

EUROPA

An Illustrated
Introduction to Europe
for Migrants and
Refugees




Introduction

Partners


Acknowledgments

1 Rising From the Ashes of War: From Bitter Enemies to European Union

You have crossed thousands of kilometers to reach the European Union


 Shifting Borders: Syria and Turkey

World War I and World War II


 Ira, 53, museum docent, Friedland, Germany


The Cold War


Labor migration

 Khadija Zamouri, 49, parliamentarian, Brussels, Belgium

The End of the Cold War

 Lua Nguyen Thi, 62, restaurateur, Frankfurt, Germany

 Thomas Hoepker, 80, photographer, New York, United States

 The Yugoslav Wars

 Zrinka Bralo, 49, CEO of Migrants Organize, London, England

Europe grows, and more people move

 Karolina, 36, entrepreneur, London, England

Today

Photo Section

2 Nuts and Bolts: How the EU Works



The Mythological Origins of Europe

A union


How it's done

 The European Parliament


Growing pains

-  Brexit
-  The Greek Crisis

Still desired

-  Turkey and Europe

Key history

-  Emilio Silvia, 50, journalist, Madrid, Spain

Europe, my country





-  Philipp Fritz, 29, journalist, Berlin, Germany

Photo section

3 What Makes Europe Europe

-  In Europe, everybody's somebody's fool


Freedom of expression and media

-  What is LGBTI?
-  Nada Diane Fridi, 31, architect, Paris, France

Freedom of religion


 Tatars: A History of Islam in Poland

Freedom of assembly and association

 Ramman Ismael, 23, student Lyon, France (from Aleppo, Syria)


Right to collective bargaining and action

Sexual freedom

 Leila, 36, social worker and special-needs educator, Paris, France

Victim rights

 Anke Domscheit-Berg, 48, publicist, Brandenburg, Germany

 Tilla (not her real name), 40, asylum seeker, the Netherlands

Right to due process

Daily life


Photo section

4 Coming to Europe

Death at sea


One million

Routes

 Abisolom (not his real name), 34, the Netherlands


Legal entry

How most people got to Europe

 Gibril Njia, 19, carpenter apprentice, Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain


Greece


The Dublin regulation


 Stefania Mizara, 40, photographer, Athens, Greece

Challenges to the EU

Hope

 Maritsa Mavrapidou, 85, Skala Sikaminias, Lesbos, Greece

 Yonous Muhammadi, 43, doctor, Athens, Greece

 Hallow Salam, 44, lawyer and sociologist, Berlin

Murky rule of law

Turkey deal

More hurdles



Mirhatam Safi, 17, student, Lubbeek, Belgium

The future

Life in the EU

Photo section

5 Practical Information

Austria

Belgium

France

Germany

Greece

Italy

The Netherlands

Spain

Sweden

United Kingdom

The European Union



Info-Grafik: Far-right parties in the EU

EUROPA: An Illustrated Introduction to Europe for Migrants and Refugees

This book was initiated by a group of photographers and journalists who have been covering both the refugee crisis in Europe and the many contexts across the Middle East, Asia, and Africa that gave rise to these migrations. With front row seats to the challenges being faced by these newly arrived people, we were struck by the utility of information that a book like this could provide.

The text is intended for a general readership and is written in four languages: Arabic, Farsi, English, and French. It aims to introduce newcomers to the motivations behind the creation of the European Union, how it developed, its current ethos, and the relevant debates that will determine its future.

A note on vocabulary: “Refugee” and “migrant” are not interchangeable terms. Refugees are people who are fleeing armed conflict or persecution. Because it is too dangerous for them to return to their home countries, they need refuge elsewhere. Migrants are people who choose to move not because they face direct threats of persecution or death but mainly because they want to improve their lives for work, education, family reunion, or other reasons. If migrants choose to return home, they will continue to receive the

protection of their government. How receiving countries treat refugees and migrants differs according to international and national laws.

Because the information provided here might be of service to both groups, we address all newcomers.

Few people we met as they desperately journeyed to the European Union knew that it arose from the devastation wrought by two world wars, that some of the member states were once bitter enemies, or that refugees have for decades crossed European borders in the aftermath of those and other wars.

Many arriving in Europe are unaware of this relatable history, and many Europeans seem to have forgotten it. After all, the physical reality of Europe today barely hints at a past that arguably resembles the present in countries such as Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

Thus with migration and conflict a part of Europe's very fabric and an integral factor in the founding of the EU and the shaping of its populations, we selected these experiences as the lenses through which we would introduce contemporary Europe to these newcomers, as well as remind Europeans of their own past.

In addition to sharing this tailored narrative of Europe, this book features treasures from the archives of the international photography collective Magnum and first-person testimonies. Readers and viewers will be introduced to many of the different people who make up Europe today — from citizens to residents to immigrants to old and new

refugees — in their own words, telling their stories of displacement, war, solidarity, and reconciliation.

Our idea was that in a shared experience, refugees and Europeans might see themselves in each other.

Finally, in the spirit of a travel guide, the last section of this book offers practical and verified information about 10 of the more popular countries for refugees and migrants at the time of this writing: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, and the U.K.

While this book does not pretend to be an exhaustive guide to the European Union, we hope that its contents can be useful in some way. We have worked with and are very grateful to a team of refugees, immigrants, historians, policy experts, and social workers to provide the most relevant information possible.

We realize that just as contemporary policies can arouse passionate debate among people who are affected by them, so can the way the events of the past are told. We acknowledge that history, especially when it comes to conflict, is often contested. We have made every effort to summarize these vast historical moments in a manner that is as fair as possible to the peoples and countries represented here. We ask that readers recognize the limits of space under which we were operating. Similarly, because the situation in Europe remains in flux as the EU and member states navigate the rapidly occurring events discussed in this book, we remind readers that the

information we have included here is up to date as of the time of this writing.

Partners

Al-liquindoi

al-liquindoi.com

The Arab Fund for Arts and Culture

arabculturefund.org

Magnum Photos

magnumphotos.com

On The Move

cortonaonthemove.com

Geneviève McMillan-Reba Stewart Foundation

mcmillanstewart.org

MDIC

mdic.com

SPRAR

sprar.it

UNHCR

unhcr.org

This book has been produced in partnership with the Arab Fund for Arts and Culture (AFAC) in the framework of the Arab European Creative Platform, Magnum Photos, Al-liquindoi, and On The Move, with support from Magnum Foundation, the Geneviève McMillan-Reba Stewart Foundation, MDIC, the Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR), and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). In cooperation with Allianz Cultural Foundation.

Allianz Cultural Foundation

kulturstiftung.allianz.de

November 2016

This book has been produced in partnership with the Arab Fund for Arts and Culture (AFAC) in the framework of the Arab European Creative Platform, Magnum Photos, Al-liquindoi, and On The Move, with support from Magnum Foundation, the Geneviève McMillan-Reba Stewart Foundation, MDIC, the Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR), and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). In cooperation with Allianz Cultural Foundation.

The book was developed and produced by

Project leader:

Jessica Murray

Idea development and specific photography:

Thomas Dworzak

Content development and editor:

Alia Malek

Photo research and editing:

Arianna Rinaldo

Writer:

Lisa De Bode

Contributing writers:

Clemente Bernad, Matthew Cassel, Colette Davidson, Avra K. Fialas, Samra Habib, Ryan Heath, Joanna Kakissis, Christian Laes, Alia Malek, Nick Malkoutzis, Lara J. Nettelfield, Agathe Osinski, Michael Pizzi, Hugh Pope, Romain Seignover, Courtney Tenz, and Lam Thuy Vo.

Researchers for “Practical Information”:

Malene Lauritsen and Shahin Zarinbal

Writer of “Practical Information”:

Paul McLoughlin

English copy editor:

Jose Fidelino

Arabic translation and copy editor:

Dr. Hanadi Ismail

Farsi translation:

Sahar Dowlatshahi

Farsi copy editor:

Sheida Mohammad Taher

French translation:

Émilie Hallard and Nicolas Sergère Tavares Sousa

French copy editors:

Marie-Lou Morin and Nicolas Sergère Tavares Sousa

Book Design: Thomas Artur Spallek,
Sinaida Michalskaja and Shahin Zarinbal

Layout: Raeeka Nayeri, Jose Peneda,
and Thomas Artur Spallek

E-Book: Hans-Jörg Pochmann

Info graphics: Rafael Höhr

Photography © Magnum Photos:

Abbas, Christopher Anderson, Bruno Barbey, Jonas
Bendiksen, Ian Berry, Michael Christopher Brown, Rene

Burri, Robert Capa © International Center of Photography, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Chien-Chi Chang, Antoine d'Agata, Carl De Keyzer, Raymond Depardon, Bieke Depoorter, Thomas Dworzak, Nikos Economopoulos, Elliott Erwitt, Martine Franck, Stuart Franklin, Leonard Freed, Cristina García Roderó, Jean Gaumy, Burt Glinn, Jim Goldberg, Thomas Hoepker, David Hurn, Josef Koudelka, Guy Le Querrec, Erich Lessing, Herbert List, Alex Majoli, Peter Marlow, Susan Meiselas, Lorenzo Meloni, Martin Parr, Paolo Pellegrin, Gilles Peress, Mark Power, George Rodger, Moises Saman, Ferdinando Scianna, Jerome Sessini, David Seymour, Chris Steele-Perkins, Peter van Agtmael, John Vink, and Patrick Zachmann.

Acknowledgments

We have worked with and are very grateful to a team of refugees, immigrants, historians, policy experts, and social workers to provide the most relevant information possible. Numerous others also lent a hand in making this book possible:

Simon Abou Assali, Carol Al Farah, Mirielle Al Farah, Mohamed Ehab Al Hindi, Samah Al Jundi and Joachim Baur and the rest of the staff at the Museum Friedland in Germany, Hasna Alghaz, Eugenio Ambrosi, Katya Andrusz, Caroline

Arvidsson, Naela Attar, Eirik Bar, Mari Bastashevski, Edu Bayer, Jonas Bendiksen, Elyse Blennerhassett, Zrinka Bralo, Antonio Carloni, Ines Casals, Mara Catalán, Domenico Chirico, Gabriella Colarusso, Bridget Conley-Zilkic, Cathryn Costello, Araba Coulibaly, Je Crisp, Hamish Crooks, Alessandro d'Ansembourg, Albin Dearing, Joe Duggan, Melissa Durda, Franck Duvell, Eka Ehlukidze, Noelle Flores Theard, Susan Fratzke, Nada Diane Fridi, Philipp Fritz, Anne Graumans, Marta Guerrini, Christa Gunsenheimer, Luna Herschenfeld-Catalan, Thomas Hoepker, Gonzalo Höhr, Andrea Holzherr, Esther Hovers, Ana Belén Jarrín, Tamsin Kelk, Cathy Khattar, Sanaa Khoury, Olaf Kleist, Marta Lores, Anna Luzzolini, Rachel Maher, Mustafa Mahli, Hiba Malek, Leyla Malek, Maritsa Mavrapidou, Robert McNeil, Susan Meiselas, Sheryl Mendez, Emanuela Mirabelli, Rima Mismar, Jina Moore, Jacqueline Mulders, Hubert Murray, Nancy Murray, Rebecca Murray, Raneem Nahawandi, Gibril Njia, Kunduzi Omaid, Paola Paleari, Giulietta Palumbo, Steve Peers, Yolanta Pinchard, Mark Power, Bieke Purnelle, Rawya Ragheh, Emma Raynes, Zoe Reyners, Oussama Rifahi, Fiona Rogers, Tommaso Rosa, Mirhatam Sa , Severine Sajous, Hallow Salam, Rasha Salti, Moises Saman, Francesca Sears, Rayon Shivanian, Tatiana Shpagina, Amadou Sidibe, Emilio Silva and the Asociación Para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica in Spain, Alexander Studtho , Lua Nguyen Thi, Giulia Ticozzi, Gubse Tokgoz, Peter van Agtmael, Wido van Bergen, Hilde Van Brussel, Nikolas Ventourakis, Rut Vilar,

Katarzyna Wysokinska, and Khadija Zamouri.

A number of people who lent their help and voices to this book have chosen not to be named; we would like to thank them all the same.

We also would like to acknowledge the following organizations:

The Center on Migration, Policy and Society at Oxford University, the European Commission, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, Eurostat, the International Crisis Group, the International Organization for Migration, Frontex, the Migration Policy Institute, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and Vluchtelingenwerk Vlaanderen.

Rising From the Ashes of War: From Bitter Enemies to European Union

YOU HAVE CROSSED THOUSANDS OF KILOMETERS TO
REACH THE EUROPEAN UNION:

a bloc of 28 countries that have populations that already reflect hundreds of years of migration. Though the member nations that make up the European Union have distinct histories and traditions, they now share a body of laws and policies. (For more on that, see “Nuts and Bolts”).

But this wasn't always the case. Just 71 years ago, Europe lay in ruins after two world wars that involved more than 30 countries in Europe, Africa, North America, and Asia. This geography reflected the scope of European empires and colonialism, the means through which European countries sought to expand their influence in the world by exploiting other territories, where the residents almost universally did not welcome European presence. Countries that many of you have traversed — such as Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine/Israel, and Iraq — had their borders drawn in the aftermath of those wars.

Shifting Borders: Syria and Turkey

In 1939, Turkey annexed the semiautonomous sanjak of Alexandretta from Syria as part of a secretive deal with France, which ruled Syria after World War I. Officially, the change of hands was based on a popular vote, overseen by

the Turkish military, that declared Turks the majority people in the region and granted them power to secede from Syria. The referendum, which contradicted a 1936 French census that found Arabs outnumbered Turks 46 to 39 percent, was highly engineered; thousands of Turks born in the region but living outside it were shuttled back to skew the vote. But French collusion with Turkey — a violation of France's legal obligations to Syria — sealed the deal. In July of that year, the Turkish province of Hatay was born.

If Turkish dominance of the region was inflated before 1939, the dramatic demographic upheaval that followed soon made it a reality. Tens of thousands of Armenians and Arabic-speaking Christians, Sunnis and Alawites left their homes and moved to parts of Syria behind the newly receded border. Many Arabs chose to remain, however, and, despite a concerted Turkification effort, Hatay never fully lost its Syrian character. Even today, it is common to hear ethnic Turks speak Arabic on the streets of cities like Antakya.

Since 2011, the region's Syrianness has re-emerged as a source of political friction. Some worry the influx of mostly Sunni Arab refugees, who now account for over 9 percent of Hatay's population (according to Turkish government estimates), could unsettle the region's delicate sectarian balance or trigger spillover violence. Meanwhile, amid soured relations with Ankara, Syrian state media have begun to raise the question of Hatay's "occupation" after years of relative silence on the matter. Hatay is one of only two Turkish provinces (out of 81) that refuse to offer Syrians residency permits, and as anti-refugee demonstrations grow

more common, there are fears the welcome mat will wear thin.



Henri Cartier-Bresson Germany. Dessau. April 1945. Much of the city was destroyed in World War II.

World War I and World War II

European countries, which today are peaceful members of the EU, fought on different sides from 1914 to 1918 (World War I) and again from 1939 to 1945 (World War II). During

WWII, Germany, Austria, Italy, and Japan (the Axis powers) fought against the United Kingdom, France, the United States, China, and what was then the Soviet Union (the Allied powers). WWI wiped out a generation of soldiers killed in trench warfare, and WWII was even deadlier, killing more than 60 million people worldwide, most of them civilians, or about 3 percent of the prewar population.

This included Germany's deliberate extermination of certain groups of people during the Holocaust, totaling 11 million. By far, the majority of those killed came from European Jewish communities (6 million). Other targeted groups were Roma (up to 220,000), ethnic Slavs (mostly Poles, Serbs, Russians), people with mental and physical disabilities, black people, socialists, political prisoners, and homosexuals.

WWII was the first war that saw the use of nuclear weapons. The United States dropped nuclear bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, killing 220,000 residents immediately or soon after the blasts.

In addition to devastating factories, farms, buildings, homes, and other infrastructure, WWII set off massive movements of people across national borders, which were redrawn in the aftermath of the war, dramatically reshaping Europe.

By 1950, the Soviet Union and its allies expelled about 12 million ethnic Germans from their territories, including areas ceded by Germany, as well as lands within the prewar borders of mostly Poland, Hungary, and what was then Czechoslovakia, a country established after WWI. An

estimated 7.8 million moved to West Germany and 3.5 million to East Germany.

IRA, 53, MUSEUM DOCENT, FRIEDLAND, GERMANY

My husband, Viktor, and I met in Sunday school at the evangelical church in a suburb of the city of Sigulda, Latvia, a part of the Soviet Union in 1973. He was my teacher back then. Our classes were secret. The USSR had banned religion and persecuted German Protestants like us. The rationale went like this: Hitler was German, and we were German, so we must be collaborators with his regime.

This made life in Latvia pretty difficult. One morning after Easter, my grade school teacher singled me out in class for having attended church with my family. She used to be a partisan against the Germans during World War II and didn't like German children. She was mean, and things got very ugly that day.

She asked me, "Is this true that you went to church? Who went with you?" It felt like a cross-examination. I told her the truth. In front of the entire class she made me say, "I will never go to church again. I will never believe in this God again."

Viktor, who immigrated to Germany before I did, wrote letters to our Sunday class at the evangelical church. We weren't in love back then, but his words supported me. I knew that West Germany was different. I knew there was freedom. Fewer and fewer Germans stayed behind, and we wanted to be a part of our community again too.

We moved to West Germany when I was 14, in October 1977. I remember the night I arrived in [the transit camp at] Friedland. I was standing on the train tracks leading to the camp. Geraniums blossomed. Nurses brought coffee and hot chocolate. My mother cried when she heard the church bells ring. She was very religious, and she had never heard them in her life.

After the warm welcome, things changed. I was German but also different — the way I dressed, my hair, my accent.

Back in Latvia, girls were still wearing miniskirts, while German fashion had moved on. Knee-length skirts were all the rage here. Luckily, my mother had bought me a red checkered skirt that was just right and a blue jacket in Riga on our way to Friedland. The outfit looked beautiful. I wore it to school every day. But because it was the only set of clothes I owned that I liked, girls started bullying me, saying I didn't wash myself, that I was dirty.

My dad didn't allow me to cut my hair. So I wore it in two thick braids — not cool at all. One day some girls at school put my hands behind my back while they untied my hair and smeared makeup on my face. They wanted to snap a picture of me and said they would submit it to "Bravo," a popular youth magazine. "Now you're like us," they said, laughing.

But of course, I wasn't. I learned to speak German at home and from Bibles that Viktor had given me. At school, my teachers put me in the lowest grade, thinking I wasn't smart. My grammar just wasn't the same as theirs. Because I emigrated from the USSR, they put me there. It was up to me to find my way out.

I worked very hard to improve my language skills, until only my appearance hinted at my background. I graduated as a certified nurse in 1984 – top of my class of 33 – and went back to school years later, in 1998, and studied landscape architecture.

One day at work I read a newspaper article about the Friedland camp. It had just opened a museum. It still is the main point of entry for ethnic Germans [and others] migrating here, since WWII. I quit my job and started working here as a guide in April 2016.

During tours, I tell newcomers it's not going to be easy. Had I maybe assimilated more quickly, had

I cut my hair against the will of my father or bought other clothes, things could have been easier. But I felt at the time I could not give up on who I was — not in the USSR, where my faith was forbidden, not here.

So look for advice from people you trust, just as I sought support from Viktor. We married, and now he is a minister and marriage counselor in Germany. I hope my experiences can mean something for refugees.

Globally, 60 million people were displaced after WWII. This is equal to current levels of worldwide displacement but less percentagewise than Syrians' displacement: About 9 million people out of a total of 22 million live away from their homes.



Thomas Hoepker Germany. Berlin. 1990. After the Berlin Wall fell, on a remaining part Dmitri Vrubel painted "The Kiss," a re-creation of a 1979 photograph of Soviet and East German leaders Leonid Brezhnev and Erich Honecker.

The Cold War

The end of WWII in 1945 marked the start of the Cold War, which lasted until 1991. The Cold War is a term used to describe the rivalry between the Soviet Union and the United States and their respective allies. Both spheres vied for influence worldwide. Though they never faced each other on

the battlefield in their countries, they backed opposing sides in conflicts around the globe, including Afghanistan.

In Europe an imaginary border — fenced and patrolled by armed guards — called the Iron Curtain split the continent in two parts: the countries of the West (mostly members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or NATO) and those of the East (those under the influence of the Soviet Union).

During the Cold War, the curtain was most visible in Germany, which was divided into two countries: West and East Germany. The city of Berlin, in the eastern part, was also split, and in 1961 the communist government of East Germany built a wall around West Berlin to keep large numbers of people from crossing to the West.

While emigration from the East was restricted during the Cold War, about 200,000 Hungarians fled to Austria and Yugoslavia during the 1956 Hungarian uprising against their Soviet-controlled government. The revolution was quickly crushed by the Soviets, who retained control until the end of the Cold War.

About 300,000 Slovaks and Czechs, citizens of what was then Czechoslovakia, fled in 1968, after the Soviets invaded the country to crush a short-lived rebellion against the Soviet-controlled regime.

Labor migration

The following decades saw continued migration for a variety of reasons: labor needs in Western Europe, the end of the Cold War, and the ethnic violence of the Yugoslav wars, which displaced more than 2 million people. Your journey across Europe is just one of many made by people before you from all over the world, including millions of Germans.

During the 1950s and '60s, when the economy of Western Europe boomed after its postwar reconstruction, millions of workers from inside and outside Europe moved to the more affluent north and west of the continent. Many moved from what had been European colonies. About 8 million work permits were issued in the U.K., France, the Netherlands, West Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and Belgium. Most of those people came from India, Morocco, and Algeria. More than 1 million Algerians moved to France alone. One-third of the workers migrated from elsewhere in Europe, mostly Italy. Countries without major colonies, such as Germany, recruited guest workers, mainly from Turkey, as well as from Italy, Greece, Portugal, Spain, and what was then Yugoslavia. By 1973, 10 percent of Germany's population was foreign-born. After WWII, reconstruction of Europe would have been impossible without the millions of guest workers who took up jobs in construction and mining.

Their arrival was regulated by agreements between countries that foresaw temporary employment and, at some point, a return home. Many workers stayed, however, and raised families in Europe. Many of their children would eventually become citizens of these host countries. But citizenship did not guarantee their integration, with high

unemployment figures among that second generation across Europe. A number of factors — such as poor access to universities, housing policies that created disadvantaged neighborhoods, and discriminatory labor practices that shut immigrants out of the job market — have hindered their full integration.

**KHADIJA ZAMOURI, 49, PARLIAMENTARIAN,
BRUSSELS, BELGIUM**

My teachers never guessed I would become a parliamentarian. I was a Moroccan born in Belgium whose parents were illiterate. But my path proves anyone can realize their dreams if they have access to quality education and someone who believes in them.

My father moved from Morocco to Belgium in 1965, when the government needed a lot of immigrants to work. World War II had ended not that long ago, and there was just so much to do — build metros, bridges, factories — and not enough people to do it.

He was 20 years old, and my mother was 17 when they left Tétouan.

He got a job at Umicore, a metals company in Antwerp, where he worked 45 years of his life.

I was my parents' first child to be born in Belgium, in 1967. My 10 siblings and I spoke

Arabic at home, and I only gradually learned to speak Dutch. This set me back in school. When I was in high school, my Dutch teacher read my essay to our class and said it was the worst she had ever graded. I'll never forget the humiliation. It really frustrated me.

My mother always said education was the only thing that could save a woman from a miserable life — one in which, in her view, a woman is oppressed by her husband. “If you fail at school, you'll have to stay home and marry.” That was my biggest fear.

So I studied like mad, and in my early 20s turned my frustration into social justice activism.

After I graduated at age 20, I applied for Belgian citizenship. If you wanted to teach, you needed to be Belgian. I became the region's first teacher of immigrant descent and later moved to Brussels to teach newcomers — refugees, immigrants — in a De Foyer community center. The faster you improve your language skills, the faster you can integrate.

One reason I wanted to become a teacher was to change our educational system and the way we teach language. As a child, I was told to memorize words from vocabulary lists, not deduce them from a wider context. But I believed the reverse would have been more effective — to discover words in a world, not the other way around.

