as a result of societal discord and potential civil skirmishes. On a greater level, refugees may increase the probability for war and internal conflict in the host nation. For example, in the Horn of Africa, famine-driven refugee crises have often led to conflicting tribal and ethnic groups confined to a small geographic area. On a smaller scale



## ECOFIN STUDY GUIDE

than all-out war, refugees can create social tensions, especially in cases where the refugees have distinct religious, political, or ethnic identities from the citizens of the host country. This has been seen most recently in Sweden—a fairly homogeneous nation—through the torching of refugee shelters. Aside from the refugee- native dynamic, societal strife grows between factions of the native population over how to deal with the refugees. This can most recently be seen in the case of the European Union, where countries like Sweden and Germany have adhered to more of an open-door policy, while some, like Hungary, have completely closed off their borders. This has resulted in a lack of burden-sharing that has frustrated the more open countries. In the process, these

countries have violated the multilateral Schengen Agreement for a “borderless” Europe, potentially undermining the very credibility of the European Union as a unified institution. As a perennially divisive issue, refugee crises are liable to cause this kind of social strife no matter where they occur. Even in countries where the refugees have roughly similar (vis-à-vis the above Sweden example) identities to the citizens of the host country, resentment, and sometimes even violence, may still surface among the natives. For example, Peshawar, a Pakistani city located near the border with Afghanistan, is home to thousands of Afghan refugees. Fleeing the Soviets, the Taliban, and the American war, these refugees have settled in nearby Pakistan.

### **SUMMARY-**

#### **On the positive side, refugees can be a godsend to the host country by:**

Spurring long-term investment  
Filling needed demographic gaps  
Integrating effectively into the labour market  
Becoming productive economic consumers and producers and  
By increasing bilateral trade with the country of origin.

#### **On the negative side, refugees can be a problem to the host country by:**

Straining public and private services  
Causing physical and economic overcrowding  
Increasing societal strife and the potential for civil conflict

### **SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF ACCEPTING REFUGEES-**

Migration may have important effects on the cultures and societies. Migration also has effects on the cultures of both the places that migrants leave and those in which they re-settle. These effects vary with different types of migration and the lengths of time involved.

**Social Stereotypes, Prejudice, Discrimination & Self-Fulfilling Prophecies -**

Where groups do not understand very much of each other's world views and lifestyles, there is typically,

- A greater dependence on social stereotypes (that is generalised views of others based on a very limited personal contact and very few observations),





## ECOFIN STUDY GUIDE

- Higher levels of prejudice (that is a tendency to pre-judge people before there is any meaningful, personal contact with them) against the migrants. These pre-judgements are often based on social stereotypes rather than actual personal experience,
- higher probability of ethnic discrimination (that is where a person's beliefs about a migrant group influence their behaviour toward that group and lead them to treat members of that group differently from others). While this discrimination occasionally leads to more favourable treatment of members it usually results in less favourable treatment.
- Social stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination often combine to produce 'self-fulfilling prophecies', which seem to 'confirm' social stereotypes and to justify Prejudice and discrimination may be illegal in the receiving society but it can and does still occur informally because some people,
  - do not know that they been discriminated against,
  - cannot prove conclusively that they have been discriminated against,
  - do not know how to complain about discrimination against them,
  - do not want to complain because they fear that this will cause them further trouble for them or for their families.

Some migrants are more vulnerable than others to prejudice and discrimination. Those migrants who are in a country legally can openly claim and pursue all of the rights of citizens or permanent residents. They can seek assistance from lawyers, government departments and trade unions to pursue those people or companies whom they believe have discriminated against them in any way. They can pursue their rights without fear of being removed from the country and losing access to income that they need to support their families.

Those migrants who are in a country illegally are much more vulnerable to discrimination and are much more likely to be denied legal and human rights. If they pursue their rights, they risk being identified and removed from the country and losing the income they need to support families. Therefore, they are forced to accept some forms of discrimination every day. For instance,

- They cannot move around freely for fear of being stopped, identified and removed by authorities,
- They may be reluctant to seek health care in public hospitals where they believe they may be identified and often suffer poor health as a consequence.
- They may be unwilling to start and hold bank accounts because they have to provide addresses and other personal information.
- They may be unwilling seek legitimate employment because they risk being identified and removed from the country. Instead they may be forced to spend much time at home, delay health treatment and to seek 'informal' employment where they are paid low wages, work in unhealthy or dangerous conditions and are threatened with 'exposure' if they complain about either their wages or conditions of work. The record of discrimination against illegal migrants is bad in most countries.



