



EU PACMUN 2016

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PACIFIC MODEL UNITED NATIONS

EUROPEAN UNION

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the European Union. My name is Phoebe Liebling, and I am honored to be directing this year's committee along with Tara Saleh, who will be serving as your chair, and Julia Wang, assistant director. As a 12th grade student at Bainbridge High School, I am looking forward to finishing my five-year Model UN career by helping shape debate at such an amazing conference.

Taking on the role of delegate during this particular year will provide each and every participant with a more challenging debate experience than ever before. The role of the European Union within the international and regional communities has greatly expanded in this past year alone, with increased media attention and heightened challenges. We believe that the largest situations currently facing the European Union have been encapsulated in the two topics chosen for this year's debate: navigating economic relations with the Russian Federation and addressing the economic effects of the refugee crisis.

In the next few months, you will undoubtedly witness changes in the status of both topics. I, along with our chair and assistant director, have worked to provide you with the most cohesive and thorough background information that has been provided to us thus far. However, both topics are ever-changing, which is why we will be expecting a heightened level of knowledge regarding current events.

Additionally, we would like to encourage delegates to thoroughly delve into their country's specific policies and stances both historically and presently. While maintaining a high level of legitimacy in debate has always been a Model UN precedent, we will be looking for a more "realistic" approach than you may have experienced. The reasoning behind this can be answered by the rapidly developing situations covered by both topics. No member state, large or small, plays an insignificant role in either topic. Both international situations yield dire consequences or extreme success for each and every nation.

There may be a few questions or concerns regarding “Brexit”, or the United Kingdom’s vote to leave the European Union. In staying true to the present situation, the United Kingdom will continue to play a large role in our committee. We do not foresee any major impacts to the status of the U.K.’s membership becoming pertinent before the committee meets. The actual exit of the nation will not be official until long after we have adjourned. That being said, please remember to remain thoroughly updated on any developments having to do with the European Union in “real” life.

The amount of information you will encounter in the following pages may seem dense, or difficult to understand. If you have any questions or concerns regarding where to begin or which direction to take, or need clarification on a specific aspect of either topic, please contact me at eu@pacificmun.com.

Best,

Phoebe Liebling

Director | European Union

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COMMITTEE INTRO

Welcome to the European Union, a group of 28 European nations forming an observer state to the United Nations. Due to the sheer amount of participating member states, the Union is considered to be an international superpower. Officially designated as a politico-economic union, the organization was begun on November 1, 1993 in the Netherlands by the Maastricht Treaty.

The European Union acts as an umbrella for numerous sub-organizations, but primarily focuses on strengthening external and internal human rights, organizing the economy (the standardization of the Euro), and regulating the market. The Union also focuses on spreading and reinforcing democracy through transparency within member governments.

While the EU does not have voting rights within the United Nations, its body includes UNSC permanent five members France and the United Kingdom. The committee votes by consensus through the use of directives, which are similar to operative clauses and require a certain amount of signatories. This gives each member state an important vote which has the potential to make or break a resolution. While many observer states, such as the Arab League, do not hold the authority to speak before the UN, the EU is unique in its ability to join the international debate by writing proposals, contributing to amendments, and submitting resolutions.

TOPIC 1

ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

TOPIC INTRO

Navigating ties with the Russian Federation has been a continuous cycle of fluctuating foreign policy and varying levels of diplomacy between bodies. Both Russian President Vladimir Putin and European Union permanent Russian representative Vladimir Chizhov have expressed firm opposition to joining the EU. However, the Russian Federation remains important for relations given its role as the largest nation bordering the EU member states. This poses the necessity to establish homogenous and stable foreign policy in regards to trade and economics, travel between nations, and various other topics of concern for Europe as a whole.



While relations between the European Union and the Russian Federation have experienced great successes, there have also been large areas of uncertainty. With recent acts of aggression and a generally lower level of transparency in the motivations held by Russia, the European Union is left uncertain in regards to the future of their relations.

Growing concerns are arising among members of the European Union as the Russian Federation threatens neighbors with measures such as trade embargoes and energy cutoffs in an attempt to further establish its global dominance. This has given rise to concerns among EU member states that Russia may be becoming increasingly separated from European nations as a whole. This situation takes on a new level of urgency with Britain's threat of exiting the EU. Britain remains one of the Union's two member states which also hold a permanent place on the Security Council, which gives the EU greater power within the international community. With many of the EU's members being smaller countries with less military power, and with the EU not possessing one centralized military, Britain is a key player in maintaining the Union's power among important military affairs.

Russia may be willing to engage in European initiatives such as the Common Space program, but it has also contributed to the rise of anti-European sentiment through the funding of extremist groups. The groups funded by the Russian Federation include those which span a range of member states to the EU, including the French National Front and European United Left-Nordic Green Left. By quietly funding these groups, Russia has enabled groups which exist outside its borders but within its ideology to achieve positions of power within the European Parliament.

European Union member states must consider the extent of their willingness to navigate foreign policy with the Russian federation. On one hand, the nation is an essential ally and economic superpower with its supplies of energy resources and immense military power. But on the other hand, there has been international uncertainty on both the motivations and overall transparency within Russia. This is not to mention any known attempts at destabilizing the region through the means of

allocated funds toward left- and rightist groups, along with movements toward controlling aspects of Europe without making efforts to join the community.

Although it appears to many European nations that Russia is making attempts at destabilizing the region in order to benefit its own economic, military, and social status, many member states still remain bound to the nation. Member states must consider trade relations, economics, free movement between nations, and future conflict when deciding the parameters by which the EU shall decide its cohesive foreign policy stance toward the Russian Federation.

HISTORY

The European Union was created in 1993 as a result of the Netherlandic Maastricht Treaty. It has since become an integral part of regional and international politics, economies, and social structures. However, establishing comprehensive foreign policy between the European Union and the Russian Federation has proved to be a challenge since the establishment of the organization. While President Vladimir Putin and other high ranking government officials have affirmed strong opposition to joining the Union, establishing economic relations between the two bodies remains essential. The Russian Federation remains the largest border state to member nations, and maintains an economic and militarial hold over many European states.

Tensions between the Russian Federation and European Union can be traced back to tension between the nation and Europe in general, long before the establishment of the organization. Russian aggression has long been a source of conflict in terms of navigating relations, and situations such as Russia's involvement in World War Two and the Cold War have thrown economic and political relations for a loop.