If we ask a Syrian student to write about her journey to Europe but she doesn't speak the local language, that shouldn't be a problem. That's where we start as a teacher. We need to support her to confidently tell her story. I know because I've lived the reverse, and know how much pain I suffered.

My work caught the attention of politicians. I was an immigrant, a woman, Dutch-speaking and committed to changing the fate of my community.

I was asked to enter politics in 1999, 10 years after I started teaching. I became a member of the Flemish Parliament in 2011, where I worked on improving access to education for minorities. I wanted to set right what my teachers had failed to do: provide quality education to immigrants in an encouraging environment.

I balled up my fists and cried in committee sessions when I debated the numbers. How could it be that we sent 30 percent of our immigrant children population to special-needs schools or vocational training institutions? Are our children collectively less intelligent, or is there something else, like structural discrimination, going on?

While I was lucky and got a job when unemployment was low, I've always had the feeling I didn't count as much as my white counterparts. People today still think job applicants with a Western name are better than others. It's a

mentality that's very difficult to change, believing that the "other" is as good or good in a different way.

I notice it with my sons, ages 21 and 23, who speak four languages. Their skills open up a lot of opportunities, but both want to leave Belgium. They keenly feel the segregation in society, the difference between "them" and "us." That chasm has widened so much that discrimination sets them back even more than me.

My youngest son, who majors in economics at the Free University of Brussels, is always in study groups with immigrants — Moroccans, Kosovars. Never is there a white Belgian in his group. How can that be? Why is there never a Jan, Pietje or Sofie with him? It pains me to realize that they are the third generation of immigrants in this country but they still feel as if they don't belong.

I really don't want refugees today to repeat this experience or live through what my parents, who were illiterate and didn't know how to navigate Belgian society, experienced 50 years ago. Refugees have a right to information so that they don't waste time and their children can attend school right away. I really don't want them to lose two generations, as we did.

Today, as a parliamentarian in Brussels, I give tours to refugees to say, "Look, you can really become whoever you want if you work for it and

find the right people to guide you. Don't take any advice from teachers who don't believe in you."

While labor recruitment largely came to a halt after the first oil price shock in 1973, immigration continued through family reunification. In the 1970s, about 240,000 people per year joined family members in Europe.



Burt Glinn Germany. West Berlin. 1961. East German workman bricking up window that is to become part of the wall dividing the city.

The End of the Cold War

Then in the early 1980s, as the power of the Soviet Union waned, millions of people, including more than 4 million ethnic Germans, caught up in the Cold War started to find their way to Europe. Afghans, Vietnamese, Iranians, and Tamils also sought refuge here. They fled the chaos that erupted in their countries as communist regimes crumbled and, with them, some of the obstacles to free travel to the West.

LUA NGUYEN THI, 62, RESTAURATEUR,
FRANKFURT, GERMANY

Sometime in 1973, I received a letter in Saigon sent from Hanover, Germany. It was from Liem, a Vietnamese exchange student at the Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz University. We had never really spoken before he left Saigon but knew each other casually. Before he left, he had developed a crush on me. Of course, he realized how much he liked me only after he had moved 9,500 kilometers away.

So he decided to write me letters. His first letter surprised me, but he was charming, so I replied.

We wrote each other for nine years. He told me about his life in Germany — about how foreign the food was, how cold and lonely the winter was, and how much he missed Saigon. I told him about my life, my studies, and my family. I asked him to send me photos of the snow. I had never seen it before.

The Vietnam War against the American forces featured heavily in our exchanges too. The war had brought heroin to the streets of Saigon, and I told him about how crime had gone up in my neighborhood because of it. Even if there were fewer battles, each one had more and more casualties, I wrote to him.

I think my stories made him all the more patriotic. He bonded with other Vietnamese students in Germany, people with whom we're still friends, people with whom he sang, protested, and raised funds. The war became a way for us to connect.

He came back to Vietnam a handful of times during those years. The first time he visited was right before the war ended. He wanted to get to know me in person. He picked me up after school and took me to see Charlie Chaplin's "Modern Times" at the cinema. I was so happy to be around him.

The second time he came was four years after the war ended. Vietnam had become a socialist republic, ruled by the North Vietnamese. Around us was famine. My brother was incarcerated and had spent several years in a re-education camp for having fought with the South Vietnamese armies. Liem and I got married, and I got pregnant. Once our son, Luan, was born, everything changed. We knew that life in Vietnam was not an option.

So Liem left to go back to Germany after we got married, and he helped me apply for a family reunification and refugee program for Vietnamese people while he was still on a student visa. Ernst Albrecht, the governor of Niedersachsen, where Liem was living, announced the program a few years earlier. I received refugee status and was resettled in Hanover, where Liem was.

I arrived in a refugee camp in December 1981. I remember it being cold and it was snowing. I had seen snow in the photographs Liem sent with his letters and in the movie "Dr. Zhivago." Liem picked me up, and thus we began a new life in Germany, finally together after nine years of separation.

We spent the next couple of years living in Liem's dorm room while he was finishing his studies. The first few months, everything just frightened me. I stayed indoors while Liem was studying and went to night classes after Liem had

come back to the dorms to watch Luan. We would eat at the university's cafeteria to save money.

Bit by bit, things got better. I learned German, and Liem bought me a bicycle so I could get around the city. There were a lot of Germans who helped us — volunteers who taught us German, people who would give us baby clothes and food. We received money from the government for basic living expenses.

There were also people who didn't like us. I remember going to the foreigners' registration office, where office workers looked at us as if we were beggars. Liem was told to get up from his seat on a tram once. The woman pulled out her German passport and said to him, "This seat is mine."

Now we've been in Germany for more than 40 years. We live in Frankfurt, where I run a restaurant. Liem works as an aeronautical engineer for his own company. Our son and daughter have had a wonderful education and ended up being good people. We worked a lot and were able to support our extended families too. And I couldn't have asked for more.

But we're also in a weird spot. I miss what it was like in Vietnam when I was young, but when I go back now, it doesn't feel like home. And while I know how to speak German, I also don't quite belong here. The Germans don't see us as

Germans, but we're also no longer Vietnamese. Now we sit in the middle and don't know where to go.

It's interesting to see what is happening now.

Of course, it tugs at my heart to see refugees bring their children. There are some Germans who are really helping a lot. They volunteer and provide so many services. But then there are many who aren't all that nice either.

In 1990, the year after the Berlin Wall fell and Germany was reunified, 397,000 ethnic Germans migrated from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Thousands more arrived and requested asylum later that decade.

THOMAS HOEPKER, 80, PHOTOGRAPHER, NEW YORK, UNITED STATES

I was a staff photographer for "Stern" magazine, and [in the 1970s] there was a treaty between West and East Germany to exchange correspondents. So my wife and I moved to East Berlin, which at the time was totally unheard of for journalists to do.

It was almost exotic, living in a country that spoke the same language as my own but under a

totally different regime. I tried to live as an East German, tried to shop at the same places as everyone else, but everything was in short supply. A good piece of chocolate or good wine was impossible to get unless you knew someone who knew someone. When you went to the movies, you had to watch Russian films. There were bookstores but only ones that sold authorized books. And we were the lucky ones. We had a car with blue plates, so we could go out to spend a few days in West Berlin. That was part of the deal. For most people, crossing [the Berlin Wall] was impossible.

As a journalist, it was a fascinating moment, but it was also very depressing. We lived in a high-rise building on the 16th floor, I think, and most of the time the elevator didn't work. Even looking out our window was unpleasant. Half of Berlin was still in ruins after the war. Of course, the wall itself was quite ugly, and there was no room between the buildings and the street. So the people who lived [along the wall], their view from their windows just disappeared one day. When the wall went up, they were staring right at barbed wire. Earlier [in 1963], I had done a photo essay in which I took a bunch of pictures of West Berlin kids climbing on the wall while it was under construction. For them, it was a play area.

I happened to be in San Francisco on a job when the wall came down [in 1989]. So I arrived three or

four days late, but the mood had changed immediately. I took pictures as people celebrated and ransacked the wall and buildings that they hated — and of East German tanks lined up in a junkyard [to be sold]. At the same time, all the Western companies came in, and it was quite amazing to see the changes unfold. I have this picture of a woman who's totally flabbergasted because she sees a cow in the supermarket. It was fake, of course, just an advertisement for chocolate. But she totally didn't understand what the hell this cow was doing in the supermarket.



Thomas Hoepker Germany. 1991. Near Rostock. A chocolate promotion at a new shopping mall after Germany's reunification.

If you, like about 1 million others, came via Turkey to Greece and made your way to another EU country from there, you traveled through some of the countries that once made up Yugoslavia, a multiethnic and multireligious federation formed in 1918 that was made up of six states: Slovenia, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Always an uneasy federation, it began to come apart in 1991, descending into war.

The conflict ended in 2001 and displaced about 2 million people, who fled to Germany, Greece, Austria, and other countries farther west. The wars are often described as Europe's bloodiest conflict since WWII, with an estimated

125,000 people killed. Most notoriously, Serbians committed rape and genocide against the Bosnians.

While the Yugoslav conflict was initially over who would control what territory, it took on a sectarian dimension.

Montenegro and Macedonia, which experienced some violent upheaval but not war, managed to escape the pattern of large-scale war during their bids for independence during this conflict.

THE YUGOSLAV WARS

If you entered Europe in Bulgaria or Greece, you likely walked through the countries of the former Yugoslavia, which 25 years ago suffered a brutal war and genocide.

Created out of the ashes of World War II, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia consisted of six republics (Serbia, Macedonia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro) and two autonomous provinces, (Kosovo and Vojvodina). Three primary forces united the country: the Communist Party, the army, and the nation's longtime leader, President Josip Broz Tito, who died in 1980. Although it was communist, Yugoslavia was aligned with neither the Soviet Union nor the West during the Cold War. The country was peaceful from 1945 until the 1990s, at which point the global collapse of

communism, financial crisis, and disputes regarding the distribution of resources and governance of the state opened the door for nationalist politicians. Among the most powerful was Serbian President Slobodan Milošević, who encouraged Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia to organize by ethnicity and supplied them the means to violently pursue a nationalist agenda. He was not alone. Among other nationalist leaders was Croatian President Franjo Tudjman.

Yugoslavia's dissolution began in 1991, with Slovenia's declaration of independence. That was quickly followed by Croatia's and a brutal war between the Serbian-controlled Yugoslav People's Army (along with state-sponsored paramilitary forces) and the newly created Croatian army. In the Croatian town of Vukovar, which borders Serbia, non-Serb civilians suffered a wave of lethal violence. In one incident, over 250 hospital patients were buried in a mass grave, many with IVs still in their arms. (If you passed through Tovarnik, you were 25 kilometers from Vukovar.) Later that year, Macedonia, with no sizable Serbian minority, declared its independence without conflict.

The violence of the Yugoslav wars of secession reached a terrifying peak in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bosnia's population consisted of Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims, accounting for 44

percent of its residents), Orthodox Serbs (32 percent), Catholic Croats (14 percent), Jews, Roma, and other minorities. While the main groups are ethnically Slav and speak variants of the same language, because of their differences, which include religion, they were treated as distinct nations in Yugoslavia and are often referred to as ethnic groups.

After multiparty elections in 1991, Bosnian Serb leaders advocated for Bosnia to remain in Yugoslavia, but Croatian and Bosniak leaders sought independence, which was achieved on April 6, 1992, after a referendum. While limited violence against civilians preceded the vote, after it, Bosnian Serbs, who had prepared for war and had the backing of neighboring Serbia, embarked on a plan to create a Serb Republic within Bosnia. To do this, they deployed violence against the civilian population of Bosniaks and Croats in Serb-claimed territory, using murder, rape, torture, theft, and forced displacement against non-Serbs. In some Bosnian cities, such as Prijedor, Serb-nationalist-led crisis committees made Muslims wear white armbands, put white sheets on their houses, and restricted their movement. Serb forces destroyed mosques and other Muslim objects of faith in territory under their control. The Bosnian government advocated that the country remain united and multiethnic, even as over time it

became increasingly dominated by Bosniaks, particularly after a rift opened in 1993 between the government and Bosnian Croat forces, supported by Croatia.

Although Bosnia was admitted to the United Nations on May 22, 1992, the international community failed to protect the country. A three-and-a-half-year war ensued, leaving over 100,000 people dead. A U.N. peacekeeping force was deployed, but it had no mandate to protect civilians, and an arms embargo imposed on the entire region crippled the capacity of government forces. Among the horrors of the conflict were the siege of Sarajevo (the longest siege of a metropolis at the time) the mass rape of Bosniak women, the displacement of over 2.5 million people, and the Srebrenica massacre, the war's largest single atrocity (in which Serbian and Bosnian Serb forces killed 8,000 Bosniak men and boys in July 1995 after the fall of a U.N. safe area). Over 83 percent of civilian victims in the war were Bosniak.

The Dayton Peace Accords ended the war in Bosnia in December 1995, splitting it into two largely autonomous entities, with 51 percent becoming the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and 49 percent the Republika Srpska — a division that solidified the aggressors' wartime strategy. Further, there was a de facto partition of Bosnian Croatian strongholds.

While the negotiations settled the conflict in Bosnia and Croatian military victory ended the war in Croatia (displacing Croatian Serbs), tensions in Kosovo, a province in southern Serbia, festered. There the majority ethnic Albanians were discriminated against by the Serb-dominated government. Kosovar Albanians pursued an unsuccessful strategy of nonviolent civil disobedience, followed by the formation of the Kosovo Liberation Army. Serbian forces responded to the group's provocations by targeting civilians beginning in 1998, including a widely publicized massacre in the village of Račak. After international mediation failed to produce a peaceful resolution, Serbia launched an offensive that displaced over 850,000 Kosovar Albanians, even as in March 1999, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization launched airstrikes to halt the bloodshed. That operation concluded with Serbia's capitulation and with a U.N.-led international civil and military presence. Kosovo declared independence in 2008.



Josef Koudelka Bosnia-Herzegovina. Mostar. 1994. One of many buildings in the Muslim quarter destroyed by the war.

ZRINKA BRALO, 49, CEO OF MIGRANTS ORGANIZE,
LONDON, ENGLAND

I grew up, lived, studied, and worked in Sarajevo [in what was then Yugoslavia] — fairly happily, I should say — until April 1992, when the war broke out. By that time, I was working already as a journalist for the Radio Sarajevo Youth Program, which was part of the national broadcasting network. As a journalist, I was in a privileged position to know more about political changes in

the country, and for a long time I felt guilty that I wasn't able to see the evil that was about to descend on us in 1992. But now I know that it wasn't that I was naive. It was beyond anyone's imagination what was about to unfold in Bosnia.

There were a number of layers to this war. You know the sectarian divisions through which the war manifested itself. If people were told to go and kill their neighbors so that their leaders could make and steal more money, they probably wouldn't do that. But politicians manipulated fears, frequently inaccurately representing history or simply lying. Then the discourse is transferred into this realm of fear and propaganda, and that's how it works. The truth or reality or the humanity of your neighbors no longer matters.

I stayed for a year and a half in Sarajevo. At the beginning of the war, I had just gotten out of the hospital and had had surgery and couldn't go back to take my stitches out because the city was blocked and to get to the hospital, you had to cross a number of sniper crossings. So I had to take my stitches out myself.

But as soon as I recovered, I went to the TV station, and I started working with international correspondents for the next 18 months, which was a kind of a way of surviving mentally as well as a basic way of surviving, because I had more access

to food and medications and little luxuries like shampoo.

But it was mentally exhausting because on a daily basis I saw pictures of every dead body, every massacre that happened across the city.

I was beginning to feel the strain and decided it was time to go.

I knew exactly what I was leaving and that I would probably not come back. I was leaving my family and friends behind, and that was very difficult, as there were no guarantees that they would survive. That was unbearable, because nothing in your life prepares you for those moments and decisions. I felt overwhelming survivor's guilt.

Because I was working with foreign journalists, I had a U.N. press pass, which was basically a ticket to access the Hercules airplane that was taking humanitarian aid into the besieged city. So I boarded an empty Hercules plane.

Through a set of completely random circumstances, I ended up in London. After 18 months of siege, there was an outside world. There was no plan. The outside world for me was about safety, hot water, and food. It wasn't about bureaucracies and legal statuses, and, you know, that sort of normality.

I had to go through the process of applying for asylum. It's difficult because the asylum system is

adversarial, which means basically that you as an asylum seeker have to provide lots of evidence that you don't have, because when you're fleeing a war zone, you don't really [think of] your asylum claim. I was also making an assumption like "British troops are in Bosnia, British journalists are in Bosnia, so why do I have to give you all of this evidence? Don't you watch television?" without understanding that the wider political discourse is about reducing numbers of refugees. They don't really care who you are or what happened to you — you're just a statistic, a number to them, a number they are trying to reduce.

My application was refused on a technicality. They didn't even look at the merits of my case. They said I traveled through safe countries and I should have applied for asylum there. And that was even before that was part of the legislation. So then I went through the appeals system for the next two years and finally won my right to stay. That was exhausting, also because the war was still going on. And you have to work, you have to study, and you have to battle the system to stay here. And there's all of this grief that you carry inside you and the worry about your loved ones back home. We used to beg journalists to take little packages of food and other things back to Bosnia, so it was just awful.

I see Syrians now go through the same thing. Those who make it here can't work, can't go to university. They're treated like second-class people, stuck in limbo. Then there are sleepless nights and worry about their friends and family at home.

Many Syrian cities look like Bosnian cities, and the sort of mode of destruction is similar. When I see pictures of Aleppo, it's so spookily similar to pictures from Sarajevo during the war, and that is soul destroying in the sense that when you go through something so tragic, with such a huge loss, you hope that — at least I try to make sense of it by believing that OK, maybe we've learned something from this and, now we, as a human race, won't make the same mistakes again.

But, sadly, we do. War is very high price for those who experience it, but the rest of the world is not very good at learning from others' mistakes.

Another country that escaped conflict at the end of the Cold War was Czechoslovakia, which in 1993 was dissolved peacefully into two nations, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, after what was called the Velvet Revolution.

During the 1990s, net immigration in Europe more than tripled compared with levels in the 1980s, to about 750,000 people per year. This included an increase in the number of

Iraqis, Afghans, and Africans, from countries such as Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Millions more people moved to Europe in the years that followed.

Europe grows, and more people move

In 2004, 10 countries (Cyprus, Malta, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) joined the EU (you can learn more about the process of how countries join the union in “Nuts and Bolts”), which until then numbered 15 states (the Netherlands, Germany, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Sweden, Denmark, Greece, Ireland, the United Kingdom, Austria, and Finland). The expansion was the union’s largest so far, and it brought on board countries and people with a very different history. While Western Europe has long had free-market capitalist policies in place, from WWII to the end of the Cold War, the East lived under communism and socialism.

After the enlargement, hundreds of thousands of people moved west, particularly from Poland, with about 300,000 Poles (about 1 percent of its population) taking up jobs elsewhere in the union. From 2004 to 2007, that number rose to 2 million.

Eastern European immigrants were joined by poor migrants and persecuted minorities (like the Roma) from non-EU countries such as Serbia, Albania, Macedonia, and the partially recognized country of Kosovo.

After the 2008 economic crisis, many unemployed youths from Spain, Portugal, and Greece moved to other, more prosperous EU countries in search for jobs.

KAROLINA, 36, ENTREPRENEUR, LONDON,
ENGLAND

I grew up in Terespol, a small border town in eastern Poland, close to Belarus. My father was a bus driver, and with his salary, our family could hardly make ends meet. I never dreamed that I could leave Poland someday.

When I was 15, I enrolled in a school where, in addition to regular classes, we learned sewing, cooking, and child care. We used to call it the School for Good Wives. On afternoons, I worked in a gardening center to support myself. One summer, I landed an internship at a farm in Germany. It was my first time abroad. I was supposed to learn how to milk cows, but I was left-handed and had a hard time doing it properly. So I spent the summer cooking, cleaning, and doing paint jobs. I didn't know it then, but these skills would end up being most useful when I moved to London a year later.

I arrived in 1999, when it was still really hard for Polish people to come here. I came on a tourist visa, pretending to visit a friend, and stayed illegally for months past the expiration date.

At first, my life here was very difficult. I slept on the floor, then in a basement room that had been a toilet. Still, it was Buckingham Palace to me.

I didn't find a job right away, but with the skills I acquired at the School for Good Wives, I could help out with the cooking and cleaning at the house I was living in. Then I got a job cleaning rooms at a bed and breakfast and signed up for English lessons.

Later on, while I was taking care of kids as a nanny, the families I worked for kept asking me to help them find Polish plumbers and cleaners. We had a reputation for being reliable and hard-working.

After 12 years in the U.K., I decided to start my own business, connecting employers looking for cleaning or child care services. I employ many women from Poland. For most of them, coming here has been a lot easier than it was for me, now that Poland is a member of the EU [since 2004]. They can take flights for 19 pounds and don't have to worry about visas or getting deported, as we did. Many of them already know someone in the U.K., and if it doesn't work out for them here, they can easily go home.

Having left Poland as a young girl, I don't have much there now — a bit of family, a handful of friends, and, unfortunately, some graves. Particularly since my daughter was born in the U.K., I have felt I belong here. I think that Poles who arrived more recently are not as well integrated into British society. There is an atmosphere of apprehension and fear in British society. I feel that recently [because of the atmosphere around the Brexit] foreigners are perceived as taking away the jobs, hospital beds, and schools of British people ... I think it will be difficult for new migrants to integrate under these circumstances.

Sometimes my husband and I talk about going back to Poland, to live in the mountains and grow old there. But our 4-year-old daughter will start school here soon. I don't think we will go back. This is my home now.

Only the U.K., Ireland, and Sweden opened their borders right away.

The delay, among other factors, caused many migrants to turn to illegal work arrangements. Figures vary widely, but about 7 to 12 percent of the immigrant population in the first 15 EU member states was undocumented in that period, according to one estimate.

Today

In 2011 the first refugees of the current migration movement, of which you are a part, started going to Europe. The number of Syrians arriving in Greece more than doubled compared with the years before. By 2015, more than 1.3 million people from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, Eritrea, and other countries in Africa and Asia had requested asylum. That number is almost double the number of applications in 1992, when a record number of people from the former Yugoslavia sought protection. In the first three months of 2016, about 173,000 people from Africa and Asia arrived by sea in Greece and Italy.

Since its beginnings in 1951, when six countries became members of the European Coal and Steel Community, the bloc has grown and changed significantly. Now called the European Union, it promotes the freedom of movement of people, goods and services among its 28 member countries. Residents of those nations — plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland (which are in Europe but have not joined the union) — may move freely among those states and work and live in any of them.

This policy of open internal borders is combined with a policy of tightly controlled external borders. (More on this in [“Nuts and Bolts”](#) and [“Coming to Europe”](#).)

This group of countries makes for a diverse union. About 3 percent of the people living in the EU are citizens of a member state other than the one in which they reside.

Of the 503 million people living in the EU, about 7 percent were born outside it, and about two-thirds of that 7 percent are citizens of non-EU countries. In 2013 the largest groups of new citizens in the EU who were born outside the bloc came from India, Turkey, and Morocco.

Among member states, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Italy have the most foreign-born residents.

Photo Section



Robert Capa Germany. Near Wesel. March 24, 1945. As Allied troops move toward the Rhine, German farmers flee fighting.



Robert Capa Germany. Berlin. 1945. Refugees making their way through the ruined Soviet sector.



Henri Cartier-Bresson Germany. Dessau. April 1945. A transit camp was organized between the U.S. and Soviet zones for refugees returning from the Eastern Front. The river was part of the line dividing the sectors.



David Seymour Greece. 1948. Refugees from the Greek civil war, which lasted from 1946 to 1949.



Herbert List Italy. Naples. 1959. A man waves farewell to his emigrating son-in-law.



Erich Lessing Hungary. On the border with Austria. 1956. In a brief thaw before the Hungarian Revolution in the autumn of 1956, Hungarian soldiers cleared mines and took down a barbed wire fence.



Patrick Zachmann Jerusalem. June 1981. A concentration camp survivor at the first worldwide meeting of Holocaust survivors.