## ***COUNTRY STANCE-***

1. **USA** - in 2019, 31,250 refugees were resettled in the United States. Since 1975, the U.S. has welcomed more than three million refugees from all over the world, and these refugees have built new lives for their families in all 50 states. Until recently, the United States offered refuge each year to more people than all other nations combined. But the Trump administration has drastically reduced the maximum number of refugees that can enter the United States. Moreover, the United States government has imposed new security vetting procedures on refugees before they can be admitted into the country, which has greatly lengthened waiting times and left many refugees in dangerous situations for prolonged periods. In 2017, for the first time in modern history, the United States settled fewer refugees than the rest of the world.
2. **China** - The People's Republic of China (China) is well-known for being a major source of refugees. China's other roles in the international refugee protection regime have long been overlooked or forgotten. Many people would be surprised to know that China admitted and locally settled more than 250,000 Vietnamese refugees from 1978 to 1982, or that China was one of the first Asian States to become a party to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (Refugee Convention) and its 1967 Protocol (collectively the Refugee Convention and Protocol), having acceded to both instruments in 1982. More recently, as China's economic strength and political influence continue to grow, it is also emerging as a transit and destination country for refugees. In the past 20 years, China experienced at least four mass influxes of displaced foreigners from neighbouring countries, namely the continuous inflow of North Korean escapees since the mid-1990s, the influxes of the ethnic Kokangs from Myanmar in August 2009 and then from February 2015 to present, and the ongoing arrivals of the ethnic Kachins from Myanmar since June 2011. Although China has remained on the margin of global refugee policymaking, it is one of the countries that are most potentially influential to the global refugee regime.
3. **Syria** - Since the Syrian civil war officially began March 15, 2011, families have suffered under brutal conflict that has killed hundreds of thousands of people, torn the nation apart, and set back the standard of living by decades. Now in its 10th year, the Syrian refugee crisis is the largest refugee and displacement crisis of our time. About 5.6 million Syrians are refugees, and another 6.2 million people are displaced within Syria. Nearly 12 million people in Syria need humanitarian assistance. At least half of the people affected by the Syrian refugee crisis are children. Healthcare centers and hospitals, schools, utilities, and water and sanitation systems are damaged or destroyed. Historic landmarks and once-busy marketplaces have been reduced to rubble. War broke the social and business ties that bound neighbours to their community. The civil war has become a sectarian conflict, with religious groups opposing each other, which affects the whole region and is heavily



## ECOFIN STUDY GUIDE

influenced by international interventions. Syrians are leaving their homes when life becomes unbearable. Some of the top reasons they cite include:

4. **Myanmar** - According to The Border Consortium, a total of 108,407 refugees fleeing political upheaval, civil strife and economic stagnation in Myanmar were living in refugee camps along the Thai-Myanmar border as of April 2015. In addition to refugees, the IDMC estimates that there were up to 662,400 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Myanmar as of March 2015. The Rohingya Muslims are Myanmar's largest group of stateless people and number 1.45 million as of 2014. The government does not recognize the Rohingya as a "national race" and has stripped them of their citizenship. Under the Rakhine State Action Plan that was drafted in October 2014, the Rohingya must demonstrate their family has lived in Myanmar for least 60 years to qualify for a lesser naturalized citizenship and the classification of Bengali, or they are put in detention camps and face deportation.
5. **India** - India hosts the largest population of refugees in all of South Asia. At the end of 2016, there were 207,070 persons of concern in India, out of whom 197,851 were refugees and 9,219 were asylum seekers.
6. **France** - In France the integration of refugees is predominantly managed through a mainstream approach. That is to say once an individual obtains international protection, they enter the regime of common law (*droit commun*). This means that they are treated equally as any other French citizen and can benefit from all mechanisms of social protection. Thus, according to the common law approach there is little need for specific measures for refugee populations. In recent years, France has seen unprecedented numbers of asylum claims. With two peaks in 1990 (61,422) and 2004 (65,614), these numbers continue to rise each year, from 35,520 in 2007, to 66,251 in 2013 and 85,726 in 2016.
7. **Germany** - Germany welcomed beyond one million refugees in 2015, 430,000 of whom escaped the grave humanitarian disaster in Syria. One in three refugees in Germany is an unaccompanied minor. Without their own parents to care for them, German family courts place the orphans in foster homes or clearinghouses that specialize in unaccompanied minors. All refugee children that receive asylum in Germany receive an education.
8. **Afghanistan** - Since the invasion by the Soviet Union in 1979, high numbers of Afghans have fled to neighbouring countries seeking refuge. During the 10-year strife with the Soviet Union, approximately one-third of the nation fled to Pakistan and Iran. On February 15, 1989, Soviet rule ended and gave way to more internal conflict between warlords seeking control over various areas of the country. On September 27, 1996, ruling members of the Afghan Government were displaced by members of the Islamic Taliban, a fundamentalist student movement. This further decentralized the government and divided the country into warring factions. The Taliban controlled between 90 to 95 percent of Afghanistan, before losing strategic strongholds to the Northern Alliance supported by US airstrikes. Afghanistan also suffered its worst drought in 30 years during 1998-2000,