More recently, a few historical situations have defined a recent timeline of the Russian Federation's relations with the European Union. Gazprom is Russia's primary supplier of gas and energy, also serving as a major player within its economy due to its source of trade. However, the 2009 gas disputes which rose out of the Russian Federation's termination of energy supplies to Ukraine caused a historical roadblock in the pursuance of positive economic relations. The Russian Federation viewed the EU's defense of Ukraine as a threat to its own interests in the territory, which set off a chain of events which damaged relations significantly. While Gazprom has since continued to provide an economic link between the nation and organization, it has had a shaky history and has contributed to rocky economic relations.

Historically, the Russian Federation has proven that it will engage in anything from territorial disputes to downright refusal to join the European Union in order to advance itself. One way by which the Russian Federation has worked to strengthen its economy at the expense of Europe has been through underhanded usage of political influence in the region. Since as early as 2013, many European political organizations have received financial gain from the Russian Federation in exchange for the power to

slyly destabilize the region. This has increased tension between European nations and the Russian Federation, and therefore between the EU and Russia.

Finally, territorial disputes have been a historic part of the Russian Federation's relationship to the European Union. In order to gain economic power, the nation has engaged in many conflicts with European nations. One such example has been the Russian occupation of EU member state Latvia, a small Baltic nation. The Russian Federation initially occupied the nation in 1940, but were forced to give it up to the Nazi party until 1944. The nation sought to strengthen its political and economic power by heavily occupying Latvia, and maintaining power until 1991. However, the Russian Federation has not lost its threat of seeking widespread control of Europe without becoming entangled in its own affairs. There remains a looming threat to smaller European Union member states that the Russian Federation may seek economic power by expanding its territory through force.

The Russian Federation has historically demonstrated its desire to reap the economic benefits of yielding power in Europe without becoming entangled in European bodies. They have created a web of complex foreign policy in which European nations are influenced economically by the policy decisions made by the Russian Federation, and the underhanded ways which the country seeks to infiltrate regional policymaking.

PAST UN/EU ACTION

The United Nations has had its own, separate involvement in terms of relations with the Russian Federation. The relationship between the European Union and Russia is inherently different given their positions as close neighbors and important economic partners. An interesting component to consider are the separate relationships between each member state of the EU and the Russian Federation. Each nation has a unique economic and political relationship with Russia, ranging from very friendly to extremely shaky. In fact, according to Professor Irina Busygina of the University of Helsinki, "Russia has better relations with certain leaders of some EU countries than with the EU as a whole because the EU has no prospect of a common foreign policy." Due to the historically tremulous relations between the EU and Russian Federation, their economic and foreign policy has a long, complex history.

The original basis of foreign policy between the two bodies stems back to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (Dec, 1997), which gave legal grounding for economic relations and free trade. However, this was replaced in 2005 by the New Basic Agreement which updated relations for a new time in foreign relations, with a special emphasis on trade, investment, and energy. Twelve rounds of negotiations spearheaded by Permanent Representative of Russia to the EU Ambassador Vladimir Chizhov resulted in the policy (explained below) that began in 2008.

Foreign policy between the European Union and Russian Federation is built on four pillars, referred to as the common spaces: economy and the environment, justice

and security, external security, and research/education. The Partnership for Modernization began the conversation regarding cooperation in the economic and judicial realms, which eventually translated to the common spaces. They were finally established during the 2005 Moscow Summit, with “road maps” and objectives to reach goals in policy areas.

The Common Economic Space was established in 2003 at the St. Petersburg Summit. At present, there are four common spaces including economics; freedom, security and justice; external security; and research, education, and cultural exchange. Energy is one sphere extensively covered within this space given its essential economic value. The European Union has described its reliance on energy relations as “mutual interdependence of supply, demand, investment and know-how.” The EU and the nation have mutually benefited from a relationship that has the potential for success on both sides. While the Russian Federation benefits highly off the European Union’s purchases of its energy, the EU benefits from a steady stream of economic benefits and energy growth.

Trade was historically incredibly important between the two bodies, with the European Union making up for 49.6% of Russia’s foreign trade in 2014. In turn, the EU possesses the Russian Federation as its third largest trading partner and sees $\frac{1}{3}$ of its crude oil and natural gas resources coming out of the nation. This makes both bodies important in a cohesive and mutually beneficial relationship regarding economic policy.

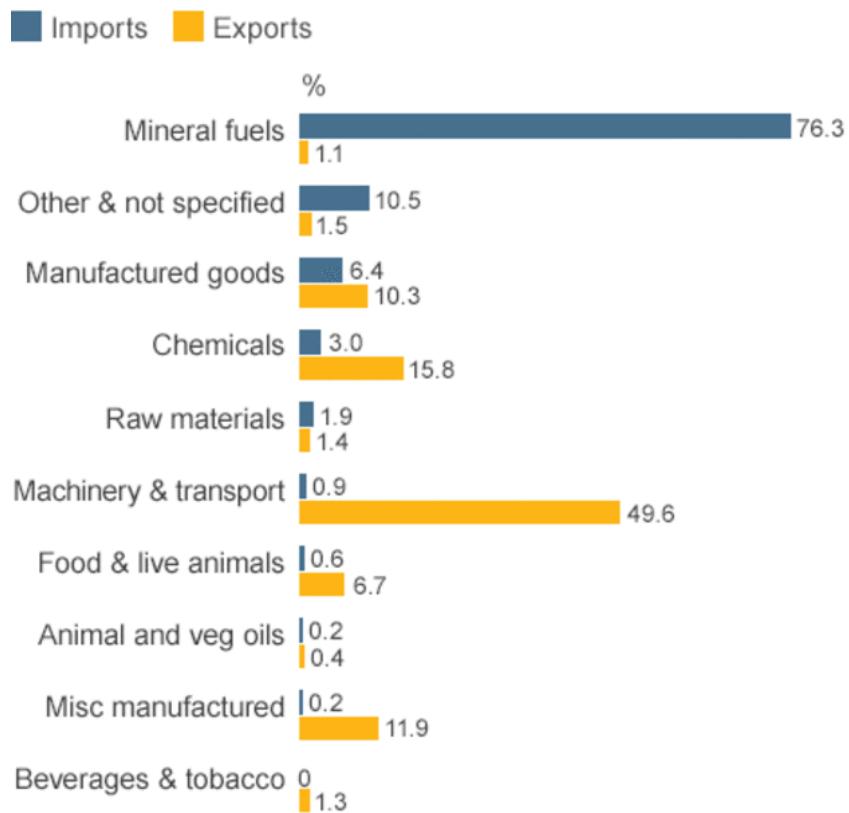
While the relationship between the EU and Russian Federation is discussed at length, it is not homogenous in its results. The two bodies have seen great success in their policies regarding climate change, terrorism, trafficking, and organized crime. The Russian Federation has also expressed interest in working internationally on issues within the global community, such as those Iran and the Middle East. However, there have also been bans and sanctions stemming from distrust on both sides.