Josef Koudelka Czechoslovakia. Prague. August 1968. Warsaw Pact troops invade Prague.



Raymond Depardon Germany. West Berlin. 1962. Children play building the wall.



Mark Power Germany. East Berlin. Nov. 12, 1989. East German soldiers in the area in front of the Brandenburg Gate while West Germans climb the Berlin Wall.



Mark Power Germany. West Berlin. Nov. 10, 1989. Emotional East Germans cross the border into the West after the fall of the Berlin Wall.



Gilles Peress Bosnia. Ahmici. 1993. The minaret of Ahmici's mosque lies destroyed beside the main road. On April 16, more than 100 villagers were killed in a single morning. It was one of the most savage examples of ethnic cleansing in the Balkans.



Cristina García Roderó Macedonia. Stenkovac. 1999. Children in a refugee camp.



Josef Koudelka Bosnia-Herzegovina. Mostar. 1994. The Stari Most, or Old Bridge, a stone arch 90 feet over the Neretva River, was built in 1566 under Suleiman the Magnificent during the Ottoman occupation. It was destroyed in November 1993 by Bosnian Croat tanks. In the foreground, a postcard of the bridge before the war.



Gilles Peress Croatia. Dvor. 1995. Croatian refugees fleeing a Bosnian Serb offensive, crossing into Bosnia at the Una river.

Nuts and Bolts: How the EU Works

In 2012 the European Union was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, the world's most prestigious prize promoting peace, for maintaining economic and political stability for its member countries. Yet just 67 years earlier, the continent lay in ruins after surviving the biggest war the world had ever witnessed, killing 60 million people, most of them civilians.

Since then, European countries — former allies and enemies — vowed never to wage war again and established a body of laws that would cement their cooperation in a number of institutions. Trade integration became the defining principle on which the EU was built, out of the belief that if former enemies become trade partners, they would be less likely to attack one another.

In a famous declaration in 1950, then-Foreign Minister of France Robert Schuman said he “aimed to make war not only unthinkable but materially impossible.”

THE MYTHOLOGICAL ORIGINS OF EUROPE

Europe is often represented as a beautiful woman riding a white bull. You may have seen her on some 2 euro coins. She's also featured as a prominent sculpture at the seat of the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France. But did you know she comes from Lebanon?

In ancient mythology, Europa was a princess, the daughter of King Agenor, who reigned in Sidon or Tyre, important harbor towns in Phoenicia (a

civilization on the Mediterranean coast in modern-day Syria, Lebanon, and Israel/Palestine.)

According to the myth, the most powerful of the Greek gods, Zeus, fell in love with Europa when he saw her picking flowers in a meadow with some female friends. He turned himself into a tame, snowy white, muscular, beautiful bull and approached her. Out of his mouth came the smell of saffron crocuses. In this way, he seduced Europa, who then happily sat on the bull's back. With the bull swimming, they crossed the Mediterranean Sea to the city of Gortyn in Crete. Under a holy plane tree, Zeus then retook his human shape and revealed himself to Europa. She had three children with Zeus: Minos (a wise and powerful ruler of Crete), Sarpedon and Rhadamanthus. Afterward, Zeus gave her in marriage to Asterion, who took care of the children.

This story is told several times by Greek and Latin writers and appears on ancient temple sculptures, wall paintings and vases. People in antiquity were likely aware of the context behind it. After all, the Phoenicians were a seafaring people and traders who sailed the Mediterranean as far west as Spain and Morocco. In ancient Rome and Greece, they were famed for their purple dye. In a way, the myth of Zeus and Europa symbolizes a transfer of culture from East to West. For

example, the Greek alphabet is derived from the Phoenician — a simple, practical, brilliant script in which each letter stands for one sound.

In Phoenician, “asu” is “sunrise” and “eureb” means “sunset.” During their travels on the Mediterranean, the Phoenicians saw the sun rising in present-day Turkey and the sun set in Greece. In their view, Asia became the region of the sunrise and Europe that of the sunset.

In the fifth century B.C.E., the Greek historian Herodotus distinguished among Asia (the East, including Egypt), Europe, and Libya (Africa, without Egypt). In his rather Eurocentric view of the world, Europe was as big as the two other continents together. He doubted the story that Europe took its name from a Phoenician princess who — except for Crete — had never set foot on what Greeks in his days called Europe.

It was not until the 19th and the early 20th century, with increasing scholarly interest in mythology and in the roots of Europe in classical civilization, that fascination with the myth of Zeus and the Phoenician princess as a European symbol took hold. Of course, controversies about the territory and borders of Europe continue. Though few would nowadays regard a Lebanese princess a true European, the millions of people crossing the Mediterranean today have reminded

us all that Europe and Asia have long shared this ancient sea.



Stuart Franklin Austria. Klagenfurt. Europe Day. 2001. Schoolchildren with European flags as they attend the multilingual and multicultural ceremony outside the town hall in the town square.

A union

To accomplish this, European countries have spent the years since then integrating their economies, which required

committing to agreed-upon trade standards, regulations, and human rights principles. Together they form a union, a bloc of countries that agree to give up some of their national autonomy, or sovereignty, when they believe taking action together would be better than tackling problems separately — for example, to keep Europe's rivers clean and railways safe.

To do this, these countries established a European Union government, now covering 28 countries. All member states elect and send representatives to a body that rules over the EU's 508 million people on matters of migration, job creation, growth, digital technology, agriculture, justice, free trade, energy, economic policy, climate protection, and human rights.

The EU's 28 countries:

- Austria
- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Germany

- Greece
- Hungary
- Ireland
- Italy
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Malta
- Netherlands
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- United Kingdom

The integration of these 28 countries is unprecedented. It's a large experiment that unites formerly autonomous governments to promote peace and cooperation among them.



Stuart Franklin France. Strasbourg. 2001. A session of the European Parliament.

How it's done

To do this, the member states agreed to create joint institutions that are like those you find in any country such as a parliament, courts, and a central bank. These are the most important ones:

The European Commission is an executive body that drafts legislative proposals and polices agreements.

The European Council is made up of the members' heads of government, a president and the president of the European Commission. They provide guidance but hold no legislative power.

The Council of the European Union (or Council of Ministers) consists of the member states' ministers of education, public health, finance, and other matters and is part of the legislative system, along with the European Parliament.

The European Parliament has 751 elected representatives from the 28 member countries. It has 24 official languages and is based in Brussels, Belgium, and Strasbourg, France. The European Parliament's laws are binding in all member countries. Some laws bind a member state to achieve a particular goal, but it is left to the country to decide on a course of action.

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The European Parliament is made up of 751 members (MEPs) elected in the 28 member states of the European Union. Since 1979, MEPs have been elected by direct vote for five-year terms. (Before then, national governments appointed MEPs.)

Each country decides on the form its elections take but must guarantee universal suffrage (all adult EU citizens must be allowed to vote) and a secret ballot. The minimum voting age is 18, except in Austria, where it is 16.

Seats are allocated roughly according to the population of each member state, with less-populous countries having more MEPs per resident than larger nations do. Slightly more than a third of MEPs are women. MEPs are grouped by political affinity, not nationality.

MEPs divide their time among their constituencies; Strasbourg, France; and Brussels, Belgium.

HOW IT WORKS

The 751 members are members of 16 political parties, or Europarties, which receive funding from the EU and are permitted to campaign during elections.

They form nine political groups (which are subject to change), along with the national parties of the 28 member countries and independent politicians. These groups are not allowed to campaign during elections. The groups range along the spectrum of political ideologies in the European Parliament, from left-wing, green groups, which generally advocate for more EU

integration and a deepening of social democracy (for a description of this concept, see [“What Makes Europe Europe”](#)), to right-wing, Euroskeptic ones, which oppose the growing influence of the union.

CURRENT GROUPS

- **Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe:** centrist
- **Confederal Group of the European United Left-Nordic Green Left:** left wing
- **Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy:** Euroskeptic
- **Europe of Nations and Freedom:** right wing, Euroskeptic
- **European Conservatives and Reformists:** right wing
- **European People’s Party:** centrist, Christian
- **Greens-European Free Alliance:** left wing, regionalist (pushing for certain regions to become independent from their countries)
- **Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats:** centrist, left wing
- **Non-attached members:** mostly far right

Adapted from the European Parliament website.

The European Court of Auditors looks after the EU budget. Each member state contributes to the budget. The EU's other funding sources include customs duties on imports from outside the union and fines imposed on members that do not comply with EU law.

The European Data Protection Supervisor guards citizens' personal data processed by EU institutions.

The European Central Bank manages the euro and its monetary policy.

The European Investment Bank makes funds available for investments in projects that are important to its member states and advance the goals of the EU, such as the construction of the Athens Metro in Greece (connecting Europe's citizens), the cleanup of the Baltic Sea (protecting the environment), and flood protection in Venice, Italy (preserving cultural heritage).

The Court of Justice of the European Union rules on whether members follow EU law. It can impose fines on members that don't. It also resolves disputes between national governments and helps national courts interpret EU law. The national court of each member country is responsible for ensuring that EU law is applied in the country.

The Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee are designed to give voice to local and regional interests and civil society organizations. Each body consists of 353 members from the 28 member states. They advise the parliament, commission, and council on legislative matters.

The Ombudsman investigates complaints by citizens, residents, businesses, and institutions about delays, discrimination, and abuses of power by EU institutions.

The European External Action Service operates like a foreign ministry. It manages the EU's diplomatic relations with countries outside the union and deals with matters concerning foreign and security policy.



Ian Berry England. London. 1972. Anti Common Market demonstration in London.

Growing pains

While the EU will propose laws when collective action makes more sense than having countries decide on issues alone, in all other cases, each member country's government remains in charge of drafting laws, enforcing them, and running affairs for its residents. This rule isn't always respected, some countries say, and not surprisingly, the EU has had its fair share of growing pains.

Some countries want more autonomy and resist the central authority of the EU. For this reason, among others, in an unprecedented move, U.K. citizens voted to leave the EU in June 2016.

BREXIT

The United Kingdom has been a reluctant member of the European Union since it joined in 1973, and in June 2016 its people voted to leave the EU. This decision was both deeply shocking and very predictable, given the U.K.'s troubled relationship with the EU.

As the European power with the biggest and longest-lasting colonial empire, most Britons have a sense of their country as one of the world's great nations. Because it is an island nation, they see themselves as somewhat separate from the rest of the continent. And as a clear winner, though at a great cost, of World War II, they have strong feelings about the ambitions of other European nations. Nearly all the British political elite places a premium on the country's relationship with the United States.

These factors all help explain why the U.K. was not a founding member of the EU and didn't join until 1973. There were previous national votes, and national political parties fought before over whether the U.K. should stay. Individuals and political parties have changed their positions on and been deeply divided over what the U.K.'s relationship with the EU should be. The U.K. media, especially privately owned tabloid newspapers, have often been notably hostile to the European Commission, based in Brussels, Belgium, which drafts EU laws.

As the powers of the EU expanded and as the size of the EU also expanded to include countries previously aligned with the Soviet Union, the U.K.'s relationship became increasingly tense.

The rise of the U.K. Independence Party, the skepticism of many Conservative Party figures, and

the ambivalence of many Labour Party figures in recent years combined in the U.K. to weaken support for EU membership.

These forces all came to an abrupt resolution in a 2016 U.K. referendum on a Brexit — on whether Britain should exit the EU.

To the surprise of most people, including many “leave” campaigners, Britons voted to withdraw from the European Union, 52 percent to 48 percent. More than 17 millions Britons voted to leave. Most expert observers, opinion polls and financial market voices had expected a narrow victory for “remain.”

The immediate consequences included the resignation of Prime Minister David Cameron, who supported U.K. membership in the EU, and the U.K.’s European commissioner in Brussels, Jonathan Hill.

There is a major debate over why people in the U.K. voted to leave. There is a consensus that some Britons are angry or feel negatively affected by the EU’s approach to migration. Under EU rules, citizens of any of the 28 member countries have the right to work in the 27 countries outside their home, in nearly all circumstances. This for example, has led to many citizens from EU countries with relatively low wages to move to the U.K. to take advantage of the country’s relatively flexible labor market.

Outside the capital, London, there are fewer immigrants from inside and outside the EU. In London, there is a large pro-EU and pro-immigration majority, and it is one of the most diverse and successful cities in the world. If the U.K. follows through on the vote to exit the EU, leaving and establishing a new trade relationship with the EU could take two to 10 years, according to experts.

Some members blame other countries for not abiding by EU law. Germany blamed Greece, for example, for missing its debt payments, deepening a financial crisis. Greece, in turn, feels constrained by conditions it cannot fulfill without suffering immense social costs.

THE GREEK CRISIS

Several factors contributed to the Greek economic crisis, in particular the poor management of public finances by Greek leaders and the country's inability to modernize its fiscal infrastructure and economic production to meet the demands of being part of the same currency as more advanced economies such as Germany and the Netherlands.

In 2009, eight years after Greece joined the euro, there was a change of government in Greece. The new administration publicized that its predecessor had not fully revealed the poor state of the country's public finances. It emerged that during 2009, Greece spent 36 billion euros more than it raised from taxes. The Greek government had been borrowing to cover this deficit, but as soon as the size of the problem was revealed, international investors stopped wanting to lend to Greece.

This created an unprecedented challenge for the eurozone because in normal circumstances a country in Greece's position would default, or stop paying its creditors, and devalue its currency to regain competitiveness. This was not possible in this case since, as a member of the eurozone, Greece had no autonomous control over its currency. Eurozone leaders decided that allowing a fellow member to default would mean that investors would lose confidence in other countries in the single currency, triggering a financial crisis across Europe.

This prompted decisionmakers to bail out Greece in May 2010 with the help of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which had experience of such rescue packages in other, mostly developing, countries. The European Commission, the European Central Bank and the IMF lent the Greek

government the money needed in order to keep paying the investment firms and banks that held the country's bonds. At 110 billion euros, this was the largest bailout package there had ever been for a country.

In return for this money, Greece was required to apply a policy of economic austerity, severely reducing public spending and raising taxes. Pensions and public sector wages have been cut drastically over the last few years, and Greeks' per capita income is now roughly 30 percent lower than when the crisis began. Because of the decision not to allow Greece to default and the rapid pace of fiscal adjustment that was demanded, the Greek economy suffered a collapse. Hundreds of thousands of jobs were lost as companies went out of business because of declining demand, reduced spending, difficulties in accessing loans and all-around uncertainty.

During the course of the crisis, criticism built up of the decision by the eurozone, along with the IMF, to demand tough austerity policies in return for lending money to Greece so it could meet its debt obligations. Many economists around the world argued that repeatedly demanding cuts and reforms to Greece's economy without supplying it with debt relief — measures that would reduce the amount of money that the government would have to repay its lenders each year — was putting too

much pressure on the country and its people. European politicians, though, felt they were restricted in their options because wiping away part of Greece's debt would have diluted the overall policy of fiscal austerity and would have been unpopular in their countries, where many voters had been given the impression that the crisis had been caused by laziness and wastefulness on the part of the Greeks.

The deepening recession, which saw about a quarter of Greece's economy wiped out over a few years, brought with it social unrest and political instability. For example, Greece had four governments from 2011 to 2015. As a result, there was constant speculation, fueled by some European politicians, about whether Greece would or should remain in the eurozone.

In March 2012 eurozone leaders agreed on a second package of loans for Greece, totaling 130 billion euros.

The economic decline, the austerity policies, the frequent changes of governments, voter discontent, and the inability of Greek leaders to implement structural changes (such as improving tax collection, making the country's justice system more efficient, and creating more amenable conditions for business investment) created a vicious cycle that Greece has found difficult to escape since 2009.

This led to Greeks' electing in January 2015 a government headed by the newly formed left-wing party Syriza, which promised to end austerity and adopt a different type of economic policy. Despite long and sometimes angry negotiations with other eurozone members, the new administration was not able to make any headway. On July 5, 2015, Syriza put the latest round of conditions for further bailouts to the country to a national referendum, the result of which was an overwhelming 61 percent voting for rejection, raising the possibility of Greece's exit from the EU, or Grexit. Despite this outcome, the government capitulated to the eurozone leaders' demands and by mid-July signed off on Greece's third bailout, worth 85 billion euros.

Greece has stayed in the eurozone but remains in a difficult position, even after the bailouts and several years of austerity. Its economy has seen extremely low growth since the crisis began, the unemployment rate is close to 25 percent, and the country's public debt is about 180 percent of GDP.

Voter turnout to elect members of the European Parliament has reached its lowest levels ever, possibly signaling that citizens do not feel sufficiently represented by European political parties. Many people say the distance between the

public and the political leaders of the EU has become vast. This makes it very easy for national political leaders to blame the EU for many problems in their countries.

The 28 members are adjusting to challenges as they arise. The current migration that you're a part of is one such a challenge. (See ["Coming to Europe."](#))



Thomas Dworzak Turkey. Istanbul. August 2014. More than 300,000 refugees have arrived in Istanbul since the war in Syria began.

Still desired

Despite these difficulties, other countries in Europe continue to ask to join the EU. Currently, Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Turkey are seeking admission.

Turkey and Europe

Turkey and Europe have a long history, characterized at times by admiration and alliance, at others by fear and conflicting interests, and always by a lack of deeper mutual understanding.

Turkish tribes that had adopted Islam began moving into the eastern border regions of the Orthodox Christian Byzantine Empire 1,000 years ago and conquered Constantinople (today's Istanbul) in 1453. Their Ottoman Empire mastered the Balkans and Middle East for more than four centuries and even threatened Western Europe before being beaten back from the gates of Vienna — twice.

This history of Turkish conquest and European alarm went into reverse in the 200 years up through 1923, with the Europeans and Russians pushing Turkish armies back on all fronts and ultimately nearly destroying Turkish control of Anatolia.

Tragedies abounded that wiped out many of the minorities that were the empire's trading and intellectual classes. From 1915 to 1922, its ancient population of Armenians was nearly wiped out in what is now known to almost all except Turkey as the Armenian genocide. After a doomed invasion by Athens in 1919, the Greek minority was expelled in exchange for the Turkish Muslim communities of Greece.

But an extraordinary feat of Turkish resistance — helped by European exhaustion after World War I — in 1923 forced Europe to recognize a new Republic of Turkey built from the ruins of the Ottoman Empire.

This achievement was largely due to the general who led the Turkish war of liberation, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. He epitomized the paradox of Turkey's European relationship. He taught Turks that they could only ever trust themselves and that they should vigilantly defend their independence. But for Turkey to be as strong as European nations, he commanded Turks to learn from European civilization, to remove Islam from the public space and to adopt a secular constitution. He copied into Turkish law commercial, penal and family codes from Italy, France, Switzerland, and other European countries, sometimes verbatim.

Nearly a century later, Turkey still embodies these paradoxes.

In theory, Turkey is negotiating to join the European Union — a process that has been underway in fits and starts since the 1950s, when Turkey, scared by Soviet threats against its territory, joined the main Western military alliance, NATO. Turkey is still (slowly) copying European laws into its legislation as part of the accession negotiations; two-thirds of Turkey's foreign investment comes from EU states, 5 million people of Turkish origin live in Europe, and half of Turkey's trade is with EU members.

But in practice, Turkey's average income remains half of Europe's, with little chance of catching up soon. Europe fears Turkey's 80 million people will mean more migrants one day. Turkey is defensive against Europe's commercial power and suspicious of any attempt to pool or dilute its sovereignty — precisely what the EU was set up to do.

This means that at best, the EU accession process has been a game in which Turkey pretends it is going to join the EU and the EU pretends it is going to accept it. This has been an exercise in constructive ambiguity that, perhaps surprisingly, has had many benefits for both sides.

At worst, however, the two sides see each other as hypocritical or even duplicitous, exaggerating the differences between Turkey's Islamic culture and Europe's Christian one, using the refugee

crisis to score cheap points, and personalizing political differences.

Ultimately, however, Turkey has deeper and broader links to Europe than to the Middle East, Russia, or the United States. And in the end, for Europe, the whole of its relationship with Turkey is worth more than the sum of its parts, even though it often has trouble seeing this reality.

As countries join the EU (this is called accession), they must agree to uphold EU laws and become signatories to all EU treaties, or binding agreements.



Thomas Dworzak Luxembourg. Schengen. In this village near Germany and France, an agreement was signed on June 14, 1985, to open Europe's internal borders, creating what is now known as the Schengen Area.

Key history

This timeline includes the most important treaties as well as the dates countries joined the EU or its forerunners. The bloc has its roots in an agreement among six nations. Today EU membership stands at 28; if the U.K. leaves, it will be down to 27.

1951, Treaty of Paris This was one of the first agreements toward the goal of cooperation among European countries. It united Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and West Germany in the European Coal and Steel Community. It pooled the coal and steel production of its members to reduce competition, primarily between France and Germany, which had been at war on and off for centuries.

1957, Treaty of Rome The European Economic Community was formed to create a common market among the six countries of the European Coal and Steel Community — a big step toward political integration. The agreement made it easier for their citizens to move among those countries at a time of great economic

growth. The treaty was the first in the bloc to lower trade barriers and reduce tariffs on imported goods. Economic integration was a way to later achieve more political integration.

1953, European Convention on Human Rights In direct response to the horrors and fascist movements of World War II (which you read about in “Rising From the Ashes of War”), 12 countries founded the Council of Europe and then ratified the European Convention on Human Rights to protect basic rights, outlawing human trafficking, racism, sexual exploitation, torture, and other wrongs. It is one of the most significant accomplishments of European countries seeking to prevent war. (The Council of Europe is independent of the EU and has 47 member nations, including Russia and many other former Soviet states.)

The EU’s **human rights charter**, which came into force in 2009, is based on this convention. Under this treaty, individuals can directly ask the European Court for Human Rights to protect their rights.

You, as a refugee, also enjoy the protection of this convention. This means you should not be returned to places where you would be at risk of being tortured or suffer cruel and inhuman treatment or punishment. You also have the right, according to this convention, to be reunited with your family under certain conditions.

(More on this in [Coming to Europe.](#))

1970s Spain and Portugal ended decades of fascist rule under Francisco Franco and António de Oliveira Salazar. The countries' accession to the EU in 1986 reinforced the bloc's commitment to liberal democracy and pulled in other countries, inspired by the connections they drew among peace, democracy and free-market economies.

EMILIO SILVIA, 50, JOURNALIST, MADRID, SPAIN

I am 50 years old, and I am writing about something that happened 80 years ago. Societies that don't heal their wounds pass that responsibility to the following generations.

My grandmother Modesta died in 1997, 22 years after the end of the terrible dictatorship of Gen. Francisco Franco, which had caused enormous suffering — half a million people exiled, political prisoners, 114,226 men and women disappeared, babies robbed from prisons.

In the 1930s, Spain had a republic and made many social advances. It universalized education, legalized women's right to vote, created a constitution that recognized all the international human rights of the time, and brought arts and

culture to the farthest corners of the country. [In 1931 anti-monarchist candidates won the majority of votes in municipal elections. King Alfonso XIII fled the country, and the Spanish people celebrated the beginning of the Second Republic. Its supporters were known as republicans.] But the creation of a modern state with citizens' rights had powerful enemies, and the military [led by the fascist generals Emilio Mola and Franco, among others] staged a coup d'état and unleashed a terrible war.

My grandmother Modesta spent almost her entire life biting her tongue, too afraid to talk. Although I spent many summers with her, I never heard her say anything about her husband, my grandfather Emilio. He had gone missing, even from my grandmother's tongue.

On Oct. 16, 1936, my grandfather was stopped by Falange [a Spanish fascist group founded by José Antonio Primo de Rivera] paramilitaries and taken with 14 other men a few kilometers away and murdered in a ditch.

He was a republican, a defender of public education. For many years he remained missing in that ditch, where he shared his grave with 12 men.

When the Spanish dictatorship ended, the people who were in charge of our transition to democracy thought we could go on as if no human rights violations had ever happened. But the absence of

thousands of missing Spaniards filled the silences, fueling the people's fear and building barriers that stopped the thousands of grandmothers, sons, and sisters from raising their voices to talk about their loved ones.