## ECOFIN STUDY GUIDE

forcing many to abandon their homes beginning in June 2000. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 3.7 million Afghans are in exile.

9. **Saudi Arabia** - Refugees in Saudi Arabia have had a difficult time initially entering the country. Saudi Arabia has faced a series of criticisms for refusing to open their doors to these refugees. Social media, the news and human rights reports have taken turns in shaming Saudi Arabia for its refusal. Saudi Arabia denies these criticisms, saying that they have given residency to 100,000 people during the crisis. The country is home to a tent city, Mina, spanning 20 square kilometres and holding about 100,000 tents. Refugees in Saudi Arabia have not been permitted to stay in these tents because they hold religious significance as a stop on the annual Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca. Each tent costs between \$500 and \$3,500. The Mina tent city has not been opened to people seeking refuge in Saudi Arabia because their government claims that this is not what such people want. The government has also voted against giving the displaced people the official designation of “refugee.”
10. **Russia** - In 2013, Russia received 3,458 refugees. The next year there were 235,750. In 2015, the refugee population in Russia was greater than 300,000. The Federal Migration Service of Russia recorded 7,096 Syrian citizens in Russia in 2016. Russia has granted refugee status to just two Syrians. There are a few charity-run schools for refugee children in Russia. Still, many parents fear sending their children to school, worrying that it raises the risk of being questioned by the authorities in case of their illegal entry.
11. **Britain** - According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), by the end of 2018 there were 126,720 refugees, 45,244 pending asylum cases and 125 stateless persons in the UK. That’s around one quarter of a percent (0.26%) of the UK’s total population. Asylum applications to the UK are relatively low – 35,566 in the year to December 2019. This is significantly lower than the peak of 84,000 applications back in 2002. As well as providing aid to the refugee camps on Syria’s borders, the UK has pledged to resettle 20,000 Syrians by 2020 through the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme. By June 2019, 17,051 Syrian refugees had come to the UK through this scheme. People seeking asylum are not allowed to claim benefits or work in the UK. If they are destitute and have no other means of supporting themselves, they can apply to receive asylum support.
12. **Brazil** - As of 2016, Brazil has about 2,100 refugees living in the country. Brazil receives more displaced people from Syria than any other country in Latin America. As of 2013, Brazil issued 8,000 humanitarian visas under more simplified conditions to allow survivors of the Syrian war to claim asylum in the country. Due to these visas, Brazil has had approximately 2,000 refugees settle in the country. Brazil’s refugees are able to receive informal, temporary employment in the services and retail industry.
13. **Turkey** - As of July 28, 2016, United Nations High Commission for Refugees, (UNHCR) reports that there are 2.7 million registered Syrian refugees in Turkey. Those registered as





## ECOFIN STUDY GUIDE

of July 31, 2016 have origins in Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq and Somalia. Human Rights Watch estimated that 250,000 Syrian refugees are residing in one of the 25 government administrated camps. The remaining estimated 2 million refugees in Turkey live outside the camps and often struggle to find housing while they live in abject poverty. According to Project Hope, an international health care organization, Turkey has created an ID card system to provide registered Syrian refugees with free health care and education