Actions taken against the Russian Federation have included economic hits such as restraining access to capital markets. Sanctions against the nation placed by the European Union have been destructive, at some level, to the relations between the two. The European Union has had sanctions placed on Russia due to the Ukraine conflict. The stance taken by the EU has always been one of support of Ukraine both politically and in the economy. Primarily, the goal has been to de-escalate the rising conflict and stabilize the region. In March of 2014, the EU put travel bans on and asset freezes against those involved with destabilization of Ukraine. Economic sanctions were later put into place in July and September of 2014. These sanctions will likely be lifted when the Russian Federation has completed the Minsk agreements and will solve the Ukrainian issue. Conflicts regarding sanctions have only exposed the other holes in policy, which include true, defined economic policy and conflicting interests regarding the state of Ukraine.

CURRENT SITUATION

Russia is currently struggling to find balance in its relationship with the European Union. On July 1st of 2016, the EU further extended its economic sanctions on the Russian Federation until January 31 of 2017. This has added further complexity to the relationship between the two entities. The initial sanctions were intended to encourage Russia to assist with peace development in the current Ukraine crisis. The efforts were hoped to stop Russia from preventing the completion of the Minsk Protocol, which necessitates the end of the war in the Donbass area of Ukraine. The sanctions were recently extended by six months as the peace process in Ukraine continues to degrade with less than ample hope for improvement. One setback has been both Ukraine and Russia's failure to launch the Minsk agreement, which would further peace proceedings and allow the EU to drop the sanctions on the Russian Federation. The sanctions are resulting in various economic consequences for both the organization and the nation.

EU imports from and exports to Russia



Source: Eurostat

At the January 13th, 2016 meeting of the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (RANEPA) convention in Moscow, a large portion of discussion was focused on the current relations between the EU and Russia. In the past, the country has relied on a large profit from its trade with the EU and have

since experienced mild economic consequences since the conception of the sanctions. The Russian Federation has expressed its desire to resolve these relations in the past, as shown by Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev's confidence in the cooperation between the EU and Russia. "Sooner or later common sense will prevail and sanctions will be lifted ...We are ready for this, we want sound, advanced relations with both the European Union and the United States," he said in an interview with the Euronews television channel on February 2nd, 2016.

However, both the Russian Federation and the EU have stopped all efforts in bilateral and regional cooperation programs as an effect of the aforementioned economic sanctions. Due to Russia's aggressive foreign policy, the nation wrongly interfered in the Ukrainian crisis after illegally annexing the Crimean Peninsula, a formerly Ukrainian owned territory, for its beneficial warm water port access. Currently, the country has been banned from arms trade, limited access to EU capital markets, and dual-use goods, which are products that may be used peacefully by civilians or harmfully by military. There are other obstacles in place to monitor Russian citizens' future international involvement: 146 citizens and 37 organizations are experiencing banned visa use and frozen assets, while the nation deals with remaining repercussions from the illegal Crimea annexation

As conditions worsen and the EU authorized sanctions increase, Russia has been placed in a position that holds a risk of defeat, which may impact how the nation conducts its relations within its economic and foreign policy. The economy experienced a 3.7% contraction during 2015 due to economic sanctions and plummeting oil prices, however they were projected in an IMF report, to experience an improved economy in 2017. This improved economy will be contingent on the oil industry regaining its strength. However, the Russian Federation has also shown great resiliency in the face of uncertain economic conditions. During the sanctions, the Federation showed interest in expanding upon its oil-centric economy and worked to diversify its sources of income. Additionally, the IMF cited "a flexible exchange rate regime, banking sector capital and liquidity injections, limited fiscal stimulus, and regulatory forbearance" as ways that the nation "cushioned the shocks, helped restore confidence and stabilized the financial system." The nation has also successfully put forth efforts to repair its high inflation rate, and has been congratulated by the international community in doing so.

Ultimately, the United Kingdom's recent vote to exit the European Union still leaves the EU unstabilized with its future unknown. With talk of powerful referendum groups favoring exiting the organization, such as the Netherlands, Italy, and beyond, the elite European organization stands on shakier ground. While it is unlikely that these parties will successfully cause their nations to exit the organization, the idea of widespread unfavorability is not helpful for the EU and its relations. The power possessed by the organization may decrease, therefore lessening the impact of sanctions and action coming directly from the EU. However, these developments leave room for individual countries to enforce embargoes against Russia.

BLOC POSITIONS

NATIONS IN SUPPORT OF MAINTAINING SANCTIONS

Nations in support of maintaining sanctions are in flux due to the Russian Federation's targeted lobbying towards nations to reverse their support of sanctions in favor of stronger relations. Smaller, less established European Union member states such as Slovenia have supported the sanctions imposed upon the Russian Federation but also pursue positive relations. These nations, which are primarily located in southern and eastern Europe, have seen the heavy lobbying from the Russian Federation in an attempt to remove their support of sanctions. In the case of Slovenia, the economic ties between itself and Russia remain important with or without sanctions. According to Fortune, Russia is Slovenia's primary economic partner and has seen a drop of about 30% in its trade with the nation. Reuters has reported that the Russian Federation will also target larger nations who have previously supported the sanctions. These member states include Greece, Italy and Hungary. Smaller nations such as Bulgaria, the Republic of Cyprus, and Slovakia have also been named as susceptible to Russia's lobbying and strengthening of relations. The Republic of Cyprus and Italy have seen important connections to the Russian Federation, with Cyprus' involvement in Russian finances and Italy's business and energy ties. These nations will be fascinating to watch as the Russian Federation increases efforts toward lobbying. In general, Denmark, Estonia, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, Romania, and Sweden have all supported continued sanctions. Certain nations, including the Czech Republic, have shown minimal investment in their feelings toward the current situation, but will continue to support sanctions for the foreseeable future.

