

#refugeeswelcome



Contribution to the debate on a European asylum strategy

by MEPs Ska Keller, Judith Sargentini and Jean Lambert

Summary of the Resolution on Migration and Refugees in Europe of the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament¹

European citizens are demonstrating an unprecedented level of solidarity with refugees. They show that compassion and protecting those in need must remain at the heart of European action. On the other hand, most European governments are displaying an embarrassing lack of solidarity, insufficient coordination and incoherent action. The refugee crisis is a solidarity crisis. It is caused by the unwillingness of European Member States to share responsibility.

Member States must to act in solidarity! The refugee crisis is a huge challenge for Europe. The EU can only address it in an efficient way if Member States stand together firmly, based on the principle of solidarity and responsibility sharing.

1. Binding emergency mechanism for the fair distribution of refugees among Member States

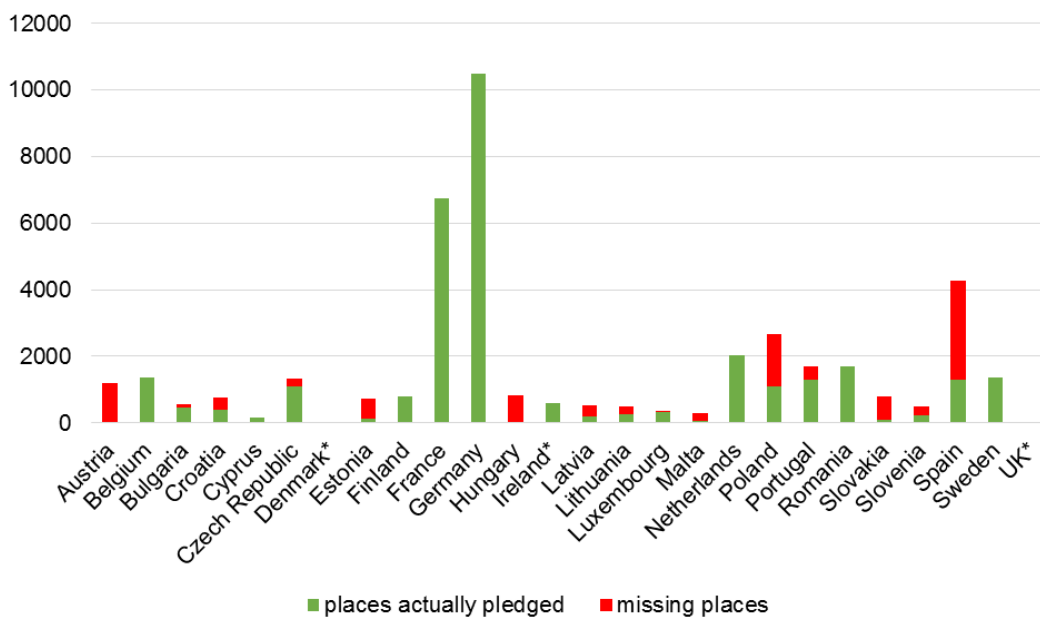
The proposal by the European Commission to quadruple the number of relocation places for refugees from an initial 40,000 to 160,000 is an important step forward to immediately ease the situation in Hungary and to further support Greece and Italy. But ad hoc measures are not enough. We insist that the permanent relocation mechanism for emergency situations, which the European Commission proposed in addition on

¹ For the full version, click here: <http://www.greens-efa.eu/migration-and-refugees-in-europe-14450.html>

September 9th, must be adopted by the Member States and the European Parliament swiftly and without delay.

The distribution key must be binding for all Member States. It is unacceptable that EU Member States stepped back from their joint responsibility by replacing the binding distribution key already suggested by the Commission in its first proposal issued in May 2015 on relocating 40.000 refugees from Greece and Italy by a voluntary scheme. So far only eight Member States have pledged to fulfil their quota, a large majority have pledged significantly less places.

Intra-EU relocation of refugees



* Denmark, Ireland and the UK have a general opt-out from EU migration policy; they are not bound by EU legislation in this area.

The Greens/EFA, with Ska Keller as the draftsman (rapporteur) of the European Parliament for the first proposal of the Commission on the emergency relocation of 40.000 refugees from Italy and Greece, succeed in garnering a large majority in the European Parliament for:

- a binding distribution key which obliges all Member States to relocate refugees according to their capacities
- the need for more solidarity and for a significantly higher number of relocation places
- taking into account the preferences of refugees to be relocated to a certain Member State based on already existing ties such as family or language skills

2. Replacing the Dublin system by a fair system of solidarity and responsibility-sharing

The Dublin system is a failure. It has created unsustainable imbalances among Member States in both arrivals of asylum seekers and their final destination in Europe. Therefore, we call on the EU Commission to make a proposal for an overhaul of the Dublin system. It must be replaced by a system of solidarity and responsibility-sharing which needs to be fair to both Member States and asylum seekers. The new system should be based on an EU-wide legally binding key for the distribution of asylum seekers between Member States. It should also take into account the needs and preferences of asylum seekers. They are human beings, not just numbers. They should be able to apply for asylum in a Member State where they already have family ties, community links or better employment prospects. This would significantly improve their integration perspective. It also would reduce irregular onward movement of asylum seekers to other Member States and the need for coercive measures such as detention for the purpose of transferring them back to the Member State responsible.

In addition, the Commission should bring forward a proposal to allow for the **mutual recognition of positive asylum decisions** so that people granted protection enjoy the same right of free movement in Europe as EU citizens. This would allow them to work or study in another Member State immediately rather than being stuck in the Member State where they are granted protection for years.

Greens/EFA discussion paper "Beyond Dublin": <http://www.greens-efa.eu/beyond-dublin-13767.html>

3. Provide safe and legal access to the EU

Refugees and migrants must be able to reach shelter in Europe in a safe way, without risking their lives. They have hardly any possibilities to reach Europe in a legal and safe way by taking an airplane or a ferry. Instead, they have to resort to ruthless smugglers and dangerous routes. This year alone 2800 women, men and children died on their way to or through Europe.

- The EU and its Member States must drastically increase the number of **resettlement** places for refugees. The current European resettlement programme for resettling 20.000 Syrian refugees from camps in Jordan or Lebanon is far too limited. UNHCR is calling for 230.000 places.
- Member States must make full use of the already existing possibilities to issue **humanitarian visas**. We also need stronger common European rules on humanitarian visas in the EU Visa Code.
- The EU and its Member States must allow **visa-free travel for Syrian refugees** to Europe
- The EU should also offer persons who want to come to Europe for work legal possibilities. The European Commission should make a proposal for an EU Migration Code to facilitate **legal migration** for third country nationals. In addition, a migration corridor for EU accession candidate countries, which would give citizens of those countries facilitated access to the European labour market, should be established.

Greens/EFA resolution of 7 September 2015 on "Migration and Refugees in Europe":
<http://www.greens-efa.eu/migration-and-refugees-in-europe-14450.html>

Greens/EFA resolution of April 2015 on "Latest tragedies in the Mediterranean and EU migration and asylum policies": <http://www.greens-efa.eu/latest-tragedies-in-the-mediterranean-and-eu-migration-and-asylum-policies-13944.html>