14. **South Sudan** - One and a half million South Sudanese have been forced to leave their homes and seek refuge in neighboring countries, predominantly Uganda, Ethiopia, Sudan and other eastern sub-Saharan African countries. The South Sudanese civil war sparked from a falling out between President Salva Kiir, an ethnic Dinka, and Vice President Riek Machar, an ethnic Nuer. As a result, 3.5 million people have lost their homes. As violence began to escalate in the capital city of Juba in July 2016, the rates of displaced refugees have continued to rise. On average, 63,000 people are displaced every month. Ninety percent of the South Sudanese refugees are women and children. Human rights groups have found that both Dinka and Nuer forces have killed civilians, raped thousands of women, and forcefully recruited children to fight in their armies.
15. **Somalia** - The Somali refugee situation has lasted three decades. In 1991, Somalia's President Siad Barre was overthrown, which led to an era of conflict that has never been resolved. When the state collapsed, Somalia became known as a "failed state," one that became the empire of pirates, kidnappers and Al-Qaeda bombers. Between 1990 and 2015, the share of Somali migrants living abroad grew 136 percent. In 1990, the total number of people born in Somalia but living outside the country was 850,000. By 2015, that number more than doubled to two million.
16. **Pakistan** - Pakistan was not a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention, which defined a refugee as "someone who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality." Pakistan has not been able to establish any nationwide legislation regarding the protection of refugees or procedures to determine whether someone falls into refugee status. Pakistan's lack of legislation regarding refugees means that the provisions of the 1993 Cooperation Agreement, between the government of Pakistan and the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), determine any refugee status. More than 1.2 million Pakistanis have been affected by military insurgencies in northwest Pakistan.
17. **Kenya** - The dominant refugee response model in East Africa has been to house refugees in large camps, often built in marginal locations that restrict access and movement. This limits interaction between refugees and citizens of the host country. More recently, an integrated settlements approach, in which refugees and host communities coexist and share common services—as exemplified by the Settlements Transformative Agenda and Refugee and Host Population Empowerment in Uganda and the Kalobeyei settlement in Kenya—have brought citizens and refugees closer together, albeit only at the local level. Islamic extremists displaced thousands of Kenyans housed in the Dadaab refugee camp. Now the

## ECOFIN STUDY GUIDE

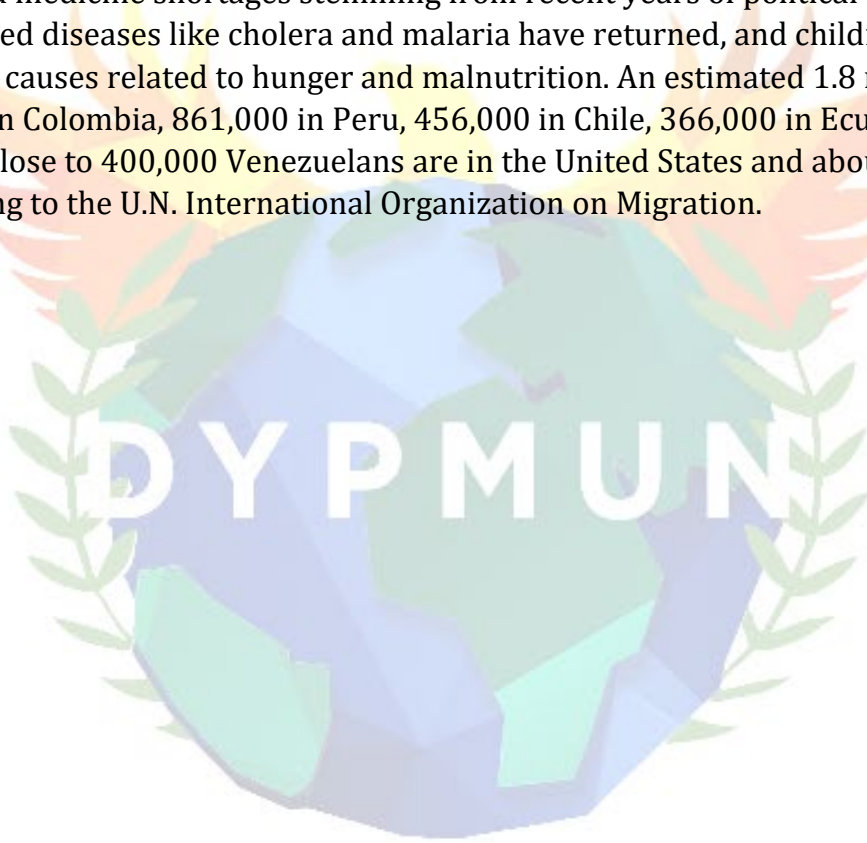
country is requesting that more than 260,000 refugees in Kenya return to Somalia for concern of Somalia-based al-Shabab Islamic extremists launching attacks within the Kenyan camp. After numerous deadly attacks from 2011-2015, the government announced in May the closure of Dadaab for immediate national security interests.