The United Kingdom is a unique case itself; it was seen as a primary player in holding the European Union together in favor of sanctions. However, with its impending exit of the Union, its regards toward Russia should be observed. Historically the nation has been in favor of sanctions, and it appears that Britain will continue its encouragement to support maintaining sanctions even after its departure from the organization.

NATIONS AGAINST MAINTAINING SANCTIONS

Most European Union member states opposed to sanctions against the Russian Federation are in favor of a gradual removal. The major reason for opposition to the sanctions is economic distress; many nations have seen their own economies hurt, rather than the Russian Federation's. In June of 2016, Prime Minister of Austria Sebastian Kurz spoke about the upcoming decision regarding the further implementation of sanctions. He outlined an ideal plan where for each implemented part of the Minsk agreements, part of the sanctions would be lifted. This is a very favorable plan among nations including France, whose Senate voted for a resolution consisting of "gradual relief from sanctions." Germany has had conflicting opinions

regarding lifting the sanctions, with Chancellor Angela Merkel calling for a complete implementation of the Minsk agreements in order to end the restrictions and Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier viewing gradual implementation as the correct approach. Belgium has even recently agreed to discuss a resolution calling for the lifting of sanctions. The discussion should be set for later in the summer of 2016.

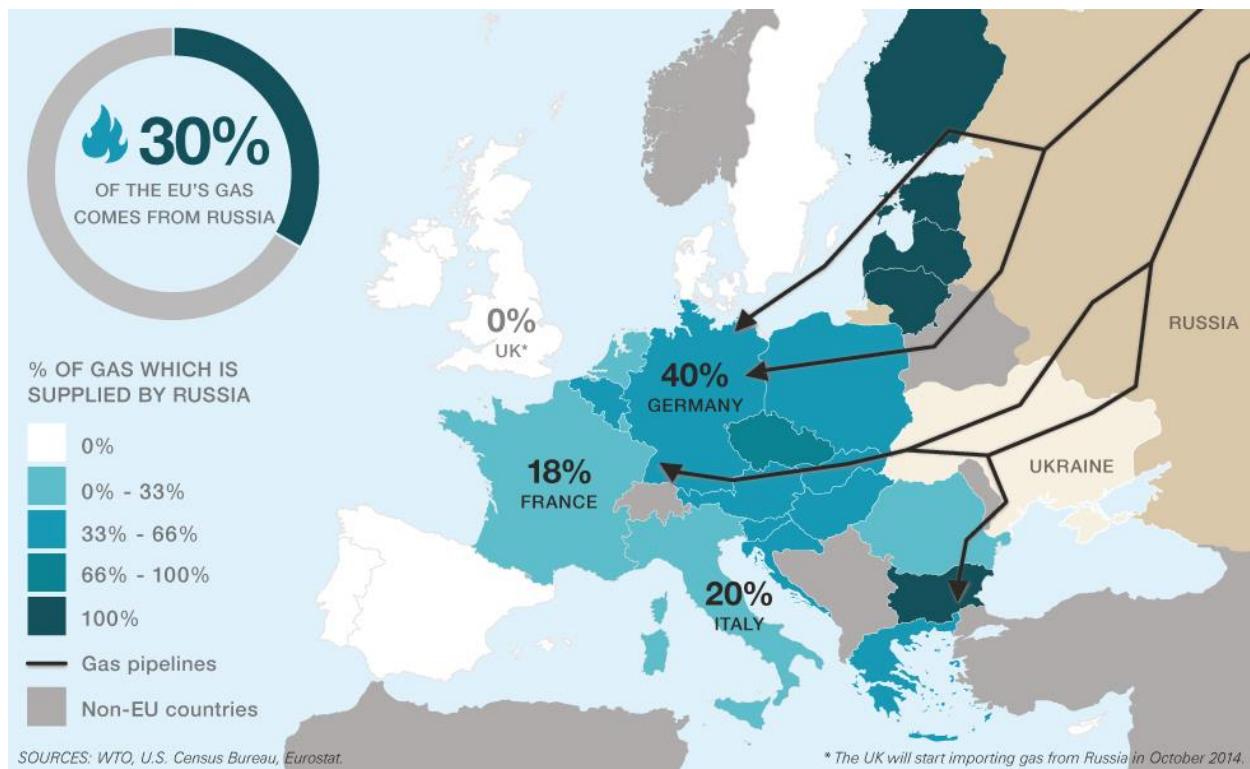
Croatia, Finland, Malta, Netherlands, and Portugal have been generally opposed to the prolongment of sanctions. Spain has publicly criticized the sanctions, citing them as harmful to its economy and not helpful to any party. However, the nation has expressed interest in watching the situation further in international politics before firmly enacting legislation.

CASE STUDIES

RUSSIA-UKRAINE GAS DISPUTE

In both 2006 and the winter of 2009, Russia's energy supplier Gazprom cut off any gas lines which ran through Ukrainian territory on the basis of a failure to compensate for the energy. The nation again terminated the energy supply in the spring of 2014, but the European Commission met to form a deal in order to ensure the supply would resume for the winter. This has been a centerpiece to the tumultuous nature of European Union-Russia relations.

The European Commission's president Maros Sefcovic has expressed support for pursuing energy plans centered on the "sharing of energy across borders, ending regulated pricing, increasing the number of liquefied natural gas terminals and improving information-sharing between companies and member states on negotiations with big suppliers such as Russia," according to news service Deutsche Welle. He has voiced this support in multiple interviews, including one as recent as January of 2016.



The EU, in attempting to diversify its sources of natural gas, has pursued Asia as a possible supplier. However, prices coming out of Asian markets are inherently higher than costs associated with Russian supplies due to Russia's closer proximity to EU member states. In the meantime, sanctions associated with Gazprom specifically are shied away from given the risk of seeing energy supplies cut off in retaliation. The EU did form a deal with Ukraine to improve its own gas lines, therefore strengthening the security of the area, but this was met with anger from the Russian Federation due to its infringement upon Russia's economic interests. The EU has gone ahead with an investigation into Gazprom, which was also seen as aggressive and politically motivated. Russia has since introduced legislation against foreign investigations, and their conflict with Ukraine has increasingly exacerbated the inherent problem of not having enough transparency into the political situation.