I'm a journalist, and maybe that's one way to fight against my family's silence. By luck, in March of 2000, while working on an article about the dictatorship, I met a man who knew where my grandfather's grave was. Thirteen bodies were exhumed from it that October. There are stories of thousands of victims, hidden in ditches.

I've kept my mouth shut all my life, unable to speak in public, as if I had inherited my grandmother's silence. I broke that silence when they exhumed my grandfather. My silence was born there 30 years before me, and there it died.

In Spain there are at least 114,226 missing people in mass graves. Thousands also went missing into exile and died there, unable to return. Almost half a million Spanish men, women, and children crossed the border on foot at the beginning of 1939, looking for refuge in France, fleeing the fascist armies of Franco, Adolf Hitler, and Benito Mussolini, who had allied themselves in the war in Spain. Many of the Spanish refugees were transferred to internment camps built by French authorities on the beaches, where women gave birth in the sand, the conditions were

miserable, and many people fell ill. The image of desperate, hungry people behind wire is something that has repeated itself throughout the world since our time. It's the same fear, the same desperation, and the same lack of government solidarity.

Governments can try to make us forget, but you can't destroy memory. Human rights have been built from mountains of suffering. My grandmother now lies in peace with my grandfather, and although their remains have decomposed, through their DNA, they converse.

Over the past 15 years, 6,500 people have been exhumed. Because the Spanish government refused to take up the search, it became the work of 700 volunteers from 20 nations. You can't disappear a person whom someone loved and knew. The memory of human dignity is inherited by those who refuse to lose theirs.

1992, Treaty of Maastricht European countries prepared for more economic integration and a common currency. This meant that the French lost the franc, Italians lost the lira, the Dutch lost the guilder, and so on, in 2003. Nineteen participating countries traded their local money for a new common currency called the euro (it uses this symbol: €), which is managed by the European Central Bank, whose primary task is to

maintain price stability by managing inflation rates across the union. The EU decides on monetary and economic policies; fiscal policies (taxes and spending) remain in the hands of the members. The Treaty of Maastricht formally created the European Union.

1993, Copenhagen criteria With the bloc's economic and social achievements attracting more countries seeking to become member states, it set conditions for accession, including that candidate countries be democratic and adopt EU law, such as the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. (More on this in [What Makes Europe Europe](#).)

1995, Schengen Convention The free movement of goods and people across the borders of its signatories was implemented, reducing border controls and establishing a visa system — made possible by the end of the Cold War. Citizens of countries under the agreement can cross those nations' borders without much scrutiny. It provided the basis for the creation of a common European asylum system, which sets out rules to offer asylum seekers and refugees international protection. (More on this in [Coming to Europe](#).) Only the U.K. and Ireland chose not to fully abide by the agreement. This means that all travelers require identification when crossing their borders.

1997, Amsterdam Treaty All migration and asylum matters, including the Schengen Agreement, were moved under EU law. The same year, the Dublin Convention, which set up criteria for allocating responsibility for processing asylum claims to the member states in 1990 (see ["The Dublin Regulation"](#)), came into force.

2006, Treaty of Lisbon Because the EU continued to expand, officials decided to clarify the structure of the centralized body and make it more efficient with this treaty. It established the current structure of the European Union, and it increased the bloc's political integration by enhancing the powers of the European Parliament.

Europe, my country

As economic integration sped ahead, the EU became bigger and more diverse. It became more difficult for citizens of member nations to get to know one another. To promote interaction among residents of its different countries, the EU launched programs for cultural exchanges (like festivals and literary translations), language courses and foreign study experiences like Erasmus in EU member states. Each year, the EU names two cities as its cultural capitals to share their

heritage with the rest of the union. This way, Europeans learn about other places. In 2016 the EU chose San Sebastián, Spain, and Wrocław, Poland.

PHILIPP FRITZ, 29, JOURNALIST, BERLIN,
GERMANY

I always wanted to study in Poland because of my family. I was born in the German village of Elmshorn, about 300 kilometers from Berlin. But my mother is Polish, and my father is an ethnic German refugee who fled Poland in the 1970s when he was about 18 years old.

At home, my parents spoke to each other in Polish. When I was young, this embarrassed me. I remember thinking, “Oh, my God, why do my parents speak this weird language? Why can’t they speak English, like in Hollywood movies, or other European languages like French or Spanish?” Even if Germany is a migrant society and every kid in my class had some sort of immigrant background, as a kid, I didn’t want to be different. I didn’t really care about Poland or being partly Polish. I spoke Polish at home but not properly and mostly limited to “thank you,” “hello.” I also went on summer vacations in Poland to visit family, but that was it.

Then as a teenager, I started being interested in Poland. I felt I was missing out on conversations

with my family, some of whom spoke only Polish. The part of my identity that I suppressed as a kid had resurfaced, so I decided to become fluent in Polish and learn more about my roots.

When I heard about Erasmus, the EU's exchange program that funds students to study in another country to get to know its culture, I jumped at the opportunity. It was the perfect fit. In 2011 I got a scholarship to study at Jagiellonian University in Krakow [Poland]. Krakow is a student city. It's the place to be, really, so it worked out well.

Erasmus changed my life.

In Poland I delved deeper into my identity. "Who am I? What makes me German, European or Polish? How would I have lived my life had my parents stayed in Poland?"

My decision to go back to Poland influenced my life in so many ways. I might not have met Kasia, my longtime girlfriend. I first saw her in a bar. She was looking at me, and I was looking at her, but I wasn't sure if I should start talking to her, because there was another guy with her. It turned out to be her best friend, I later learned.

The next day we met by accident in the apartment of a mutual friend. We decided to meet up for coffee to speak Polish and German together. She wanted to brush up on her German, which she studied before. It was a great excuse for a date.

After that, we practiced Polish together, especially the declamations, the dative, the genitive. It sounds silly, I know. We once took a walk together by the Vistula River on one of the warmest days of the year. She had her hair untied, and I remember how much I wanted to be in a relationship with her. It was my best Erasmus memory.

As my language skills improved, I was able to understand my grandfather better. For the first time in my life, I could talk to him.

Professionally, Erasmus helped me a great deal too. I am now nearly bilingual and work for two German newspapers, Die Berliner Zeitung and a Jewish weekly, Jüdische Allgemeine. I also freelance for Poland's biggest newspaper, Gazeta Wyborcza.

You know, often Europe is treated as an economic union, but it's not just about open borders and travel. It's about creating a mutual understanding. Although Poland is a neighboring country, it's still far away to a lot of Germans.

For students in the so-called new member states of 2004, including Poland, programs like Erasmus are a great chance to travel and see different things. In 2007, Kasia was an Erasmus student at the Universidad de Salamanca in Spain.

Kasia and I didn't stop traveling after we finished our Erasmus exchanges. I moved to Bremen

[Germany] to finish my studies and obtain my degree in history and sociology. She moved to Amsterdam [the Netherlands] to work. After one year, we moved to Berlin together. We're still a couple. One week we speak German, and the other we speak Polish.

Photo section



Carl De Keyser Belgium. Diksmuide. August 1987. Ijzerbedevaart, an annual remembrance of slain Flemish soldiers attended mostly by right-wing Flemish nationalists. Belgium is a founding member of the EU.



Raymond Depardon France. Criel-sur-Mer. France is a founding member of the EU.



Ferdinando Scianna Italy. Corigliano. Italy is a founding member of the EU.



Thomas Dworzak Luxembourg. Schengen. 2016. The Schengen Area was named after this village on the Luxembourg-Germany-France frontier where the agreement to open internal European borders was signed, June 14, 1985.



Carl De Keyzer The Netherlands. Vrouwenpolder. 2012. Part of the largest storm- surge barrier in the world. The Netherlands are one of the founding members of the EU.



Thomas Dworzak Germany. Rust. 2016. Europa- Park, the largest theme park in Germany and the second largest in Europe. Germany is one of the founding members of the EU.



Mark Power Denmark. Løkken. Aug. 12, 1995. Part of Adolf Hitler's now abandoned Atlantic Wall, built to defend continental Europe against British attack from the sea during World War. Denmark joined the EU of Jan. 1, 1973.



David Hurn Ireland. Killarney. 1984. The tradition of Irish dancing is kept alive by numerous schools. Ireland joined the EU on Jan. 1, 1973.



Martin Parr England. New Brighton. Early 1980s. England joined the EU on Jan. 1, 1973.



Alex Majoli Greece. Athens. 2014. In the distance, Mount Lycabettus, the highest point in Athens. Greece joined the EU on Jan. 1, 1981.



Susan Meiselas Portugal. Lisbon. 2004. The Cova de Moura neighborhood is home to many immigrants from Cape Verde, a former Portuguese colony. Portugal joined the EU on Jan. 1, 1986.



Cristina García Rodero Spain. Abaràn. 1993. Cruz de Mayo, the Festival of the Crosses, is celebrated on May 3 each year. Spain joined the EU on Jan. 1, 1986.



Chien-Chi Chang Austria. Bad Ischl. 2013. The annual celebration honoring Franz Josef I, the Austrian emperor from 1848 to 1916, on his birthday. Austria joined the EU on Jan. 1, 1995.



Patrick Zachmann Finland. The northernmost member of the EU, it joined the bloc on Jan. 1, 1995.



Jonas Bendiksen Sweden. Stockholm. 2013. Hammarby Sjöstad, a housing development in eastern Stockholm. Sweden joined the EU on Jan. 1, 1995.



Martin Parr Hungary. Budapest. 1997. The Szechenyi thermal baths. Hungary joined the EU on May 1, 2004.



Peter Marlow Cyprus. Nicosia. 2004. The Ledra Palace crossing point between the island's Greek and Turkish sides.



Martin Parr Czech Republic. Prague. 2005. A guide leading English-speaking tourists. The Czech Republic joined the EU on May 1, 2004.



Ian Berry Estonia. Tallinn. 2002. Raekoja plats, the main square in the old city. Estonia joined the EU on May 1, 2004.



Alex Majoli Latvia. Riga. 2004. Inside the national TV station's building. Latvia joined the EU on May 1, 2004.



Christopher Anderson Lithuania. Trakai National Park, near Vilnius. 2003.
Lithuania joined the EU on May 1, 2004.



Carl De Keyzer Malta. Mellieha. 2004. Our Lady of Victories Festa. Tourists on the square in front of the church during the religious festa. Malta joined the EU on May 1, 2004.



Mark Power Poland. Gdansk. November 2004. The shipyard where the Solidarity movement was founded in 1980.



Chris Steele-Perkins Slovakia. Zilina. 2012. A factory for the Korean car company Kia. Slovakia joined the EU on May 1, 2004.



Martin Parr Slovenia. Piran. 2004. Slovenia joined the EU on May 1, 2004.



Bruno Barbey Bulgaria. Sofia. January 2007. A recently developed district in the capital. Bulgaria joined the EU on Jan. 1, 2007.



Paolo Pellegrin Romania. 2007. A bus station in Baia Mare. Romania joined the EU on Jan. 1, 2007.



Carl De Keyzer Croatia. Kraljevica. 2011. Stairs used for fishing. Croatia joined the EU on July 1, 2013.

What Makes Europe Europe

While countries in the EU each have their own history, language, culture, and customs, they also have a few things in common that make life in Europe, wherever you are, similar. This chapter will introduce you to some of these similarities.

IN EUROPE, EVERYBODY'S SOMEBODY'S FOOL

Understanding Europeans means realizing how they come to live together in harmony, even though they come from very different cultures and traditions. One way they do that is by telling jokes, showing the sense of humor that has made Europe tick for decades, if not centuries. Rather than being aggressive or offensive, that rich joke folklore can be seen as the affectionate and teasing way members of the European family relate to one another, just as any family does. Telling jokes can help establish an identity and help people treasure their diversity. And of course, they can give you a good laugh too.

Sometimes, the jokes that Europeans tell give insight into the continent's history. The French depict the Belgians as simpleminded, which dates back to the Industrial Revolution in the 19th century when Belgian workers went off to the mines and factories of northern France and were looked on as strikebreakers. Swedes think of their

Norwegian neighbors as uncouth country folk — a friendly rivalry that wasn't helped when the Norwegians struck it rich by discovering oil in the North Sea. In the 1970s, the two countries' most widely read newspapers started a war of jokes, without a shot being fired. Meanwhile, Hungarians tell jokes about Scots, 2,000 miles away, which may date as far back as the 15th century, when many Scots migrated to Eastern Europe.

So much for the facts; let's get to the jokes. Here are just a few of the funniest ones the people of Europe tell about each other.

The Belgians tease the French for being arrogant:

"After God created France, he thought it was the most beautiful country in the world. People were going to get jealous, so to make things fair, he decided to create the French."

And the French say the Belgians are dumb:

"Why does the Arab world have oil and Belgium have fries? Because when the world was created, the Belgians got to choose first."

The Swedes love to make fun of their "stupid"

Norwegian neighbors:

"Why did the library in Oslo shut down?
Someone stole the book."

The Portuguese mock the Spanish for thinking they're better than everyone else:

"In a recent survey, 11 out of 10 Spaniards said they felt superior to others."

The Swiss say the Austrians aren't too bright:

"Why is the Austrian flag red, white, and red? So they can't fly it upside down."

The Austrians say their German neighbors don't laugh enough:

"What is the shortest book in the world? '500 Years of German Humor.'"

The Greeks think the Albanians are backward:

"What is the special Albanian tomato soup? Hot water in a red bowl."

The Ukrainians accuse the Russians of being stinking rich:

"'I just bought a tie for 3,000 euros,' says a Russian to his friend. His friend replies, 'Idiot! You could have bought the same one down the street for 5,000 euros.'"

Other Europeans think the English are stuffy:

"What's the English definition of a thrill? Having an After Eight mint at 7:30."

And the Italians make jokes about ... themselves:
“What do you call an Italian with his hands in his pockets? A mute.”

The EU is built on the idea that only when everyone respects one another's rights, regardless of immigration status, can freedom exist.

Every individual has the same fundamental rights. They are enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights, which was adopted in the aftermath of World War II to ensure that all people, including the millions of refugees fleeing persecution, are protected. (See [“Nuts and Bolts”](#))

This means that all people, regardless of gender, race, national origin, genetic features, religion, political or other opinion, age, sexual orientation, language, disability or other traits — female, male, old, young, black, white, immigrant, native, Muslim, Christian, LGBTI, cisgender — have the same fundamental rights. These rights were reiterated and expanded on in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, which was inspired by the principles of dignity, justice, freedom, solidarity, and equality.

Each member country needs to implement national laws and follow EU regulations that respect the charter.

However, vulnerable communities — particularly Roma, Muslims, Jews, LGBTI people, and migrants and refugees — are most at risk of suffering from discrimination (or being

disadvantaged for who they are or for what they believe) and crimes motivated against people on the basis of their national origin, gender, race, or any of the other categories above.

Know your essential rights:



Abbas France. Paris. Jan. 17, 2004. A march against the ban on wearing hijabs in government schools and offices. The mask reads, "Where are liberty, equality, fraternity?" — a reference to the national motto.

Freedom of expression and media

Everyone has the right to express his or her opinions and to share information without interference from government. Having freedom of expression and a free press is a critical factor in whether a country may become a member of the EU.

There are, however, exceptions to this right. Freedom of expression is not an absolute right but one that needs to be balanced with other considerations

— for example, when it affects other important rights.

Therefore, the EU outlaws hate speech, or forms of expression that spread, incite, or promote hatred; negative stereotyping; and stigmatization of or threats against people on the basis of race, gender, national origin, genetic features, religion, political opinion, age, sexual orientation, language or disability. These strike at the fundamental rights of equality and nondiscrimination.

WHAT IS LGBTI?

In the EU, LGBTI describes a diverse group of people who do not conform to conventional notions of male and female or to traditional gender roles. LGBTI people are also sometimes referred to as sexual, gender or bodily minorities.

LESBIAN:

describes women whose physical, romantic or emotional attraction is to other women.

GAY:

describes men whose physical, romantic or emotional attraction is to other men. The term can also be used to describe lesbians.

BISEXUAL:

describes individuals whose physical, romantic or emotional attraction is to both men and women.

TRANSGENDER:

describes people whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth or people who wish to express their gender identity in a way different from their gender assigned at birth. This includes people who are between male and female, transsexuals and transvestites.

CISGENDER:

describes people whose gender identity corresponds to the sex they were assigned at birth.

INTERSEX:

describes people with bodily variations from culturally established standards of maleness and

femaleness regarding chromosomes, gonads and genitals.

Adapted from the European Parliamentary Research Service's "The Rights of LGBTI People in the European Union." _

Denying the Holocaust is illegal in a number of EU countries, including Germany, Italy, and Austria. These prohibitions were adopted in hopes of preventing a recurrence of its atrocities.

It is also illegal to deliberately and publicly make racist comments against immigrants. In the Netherlands, a politician named Geert Wilders instructed a room of supporters before the 2014 municipal elections to chant that they wanted "fewer, fewer" Moroccans. The public prosecutor has accused him of inciting racial hatred.

However, the definition of "hate speech" is subjective and varies among member countries. The greatest challenges in determining what is hate speech arise in cases in which religious feelings are insulted.

In the EU, individuals have rights, but religious figures do not. Therefore, it is legal to talk about or depict religious figures such as Jesus, Mary, and Muhammad in ways that many people may find insulting. While you as an individual have rights to not be physically or economically harmed by hate speech, inflicting emotional harm from such expression is not always prohibited.

This distinction has led to several controversies in recent years, when speech that ridicules religion or religious figures has hurt the feelings of large groups of people and sparked protests — some violent — around the world, fueled in part by anger that such speech is protected.

NADA DIANE FRIDI, 31, ARCHITECT, PARIS,
FRANCE

I was born between the mountains and the Mediterranean Sea in the sunny city of Algiers, Algeria, in the mid-1980s. Until the civil war — what we now call the Black Decade — life was good. But in those dark years, many innocent citizens, intellectuals, and progressives, as well as the populations of whole villages, were slaughtered. The Islamists often threatened my mother, a doctor, raising me alone after her divorce.

My mother and I fled to France when I was 10 years old, and although it broke my heart to leave everything behind on such short notice, not fearing for my mom's life on a daily basis took such a weight off my shoulders that I got used to my new country very quickly. I was very good in school, and my teachers were always surprised to learn my origin, because there are quite a few stereotypes about North African immigrants in

France. During our first year living in France, my French teacher gave me the best grade she'd ever given, and when she congratulated my mother, she asked her if we were Italian or Spanish, and how was my French so impeccable? When my mom said we were Algerian, the teacher was speechless.

On the morning of Wednesday, Jan. 7, 2015, I was at my office waiting for my client to review my designs for his new bar. But when he showed up, he was clearly very upset and asked me, "Have you heard?"

That's how I found out that two gunmen had stormed the office of the magazine "Charlie Hebdo," barely a mile away. Together with my business partner, we gathered around a computer to follow the story. Soon we found out the attackers identified as Muslims and had justified their horrific acts as retaliation for the magazine's racist cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad.

I was in utter shock. It introduced the feeling that we weren't safe in Paris. The footage from the attacks looked like a movie or something that happens in faraway war zones that we see in the news.

"Charlie Hebdo" became a symbol of freedom of speech and a litmus test for whether you were a civilized peace lover or an agent of foreign hatred. So you had to say "Je suis Charlie" [I am Charlie]

— otherwise, you were against free speech and for the killers.

This became a way to divide us in France. People were checking on social media to see who was and who wasn't Charlie, looking to see how many dark-skinned or nonwhite people were declaring it. So "Je suis Charlie" became a tool to judge, make assumptions, and discriminate.

And the French government used it to whitewash and distract from its own contradictions. The French president marched behind the slogan with politicians from different countries, some of which have journalists and free thinkers imprisoned, beaten, or killed.

That image was so hypocritical and appalling, even if "Charlie Hebdo" had been actually a symbol of freedom of speech. I felt it an insult to the intelligence of a diverse body of French citizens to rally them behind such a simplified and misused slogan. It also legitimized this idea that those of us who rejected the slogan weren't really French. It excluded us from the national grieving.

It was also used to absolve us as French people of the responsibility for the killers. As if they were foreign, when the French social system is the very place where the killers were born and raised. They were a part of our society.

I am for free speech and against these senseless killings, but I am not Charlie. I never liked "Charlie

Hebdo.” It’s vulgar and not funny. Basically, whenever I encountered it, I’d roll my eyes at the front cover that was purposely shocking and provocative.

But to me, it’s not hate speech. I might not laugh when “Charlie Hebdo” makes fun of women, Muslims, athletes, and musicians, and sometimes I’m even disgusted, but we are in a country where this type of expression is neither taboo nor condemnable. It’s just a French fact, just as much as cheese and everyday sexual harassment and very good health care are also French.

For example:

- In 2006 a Danish newspaper, Jyllands-Posten, published cartoons ridiculing the Prophet Muhammad.
- Charlie Hebdo, a French satirical magazine and the target of a terrorist attack in January 2015 on its offices in Paris that killed 12 people, regularly publishes cartoons ridiculing the Prophet Muhammad.
- The Polish magazine Wprost regularly features satirical images of Catholic figures, such as the Virgin Mary and Jesus wearing gas masks to highlight the environmental problems of Częstochowa, a pilgrimage site.
- There are also special precautions to protect the media. A free press is essential to a stable democracy. Only

when journalists can work freely can they hold powerful people and institutions accountable by exposing corruption, fraud, abuse, and other crimes. Political meddling, excessive media concentration, and any type of harassment, including violence against journalists, are outlawed.

Freedom of religion

In the EU, everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. This right includes the freedom to manifest religion in worship, teaching, practice, and observance.

The right has come after centuries of conflict, most notably in the 16th and 17th centuries, when Catholics fought Protestants across Europe. They are both Christians but interpret their faith differently.

EU members have various relationships to religion: Some countries have recognized an official state religion, while others have separated religion from the state — a principle called secularism. In some countries this model has contributed to excluding religion from the public sphere, a process called secularization, in which people engage in their faith privately.

The charter does not forbid differentiation between religions, as long as equality among religious groups is

guaranteed and discrimination is

outlawed. This means the law does not prevent countries from maintaining a state church, as long as other religions have equal opportunities to access benefits granted to the official religion.

People living in the EU practice various religions. Europe is not exclusively Christian and hasn't been for centuries. Christianity (Protestantism, Roman Catholicism, and Eastern Orthodoxy) and Islam are the most common faiths in most EU countries. The EU, however, is a secular organization.

TATARS: A HISTORY OF ISLAM IN POLAND

The history of Islam in Polish lands can be traced back to the 14th century, when the first Tatars, from Central Asia, settled in the Baltic region, under Polish and Lithuanian rule at the time. The early Tatars were made up of migrants fleeing famine and power struggles in the region of the Black Sea, as well as prisoners of war taken in a series of battles between the grand dukes of Lithuania and the Golden Horde, a khanate of the Mongol Empire.

A community deeply rooted in Islam, the Tatars were granted freedom of religion and the right to build mosques in predominantly Catholic Poland. In the wars of the time, the Tatars fought

consistently on the side of Polish-Lithuanian forces and earned a reputation as courageous fighters.

By the 17th century, an estimated 15,000 Tatars were living in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The Counter-Reformation

(a period in Europe from the mid-16th to mid-18th centuries when the Roman Catholic Church tried to reassert its dominant position in response to the Protestant Reformation) brought worsening political conditions and increasing poverty for the Tatar community in Poland. In 1672 the Tatars rebelled, abandoning the Polish army fighting the Ottoman Empire. To gain back their loyalty, the Polish King Jan III Sobieski negotiated an agreement with the Sejm (Parliament) and restored the Tatars' rights, offering them lands in the eastern part of modern-day Poland. They rejoined the ranks of the Polish army, and in 1683 they helped secure a victory for Poland in the Battle of Vienna, considered by historians to mark the beginning of the decline of the Ottoman Empire.

Today 1,500 to 5,000 Tatars live in Poland, mainly in the northeastern part of the country. While their original languages were forgotten in favor of Polish centuries ago, many Tatars continue to practice Islam in Poland and have preserved their traditions and identity. "I'm proud of my origins," says Magdalena Dżamila Assanowicz, who

lives in Warsaw. “My father is Muslim, and my mother is Catholic, so as a child, I used to confuse churches and mosques.” There are five mosques in Poland today, in Warsaw, Gdansk, Poznan, Bohoniki, and Kruszyń.