18. **Canada** - The Canadian Refugee system has two primary sections: the Refugee and Humanitarian Resettlement Program and the In-Canada Asylum Program. The Refugee and Humanitarian Resettlement Program deals with claims for asylum that come from outside of Canada. The In-Canada Asylum Program works to help people making refugee protection claims from within Canada. Initial assistance for refugees coming to Canada comes from the federal Canadian government, a private sponsor (such as an organization or wealthy person), or the Province of Quebec. Income support for refugees is provided for up to one year or until the refugee/refugee's family becomes self-sufficient, whichever comes first. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) funds language training in English and French for incoming refugees who lack the language skills necessary to function successfully in Canada
19. **Mexico** - Those crossing the U.S.-Mexico border are primarily from Central America. Central Americans have recently been seeking asylum within the borders of Mexico and then, making the journey through Mexico to reach the U.S. For some refugees, Mexico is the destination, but for others Mexico is a means to an end. Mexico has become a safe haven for Central Americans and others. Mexico has opened its borders to Syrian refugees. Last year, Mexico's full Senate unanimously approved a motion to welcome Syrian refugees seeking asylum in Mexico. Approximately 400,000 undocumented Central American immigrants are crossing the border into southern Mexico each year.
20. **Bangladesh** - Since Aug. 25, 2017, more than 700,000 Rohingya refugees from Myanmar have fled to Bangladesh. This Rohingya refugee crisis is among the largest, fastest movements of people in recent history. The Rohingya, a mostly-Muslim minority ethnic group in predominantly Buddhist Myanmar, are escaping what the United Nations has described as genocidal violence that follows decades of persecution and human rights abuses. Flooding into Cox's Bazar district in Bangladesh, the refugees joined more than 200,000 Rohingya who had fled years before. Today, about 860,000 stateless Rohingya refugees live in the world's largest and most densely populated refugee camp, Kutupalong. About half of the refugees are children. Despite help, the Rohingya people remain at risk, and their future is uncertain. Without recognized refugee status in Bangladesh or legal citizenship in Myanmar, they are citizens of nowhere.
21. **Australia** - In 2015, only 0.48 percent of the world's refugees were protected in Australia. In 2015-2016, Australia accepted 13,750 people through humanitarian programs. In 2010, Prime Minister Julia Gillard tried to get an agreement from nations involved in the Syrian War to stop people from arriving. The government would even turn away boats filled with refugees. Australia's government introduced a policy in 2013 called the Operation Sovereign Borders. When refugees travel by boat to the country, they stop at the Pacific Islands in Papua New Guinea. Refugees are being held in detention facilities on the islands

## ECOFIN STUDY GUIDE

of Nauru and Manus. These refugees in Australia from countries such as Iran, Afghanistan, and Iraq are named asylum seekers.

22. **Venezuela** - Venezuela is in crisis. The economy has collapsed, and an uprising of political opposition to President Nicolas Maduro has put the country's leadership in question. About 5 million Venezuelan people have left the country seeking food, work, and a better life. Latin America's largest migration in recent years is driven by hyperinflation, violence, and food and medicine shortages stemming from recent years of political turmoil. Once-eradicated diseases like cholera and malaria have returned, and children increasingly are dying of causes related to hunger and malnutrition. An estimated 1.8 million people have settled in Colombia, 861,000 in Peru, 456,000 in Chile, 366,000 in Ecuador, and 253,000 in Brazil. Close to 400,000 Venezuelans are in the United States and about 300,000 in Spain, according to the U.N. International Organization on Migration.