Gazprom has described itself as a separate entity not beneath the consequence of the European Union, but the argument for intervention is on the basis that energy is being used as an economic pawn used for keeping its trade partners beneath the power of the nation.

EU AUTHORIZED SANCTIONS ON RUSSIAN FEDERATION

On July 1, 2016, the European Union renewed its sanctions on the Russian Federation for a period of six months (until January of 2017). These sanctions were initially put into place in July of 2014, but were prolonged shortly after. The decision was made on the basis that Russia has made little progress in mending its relations

with Ukraine, and has been captured in the reluctantly implemented Minsk Agreements.

The decision to prolong sanctions against the Russian Federation will have further impacts for relations between the nation and organization. These sanctions have been created specifically to target financial, energy, and defense sectors according to the European Council. While they have been seen as partially successful in pushing the Russian Federation toward political reform, sanctions intentionally targeting the nation's economy have not come without controversy.

In response to the prolongment of the sanctions, the Russian Federation has extended its own ban on imported food items. However, many news agencies have reported that the Russian Federation is not, in fact, substantially hurting from the sanctions. According to the Independent, many small business have gained traction within Russia due to the inexistence of international competition for their goods. Dmitry Medvedev, prime minister of Russia, has spoken about the adverse effects of the sanctions and how they believe them to only hurt European nations. "Everyone I talked to were certain that these sanctions were harmful to economic relations... According to international experts, the countries that introduced the sanctions have lost about \$100 billion (R1.4 trillion) over the past couple of years. But we will not ask for the sanctions to be lifted, because we did not impose them," he said in mid-July of 2016.

Indeed, the sanctions have been controversial for European nations who previously supported their implementation. Initially, there was concern among nations that the sanctions could pit nations against the Russian Federation and call for an increase in tensions on both sides. However, the current concern is in regards to the negative impacts of the sanctions for individual EU member states. The French senate is one body which has become increasingly skeptical of the efficiency of the sanctions. "Those who conceived these sanctions miss one important thing: for at least 15 or 20 years Russia has been part of the world economy with objectively established complex interconnections rooted in the need to have normal exchange relations," said Yevgeny Yasin, a higher-up in the French Higher School of Economics and former minister of economics.

The sanctions include measures which limit the Russian Federation's access to European Union markets, ban trade in arms, limit the ability to export military goods, and restrict access to technology among other limitations. There are additional measures in place by the EU including visa bans and asset freezes upon individuals and legislation targeted directly in response to Russia's annexation of Crimea.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Should sanctions be eased gradually, eliminated completely, or continued for the foreseeable future?

- What are the economic advantages of positive relations with the Russian Federation? What are the economic disadvantages?
- What are your country's historical and current ties to the Russian Federation, and how deeply ingrained are they into your country's economy, culture, and political stability?
- How will the United Kingdom's upcoming exit from the European Union impact relations with the Russian Federation?
- How do you maintain a level of transparency with the Russian Federation in political and economic relations?

FURTHER READING

- <http://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/medialibrary/2016/07/21/473d3299/THE%20STRATEGIC%20CASE%20FOR%20EU-RUSSIA%20COOPERATION%20JULY%202016%20KEARNS%20DOBBS.pdf>
- <http://www.brookings.edu/research/articles/2016/02/eu-us-minsk-ii-provisions-pifer>
- <http://www.russia-direct.org/analysis/russia-eu-relations-2016-looking-way-out>

TOPIC 2

ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF THE REFUGEE CRISIS

TOPIC INTRO

The concept of the refugee crisis is nothing new for the international community. Since the creation of the European Union in 1993, various refugee crises have affected the 28 member states of the body in different ways, both socially and economically. Refugee crises first occurred during the aftermath of World War Two in 1947, when the Holocaust produced a mass exodus of those persecuted. As an repercussion, the Refugee Convention was signed in 1951 by 144 State Parties of the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR). This Convention was the first to formally defined the term "refugee," and acknowledge the notion of non-refoulement (defined as not redirecting fleeing people back to the nation that may continue to persecute them).

Presently, refugee crises have been rocketed back into the international limelight with the Syrian exodus beginning in September of 2011. This refugee crisis is now being called the world's largest, with thousands of Syrians displaced from their native homes and sent on a search for accommodations. The highly debated issue of welcoming newly displaced peoples into a nation has riddled the EU countless times with past refugee crises, and caused the body to instate strict laws limiting immigration.

The EU is technically part of the United Nations, but holds different jurisdiction over its members than many other UN bodies. This can work both for and against the committee, especially in terms of pressing challenges faced by the body such as the Syrian refugee crisis. With so many diverse European countries united within one union, acts and laws that are passed often still fail to include the wishes of all countries. There is a risk of the exclusion of opinions belonging to those who may disagree. This may result in member states simply refusing to follow European Union suggestions and paths, or creating their own attempts to address the issue. One such example is Germany, which attempted to defer 10% of EU funds allocated for the purpose of solving current refugee crises surrounding the union.

With upwards of 4 million people becoming destitute due to political and social unrest within their home nations, the EU has considered renegotiating past actions taken by the body. Previous standards set for accommodating refugees and displaced persons have become null for many nations as the present situation has grown, and a lack of specific planning has allowed this disparity.

The economic and social consequences of harboring refugees have become clear to nations throughout history and in recent times, which was prevented nations from welcoming displaced persons with open arms. In addition, limited amounts of space and resources in already over-populated regions of the world has proved a setback in accommodating a stateless people. There have also been complaints of a lack of jobs for refugees, along with the provisions for basic human resources such as sanitary water, proper living conditions, and nourishing food. The lack of jobs for refugees entering a new country is alarmingly high, as well as the necessity for basic human resources such as sanitary water, proper living conditions, and nourishing food. Each of these truths have been utilized as talking points by nations skeptical at the prospect of taking in refugees. But, with many countries placing a quota on the amount of displaced persons permitted to enter the country, a majority is left stranded with no nation.

Although welcoming refugees has proven to be a controversial and challenging task, the refugee crisis demands cohesive European Union action. While violence ensues in conflict areas such as the Middle East, and especially Syria, millions of citizens are fleeing in hope of a safer environment. The role of the European Union is to protect and better the member states, and formulating a plan for addressing the refugee crisis has become the controversial yet necessary next step in strengthening the EU.