Stuart Franklin England. London. 2012. A demonstration outside Parliament, with some participants dressed as suffragists, who fought for British women's right to vote a century ago.

Freedom of assembly and association

In the EU, everyone has the right to assemble or associate peacefully, particularly in political, trade union, and civic matters. The right plays an important role in building support for societal change. It means people can protest or advocate issues in public, collective settings.

RAMMAN ISMAEL, 23, STUDENT LYON, FRANCE
(FROM ALEPPO, SYRIA)

I remember the date of my first demonstration in France: March 15, 2014, the third anniversary of the Syrian revolution. I had been in Paris for only a month and didn't know anyone there but my brother. There were journalists taking pictures, but the atmosphere was sort of flat. No one sang or cheered as they did in Syria. So I told them, "I will sing. Give me the mic." And I sang.

From then on, any protest I went to, I would sing. Any time there was a major event, like an anniversary, we would hold a demonstration and distribute fliers to all our friends. Any photo you see on my Facebook, either Zahia [another activist] or I am up front singing. Same thing for the protests in support of refugees last September.

There are photos on Facebook of the crowds in front of the Place de la République all the way to the Hôtel de Ville. Ten thousand people came.

You could never demonstrate like this in Syria before the revolution. Even after it started, when I was studying in Aleppo, it was too dangerous to protest in the city. Mukhabarat [Syrian intelligence, or secret police] agents were everywhere. I went out only in the northern suburbs, where the opposition was stronger and people didn't know my name. It felt like a celebration, an achievement. To be a student demanding freedom — this was something we could never do before in Syria.

In the beginning of 2013, I had to leave Aleppo and abandon my [high school] studies because of the war. I moved to Kobane, the Kurdish city, but there were problems there, too, mainly between the Free Syrian Army and the PKK [Kurdistan Workers' Party]. The FSA saw any Kurd, like me, as PKK. But I was against the PKK as well. It was recruiting young people to fight and handing out weapons, and I didn't want to join. So I left for Turkey and worked in Istanbul for a while. I was lucky to get a visa to go to Paris in early 2014. I didn't have to make the boat journey to Greece like most.

A few months ago, I moved to Lyon. I am preparing to study for my university-access

diploma [to study architectural engineering], and I work 35 hours a week at a clothing store, Primark, so I don't have much time for activism. I don't know any Syrians here, but recently Syrian friends from outside the city came for a demonstration. They knew the organizers, so I went with them. It was mostly young people — 17, 18, 19 years old — and they didn't know how to sing. So I took the mic and started singing.

It's mostly only Syrians who show up to our demonstrations. Except for September, and that was about refugees, not the situation in Syria. We used to chant slogans just in Arabic, and French people couldn't understand them. Maybe they didn't even know what we were doing — “Is it a celebration or what?” Now we use French too.

But to be honest, I don't think most people here care about Syria. Maybe they will talk for five minutes about the situation there, but then they forget about it. Since the attacks, on every French TV channel, all they talk about is “Daesh, Daesh, Daesh, Daesh” [the Islamic State]. But the problem in Syria isn't just Daesh. There are people dying every day because of shelling. This is what we're trying to get across to people any way we can.

There are exceptions to this rule, such as when assemblies incite hatred or violence.

For example, in Hungary, a court prohibited a reactionary group that held demonstrations in villages with large Roma populations. The association, whose members yelled racist slurs at Roma and wore uniforms reminiscent of those worn by a Hungarian fascist party during World War II, violated the villagers' right to security and liberty, the judges found.

Right to collective bargaining and action

Workers may organize collectively to obtain better work conditions from their employers. They can defend their interests — better pay, vacation days, pension rights, and disability insurance — using strikes and other tools.

In the EU, workers should not have to work an unlimited number of hours; their schedules are defined by law. They also have the right to claim daily and weekly rest periods, have an annual period of paid leave, and working conditions that protect their health, dignity, and safety.

Women are entitled to paid, uninterrupted maternity leave of at least 14 weeks and enjoy various protections during their pregnancy.

Child labor is outlawed. In the EU, a child is any person below the age of 18. With a few exceptions, the minimum

age of an employee may not be lower than the minimum school-leaving age, which can be 16 to 18, depending on the member country's laws.



Bruno Barbey England. London. 2016. The city's annual LGBT Pride Festival in Trafalgar Square.

Sexual freedom

Consensual relations between adults are protected under the charter's right to privacy. The age of consent ranges from 14

to 18 among EU nations.

Most discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation (attraction to people of the opposite sex, the same sex or both) is prohibited in the EU.

Member states must comply with this principle; however, many have yet to implement national policies that outlaw discrimination against LGBTI people (see [“What is LGBTI?”](#)). Their protection across Europe is limited, which exposes them to exclusion from the right to health care, education, and access to goods and services. They are also regularly denied the recognition of marital or family status.

Only 12 members have legalized same-sex marriage. In France, thousands of people protested when it became legal. Others legalized same-sex civil unions, which are similar to marriage but don't always confer on the couple the same benefits and protections, such as tax breaks, adoption, and family reunification rights.

To celebrate the efforts of the gay rights movement, LGBTI groups organize pride marches or parades in many European cities annually.

LEILA, 36, SOCIAL WORKER AND SPECIAL-NEEDS
EDUCATOR, PARIS, FRANCE

My twin brother and I were born in 1980 in Paris. I am a black Arab, meaning that my mum is North African and my dad is Caribbean.

My father was born in French Guyana. He came to France in the late '70s for his military services, which used to be an obligation as soon as you were 18. He was the only one from his family who moved to France. It's just because he met my mother that he decided to stay in Paris. She was born and raised there. Her parents were Algerian.

I didn't grow up Muslim, as we were practicing Buddhism with my dad. My mum used to fast during the month of Ramadan, and it's the only time we practiced Islam. Even though my mum was born in a Muslim family, the politics of assimilation in France were running the life of people with a Muslim background while she was growing up.

I have always been a spiritual person, and the first time I got to know a bit more about Islam was when I was 16. I was in the library and picked up the Quran and read the French translation. I read it in three weeks. I talked to my Muslim aunty about it, and she gave me some books about the life of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (sws). I started reading more and more about Islam and fell in love with it. When I was 20, I decided to become a Muslimah. I started wearing the hijab when I was 25. That was a big decision, especially in an Islamophobic country like France. It became a struggle to find a job in Paris. My life in France became very difficult.

As time passed, my hijab was more than a symbol of faith; it became a symbol of resistance. My hijab is political. My hijab is resistance. I am covered in tattoos, so when people see me with a hijab, they're always shocked. Some non-Muslims like to tell me that I shouldn't have tattoos or dress this way. They're becoming the mufti of Paris. I just want to say, "It's between me and Allah."

I never wear my hijab the same way, just because my mood changes all the time. I love the turban, I love the Arab-style hijab, I love wearing a simple woolly hat, and I love wearing a nice Panama hat. Covering my head is a part of me. And just to disturb the Islamophobic system, I would keep doing it. I also decided to shave my head. You wanna see what's under that hijab? Sorry, boo, no long black hair, soft and shiny like in your "1,001 Nights" fantasy. I'm not Jasmine from "Aladdin."

I always knew I was queer. I was born this way. It was not a problem until you hear queerphobic statements by the majority of people around you. When you hear things from people who share your faith, who reject a part of you, it hurts. People in my Muslim community don't want to accept me as queer. They ask me how I can be queer and practicing at the same time. I think that the main issue for them is that I'm practicing. Being queer and Muslim is not a disease. We are lacking a safe space for us. We are meeting up a lot in really

small groups, but it's still not enough. Some of us are scared, and it's not easy.

Most of my family doesn't know that I'm queer, and I don't believe in telling them anyway. Only my two sisters know about it, and I'm fine with that. I have three kids, and they know Islam, the same way they know about the oppressive system that we are living in. They know the queer community, the anti-racist community. They go to all the protests with me and their dad, who is my ex-husband and is the best ally that I could dream of. He knows about my queerness and has always been supportive and protective. I have the support of my two sisters, the father of my kids, and my kids. It's more than enough.

I feel that the activist scene in Paris is largely white. You feel like you will never be equal to them. As people of color and especially queer people of color, we have to deal with much more prejudice than they do. We have to face racism and queerphobia. They want to speak for us without having a clue about what it is like to be queer and a person of color.

My dream would be to create a space for young queer people of color. A space where they can be themselves and grow up feeling proud, with no guilt or no crap like that.

The advice I would offer to new refugees is to keep coming. We are becoming more active. The

queer people of color organizations are growing. We are fighting for you and with you. Keep coming, and let's kick this racist system, let's kill the border.

Victim rights

In the EU, victims of crimes and violence have rights that protect them. This includes granting recognition and protection against retaliation and further harm by the suspected or accused. It also means providing support, including psychological care, access to justice, and compensation.

Violence against women, or gender-based violence, is prohibited.

ANKE DOMSCHEIT-BERG, 48, PUBLICIST,
BRANDENBURG, GERMANY

I got involved with refugees in August 2015, when the wave of people was coming along the Balkan route. I felt moved to act because what I saw and heard reminded me of stories I'd heard as a child.

My parents are both refugee children from World War II. They are Germans born outside Germany. My mom comes from a region known as Bessarabia, close to the Black Sea. At the time, it was under Russian rule, and German settlers were living in villages there. Then came World War II, and suddenly they were in enemy country and had to leave, first to Poland, then to Germany.

My dad was born in East Prussia, a German area far east. Today it's a Russian exclave between Poland and Lithuania. My father was 10 when he saw the beautiful old city of Königsberg burn to the ground. He fled with his mom and three younger siblings to Germany. I grew up with their stories. How they were starving on the road. They lost everything — family, friends, house, gardens, all their toys.

When I saw those refugee kids arriving on the news, I felt obliged to do something to make life for them a bit easier than my parents had it.

My husband and I are part of a welcome initiative in our small town in Brandenburg, one hour from Berlin. Since September 2015, we've continuously had refugees living in our house: a Syrian rock band with eight people, an Iraqi family, a Syrian family with three little girls. We have really enjoyed having them.

With all the encounters, gender equality has been a topic of interest, more for Germans than for

refugees. There are a lot of prejudices, also real differences.

It's true Germany is advanced in gender equality. For decades our Constitution has clearly stated men and women are equal. We have a female chancellor. Women work. Women may marry or get divorced if they want. They can raise kids with or without a husband. That's a reality.

It's also true that in some other cultures, there is less gender equality. But it's never black and white. Germany has developed a lot, but it has not been like this long. Many people in Germany don't remember that until the 1970s, husbands in West Germany could forbid wives to work.

We've come far in the last decade. Societal, cultural values can change. Germans should listen to what refugees tell us about gender relationships. It's particularly interesting when they talk about sexism they see in Western movies or advertisements and think it's disrespectful toward women. I totally agree: It is sexist and disrespectful. We could learn something from some Arab countries in that respect. Which doesn't mean women in advertisements always have to be covered. But how we picture them, under what circumstances, what roles they play, how available they are as bodies.

We're still developing in Germany. Only since 1997 has rape within marriage been illegal. In July

2016 sexual intercourse without consent became illegal under all circumstances and is now considered rape. Again, under all circumstances. Sexual molestation (for example. groping) is also now punished much harder.

Which means that whatever women wear, however they dress, whether they smile at you or not, it doesn't mean they want sex and are not entitled to full freedom and respect. That's hard for some men, no matter their background, to understand. That's why we have these laws.

Many people will look doubly hard if refugees break those laws. A new clause makes it easy to extradite refugees who violate them.

In all countries, domestic violence and sexual violence are issues, including in Germany. I recently met a couple from Syria. The husband was violent. It was comforting to see how the peer migrant community communicated with this violent husband, explaining to him how this violence was absolutely not according to the Quran's ethics. The two now live separately. He can see the kids, and you can see how quickly the wife is adapting to some freedoms — living on her own with their kids, getting her own money. At the same time, she keeps values important to her, saying her prayers five times a day, sticking to Ramadan traditions. Respect for women and

adhering to stricter German laws does not mean you have to give up cultural values.

The community is supporting her, including Syrian men. Most of them in our city are young, under 35. Her husband is over 60. Those men explained to me that, not much different from in Germany, gender equality views are often more a generational issue than a religious one. They have the same religion but not the same values.

If I look at pictures from my mother in Bessarabia, I see women and men sitting separately in the church, all women wearing headscarves. My mom still became a feminist even with her traditional upbringing. If I look at the change my mother experienced, what I experienced in East Germany, I see how much Germany has changed. I believe that migrants will learn to understand and embrace the concept of gender equality and that Germany too will further develop. Differences within one culture or one community can be big, and we all can learn from one another.

TILLA (NOT HER REAL NAME), 40, ASYLUM
SEEKER, THE NETHERLANDS

I sought asylum three months ago in the Netherlands, fleeing religious persecution in Iran. I stayed in four camps since I arrived here. In one of them I was raped, and no one could hear me scream. I heard it used to be a prison. There were no windows, the walls were sound-resistant, and the doors were heavy. I tried to fight back. I screamed as loud as I could. I pushed him and kicked him. He fell on the chair and table. Nobody heard me because of the walls and doors.

I felt very lonely in the room. It was after only five days that I was raped. I trusted those people from my country. I don't know what they were thinking about me. I was always decently dressed.

I reported the attack to the police. But not the same day. I felt horrible. I didn't know what to do. I am not familiar with the Netherlands and people here. I thought these men at refugee camps might gossip about me and harass me if they found out what happened. I was confused.

The day after the attack, I went to my relatives [outside the camp.] They saw that I was crying and shaking. Finally, I told them everything. The next day we went to the police, and I explained everything to them. Afterward, I received medical treatment and medications, and now I am feeling much better. [My assailant] has fled the Netherlands. The police couldn't catch him.

When I came here and heard about horrible things happening at refugee centers, I never thought these would happen to me. I always felt strong. But sometimes you can't do anything. Men at the refugee camp were different. I had never seen people like that before. They always looked at women as if they weren't wearing anything. This was very disturbing. I didn't like it. I think nobody did. Generally, there are fewer single women in refugee camps and more single men. I think single men cause trouble for women, mainly single women.

Most women don't talk about [sexual violence], but I am sure that it happens to other women as well. But for most, it is very difficult to talk about such a terrible experience. After this incident, all women were invited to a meeting at the refugee center. The staff said that if we experienced any problems, we should talk about it — it shouldn't be a secret. But OK, after I did, nobody helped me. I am in Europe, and I still can't do anything about it. This makes me feel terrible.

The police said that I could file an official complaint against him but that if he isn't in the Netherlands and they can't find him, they won't be able to catch him. I went to the police station over and over again, and I explained more and more, but no results. They can't get him.

After all this, the guy sent a photo of himself holding a long gun, and he sent me threatening messages. He told me if I talk about this with anyone or if I go to the police, he will kill me.

You know, it's very heavy for me because I can't do anything. I wonder, "Why me?" But sometimes I want to talk about it. Maybe I can help other women. Maybe I can do something for women's rights.

Equality of men and women is one of the EU's founding principles. It was established in the Treaty of Rome (see "[Nuts and Bolts](#)"), at the beginning of the union, which said men and women should be paid the same for equal work. Since then, the EU has added more specific rights, such as outlawing violence directed at people because of their gender.

This is a work in progress. About 1 in 3 women older than 15 in the EU has experienced gender-based violence. In many EU countries, more than half the killings of women were committed by an intimate partner or relative.

There are five categories of gender-based violence: sexual violence, such as rape, assault, and stalking; violence in intimate relationships; slavery; practices such as child marriage, forced marriage, and genital female mutilation; and violence against people online (cyber harassment).

Right to due process

In the EU, everyone has the right to a fair trial by an independent tribunal. You also have the right to be defended.

EU law requires that in all member states anyone suspected or accused in criminal proceedings is innocent until proved guilty. People have the right to remain silent and be present at their trial.

If defendants don't have the money to pay for an attorney, legal aid will be provided.

Daily life

While member countries organize many aspects of daily life independently, they do so on the common principle that everyone should be able to enjoy certain benefits, such as education, transportation, housing, and health care.

In return for these rights and benefits, the state expects residents to abide by its laws (civic duties) and take up activities (civic responsibilities) such as voting, volunteering in community activities, running for office, and assuming political roles to become productive and involved members of society.

The government provides benefits to promote residents' well-being and limit the costs of illiteracy, immobility,

homelessness, and disease. The rationale for providing these services is that if people are better educated, mobile, sheltered, and healthier, everyone in society benefits. This way, the government hopes to lower inequality.

However, this system can work only if people respect the law, and, for example, vaccinate their children and maintain their homes.

The EU manages common resources such as water, air, land, and cultural heritage sites. (See [“Nuts and Bolts”](#).) If left unregulated, these resources would become overly polluted, damaged, or depleted.

Taxes pay for these services. The highest salaries are taxed more heavily than others to distribute wealth across society.

This distribution, however, remains unequal. Vulnerable groups — minorities, single mothers, and immigrants — typically have less. Turn to Practical Information to learn about how you can improve your access to public services.

Transportation

In the EU, public transportation in cities — trams, buses, trains — helps residents travel affordably and in an environmentally friendly way. As a refugee, you have the right to move freely within your country of residence.

Araba Coulibaly, 47, member of the maintenance team at a hospital pharmacy, Barcelona, Spain:

“I left Mali almost 30 years ago and came to Barcelona, where I started my family: Both my daughter and my granddaughter were born here. Where I’m from, there is no public transport. Instead, we move around in cars, motorbikes and shared vans. There’s not much else.

In Barcelona I use the metro and bus every day. The transport system is very intuitive and it’s easy to get around. A loudspeaker system announces the stops so it helps to know where to get off.

When I first arrived in Barcelona, I had some problems navigating the system — mixing up stations and getting off when I shouldn’t — but by asking directions, I’ve always got to where I need to go. You can ask fellow passengers or the bus driver and they all tend to help you.

I must say though, that I do find the transport system very expensive.”

Health care

The right to health is a basic social right, regardless of status. Most countries have a combination of public and private health care systems. The public system covers basic

health needs for all ages. Medication and treatments for diseases are subsidized by the state.

Specialized care, such as plastic surgery, can be privatized. Turn to Practical Information for country-specific information on accessing health care.

Mustafa, 32, a plastic surgeon from Aleppo, Syria, who volunteers at a refugee health center in Utrecht, the Netherlands:

“I fled Syria to save my family — my son and wife, who also is a plastic surgeon — and escape military service. My father is a surgeon, and when I was child, I liked surgery. It helped people with deformities, not just those with cosmetic issues.

As a medical doctor, I can help Syrians in the Netherlands because I know their vocabulary. I know how they speak about their issues.

In Utrecht, I think I saw one or three cases of refugees with torture scars. But some people cover it, so there might be more.

I am volunteering because I have my hands, and my hands are losing power when you stay for a long time without working. I hope to learn the language and pass medical exams to equalize [accredit] my degree.

It’s very hard and takes a very long time before you can work. It’s a strong reason educated people get depressed here.”



Stuart Franklin France. Bondy. 2012. Bakhta Dini, a teacher at the Olympes de Gouges primary school, outside Paris.

Education

Everyone has the right to education, including refugee children, regardless of status. Most countries have compulsory education from ages 6 to 16 and offer specialized schooling for disabled children.

After completion of the compulsory years, students can pursue part-time schooling or training, apply to jobs or enroll in universities.

Most governments provide language courses for refugees. Many refugee children don't receive access to standard education, however. For help with obtaining access, see ["Practical Information."](#)

Ramin, 50, a professor from Iran:

"I fled because of the current government in Iran. I never agreed with its ideologies. I tried to remain silent about this, but finally I couldn't. You can't say anything against the system. You can't criticize the government. You can't trust anybody, not even your students. The secret agents are everywhere, even inside the universities. In the end, I was detained and had more problems with the authorities.

In the Netherlands, they have freedom of speech. The atmosphere at schools and universities is not dark and scary. Nobody has to be scared of anyone. Huge difference.

Education is very important. Refugees come here for a new life. As a refugee, you have few options. The only way or maybe the best way for refugees to become an acceptable and honorable part of society is to educate themselves and become someone. You won't be a refugee anymore, people will respect you, and they will accept you better in their society."

Work

Everyone, including refugees, has the right to work. Many hurdles stand in the way of finding employment, however. Lack of language skills, difficulties with accrediting degrees obtained abroad, and labor market discrimination contribute to higher unemployment rates among refugees than among nationals.

Also, access to the labor market for refugees is gradual. Some employers don't realize they may hire newcomers.

Hasna, 34, a legal assistant from Damascus:

"I left Syria because intelligence agents are everywhere and to help my son realize his dream of studying in Germany. My son was nearly killed by a bomb twice, and my daughter's school was bombed. I dream of being here with my family soon. They are still in Syria, and I fear for their lives every day.

I also dream of the moment that I can work. I can't work now because of the language, but I want to work as a social worker or with refugees. That's why I stopped wearing hijab —

I wanted to be integrated in this society without question marks. I don't want my hijab to be the barrier in my community. Especially later, I will have fewer work chances if I wear it."

Housing

The EU promotes the right to housing assistance to counter inequality. Waitlists for state-subsidized housing in many countries, however, are very long, and refugees are particularly vulnerable to homelessness.

Tatiana, 35, an ethnic German (see [“Ira, 53, Friedland, Germany,”](#)) from Kyrgyzstan:

“After we left the camp, we lived in a basement apartment for a month. It came furnished, and we got a sofa and a cupboard from relatives. Then we moved to a place that felt like a real home. To furnish it, we bought things with a grant from the German government. In December my mother died, so I flew to Kyrgyzstan, where I took vases and statues that belonged to my mother. It’s important to me to have those things close.”

In addition to providing public services such as health care, housing, and education to limit inequality in society, governments also promote their citizens’ well-being by encouraging creativity and physical fitness.

These activities are seen as a way to include vulnerable groups in society. Sports and the arts play a vital role in connecting EU citizens to one another.

Arts

Everyone has the right to freedom of expression in the arts. It is a pillar of European culture, celebrated in museums, theaters, opera houses, libraries, and other art centers, which each receive funding from their countries.

The arts are also a vehicle for social inclusion and foster mutual understanding for different cultural traditions across the EU.

To promote social inclusion of various groups and their artistic work, the EU helps fund cultural projects in its 28 member countries. In the next five years, the EU will finance at least 250,000 artists and cultural professionals, 2,000 cinemas, 800 films, and 4,500 book translations. Creative enterprises can access up to 750 million euros in bank loans.

Simon, 35, a musician from Damascus:

“In 2002, I founded the band MaBRaD, an Arab acronym for “a citizen who wants a decent salary and a government that protects him.” Our lyrics mixed satire with social critiques of Syrian society.

I left Syria because our songs caught the ire of the intelligence service. Not a single studio allowed us to rehearse, so we built our own. We hid many fellow artists there during the war, until it was occupied and then destroyed.

Before the war, Syria had a beautiful art scene. Musicians played in the streets and went to the villages.

So many international artists visited Damascus. We played music from so many cultures. It's like in Paris — there is no French music, only multicultural music, from Algeria, Africa. Music and art is the language that everybody knows.”



Martin Parr Ireland. University of Limerick. 2014. Indoor kayaking in the school's pool.

Sports

Sports play a vital role in keeping people healthy, both physically and mentally, and encourage a sense of belonging — especially among youths, disabled people, and newcomers.

The EU recognizes that athletes are role models. They inspire people, especially poor immigrant youths, to partake in society. The Erasmus program funds youths to play sports in other countries and unite people in their passion for sport.

Athletics also help disabled people showcase their skills in various competitions and challenge stereotypes about their capabilities.

Because men and women have equal rights, the EU works on improving access to sport for immigrant women and women from ethnic minorities.

Amadou, 19, a soccer player from Mali:

“Soccer is one of the most important things in my life. My dad enrolled me in a soccer school in Bamako when I was 7. Everyone in Mali plays soccer — young, old, people from all backgrounds. It’s a way to bring people together.