## **QUESTIONS A RESOLUTION MUST ANSWER-**

1. *Measures to keep a check on the implementation of all international legislature and norms pertaining to Refugees.*
2. *Should the 1951 refugee convention be amended and if so, how?*
3. *Policies and Initiatives that can be initiated by ECOFIN to tackle the refugee crisis, refugee housing and humanitarian violations against refugees.*
4. *How can socio-economic disparity between natives and refugees be mitigated?*
5. *Can countries be compelled by other countries/international bodies to accept/host refugees and if so, on what grounds?*
6. *Should racial/religious profiling be removed while migrants are being granted temporary or permanent residency, if so, how?*
7. *Should refugees be granted equal rights and status as natives, and if so, how?*
8. *Can states be allowed to discriminate against refugees by providing favourable treatment to the local population?*
9. *Should refugee populations be educated and integrated into a country? If so, how?*
10. *Should countries be allowed to deny refugee status or citizenship based on political ties?*
11. *How will the economics and logistics of climate refugees be managed? What should be the norms for climate change refugees?*
12. *Should economic migrants be subject to different norms than refugees?*
13. *Strategies to protect rights of refugees.*
14. *Should the definition of a 'refugee' be modified in view of current times?*
15. *Should countries place quotas on how many and which type of refugees or migrants they accept based on their national interests, and if so, on what grounds?*
16. *Should refugees accepted by a country be required to assimilate with the local population and laws in terms of social, religious and personal practices, even if that entails an abdication of their former beliefs?*





## **BIBLIOGRAPHY-**

- <https://bestdelegate.com/committee-guide-to-ecofin-economic-and-financial-committee/>
- <https://www.unrefugees.org/refugee-facts/statistics/>
- [https://www.zef.de/uploads/tx\\_zefnews/AnnualReport\\_14-15\\_Lead\\_Article.pdf](https://www.zef.de/uploads/tx_zefnews/AnnualReport_14-15_Lead_Article.pdf)
- <https://www.kaldorcentre.unsw.edu.au/publication/1967-protocol#:~:text=Status%20of%20Refugees%3F-The%201967%20Protocol%20relating%20to%20the,Refugees%20is%20an%20international%20treaty.&text=The%20Refugee%20Convention%20was%20drafted,occurring%20before%201%20January%201951.x>
- <https://www.unhcr.org/1951-refugee-convention.html>
- <https://www.newsdeeply.com/refugees/community/2017/08/08/the-real-economic-cost-of-accepting-refugees>
- <http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/SHS/pdf/Migration-in-Samoa.pdf>
- <https://mediaindia.eu/immigration/indias-stance-on-refugees/>
- <https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/IND/india/refugee-statistics>
- <https://borgenproject.org/10-facts-about-myanmar-refugees/>
- <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/overview-us-refugee-law-and-policy>
- <https://www.unrefugees.org/refugee-facts/usa/>
- <https://academic.oup.com/rsq/article/37/2/139/4934135>
- <https://www.worldvision.org/refugees-news-stories/syrian-refugee-crisis-facts>
- <https://www.borgenmagazine.com/10-facts-refugees-in-germany/>
- <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/facts-afghanistan-country-and-its-refugee-crisis>
- <https://borgenproject.org/refugees-in-saudi-arabia/>
- <https://borgenproject.org/refugees-in-russia/>
- <https://borgenproject.org/facts-about-brazil-refugees/>
- <https://www.refugee-action.org.uk/about/facts-about-refugees/>
- <https://borgenproject.org/refugees-in-turkey/>
- <https://borgenproject.org/south-sudanese-refugees/>
- <https://borgenproject.org/10-facts-somali-refugees/>
- <https://borgenproject.org/10-facts-pakistani-refugees/>

## ECOFIN STUDY GUIDE

<https://borgenproject.org/ten-facts-about-refugees-in-kenya/>

<https://borgenproject.org/10-facts-canadian-refugee-system/>

<https://www.borgenmagazine.com/10-facts-about-mexican-refugees/>

<https://www.worldvision.org/refugees-news-stories/rohingya-refugees-bangladesh-facts>

<https://borgenproject.org/refugees-in-australia/>

<https://www.worldvision.org/disaster-relief-news-stories/venezuela-crisis-facts>