While many of the nations have avoided addressing the immigration and all its many intricacies, the European Union has quite obviously drawn refugees to its peaceful outer shell and significant role in the international community. Unspoken obligations force surrounding countries to achieve humanitarianism and accept new refugees, as well as the obvious obligation to address an issue that is unavoidable in its growth and complicated roots. As citizens are expelled from their home nations, the member states of the EU take on the responsibility for addressing the aftermath at every level. The Syrian refugee crisis speaks for other crises to come, and has forced the EU to create a cohesive and succinct plan that accommodates each member state.



HISTORY

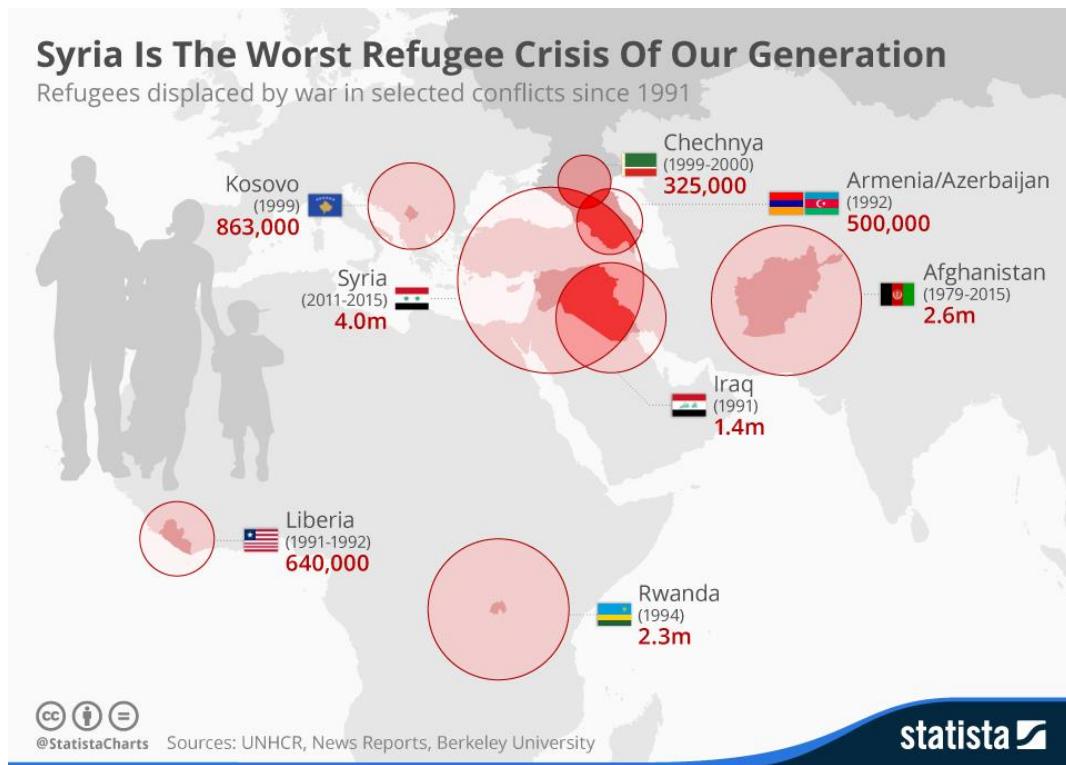
In order to fully discuss the importance of the current refugee crisis, it would be necessary to define the extent of what the crisis is in itself. Refugee crises are started when people are faced with some type of persecution or strong incentive to leave, but have nowhere that is legal and safe for them to go. Such issues began as early as 740 BC with empire rulers impeding on new lands and taking over areas beyond their scope. Assyrian rulers conquered parts of ancient Israeli land and kicked the natives out of the land they had always called home. Ten of the twelve tribes were forcefully expelled from the area in search of a safe haven. Through time refugee crises have not

only increased in frequency but also increased in intensity and the resulting number of homeless individuals and groups.

To date, one of the world's most impactful refugee crises began in 1914 with the launch of World War I through Europe. Thousands of Belgian citizens were massacred and the remaining shell shocked civilians were left seeking asylum in surrounding countries. With close to a million people on the search for safety, 25% were assimilated into England under the British government after offering the "...victims of war the hospitality of British nations" in an effort to better the situation. In addition, the United Kingdom accepted many struggling Belgians to avoid turning away those suffering from violence in their own homelands.

A short 27 years after World War II struck, the aforementioned refugee crisis was the largest to have ever occurred. German ruler Adolf Hitler began a colossal refugee crisis in which millions of Jews fled persecution from the German government in order to stay alive. Intergovernmental committees regarding refugees, including the War Refugee Committee and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), took action in 1938, but the United Nations bodies didn't send help until late 1943. Eastern Europe and the surrounding countries were suddenly flooded by Jewish refugees who needed shelter and were largely detrimental to the economic and social systems of their hosting countries. Countries accepted refugees in accordance to victims' laws of the Conventions of Refugee Status (1951) and the Geneva conventions of 1949, which passed four treaties to state the appropriate treatment of civilians and assess the necessity of humanitarian conduct. These conventions, laws, and resolutions eventually paved the way for the current treatment of refugees.

A large amount of the aforementioned improvement to refugee treatment stemmed from the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. During the Cold War the nation was sent into political disarray after a student protest at the Budapest, which led upwards of 200,000 citizens to evacuate their hometowns for the nearby safety of Austria. The Hungarian refugees were welcomed by Oskar Helmer, Austria's interior minister, and were offered political asylum. More than 93,000 refugees were safely transported to Austria in ten short weeks with the help of the efficient and friendliness exhibited by the Austrian citizens. The commissioner of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Gerrit van Heuvan, attempted efforts to assist the refugees by creating a committee including the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM) and the League of Red Cross Societies (LRCS) with various local NGOs in order to discuss further action regarding the refugee crisis. After much debate and negotiation the Hungarians were roughly distributed among five continents to relieve the pressure off of Austria. Following the revolution, the UNHCR and similar committees were far more prepared to deal with future refugee crises.



In 2011, a refugee crisis surrounding Syria broke out due to civilian protests against the government and soon turned into a violent civil war. Currently 13.5 million people are in need of some humanitarian assistance in addition to 4.8 million refugees seeking external country asylum and 6.5 million Syrians displaced within the nation as a result of the crisis. The current situation has dragged on for 5 years to affect many different aspects of the displaced Syrians. For example, many lack basic needs, such as the simple necessity of food to sustain life, while others need a place of refuge for protection from the elements. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights stated the increase of the conflict since the involvement of foreign powers. Since the crisis the country's infrastructure has collapsed and many areas including education systems, healthcare and the overall economy have fallen apart from the massive emigration of people and extreme acts of violence.