I boarded a dinghy from Tangier [in Morocco] to Tarifa [in Spain] because I wanted to play professional soccer and change my life. At sea, the water was very rough and dangerous. I fell in the water twice and had to be rescued. I swallowed so much saltwater, I became very sick.

Once in Spain, I recovered and started playing soccer again. I moved to Valencia to find work and was recruited by the local youth club. Soon, I switched clubs and was playing in a friendly against Finland's champions for Real Balompédica Linense.

In Mali, soccer is more relaxed, and there is less competition. In Spain, there is much more pressure and rivalry among players. I'm hoping to sign for the team in time for the next season. I hope this year I can carry on scoring lots of goals and do my town and country proud."

Photo section



Jonas Bendiksen Sweden. Stockholm. 2013. Members of the international hacktivist group Anonymous, known for breaking into corporate and government computer systems to disclose secret information.



Bruno Barbey France. Paris. Jan 11, 2015. Republican march versus terrorism and antisemitism.



Jerome Sessini Germany. Leipzig. Jan. 11, 2016. A march organized by LEGIDA — an anti-Islam, anti-immigration group on the first anniversary of its founding.



Jerome Sessini France. St.-Denis. Dec. 28, 2010. A volunteer tries to persuade a homeless person to spend the night in a shelter.



Mark Power England. Brighton. 1984. A march in support of striking coal miners.



Jerome Sessini France. Paris. May 1, 2016. Police launched tear gas in La Place de la Nation to disperse demonstrators after a May Day march.



John Vink Germany. Berlin. July 7, 1997. The Love Parade, an electronic dance music festival that in some years had more than 1 million attendees.



Martine Franck France. Paris. 1992. A protest against right-wing leader Jean-Marie Le Pen, made to look like Adolf Hitler on the posters.



Abbas France. Paris. 1981. A student draws from a live model at the National School of Fine Arts.



Abbas France. Tours. Sept. 21, 1996. A demonstration against the Catholic Church, with someone portraying the pope alongside inflated condoms, a reference to the church's ban on contraception.



Cristina García Roderó Italy. Puglia region. 2000. On Holy Saturday, women commemorate the death of Jesus Christ.



Patrick Zachmann France. Bagneux. April 1981. Anti-Semitic inscriptions in the Jewish section of a cemetery outside Paris.

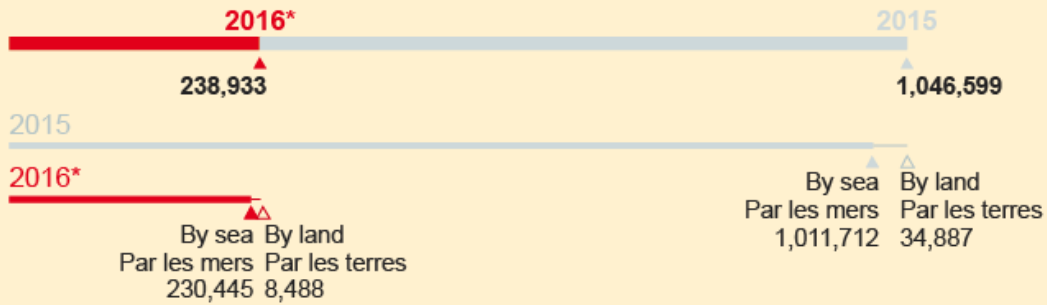


Gilles Peress Berlin. 1973. A beer hall transformed during Ramadan into a place of worship for the Turkish community.

Coming to Europe

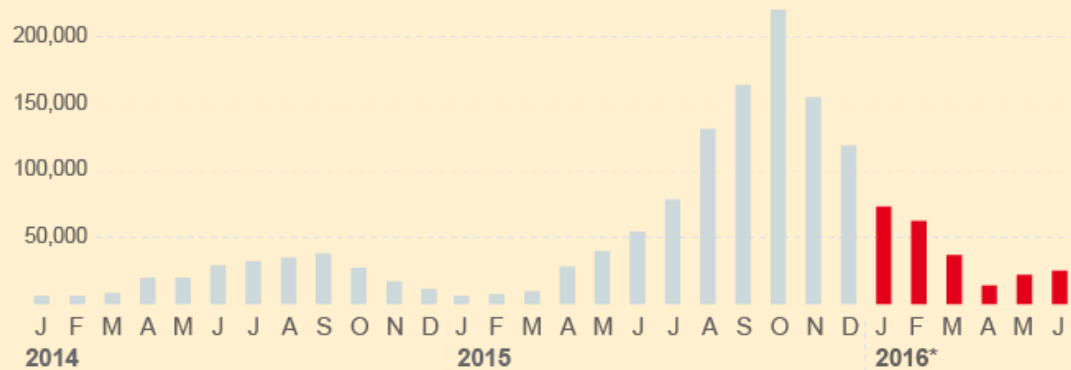
ARRIVALS IN EUROPE

ARRIVÉES EN EUROPE



ARRIVALS IN EUROPE, BY MONTH

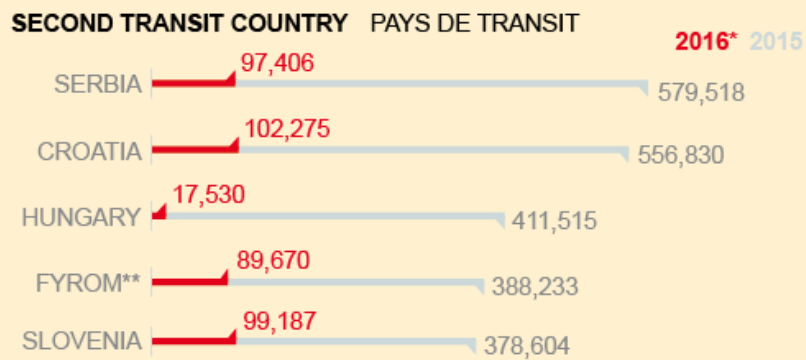
ARRIVÉES EN EUROPE PAR MOIS



ARRIVALS OVERVIEW

VUE D'ENSEMBLE DES ARRIVÉES

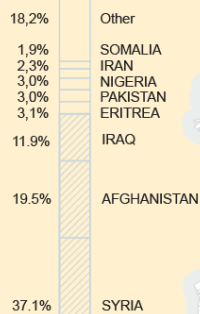




*Jan. 1 to June 30, 2016 / **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

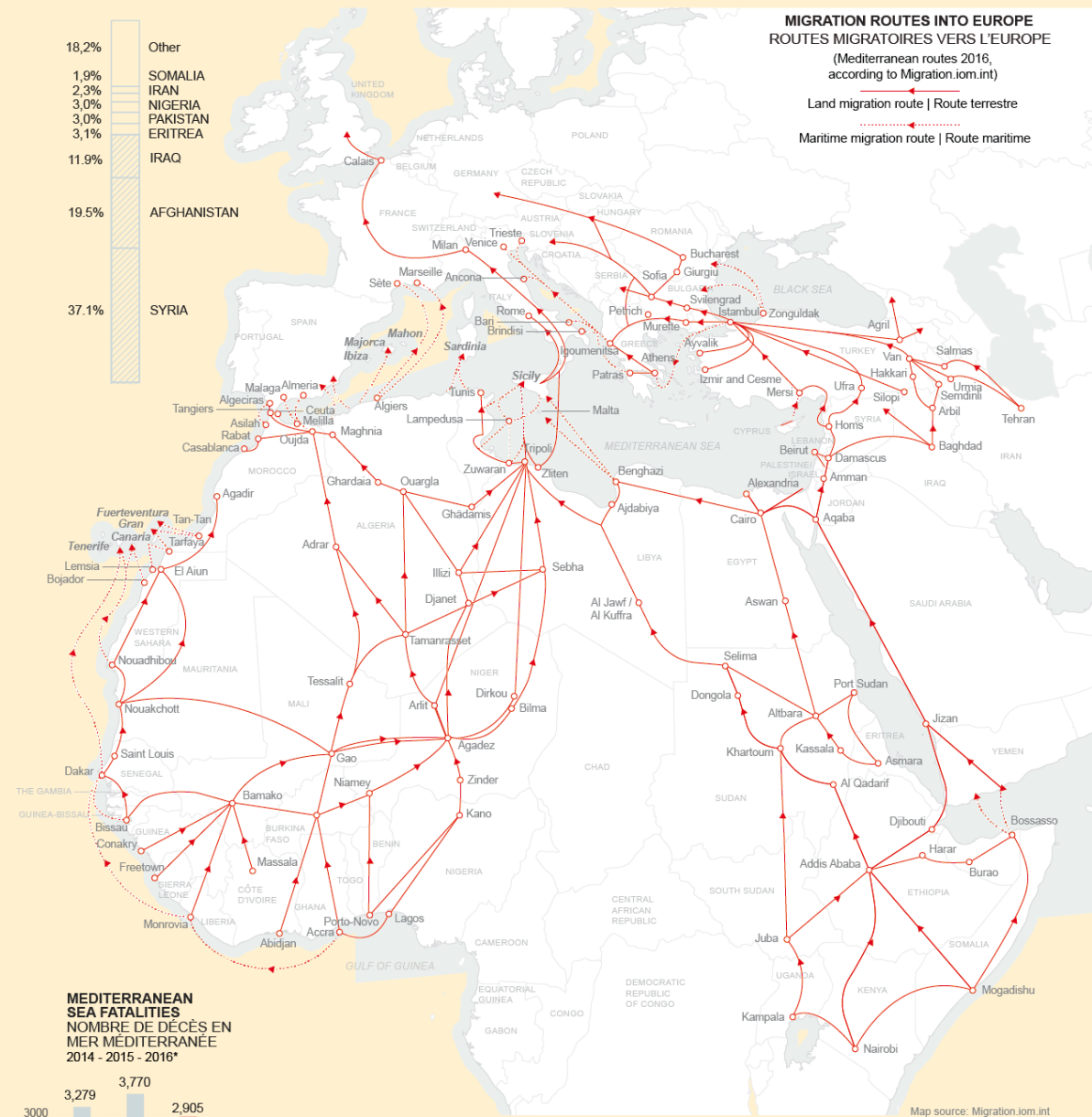
* du 1er janvier au 30 juin 2016 / **Ancienne République yougoslave de Macédoine

NATIONALITIES OF ARRIVALS IN 2016*
NATIONALITÉS DES ARRIVANTS
EN 2016* (%)

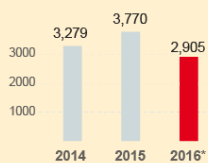


MIGRATION ROUTES INTO EUROPE
ROUTES MIGRATOIRES VERS L'EUROPE
(Mediterranean routes 2016,
according to Migration.iom.int)

Land migration route | Route terrestre
Maritime migration route | Route maritime



**MEDITERRANEAN
SEA FATALITIES**
NOMBRE DE DÉCÈS EN
MER MÉDITERRANÉE
2014 - 2015 - 2016*



Map source: Migration.iom.int

DEATH AT SEA

Ehab, 26, told his brother, Ayham, to picture their parents as he gently closed Ayham's eyes, losing hope the 17-year-old would survive their four-day journey at sea from Greece to Italy without enough water or food or the proper clothing to protect them against the cold. Ehab had promised his parents to take care of his younger brother. But now, cramped in an ambulance in the small Italian village where their boat arrived, he feared Ayham would die from hypothermia.

Ehab learned to swim 15 years ago in Damascus, Syria, even earning a lifeguard certification, but nothing had prepared him for the freezing waters of Greece and then Italy, as they made their way to Europe in September 2015.

"It was extraordinarily cold, so cold that you had to move every second, shaking fingers, legs, because if you stop, maybe your heart will stop as well," he said.

Their journey, from Turkey to the island of Symi, Greece, then to Italy, was deadly: Ehab and Ayham survived, but an elderly woman, one of 78 passengers on their rubber boat, which crashed against a rocky shore 200 meters before the end of their trip, suffered a heart attack. By the time the doctors arrived, it was too late.

She died — one of 3,771 people known to have perished at sea in 2015 trying to reach Europe. (It is impossible to know precisely how many have drowned trying to make the journey.) Many of you have stories like Ehab's and Ayham's.



Paolo Pellegrin Greece, Lesbos, 2015. Volunteers help refugees come ashore near the village of Skala Sikamineas after traveling on an inflatable raft from Turkey.

One million

In 2015, more than 1 million people requested asylum in the EU — most likely the most in a single year since World War II. Most came from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Kosovo, and Albania. Their reasons for leaving include war, poverty, and persecution at home.

By contrast, in 2014, about half that number — 626,000 — requested asylum in the EU. Before the refugee crisis,

200,000 to 300,000 lodged asylum applications yearly.

In the first three months of 2016, 287,000 people requested asylum in the EU, down by one-third from the fourth quarter of 2015.

Routes

The vast majority of migrants and refugees entered the EU via Italy, Greece, and Spain. This is because these countries are at the EU's external borders. From there, many refugees and migrants travel on to other destinations within Europe.

Smugglers and their clients' budgets largely determine the routes people select. The way to Greece via Turkey used to be the most popular and is considered the safest, since only about 7 kilometers separate Turkey and the nearest Greek island.

Geography plays a secondary role in people's decisions, with most Syrians, for example, traveling through Greece and Turkey, as that is the nearest point of entry.

ABISOLOM (NOT HIS REAL NAME), 34, THE
NETHERLANDS

I was almost 9 years old when Eritrea won its independence in the early 1990s. It came after a

30-year war with Ethiopia that cost thousands of lives.

We were a new nation, and it was a very optimistic and idealistic time. We wanted to be progressive and not make the mistakes of many other African countries. We wanted to become a role model for others. My generation was confident and was willing to work hard for that to happen.

Those ambitions, however, were frustrated after the government fell in the hands of one man [Isaias Afwerki, the president of Eritrea since its independence in 1993]. If you knew the history of other Marxist and Leninist guerrilla movements, what came next was not unexpected. But common people were much more trusting.

Under the pretext of a border conflict with Ethiopia that started in 1998 and ended in 2000, the government quashed many freedoms, including freedom of speech and free press. Many university students like me were put in a concentration camp.

The enormity of the repression grew exponentially until it became impossible for any young person to stay in the country for many reasons, like endless military service, torture, and arbitrary imprisonment without trial or any kind of court hearing.

It became unbearable for me too, but I kept hoping for things to change.

To leave Eritrea, the smuggling process starts from home because of the danger of being caught at the border. The risks include being shot on sight and long, terrible imprisonment. I tried to leave the country two times but didn't succeed and spent three years in total in prison before I finally managed to leave the country. The trauma of the interrogations and the terribly inhuman situation in the prison still live in my memories.

Like many other Eritreans, I crossed the border to Sudan — first to Kessala, a small town at the border with Eritrea, and then spent some months in Khartoum, trying to find a way to Europe. Everybody knows the danger of crossing — first the Sahara in overcrowded trucks and then the Mediterranean Sea in unreliable, overcrowded boats.

My family didn't want me to cross the Sahara, because I lost a brother there a few years ago, and we still don't know where or how he died. The sadness never left my family, especially my mother, and to speak his name is like a taboo in the whole family. So my parents begged me to wait until a safer way could be available.

Finally, we managed to find a way to Turkey with fake documents. We all agreed crossing the Mediterranean from Turkey is safer than from Libya. We paid quite a lot of money to the people who would do the dirty business.

I finally arrived in Istanbul already knowing what to do if I made it safe to Greece. There are smugglers who would arrange trips to Northern Europe. I was required only to reach Athens by any means, which I did. From Athens, it was just a matter of finding the right moment to disguise myself as a tourist — I carried a camera around my neck — and board a night boat to Italy. I then traveled by train to the Netherlands.

I look back now and see all the hustles and sleepless nights, organizing and waiting for calls to be told to move or wait. I never had a normal night's sleep in all those months since I planned to leave my country, knowing the enormous danger I was in.

Finally I feel safe and free in the Netherlands. Even though I'm still waiting for my legal status, the atmosphere is good enough for my mind finally to get some rest and sleep like a normal person.

From my first trip by train to the first camp, I felt at home. I met one Dutch guy on the train, and we immediately started to chat — my English is good enough — and I briefly told him my story. He was quite amused and told me he couldn't imagine himself taking all this risk. He was very friendly and wished me luck before getting off at his stop. I spent the rest of my trip with a good feeling from my positive encounter with this young guy who is from the south of the country, as he told me.

I have been through several camps now, and I have always been involved in all kinds of volunteer work to keep myself busy as I wait for my papers but also to interact with the Dutch people. I have enjoyed chats with many and always get impressed by their open mind and egalitarian thinking. They never like to talk about themselves or boast about what they have, and when you are from outside, you cannot tell the difference between rich and poor. They ride a bike and live a simple life.

I like living in the Netherlands. It suits me very well.

Frontex, the EU's border patrol agency, helps the member states control their external borders — 44,000 kilometers of sea borders and 9,000 on land. In 2015, the agency received extra funds to assist the Greek and Italian coast guards with border operations in the Mediterranean Sea. This does not mean it may send people back to places where they are likely to face persecution or serious harm. (See "Nuts and Bolts".) In 2012, the European Court of Human Rights condemned Italy for pushing back boats carrying migrants and refugees from Italian waters to Libya. Frontex's operations are still considered very controversial.

Frontex also conducts forced deportations of migrants to their country of origin if their claim for asylum has been deemed unfounded.

Legal entry

Some people were able to enter the EU via safe and legal pathways managed by international organizations such as the United Nations. Some of these routes are available both to refugees (people fleeing armed conflict and persecution who qualify for special protection), and migrants (people moving not because of a direct threat or persecution). The distinction between these two categories, however, is not always clear, and often abused by governments unwilling to grant protection to large groups of people. For more on the difference, see “The future” later in this chapter.

These safe and legal pathways include family reunification, academic scholarships, and in some EU countries, private sponsorship and humanitarian visas. These visas provide access to a third country or provide the opportunity to apply for asylum (sometimes expedited) on arrival. Often this scheme has proved useful for extended family members who would otherwise not qualify for family reunification.

Legal migration channels only offer a limited number of places to refugees: Only about 30,000 Syrians have come to Europe through these alternative pathways since 2013.

The most common pathway is resettlement, in which refugees — the vast majority of whom have sought refuge in Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq, Turkey, and Jordan — are selected for relocation to other countries. There are a number of factors considered in this process, including vulnerability and medical urgency.

After their selection by the United Nations' refugee office (the UNHCR) and their assignment to the EU, candidates are vetted by a member state and, on approval, are provided practical assistance by the International Organization for Migration, an intergovernmental group.

As of June 2016, only 72,000 resettlement spots have been pledged by EU member states, and most have yet to follow through on their commitments.

Widespread political resistance to immigration and the growing influence of the far right has deprioritized the resettlement of nationals other than Syrians, such as Iraqis and Afghans, who previously had better chances of being resettled.



Patrick Zachmann Italy. Off Lampedusa. July 8, 2011. A boat from Libya with 158 people on board. The Italian coast guard spotted it and escorted it to port in Lampedusa.

How most people got to Europe

Most refugees and migrants — mainly Syrians, Iraqis, and Afghans — enter the EU irregularly, on rubber boats or larger fishing or leisure vessels from Turkey to Greece, where 854,000 migrants and refugees arrived in 2015. In the first half of 2016, 159,061 migrants and refugees arrived in Greece.

Others, mostly people from North and sub-Saharan Africa, travel on dinghies or fishing boats, many unseaworthy, from Libya to Italy, where 154,000 migrants and refugees arrived in 2015. Most of those passengers are registered on Lampedusa, an Italian island that's close to Libya. Before getting there, the majority pass through Niger, a key trafficking node. In the first six months of 2016, 54,778 refugees and migrants arrived in Italy.

About 4,000 mostly African migrants and refugees, many of them on inflatable rubber boats, arrived in 2015 in Spain via Morocco, Spain's North African territories of Ceuta and Melilla, and the Canary Islands. In the first six months of 2016, about 1,000 migrants and refugees arrived in Spain.

GIBRIL NJIA, 19, CARPENTER APPRENTICE,
TENERIFE, CANARY ISLANDS, SPAIN

I always wanted to leave the Gambia. It was always in my head. My parents didn't want me to leave, though. It was just impossible for them to imagine. If I had asked for their permission, I never would have left home. It was my decision to go to Spain, to have a better life, send money back to my family and have a better economic situation.

Finally in December 2012, when I was 16 years old, I heard there were people in Mauritania who wanted to go to Europe. So one day, I opened my window and ran away from home — no bag, no money, nothing. I traveled about 400 miles to Mauritania via Dakar, Senegal, where I have family. In Mauritania, I worked for eight months as a fisherman until a boat was ready to leave for Europe. The owner of a “patera” [a small fishing boat] knew a man who knew my uncle. The man asked me, “Are you afraid of the sea?” I said, “No, not at all.” I was used to fishing when I was a kid, so the idea of traveling on the ocean in a boat didn't scare me. I never thought not to go.

Our group tried three times to make the crossing to Europe, each time at night. We hid in the desert to avoid the police, since we knew we weren't supposed to be leaving the country. From Morocco

to Senegal to Mauritania, everything was closed off. Europe made agreements with several governments in Africa to stop people from leaving. There were security controls and guards in all these areas along the coast. There were still patrols in the part of Mauritania where we tried to leave, but we went out of our way to avoid them.

On the third night of trying to cross, a lot of people were scared and crying, saying we should go via Morocco instead or that we were going to die in the waves. Some thought about not going at all. But many people had paid up to 3,000 euros for this trip. The captain said that if the boat didn't leave after three tries, everyone would lose their money. I hadn't paid anything because I knew the captain through a friend of my family, but I can tell you that 3,000 euros is a lot of money for us. Then one night we succeeded in crossing.

There were 42 of us in the boat, with a motor of only 40 horsepower. We spent four days on the ocean. It was very cold. Luckily for us, there was enough food and water for everyone. But many people were not used to the sea and were violently ill. At one point in the journey, some people started getting scared and saying we should go back. But the captain said, "If you want to go back, you'll have to jump." So we continued.

Finally, we arrived on the Canary Island of El Hierro. I still remember that day. People were

waving to us from the beach, calling for us to watch out for the breakers and directing us to the beach. When we finally made it to shore, some people could barely walk, but the police and ambulances were there within minutes to help. The beachgoers were crying and giving us whatever clothes and water they had. I was really, really cold. That was my first thought. Then my next thought was, "I need to work and make money."

After I got my fingerprints taken, I was taken to a center for youth migrants. We could take a shower and were given food, clothes and a ball to play football. Soon after, we started getting language classes and a small stipend to live. In previous years, from about 2004 to 2010, there were thousands of people in each center, but by the time I arrived, there were far fewer, since fewer people were trying to cross into Europe via the sea route I used. So there were enough resources to go around.

To be honest, I didn't know anything about the Canary Islands. I knew that it was part of Spain and Europe and that I could work, earn money and send it back home to my family, but that's about it. I started a carpentry course and did that for four months. Things went so well that they offered me a one-year contract.

Now I'm 19 years old, and I'm looking for a new job. I am sending my CV out everywhere. My life is

good here. I have a brother in Germany and an aunt and uncle in Almeria, Spain, but I want to stay here. I'm totally integrated. I've applied for Spanish nationality, and I'm waiting for the answer. It's representative of my whole journey — if you want something, you have to fight for it.

About 33,000 migrants and refugees, mostly Syrians and Afghans, crossed into Finland by car and bicycle via Norway and Russia in 2015. In the first two months of 2016, 1,063 migrants and refugees arrived through this route. None have used the route since the end of February.

Within Europe, more than 100,000 Kosovars and Albanians (see ["Rising From the Ashes of War"](#)) fled the Balkans by car, truck, and foot, going north and west. In the first quarter of 2016, these numbers decreased to about 8,500 Albanians and 3,000 Kosovars who requested asylum in the EU.

Greece, Italy, and Spain were not the final destinations for most migrants and refugees. In the fall of 2015 and the first three months of 2016, most newcomers requested asylum in Germany and Austria, where they perceived economic opportunity to be greater and where some had family ties. Sweden is another popular final destination.

Many Syrians, Afghans, Ethiopians, and people from English-speaking countries in sub-Saharan Africa traveled to France in an attempt to reach Britain, where the economy is

perceived to be strong. Many are looking to join relatives or friends in the U.K. who can help them get a job or shelter.