PAST UN/EU ACTION

While the Syrian refugee crisis has become an international centerpiece for the conversation on immigration, refugee status, and asylum seeking, it does not mark the beginning of the European Union's involvement in these realms. Given the EU's role as one body encompassing many individual member states, the organization has been involved in numerous refugee crises and therefore has previously had to deal with the economic repercussions.

In terms of treatment of refugees, member nations have come up with a plan beneath the title of “Common European Asylum System (1999)”. This covers the rights and processing of refugees, but has yet to be implemented cohesively across each nation. Theoretically, member states are able to send refugees north which creates a dispersion and prevents backlog of refugees concentrated in the southern member states. But because the standards are largely ignored, this rarely occurs. Nations are also free to set their own border controls, which contributes to murky standards regarding fences and security. Because the European Commission acts as the executive branch, or political arm, of the EU, it has been the most active in the realm of funding for various refugee initiatives.

The EU began with a ten point plan created in the face of the Syrian refugee crisis, back in April 2015. This initial course of action was created under the idea of acting beneath a sense of urgency, and included various steps such as fingerprinting of migrants and addressing smuggling vessels. However, the sheer numbers and increased complexities of the situation have proved to require something more. Throughout the course of the Syrian refugee crisis, over one million refugees have reached European Union member states. This trend is slowing, according to the European Commission, but 128,000 people still reached the EU during the month of April 2016. With this, the EU has made it clear that humanitarian aid in the form of money is simply not enough, more committal assistance is also required. The EU has utilized the European Commission’s Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Plan department for help in various spheres and stages of the crisis. In 2016, the European Commission allocated 83 million Euros of funding for emergency support of refugees. This was specifically destined as an initial starting place, and given solely for Greece. The funding will be used for basic provisions, but will mostly be given to nations which are experiencing economic difficulties as a direct impact of the refugee crisis.

There has also been aid allocated at transit points as refugees make their way through the EU, and has provided shelter for those traveling. Additionally, funding has been provided to the Western Balkans through partner organizations to directly help the displaced people. In 2015, the EU established a facility in Turkey to help refugees within the nation and Libya has also seen efforts stemming from the organization.

The EU Civil Protection Mechanism is beneath the umbrella of the European Union, and works to provide voluntary aid to member states facing extremely high numbers of refugees. It is entirely at the will of the nation, and will be allocated if needed. According to the European Commission, Hungary, Serbia, Slovenia, Croatia and Greece have all been given aid in the form of supplies. The Commission has also been steadily increasing its allocated funds toward the refugee crisis, with 300 million Euros set for 2016. This funding will come through bodies such as the UN Refugee Agency, World Food Program, and NGOs.

CURRENT SITUATION

The European Union has been significantly shaken by the ongoing refugee crisis. With harsh responses ranging from condemnations of the EU's response (or lack thereof) to the crisis, to the United Kingdom's vote in favor of exiting the Union, the state of the refugee influx is very grim. The need to address the crisis in a cohesive way has been encapsulated by the United Kingdom's vote to exit the organization. Member states have become restless as they express the need to address the crisis in a way that takes into account each member's needs. There is a pressing necessity to stabilize the European Union through diplomacy and creative thinking, without allowing Europe to lose its central organization.

The refugee crisis remains entirely incomplete in its addressment, which may prove catastrophic for the European Union should no complete action be taken. Prime Minister of the United Kingdom David Cameron cited this feeling of destabilization and distrust in the ability to control European borders as a top reason why the nation chose to leave the Union. Before voting to leave the EU, a poll conducted by Cambre Associates found that 64% of British citizens believed that the organization negatively impacted their immigration programs.

With the United Kingdom leaving the European Union, many referendum groups and political parties in nearly every member state have begun to view leaving the Union as a real course of action, which could be extremely damaging to the organization. France and Hungary are two examples of nations which may see its anti-immigration rhetoric result in a push for exiting the EU. In Hungary, much of the sentiment against immigrants has come from resentment regarding immigrant quotas and putting money toward dealing with the influx of migrants.

Austrian Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz was quoted to the press saying, "The unlimited acceptance [of refugees] and incompetence of the EU are in the meantime shaking the foundations of the European Union," and called the Union's action a "dramatic failure." Austria has taken very strict border controls in the face of refugees, with heavy restrictions on asylum applications and strict financial regulations in terms of the benefits that refugees may receive. These methods of handling the onslaught of refugees provide another example of the need to reshape European Union policy.

In July of 2016, the European Union made a clear step in determining the future of the refugee crisis. Labeled as a "common EU asylum system and refugee resettlement scheme," it proposes a future where refugees can expect the same conditions upon their arrival in any member state. This will theoretically address concerns that unequal treatment has resulted in worsened conditions for refugees and Europe as a whole. It will also begin the process of legally distributing refugees throughout the nations, and hopefully encourage refugees to settle in one nation rather than travel between many. However, concerns have already been brought up regarding nations having too much power to reject large numbers of refugees. This

concern remains valid, after just 3,056 refugees were formally accepted by member states of the 160,000 inhabiting Greece and Italy.

The situation regarding the European Union is one of constant change, and is sure to be in a completely different state of affairs as time progresses. However, steps taken have involved enacting quotas in order to keep each nation receiving a manageable number of refugees, along with various work paralleled to United Nations bodies in order to secure the rights of individuals. Beyond that, each nation is currently considering how best to protect their own citizens while simultaneously addressing the growing crisis as it shows no sign of stopping. The present goal within the European Union is to pursue the same two factors while considering how best to implement cohesive programs and regulations upon its members.

BLOC POSITIONS

CENTRAL/EASTERN EUROPEAN BLOC

This group of former Communist countries (such as Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria) of both the Central and Eastern European regions have been asked to accept a small portion of the refugees that are relentlessly flooding into transit and Western European countries in order to mitigate the sheer number of people. However, their fierce resistance to accepting refugees is further unsettling a union that is already shaky from previous struggle. When the European Union meets to discuss possible proposals to allocate refugees amongst various member countries, these nations are very likely to be the most vocally adamant opponents. They argue that they are far less economically and financially able to take in outsiders when compared to their wealthier neighbors.