The Strait of Dover, which separates France from Britain, can be crossed by ferry or through the Channel Tunnel by train.

Because the U.K. is not part of the Schengen Area (See ["Nuts and Bolts"](#)), travelers need identification to cross between France and Britain. Without a Schengen visa, about 6,000 people are stranded in a camp known as the Jungle near the French port city of Calais. Thousands jump aboard trains or pay smugglers to hide them in trucks to try to reach their final destination.



Chien-Chi Chang Greece. Idomeni. March 2016. Refugees stuck at the closed border between Greece and Macedonia.

Greece

Most migrants and refugees in 2015 — 854,000 of them — went to Europe via Greece, which wasn't equipped to deal with the record number of arrivals.

Human rights reports cite chaotic registration procedures on Lesbos and elsewhere in Greece, including a failure to fingerprint newcomers and register them in the Eurodac database, little access to interpreters, processing delays, overcrowded and dirty reception facilities, and a lack of psychological and administrative support, as mandated by EU law.

Many refugees, including children, live in makeshift camps or on the streets, with little access to food, water, and other basic needs.

Even before the current crisis, Greece had a poor track record of receiving refugees. In 2011, the European Court of Human Rights issued a ruling against the country for its inhumane and degrading treatment of asylum seekers.

Since then, EU countries have not been permitted to return asylum seekers to Greece, if that's where they first entered the EU, regardless of the Dublin Regulation (see ["The Dublin Regulation"](#)).

In 2015, when thousands of asylum seekers arrived in Greece, the situation quickly deteriorated. Many had no intention of staying and continued their journey west to join relatives or look for jobs.

While EU law requires people to seek asylum in the first country of entry in the majority of cases (under the Dublin Regulation), many were able to continue their journeys north and west after arriving in Greece, in favor of richer countries such as Germany, Sweden, Austria, and France.

There were a number of reasons Greece did not enforce the Dublin Regulation, primarily that the country was still reeling from an economic crisis (see [“Nuts and Bolts”](#)). Also, Germany chose to overrule the regulation in the fall of 2015 when it took in 162,500 migrants and refugees who had traveled via the Balkans from Greece.

In addition, some people evaded registration by refusing to be fingerprinted on arrival in Greece or burning their fingertips off.

In response to the record number of arrivals, Frontex, the EU’s border patrol agency, now operates two registration centers, called hotspot centers, on the Greek islands of Lesbos and Chios to assist with fingerprinting, determining people’s nationality, identifying possible terrorism links, gathering information on smuggling networks, and, if determined by Greece, deporting people.

The United Nations and the medical charity Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders) have denounced the centers for failing to properly care for asylum seekers.

THE DUBLIN REGULATION

In 1990, five years after most of the EU's internal border controls were abolished under the Schengen Agreement (see "Nuts and Bolts"), the EU needed a system to process asylum applications in its member countries.

With the disappearance of internal border controls, the EU wanted to discourage asylum shopping, the practice of seeking asylum in more than one EU country.

The Dublin Convention, later replaced by the Dublin II Regulation, assigned responsibility for asylum seekers' claims to EU member countries on the basis of a number of criteria. In the majority of cases, the burden fell on the first EU country that asylum seekers entered.

That is why the EU expected Italy and Greece to process most of your claims.

The system was a disaster long in the making: It wasn't designed to share the burden equally among member states.

Before the crisis, Greece had only about 3,000 places to shelter asylum seekers. After the first arrivals in 2011, it quickly became overwhelmed with applications.

STEFANIA MIZARA, 40, PHOTOGRAPHER, ATHENS,
GREECE

I worked as a freelance photographer for Greek media, mainly covering social subjects abroad. I never thought that I would cover the same things in my own country. We were raised with the idea that prosperity would never end, but what has happened in Greece since 2008 has proved otherwise.

I was raised with an admiration of anything European — perceived as structured and organized, which contrasted with the chaotic Greek mentality. We had an inferiority complex, of not being completely European, like adolescents at the adult dinner table.

This changed during the five years of economic depression as I discovered qualities in my people that I didn't find in the non-Greek Europeans: solidarity, courage, inventive spirit, and so much more. I wouldn't live in any other country.

In 2008, the death of 15-year-old Alexandros Grigoropoulos, killed by a police officer without any reason, led to a huge wave of protests and demonstrations as the first signs of recession started to show. I was in Poland at the time, covering a summit on the environment. I came back and found Athens in flames. The death of this

kid awakened a social uprising against many social and financial problems that had long existed beneath the surface.

The recession kept growing, and in 2011 a massive movement started. That summer the occupation of Syntagma Square by citizens asking for direct democracy lasted almost three months.

Life in Greece changed after that. During the last months of 2011, the first signs of poverty started to be visible in everyday life. Soup kitchens started growing in different neighborhoods, organized by citizen initiatives (mostly leftist or anarchist movements), churches, or the state.

After the occupation of Syntagma, we were feeling threatened but strong. We had the feeling that we can change things.

Greek people rediscovered the values that traditionally kept our society together: family, friends, solidarity — the base for building resistance during centuries of wars, occupations and depressions. Even if we fight each other all the time, nobody died of hunger or cold, because we will never let anybody starve or freeze.

For the first time, some of my friends couldn't afford five euros to put some credit on their mobile phones or people couldn't pay their rent and had to move in with friends or family. Greeks stood in line for food. Two of my friends came to live in my

house until they could have an idea of what to do next.

During the five years of the crisis, I, as along with many other Greeks, matured politically. We learned to think, evaluate, and vote for issues bigger than our pockets. We learned that European governments are not our friends — they are our lenders, our business partners, our executioners, the old teacher always treating us like young, inexperienced children who need guidance.

The refugee issue started in Greece almost 10 years ago. This phenomenon had been happening for years but hadn't been as visible. Camps existed in Patras, where people tried to get smuggled aboard trucks going to Italy. In 2015 the flow of people became massive.

For three years now, the migration's methods and directions have changed as Europe closes its borders with fences, putting Frontex guards here and there. It has been three years of finding the wrong remedies and methods to deal with people coming from the Middle East and Africa where war or poverty are motivating people to leave their countries for what they think is a better life and future.

Greek society, I'm proud to say, reacted with a lot of humanity when refugees started flowing into our country. Greeks are not politically correct people. My mother asked a man how many wives he has as

a Muslim and was happy when he replied that he had only one. But Greeks cannot think of having someone hungry or wet at their front door. This idea of solidarity as a solution for our problems due to the financial crisis was replicated in the way that most Greeks saw those arriving on their shores in search of safety.

I got involved in the movements for helping the refugees because I think that self-organization and solidarity can be the best weapon against capitalism. I also believe that being involved in social movements is a duty for all of us, as we are living in societies. When society is weak and ill, we can't be healthy living in it.

I don't believe anymore in demonstrations, riots, treaties, politicians, companies, profit, development. I hope that in this country we will be doing what we know best: resist the system. Take steps toward self-organization, in which we create a logically scaled system, in which people produce what they eat and need locally. A life in which you can have the time to think, feel and react.

Challenges to the EU

While the EU should have dealt with the crisis collectively (see [“Nuts and Bolts”](#)), it failed to do so, leaving Greece and Italy to cope with the influx.

This mass movement of refugees and migrants has confronted the EU with its most significant challenges to date.

A major issue centers on upholding the EU’s open-border principle under the Schengen Agreement. (See [“Nuts and Bolts”](#).) Five European countries — Germany, Sweden, Austria, Denmark, and Norway — have invoked emergency procedures that allow them to suspend free movement across their borders, citing internal security and public policy concerns as long as people continue to arrive in Greece and move beyond it unimpeded.

The Dublin system has also come under serious pressure since 2015. It is likely that neither system will survive in its current form.

In an effort to remedy the Dublin system’s shortcomings, the European Commission proposed a quota system in September 2015. According to the proposal, all member states would take in a set number of refugees. But of 160,000 people who the EU said would be relocated from Greece and Italy, fewer than 5 percent were moved by June 2016. Countries have been slow to fulfill their commitments.

After the terrorist attacks by ISIS in Paris, France, and Brussels, Belgium, member states’ security checks of newcomers have become more stringent. At least two of the attackers entered Europe amid the mass movement of

people in 2015. Some majority-Christian countries fear the arrival of large numbers of Muslim immigrants.

Citing such fears, some Eastern European countries — notably Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia — refused to participate in the relocation scheme. In the fall of 2015, Hungary built a fence along its borders with non-Schengen neighbors Serbia and Croatia to keep out newcomers. In September, at the height of the crisis, Hungarian Prime Minister Victor Orban said he would not accept large-scale Muslim immigration to “keep Europe Christian.”

In December 2015 the EU launched an infringement procedure against Hungary’s recently adopted asylum law, which deprives asylum seekers from certain basic support and rights.

Regardless of the legal action, sentiment against refugees and immigrants is growing across Europe. In Germany, which has taken in the most refugees, police recorded more than 200 arson attacks against asylum centers in 2015. In 2016, attacks there have increased.

This crisis has also prompted countries such as the Netherlands, Belgium and Denmark to tighten their asylum procedures.

This type of opposition isn’t new. In the 1950s, when millions of ethnic Germans made their way to East and West Germany after expulsion from their countries at the end of World War II, their arrival was met with suspicion. Although some people say the current movement of refugees is

unprecedented, it is not. (See [“Rising From the Ashes of War”](#).)



Thomas Dworzak Germany. Passau. November 2015. Language classes for refugees — from countries such as Iraq, Syria and Eritrea — are taught by student volunteers.

Hope

While opposition to immigration remains high in many EU countries, many people have welcomed refugees by volunteering in various capacities — opening their homes,

helping refugees cross borders, providing medical support, and teaching languages and skills.

MARITSA MAVRAPIDOU, 85, SKALA SIKAMINIAS,
LESBOS, GREECE

My name is Maritsa, I'm 85 years old, and I live on Lesbos, where I was born and raised. My cousin Militsa and in-law Efstratia are my closest friends. We are all grandmothers in our 80s. Efstratia is almost 90!

We had heard that entire families were crossing from Turkey on rubber boats, running away from wars. We used to walk together to the rocky shore — though Efstratia now has a hard time walking — every day to welcome the people coming in on those boats, to let them know that we cared about them.

One day, all of us were sitting on plastic chairs right by the shore. I saw a mother holding a baby in her arms. She was dripping wet from the waist down because waves from the sea had gotten into the raft she was in. There were so many people on that raft. Many of them were crying or kissing the ground, but she was calm. She looked strong. Her baby was maybe a month old.

I spoke to the young mother in Greek, but of course she didn't understand me. She wore a

headscarf and looked right at me, as if she already knew me. I liked that. I motioned to her give us the baby and pointed to some volunteers — people from all over the world — handing out dry clothes. It's as if she understood. She handed the baby to Militsa. The baby was a girl, and Militsa gave her a bottle.

Last year we saw so many young women like this mother, holding babies as they crossed the sea on those flimsy rafts.

Our mothers came to Greece the same way, almost a hundred years before. My mother's name was Tasoula. She was just 15 when she fled Smyrna [now Izmir, Turkey]. There had been a war, and the Turks were attacking ethnic Greeks who lived there. Many of them died. My mother fled to Moskonisia [now known as the Ayvalik archipelago]. She wore just the clothes on her back. Efstratia's mother, Evanthia, ran away with three little baby boys. She didn't even have time to dress the youngest, so she tore part of her underskirt to swaddle him. They crowded onto these wooden boats and paddled their way to this rocky shore on the beach. So many drowned along the way.

When they arrived, there were just five farmers in the village. There was no place for them to live, so they cleaned out some olive storage sheds and slept there. They eventually married and had

families. Our village, Skala Sikaminias, is a village of refugees. We are the children of refugees. We grew up listening to our mothers' stories and felt their longing to return to a home that they had lost.

We were never afraid of the refugees. Not for one minute. These are really peaceful people. They always hugged us. They would blow us kisses. They trusted us to hold their babies, who were sometimes trembling from the cold. We would hold those babies tightly, as if they were our own. We rocked them until they fell asleep in our arms.

The baby's mother changed into dry clothes and brand new tennis shoes that had been donated. People as far away as Australia were sending boxes of clothes and shoes and baby formula to us. The mother looked so pretty and relaxed in her new clothes. She smiled as she saw us fussing over her baby girl. I saw my mother's face in that young woman, in all these young women crossing this sometimes angry sea that separates us from Turkey. When we hugged them, we felt as if our own mothers were hugging these young mothers too.

YONOUS MUHAMMADI, 43, DOCTOR, ATHENS,
GREECE

It is no accident that I found myself in Greece. I made a conscious decision to go to Greece and seek asylum in 2001. I was always fascinated by Greece.

I am a doctor, and like all doctors around the world, I took the Hippocratic oath — which dates back to ancient Greece — when I graduated from medical school in 1997 in Mazar-i-Sharif. So I always wanted to go to the country of medicine.

I am from Ghazni, Afghanistan. I was very young, still a child in school, when the Soviets invaded my country. I was nonetheless posting posters in the streets against the invaders with other activists. But what really destroyed the country was the civil war, which started after the Soviets departed Afghanistan.

Because of the civil war, I went to Pakistan in 1997, where I joined refugee organizations and taught children. I returned in 2000 to Afghanistan, eager to join the fight for my country against the Taliban. But they captured me and imprisoned me for 28 days in Mazar-i-Sharif.

That was the trigger for me to leave Afghanistan forever. I left via the city of Mazar-i-Sharif for Pakistan and then moved to Iran, where my son

was born, just before arriving in Turkey. Finally on Sept. 5, 2001, I arrived in Greece with my wife and son.

I remember the day because only a few days later, 9/11 happened. If I had still been in Turkey after the attacks of 9/11, I would have never gone to Greece. I would have headed back to Afghanistan to fight for my country.

But here I am.

I really wanted to live in Greece, so I pursued it, going to ministries and competent offices until they granted me asylum. I was one of only 11 people — out of 6,000 — who were granted asylum in Greece that year.

Sadly, my wife and I weren't happy together, and both of us wanted a divorce, even in Afghanistan. But you know how it was and is there. It was not culturally acceptable in Afghanistan, especially for the woman. In Greece we made the decision together to do it.

After 15 years, I still live and work in Athens. Being a doctor, speaking English and working all day for MDM [Médecins du Monde, or Doctors of the World] really helped me gain international protection so that I didn't need to live with uncertainty in Greece.

I emerged as the leader of the Afghan community [in Athens], and I am now the president of the Greek Refugees Forum, a local

nongovernmental organization that helps and advocates for refugees in Greece.

Life for refugees and migrants in Greece changed gradually. In the early 2000s, social acceptance was good, even though the profile of a refugee was expressed problematically in the media. There were only a few racist incidents back then.

However, from 2008 to 2011, racist attacks and incidents against refugees increased rapidly. Discrimination by the Greek police became common, and a lack of social acceptance thrived. If extremist right-wing groups would attack a migrant in the streets, the neighbors would not intervene. That was the scariest part.

I once went to see a refugee who was detained in jail. The police officer hit him repeatedly in front of me. I had nightmares for weeks after that.

The big difference in society started in 2014 after the murder of Greek musician Pavlos Fyssas by Golden Dawn. It wasn't a matter of only refugees or migrants — racism turns also against the Greeks.

The situation in Syria helped as a turnaround in politics and social climate in Greece, with the creation of a strong solidarity movement with the refugees.

Before, the media made a negative presentation of the refugees, but now even the most derogative

journalists write positively about the refugees.

The crisis in Europe is not a refugee crisis but a political crisis, a crisis of responsibilities. And unless they are equally distributed, we'll witness a continuous rise of the extremist right in Europe. So what we ask from people is not solidarity only in food and bread but also to push governments to accept and integrate refugees.

HALLOW SALAM, 44, LAWYER AND SOCIOLOGIST,
BERLIN

I came to Germany 20 years ago. I was one of many Iraqis and specifically Iraqi Kurds who fled to Europe when Saddam Hussein was still in power. Maybe my name was a sign of a future abroad: My first name means "eagle" in Kurdish, and my family name "peace" in Arabic.

In 1996, I traveled by foot from Sulaymaniya to Istanbul, Turkey. I stayed there for three months. I took a boat to Greece and made my way to Germany from there. I requested asylum in Hanover. Two years later, I became a refugee.

Those two years were the hardest of my life. I worked in a restaurant from 5 a.m. until 8 a.m., then I left for school until noon to learn German.

Meanwhile, I also enrolled at the Technische Universität Berlin to study sociology and teaching, paying my way by working odd jobs during weekends.

That decision wasn't easy: I studied law in Iraq, but in Berlin, when I went to present my Iraqi degree, they just scoffed and told me I would have to do everything over again. That was frustrating, but I'm glad I did it. I would not have qualified for my job today.

As a student, I became a source of support for fellow refugees. I accompanied them to the housing authorities, to the police, to the bank — every day — to interpret and assist.

Finally, in November 2006, the same year I got German citizenship, I got a job as a social worker at a shelter for 147 refugees in the Kreuzberg neighborhood of Berlin. By then, I had graduated and really enjoyed putting my knowledge to use.

People need the help. A lot of people arrive here traumatized by the hardship they suffered in conflicts and the journey here. When the refugee crisis began last year and hundreds of thousands of people arrived in Germany, my heart ached for them.

It brought back memories of when I was in their shoes. But back then, times were different. There were fewer social services available, and we were left to our own devices. It's become easier for

refugees to settle into life here. Now people all over Germany are helping newcomers, and it's heartwarming to see.

But some people rode this wave of sympathy for their own interests. Activists said Germany was crap for not doing enough to resettle people. But they didn't have any plans themselves or relevant experience with refugees. I think they were just using refugees to get more attention for their own causes.

My philosophy as a social worker is to help others help themselves. I don't support self-pity. I tell people to grasp the chance they are given for a new life. You're reborn, I say, as I was.

Germany is a very, very good country to resettle. A new life really is possible.

Murky rule of law

Other individuals and groups have stepped in where the EU has not provided protection or, in some cases, evaded its responsibility to do so under international human rights law. The legality of such inaction is being argued in classrooms and courtrooms across the EU while millions of lives are at stake.

These instances include:

- Hungary's building a fence on its borders and criminalizing cutting holes in it and encouraging people to cross.
- Expulsion of asylum seekers after much-truncated or non-individual asylum procedures to non-Schengen third countries that are deemed safe, such as Serbia and Turkey. (See next section.)
- Forbidding carriers to transport refugees and imposing sanctions on those that do.
- A dearth of humanitarian visas issued to people living in conflict zones.
- Detention of people who refuse to be fingerprinted in hotspots.
- Arrest or shooting of people who entered the EU irregularly via Turkey's or Bulgaria's borders with Greece.
- Profiling asylum seekers on the basis of nationality.
- Restrictions on family reunion.

Turkey deal

After the European Commission's relocation scheme failed, the EU, facing increasing pressure to stop the record number of daily arrivals, enlisted Turkey to stop migrants and refugees from leaving for Europe. This shifted the

responsibility to provide refugees with shelter from the EU to Turkey, where most Syrian refugees have fled the war in their country. As of June 2016, there are 2.5 million Syrians in Turkey, 1 million in Lebanon, and 635,000 in Jordan.

The plan: For every deported person Turkey took back from Greece, the EU promised to take in a Syrian refugee who was vetted by the member countries, which would consider factors such as security concerns, vulnerability, and medical urgency, as in the United Nations resettlement process above.

Before the deal went into force and the closure of the borders in the Balkans, about 1,500 migrants and refugees arrived in Greece daily. That number has now dwindled, with thousands of people in Turkey who wish to go but are stopped by Turkish police. By June 2016, about 441 people were returned by Frontex.

About 50,000 asylum seekers were stuck in Greece in June 2016, waiting for their claims to be processed, with no idea what the future will bring.

Human rights advocates have decried the EU for failing to take up its responsibility to provide international protection to people fleeing war. In June 2016, Médecins Sans Frontières announced it would stop accepting donations from the EU as long as the EU-Turkey deal remained in place.

To many, Turkey is not a safe country because, for example, Turkey forces people to return to war-torn countries and allows child labor. Already 3 million refugees are struggling to survive there.

More hurdles

While closing off routes has deterred some people by making it more difficult to go to Europe, it will only put others in more dangerous situations. People continue to arrive and likely will do so as long as the wars in Syria, Iraq, and elsewhere are left unresolved. Similarly, smugglers will probably keep making false promises about life in Europe, while charging higher prices.

Once in the EU, the road to asylum is long. It often takes much more time than smugglers tell their clients. The path to family reunification is arduous and takes months if not years, especially when applicants are stateless (people who are not recognized as citizens of any nation, such as some Palestinians who were refugees in Syria before they went to the EU) or don't have the required identification papers to prove a family link. Many are still waiting on family members to arrive.

Nearly 90,000 children, half of them Afghans, made the voyage alone in 2015.

MIRHATAM SAFI, 17, STUDENT, LUBBEEK,
BELGIUM

The Taliban came for me when I was 15 years old.
I'm from Tagab, a district in the province of Kapisa

in Afghanistan. One day they came to our village to round up men to fight.

When I refused, they tortured me and broke my leg. The pain was excruciating. It took about six months before it got treated. There is no good doctor where I'm from. I was in bed for a month or so, then I slowly started to walk again on crutches.

Staying was not an option. Had I stayed, I would have had to join the Taliban. I lost three friends already. The Taliban made them commit suicide attacks. They say you will go to heaven. They make up so many stories. But none are true.

So I left my village and fled to Kabul. I was 17. My family wanted to go with me, but it was too expensive. I left alone. In the capital, a smuggler got me to Iran. I boarded a jeep along with so many others like me — kids without their parents.

From Iran, we went to Turkey, then Greece and eventually Germany. Friends told me to continue to Belgium because they had heard it was good for refugees. So I did.

I'm very happy I made that decision. Now I'm in school in a class with other refugees at the Sint-Jozefinstituut in Kessel-Lo, a village near Brussels. I study every day. My favorite courses are sports — despite the pain in my leg — Dutch and maybe some math. It's hard, but I'm trying. I'm always studying as much as I can.

I now understand the true meaning of education. My Afghan teachers forbade most music, movies, and English. They said it was the language of non-Muslims. They are all affiliated with the Taliban and tried to influence our minds so that one day we become like them.

In my case, they failed, but the price I paid was steep. I miss my family very much. I spoke with them just once since I got to Belgium, in November 2015. It's difficult to keep in touch after the Taliban destroyed the cell tower near our village. My little brother, who is 12, asked when I'm coming back. It was tough to hear him say that.

My parents told me not to think about them and just focus on my studies. One day I hope to be a doctor. I want to be able to provide for my family so they can join me here.

Meanwhile, I'm just waiting. I don't know if we can stay here or not. Maybe within a year or the next three months, a decision will come down. All we can do is wait.

In 2015 about 20,000 refugees in the EU were stateless. The nationalities of at least another 20,000 were undetermined. Statelessness is a growing risk across the EU. Some officials have refused to register babies born to refugees — a practice that violates the fundamental rights of the child.

Others, born in exile to Syrian or Iraqi women, risk being stateless in the absence of their father, who confers nationality, according to Syrian and Iraqi law, while women cannot.



Moises Saman Greece. Lesbos. September 2015. Newly arrived refugees walk toward the port of Mytilene for processing.

The future

In May 2016, the European Commission proposed a permanent relocation system that would impose a €250,000-per-refugee fine on countries that opt out of the scheme and refuse to resettle refugees. In June, the commission updated what is called the blue card scheme to make it easier for some refugees to work in Europe, granting temporary work permits to highly skilled workers, including those who have been granted international protection.

Many fear that the fine proposal will not be adopted by the member states and say that the blue card scheme can help only a very limited number of people — just those who are highly skilled. In 2014, only 12,964 applicants were granted a blue card in the EU.

The blue card proposal fails to address the issue at the heart of the refugee crisis: helping people in need of international protection who have very limited means to reach Europe legally and safely.

In response to the EU's inability to agree on proposals that would create such routes, some have called for a more rigorous approach when evaluating whether a country may become a member of the EU.