TRANSIT COUNTRIES

The transit countries, which are places that refugees pass through to reach their final destinations, are growing increasingly hostile towards those who are traveling through their land. These countries include Greece, Macedonia, Hungary, and Denmark. They are drastically mitigating the huge numbers of people flowing into their countries by creating impassable physical barriers such as wire fences, military defenses, and roadblocks. These countries believe that the huge amount of people advancing daily exceeds their land's capacities and that such limiting factors must be placed on the flow of people.

WESTERN EUROPEAN BLOC

The Western European Bloc contains the group of countries that are the most welcoming to refugees. Germany, one of the biggest powers of the entire EU, faces the

largest share of Syrian refugee asylum requests. Most fleeing refugees want to be registered in Germany, along with other popular countries such as Austria, Italy, and Sweden. However, with the huge, seemingly never-ending influx of people flooding into these areas, the attitudes even in these most welcoming countries are changing, with confrontations and vitriol on the rise. The question of how much longer these areas can sustain these huge additions to population is an increasingly pressing issue, and must be addressed.

CASE STUDIES

AUSTRIAN RESPONSE TO REFUGEE CRISIS

On February 24th of this year, foreign representatives from various European Union member states including Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Serbia, and Slovenia met in Vienna, Austria for a meeting concerning an increase in the influx of refugees to Greece. This was spurred when Macedonia shut its borders to incoming Afghan refugees on February 21st 2016, which left many stranded. Countless refugees were forced to turn to surrounding European nations including Greece, thus invoking an uproar for stricter border control within the European Union.



Although the meeting concerned Greece, the nation was exclusively not invited in order to avoid conflict of interest in the matter at hand. This move was deemed "anti-European, one sided, and not at all friendly" by Greece's Migrations Minister Yannis Mouzalas in a statement published by Greece's foreign ministry. The European Commission was also not invited to send a representative to the meeting, but its agenda regarding asylum was enforced and respected in discussion. The Commission's views on asylum seekers remains open, with the belief that countries have the obligation to welcome citizens in need of international safety. The EU reminded member states of their duty to welcome citizens requiring international protection and work together to form a cohesive plan addressing the issue.

Since then, Austria has begun working fervently alongside the EU to counter current Grecian refugee laws which turn away refugees at the border. The EU attempted to convince European member states of the dangerous situation closing borders will cause within the Balkans route. Greece ignored the warning message and continued to increase security around borders, and implemented further obstacles for refugees to overcome while applying for asylum within the nation. Afghan asylum-seeking citizens who lacked the proper documentation to enter Greece were turned away by swarms of Greek police officers and bussed back to relocation camps.

Later in March, Turkey cooperated with the European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker to form a plan allowing higher quality screening of refugees while simultaneously allowing more asylum seekers to efficiently enter European nations. The plan specifically focused on the Syrian refugee crisis, establishing a policy which guaranteed that each refugee who settled in Turkey and arrived from Greece would result in another refugee to be resettled from Turkey in the EU. The plan went into effect on March 20th of 2016 and allowed for a limit of 72,000 refugees to be resettled according to the agreed guidelines. In April, the EU aided the plan by providing Greece with 91.7 million USD of funding towards shelter, nourishment, and protection for the thousands of refugees settled in the nation. These recent measures have shown progress in nations working together to address country-specific overloads of refugees.

CROATIAN RESPONSES TO REFUGEE CRISIS

In late September of 2015, Croatia started to experience the beginning of a huge wave of refugees after Hungary closed off its borders to migrants in addition to Serbia as a whole. Huge amounts of violence were used at all points on the Hungarian border in order to stop people from pushing in - specifically with spray guns and tear gas - and every refugee who was found to be crossing the border illegally (without approval from fingerprinting) would be arrested and detained. This subsequently forced the migrants to carve out a new path through the neighboring country in order to reach Western Europe, and subsequently people from the nearby Serbian town of Šid were rapidly pushing to enter Croatia, the nearest transit country.

Two days after the closing of the Hungarian-Serbian borders, more than 5,000 migrants had already arrived in the Croatian city of Tovarnik, and Croatia was deemed "absolutely full" by their interior minister, Ranko Ostojić. Face-to-face with the huge amount of people threatening to advance, Croatia was forced to follow suit with Hungary two days later, and closed off all of its borders with Serbia in addition to its train lines from Slovenia until future events unfolded.

However, since the refugees moving through Croatia did not stay in the transit country, more than 200,000 of the migrants had moved through the country and flowed back into their original destination, Hungary, by October of the same year. In realization of this problem, Hungary then took further action by closing its migrant

border with Croatia, forcing the diversion of migrants inside Croatia to change its course toward Slovenia instead. However, because of the daily 2,500 refugee limit that Slovenia had placed on the flow, thousands of refugees were stranded in Croatia, causing massive backlog and even more sources of chaos to the already-full country.

In March 9th, 2016, Croatia, Slovenia and Serbia started implementing border restrictions in order to attempt to instigate the Schengen rules, which push for a complete and effective closure of the Balkan route against refugees. After the European Union summit in Brussels was held, Croatia has decided to follow the example of Slovenia to deny the entry of those without the proper documentation. These measures followed Austria's decision in February 2016 to cap the number of refugees passing through its territory.

After the partial Vienna EU meeting in late February 2016, Croatia made the decision to allow no more than 580 migrants to enter its borders daily. True to its word, Croatia and the other countries at the Vienna congregation agreed to step up its border security surrounding the western Balkan route to mitigate the flow of people hoping to travel to Germany and Northern Europe. Croatia no longer permits the passage of large numbers of migrants by train or bus, and each traveling individual is subject to personal monitoring. These country-specific measures have been relatively successful in decreasing the overflowing numbers of refugees in their originating countries.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- How much should larger, more powerful member states be leaned upon, and how do we establish which nations fit this criteria?
- Which nations are seen as more economically capable in terms of hosting refugees?
- To what level should each nation be asked to aid refugees, and how can these levels of assistance be divided?
- How do we ensure the stability of European economies, and prevent certain nations from being more economically damaged than others?
- Is it fair or right to require the commitment of each nation in terms of financial aid or otherwise?
- How much does the resentment of certain nations to comply with assistance impact the European Union's ability to require economic aid?

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