When Hungary became a member in 2004, it agreed to the Copenhagen criteria (see “Nuts and Bolts”), which safeguard the right to asylum. But sometimes it is easy to profess a set of principles until they are put to the test, as this crisis has shown.

Today there is no common EU asylum policy, resulting in 28 different systems. While all member nations have agreed to the Dublin Regulation, it is left to them to create asylum

procedures in accordance with EU law. In some countries, it's easier to access the labor market, while others have less strict procedures to bring over family members. However, many countries have adopted similar standards regarding whom to offer protection.

The 1951 Refugee Convention protects people fleeing persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, social group membership, or political opinions. In 2011, the U.N. updated this position and recognized the need to include protection for people fleeing conflict zones, torture, and other life-threatening conditions. By broadening the convention's scope, it aligned its policies with developments in EU law and practice.

The Yugoslav war (see ["Rising From the Ashes of War"](#)), which set off a surge of refugees who could not qualify for protection under traditional definitions, prompted the reform. This decision reduced applicants' burden to prove individual persecution in the context of war or other situations of indiscriminate violence. This means that in some cases, applicants do not have to prove they are at risk of individual persecution if they were living in a conflict zone.

But now these provisions have been scaled back. While the number of voluntary returns of people to their countries of origin (repatriation) has reached its lowest level since 1983, signaling protracted conflict in countries in the Middle East, Asia, and Africa, the EU is prioritizing Syrians over others.

This has prompted many to point at the fundamental principles the EU was built on: dignity, equality, solidarity,

freedom, and justice, saying the current response falls short of living up to those ideals.

As the union moves toward a common asylum policy and you build a new life here, this book hopes to provide you with the historic context that enabled these ideas to take root and led the EU to enshrine these principles in a series of fundamental rights. Their widespread implementation, however, still has a long way to go.

Life in the EU

After Ehab and Ayham reached Italy and Ayham recovered from hypothermia, they bought fake Schengen visas in Milan and boarded a plane to Amsterdam, the Netherlands, in October 2014.

They were granted asylum, and Raneem, Ehab's wife, arrived a year later through family reunification. His mother, who was already in the Netherlands, brought his father.

"I could not have imagined a better place to come to," Ehab said. "People here are very friendly and open-minded."

Six years ago, the Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas visited Ehab's and Raneem's school in Syria. Now they hope to finish their architecture studies at Delft University of Technology and one day start the reconstruction of their country.

“In Syria there are a lot of rules, while Europe is open to new spatial concepts. When we go back, we want to reconcile our tradition with the freedom we found here,” Ehab said.

“It’s our dream to rehabilitate our city, Damascus, because as Winston Churchill said, ‘We shape our buildings, and then they shape us.’ ”

Photo section



Moises Saman Greece. Lesbos. Sept. 29, 2015. Asylum seekers make landfall after an often perilous sea crossing from Turkey.



Jerome Sessini Greece. Lesbos. Dec. 22, 2015. Thousands of life jackets, used by refugees while crossing the Aegean Sea from Turkey, lie discarded on Lesbos.



Jerome Sessini Greece. Lesbos. Dec. 23, 2015. The Kara Tepe camp for refugees near Mytilene.



Paolo Pellegrin Greece. Lesbos. 2015. Refugees in Mytilene. In early September 2015, 15,000 to 20, 000 refugees, roughly 70 percent of them Syrians, awaited processing there.



Thomas Dworzak Slovenia. 2015. Red Cross workers monitor refugees as they pass through the country.



Peter van Agtmael Croatia. Tovarnik. Sept. 17, 2015. A train station on the border with Serbia. After waiting for hours in sweltering heat, thousands of refugees crashed through police lines to seek shade.



Jerome Sessini Serbia. Vasariste. Aug. 12, 2015. Refugees at the camp in central Serbia hope to make it to Serbia's northern border with Hungary, an EU member.



Peter van Agtmael Serbia. Horgos. Sept. 15, 2015. The closed border with Hungary. Thousands of people arrived after the closure, hoping it would be reopened. The next morning, most headed to Croatia.



Antoine d'Agata Morocco. Nador. 2013. Sub-Saharan refugees living in the hills above the city take turns searching for firewood. Some have been stuck there for two years.



Jerome Sessini France. Calais. Dec. 8, 2015. About 5,000 migrants and refugees are living in a makeshift camp called the Jungle, waiting for a chance to enter the U.K. via ferry or the Eurotunnel.



Michael Christopher Brown Turkey. Suruç. Sept. 28, 2014. Syrian Kurdish refugees and Turkish citizens watch Kurds battle Islamic State fighters across the border, about 5 kilometers west of Kobane.



Moises Saman Turkey. Antakya. March 2, 2012. Ahmed, a Syrian refugee, in a hospital after stepping on a mine walking from Syria to Turkey.



Moises Saman Turkey. Boynuyogun. March 2, 2012. Syrian refugees at a playground in a camp near the border with Syria that houses over 1,800 people.



Jerome Sessini Germany. Cologne. Feb. 3, 2016. An activity area for children at a shelter housing 627 refugees.



Thomas Dworzak Austria. On the border with Germany. November 2015. Syrian refugees at the Wegscheid border post, waiting to cross to Germany.

Practical Information

In the spirit of a travel guide, this chapter offers some practical information about 10 popular destination countries for migrants and refugees in the EU at the time of writing: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, and the U.K.

It includes basic information about their different political systems, geography, demographics and traditions, as well as typical foods and drinks, and some books and films of interest. It also lists some of the major institutions and organizations that provide information and service to migrants and refugees in each place and also in the EU in general.

All the information in this chapter has been checked and verified and is accurate

to the best of our knowledge, up to the time of writing.

Austria



POLITICAL SYSTEM

Austria's political system — like that of its larger neighbor Germany — is a federal republic. This means that although ultimate authority lies in the hands of a popularly elected central government, local and federal authorities also exercise considerable power. As in much of the rest of Europe, the two main political powers occupy the center left and center right. The conservatives are represented by the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP), the center-left by the Social Democratic Party of Austria (SPÖ).

There are far-right sentiments in Austria, and the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ) has been one of Europe's most successful right wing parties, advocating stronger controls on immigration.



GEOGRAPHY

Austria borders Germany and the Czech Republic to the north, Slovakia and Hungary to the east, Slovenia and Italy to the south, and Switzerland and Liechtenstein to the west.

It is largely mountainous, with some plains. The capital, Vienna, sits on the Danube River, which cuts through the east of the country.



PEOPLE

Many Austrians are considered conservative, with pride in their traditions. Vienna has been home to some of the greatest philosophical, artistic and scientific minds. Austrians are viewed as hospitable and welcoming, but — compared with other Europeans — can seem formal, even with friends.



DEMOGRAPHICS

There are 8.6 million Austrians; 10 percent were foreign born, many originally from the Balkans and Eastern Europe. Like Germany, it has a sizable Turkish community.



RELIGION

Austria is a predominantly Roman Catholic country. Around half a million Austrians are Muslim. Religious views and opinions are respected, and most prefer to keep their beliefs private. The state takes a tough line against hate speech directed at any ethnic, religious, or social group.



EDUCATION

Children must attend elementary school for four years. Secondary schools are divided into streams — one more academic and the other more vocational. After students graduate from some schools and pass a matura, they may enter a university.

Refugee children, like all the others, must attend school until age 15. Jugend colleges offer education and training for students aged 15 to 21 who recently arrived in Austria.



HEALTH CARE

The basic care program gives refugees access to some medical services through health insurance, while those without are entitled to essential and emergency care. Postponing your asylum application can lead to delays in accessing health insurance. There are other bureaucratic obstacles for those outside the system. Universal health care is open to Austrian and other EU residents. Public and private insurance services exist through a two-tier system.



TABOOS

Although Adolf Hitler was born in Austria, Austrians are ashamed of this link and often try to portray Austria as occupied by Germany during World War II rather than complicit in the war. Anti-Semitic comments are considered highly out of bounds.



COHABITATION

Austrians often live with their partners before marrying or have children, but most marry eventually.



FOOD, DRINK AND SMOKING

A smoking ban applies to many bars and public buildings. Although smoking rules in Austria are more relaxed than in many other parts of the EU, it is considered impolite to smoke in other people's homes and around children, pregnant women and nonsmokers.

Drinking is an important part of social life in this country. If you want to drink like a true Austrian, say "Prost" ("Cheers") and look your drinking partners in the eye.

The national dish in Austria is Wiener schnitzel, a thin large cutlet of breaded veal, which is pan fried and usually served with potato, lemon and salad.

Another popular dish, particularly with late-night drinkers, is bosna or bosner, which consists of a bratwurst served with onions, mustard and ketchup with a dash of curry powder. It usually comes on white bread and is briefly grilled before serving.

A favorite sweet treat is kaiserschmarrn (emperor's mess), a caramelized pancake cooked with copious amounts of sugar.

Meat is generally not halal, but plenty of butchers and supermarkets provide this option.



SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Same-sex marriage is not legal in Austria, but registered partnerships are, and same-sex couples may adopt children.



PHARMACIES

Pharmacies are open on weekdays from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., with shorter hours on Saturdays. Most don't open on Sundays. Emergency pharmacies are available at all times.



SHOPS

Shops are allowed to open from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. on weekdays and until 6 p.m. on Saturdays. On Sundays and the Christmas holidays, shops stay closed, but there are some exceptions in larger cities.



SUPERMARKETS

There is a range of supermarkets available, with cheaper outlets such as Aldi and Lidl. Spar is a popular and convenient choice.



WASTE AND RECYCLING

By law, residents must separate recyclable and nonrecyclable waste, and separate containers are available for doing so. Hazardous items such as batteries and medicines must be deposited in special bins.



FILMS

Kuma: Teenager Ayse is about to leave Turkey and become the second wife of an elderly Austrian-Turkish man. The film deals with some of the insularity and protectionist attitudes of some Turkish men toward women and the clash in expectations about gender roles.

Nordrand (Northern Skirts):

A group of young of migrants in Vienna — mostly from the former Yugoslavia and other parts of Eastern Europe — find themselves navigating life, loneliness and challenges in Austria's capital. They are brought closer together through their shared sense of solitude.

Import/Export: A Ukrainian nurse heads west, hoping for a better life, while a hopeful Austrian man moves to Eastern Europe for the same reason. These parallel lives begin with hope but end in disappointment.



BOOK

Women as Lovers by Elfriede Jelinek: Two women workers at a lingerie factory in the Alps plan for their future and the possibilities of marriage. But their aspirations, independence and power are affected by the realities of married life.



TRADITIONS

Some Austrians love to get back in touch with the past and wear traditional costumes, which for men includes leather pants and other garb, during August celebrations.

Fasching (Carnival) is a great Austrian celebration between Epiphany and the beginning of Lent and is loved by Austrians, even nonreligious ones.

Christmas season is another anticipated holiday, filled with sparkle.

On Jan. 6, Christians celebrate the Epiphany, when three wise men from the East are said to have visited the newborn Jesus. Children visit houses and collect money, leaving behind the initials CBM, for “Christus mansionem benedicat” (May Christ bless this house).



A TYPICAL GESTURE

Before an important meeting, interview or event, Austrians might wish you luck by making two fists and pretending to pound on a table.



A TYPICAL SAYING

A common phrase in Austria is “Deutsche Sprache, schwere Sprache” which means “German language, difficult language.” But don’t let that put you off; it’s not as difficult as it seems.



SOME ORGANIZATIONS THAT WORK WITH MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Provides assistance to migrants in areas such as voluntary returns, reintegration, countertrafficking, integration, and EU relocation.

Nibelungengasse 13/4

1010 Vienna

+43 (0) 1 5853322

iomvienna@iom.int

www.iomvienna.at

Diakonie - Evangelischer Flüchtlingsdienst Österreich

Provides counseling, care, accommodation, education, integration, and medical and psychotherapeutic treatment for asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants.

Steinergasse 3/12

1170 Vienna

[+43 \(0\) 1 402675416](tel:+4301402675416)

fluechtlingsdienst@diakonie.at

fluechtlingsdienst.diakonie.at

Caritas Österreich

Offers various services for asylum seekers, including legal counseling, housing, and language courses.

Albrechtskreithgasse 19-21

1160 Vienna

[+43 \(0\) 1488310](tel:+4301488310)

office@caritas-austria.at

www.caritas.at

Zebra

Offers legal advice for migrants, psychotherapeutic treatment, family counseling, counseling on education and employment, and recognition of qualifications obtained in other countries.

Granatengasse 4/3

8020 Graz

+43 (0) 316835630

office@zebra.or.at

www.zebra.or.at

Deserteurs- und Flüchtlingsberatung

Offers German classes and counseling service and provides legal assistance in appeals for rejected asylum seekers.

Schottengasse 3a/1/59

1010 Vienna

+43 (0) 15337271

deserteursberatung@utanet.at

www.deserteursberatung.at

Don Bosco Flüchtlingswerk Austria

Provides secure and stable homes for young people from different cultures and with different languages.

+43 (0) 1 6650255

office@fluechtlingswerk.at

www.fluechtlingswerk.at

Asyl in Not

Provides legal assistance in German, English, French, Russian, Farsi, and Arabic. Offers guidance and support during the entire asylum procedure, including writing appeals and statements if an application is rejected.

Währingerstrasse 59/2/1

1090 Vienna

+43 (0) 14084210

asyl-in-not@asyl-in-not.org

office@asyl-in-not.org

www.asyl-in-not.org

CHEAP SUPERMARKETS

There are multiple options for cheap supermarkets in each country.









Belgium



POLITICAL SYSTEM

Belgium has one of the most complicated political systems in the world. Its simplest component is the monarchy, with the king the head of state with a constitutional democracy form of government.

The country has three distinct communities: Flemish (Dutch), French and German. They largely inhabit separate parts of the country. Dutch and French are the official languages in the capital, Brussels.

Decision making is split among the federal government, the communities (Flemish, French and German) and the regions (Flemish-speaking Flanders, French-speaking Wallonia and Brussels). Each community and region has its own government.



GEOGRAPHY

Belgium is made up of Flanders in the north, inhabited mostly by Flemish speakers; Wallonia in the south, with mostly French speakers; and a small German-speaking region in the east. Brussels is in southern Flanders. Belgium is part of the Lowlands (along with the Netherlands), with the North Sea to the northwest, the Netherlands to the

northeast, Germany and Luxembourg to the east, and France to the southwest.



DEMOGRAPHICS

There are 11 million Belgians; just under 60 percent live in Flanders, about 30 percent are in Wallonia, and about 10 percent live in Brussels. A quarter of the country's residents are of non-Belgian backgrounds, including large numbers of people of Moroccan and Turkish descent.



RELIGION

Most of the population is Catholic, and there are sizable Muslim, Protestant, Jewish and nonreligious populations.



EDUCATION

School is mandatory for all children up to the age of 18, including refugees. Special bridging classes are arranged for newly arrived children, and after students reach a certain level, they are integrated into the regular school system. At reception centers for refugees, there are usually special activities to help asylum seekers build their knowledge of the country, while adults who are entitled to work may have access to special education and professional training services to help them find jobs. Sufficient knowledge of the local language might be required.



HEALTH CARE

The federal government generally provides publicly funded health care through an insurance-based system. Health care for asylum seekers is covered by the National Institute for Health and Disability Insurance. Generally Belgians and asylum seekers alike must pay for treatment first, and the cost is reimbursed by insurance. However, at collective reception centers, up-front payment is not required, but choice of doctors and some other matters is limited.



PEOPLE

Many Belgians deride the inefficient and highly complex political system. The country is fraught with linguistic divides, and there is often talk of the country's breaking apart. Belgium's public services are generally top notch, and no matter their language, all Belgians take great pride in their beer, waffles and french fries.



COHABITATION

Belgium has a progressive outlook legally and socially, on cohabitation and has one of Europe's highest rates of children born outside marriage. Marriage is not the only way to gain legal status as a couple, and couples may get a cohabitation agreement and papers to certify a union without getting married.



SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Belgians have liberal views on most matters, and in 2003 the country became the second in the world to legalize same-sex marriage.



PHARMACIES

Pharmacies usually are marked with a large green cross and are open Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Those pharmacies often display in a window a list of others nearby that are open outside normal hours. Most areas have some pharmacies that are open late or 24 hours a day and on Sundays.



TABOOS

Issues of identity (particularly those in the Flemish and Walloon communities), stereotypes, and religious and linguistic divides are subjects best avoided, particularly with strangers.



FOOD, DRINK AND SMOKING

Smoking is banned in most indoor public areas, such as on public transport and in bars, nightclubs, and casinos.

Belgians are proud of their huge variety of beers, which are often very strong and are said to be some of the best in the world. Beer drinking is common, including in the daytime, but public drunkenness less so.

Belgians like to say that their cuisine is French quality, German quantity. One dish loved across all of Belgium is

french fries and mayonnaise. Another national dish strongly associated with the country is moules-frites. This is usually a large quantity of mussels cooked in wine, cream, butter, or beer and served in a metal bucket, along with french fries.

Waffles are another firm favorite with regional variations, served with fruit, chocolate, cream, butter, or syrup.

In cities you will find plenty of butchers offering halal meats and many restaurants serving halal food, particularly in Moroccan, Turkish and Arabic eateries.



WASTE AND RECYCLING

In Belgium, almost everything is recycled, and trash must be separated into the appropriate bin bags. In Brussels, plastics and metals, such as aluminium and tin cans, go into blue coded bags, usually found around residential buildings. Yellow coded bags are for paper and cardboard. Green ones are for vegetable trimmings, leaves, grass cuttings and branches. Glass bottles and jars go into a separate container. White and black bags are for general waste. Different regions might have different systems, so best check with locals.



SHOPS

Most stores are open from Monday to Saturday and close on Sunday, except for the Sundays before Christmas and New Year's Day. Even on Sundays, some shops are open in the morning, particularly those selling fresh produce such as

bakeries. Establishments in larger cities generally open at 10 a.m. and close at 6 p.m.; in smaller towns and villages, some — particularly banks and post offices — might close for lunch.



TRADITIONS

In Ypres, Kattenstoet (the Festival of the Cats) has been an annual celebration since 1955. The festival harks back to an old practice, in which cats were dropped from the bell tower in the center of the city to the square below.

Thankfully for felines, this tradition has ended, and instead city residents put on a massive parade for cats that includes giant feline puppets on floats.



A TYPICAL SAYING

“Nu komt de aap uit de mouw”

translates from Flemish to “Now the monkey comes out of the sleeve,” which means “The truth will be revealed.”



A TYPICAL GESTURE

If you mimic grabbing an imaginary fly in front of your face, then you are suggesting that somebody is crazy.



FILMS

Illégal (Illegal): In a desperate and determined bid to seek residency in Belgium, Tania, a Russian mother, attempts to

hide her identity by burning her fingertips. On the run, she refuses her friend's advice to claim to be Belorussian and seek political asylum, but her act of dignity sees her locked into a seemingly inescapable system of imprisonment.

Le Gamin au Vélo (The Boy With a Bicycle): A kindhearted Belgian boy escapes from his foster home and attempts to find his father, who abandoned him and took his bike. When he is apprehended by a caretaker, he clings to a nearby woman who later goes to visit him at his home with his bike. The two go on to spend weekends together as they seek out his father.

Marina: In this story based on the life of Rocco Granata, the son of a poor Italian immigrant miner who appears destined for a life of subterranean toil as well, but Rocco learns the accordion, and despite discrimination and poverty. He becomes one of the country's best-loved singers, with a hit single, "Marina."



BOOK

The Sorrow of Belgium by Hugo Claus: This two-part book ("The Sorrow" and "Of Belgium") is a Flemish-language masterpiece about a Belgian family during World War II and a free-minded boy's bid to break away from his Nazi sympathizing family and find forbidden books.



SUPERMARKETS

Supermarkets in Belgium include Colruyt, Aldi, Lidl, Carrefour and Delhaize.

SOME ORGANIZATIONS THAT WORK WITH MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Provides migration management and assistance to migrants in need, including assisted voluntary returns and reintegration, countertrafficking, labor migration and development, resettlement and EU relocation.

Rue Montoyer 40 | 3rd floor

+32 (0) 2 287 70 00

iombrussels@iom.int

eea.iom.int

Croix Rouge

(Red Cross) - Belgium

Provides legal support for asylum seekers and psychological evaluations for those at most risk. It also distributes relief.

Rue de Stalle 96

1180 Brussels

+31 (0) 2 3713111

info.crb@croix-rouge.be

www.croix-rouge.be

Association Pour le Droit des Étrangers (Association for the Rights of Foreigners)

Assists migrants and refugees in resolving legal and social issues.

Rue de Laeken 89
1000 Brussels
[+32 \(0\) 2 2274242](tel:+3222274242)
www.adde.be

Athéna

Offers general medical services. Social assistants there determine whether a service may be provided free. Open 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Rue de Brouchoven 2
1000 Brussels
[+32 \(0\) 2 209 05 25](tel:+3222090525)
www.athenapmg.be

Belgian Refugee Council

Provides free legal aid to asylum seekers. Helps with asylum applications, assists asylum seekers in detention and supports family reunification for recognized refugees. Is the operational partner of the UNHCR in Belgium.

Rue Botanique 75
1210 Brussels
[+32 \(0\) 2 537 82 20](tel:+3225378220)
info@cbar-bchv.be
www.cbar-bchv.be

Médecins du Monde (Doctors of the World)

Provides medical assistance to vulnerable groups.

info@medecinsdumonde.be
www.medecinsdumonde.be

For referrals, not for consultations:

Rue Botanique 75

1210 Brussels

+32 (0) 2 225 43 00

For consultations:

Rue Martine Bourtonbourt 6 Salzinnes 5000 Namur

(Thursdays 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)

Rue du Moulin 79

7100 La Louvière

(Wed. 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)

Sint Sebastiaanstraat 16a

8400 Oostende

(Thu. 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)

Van Maerlanstraat 56

2060 Antwerp

(Mondays and Thursdays 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)

Medimmigrant

Offers information and advice concerning medical topics for undocumented migrants and organizations in the Brussels region, by phone or email only.

+32 (0) 2 274 14 33

Info@medimmigrant.be

www.medimmigrant.be

Duo for a Job

Connects young immigrants with experienced professionals aged over 50 years old for help with finding a job.

Rue de Stassart 48

1050 Brussels

+32 (0) 2 203 02 31

info@duoforajob.be

www.duoforajob.be

Medibus

Provides free consultations at these Brussels locations:

Rue Botanique 75

Gare Centrale (Mondays 6:30 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.)

Gare du Midi (Tuesdays 6:30 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.)

Gare du Nord (Wednesdays 6:30 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.)

Aide aux Personnes Déplacées (Aid for Displaced People)

Offers social services to help migrants understand Belgian asylum procedures and find solutions to everyday problems. Also offers French language courses.

Rue Jean d'Outremeuse 91-93

4020 Liege

+32 (0) 4 342 14 44

www.aideauxpersonnesdeplacees.be

Mentor-Escale (Mentor-Stopover)

Assists foreign unaccompanied minors and refugee youths in their journey toward autonomy and integration.

Opperstraet 19
1050 Brussels
+32 (0) 2 505 32 32
info@mentorescale.be
www.mentorescale.be

Vluchtingenwerk Vlaanderen (Flemish Refugee Action)

Supports asylum seekers and refugees by putting pressure on policymakers and increasing awareness among the general public. They also coordinate a reception network and are actively involved in integration, supporting all those that assist asylum seekers and refugees.

Rue Botanique 75
1210 Bruxelles
info@vluchtelingenwerk.be
www.vluchtelingenwerk.be

PHARMACIES

Pharmacies are sprinkled throughout cities, and some are open 24 hours. They can recommend other medical help.









APOTEK

France



POLITICAL SYSTEM

France has a strong centralized, democratic political structure and is led by a president. Voters elect the president and representatives to the National Assembly (the lower house of Parliament) for five-year terms, and the president chooses the prime minister.

President François Hollande of the center-left social-democratic Socialist Party currently heads the country. The second-largest group in Parliament is the center-right, conservative Republicans, formerly called The Union for a Popular Movement.

France has seen a surge in support for the far-right National Front, which came in third in the 2012 elections and was France's best-performing party in the 2014 European elections.



GEOGRAPHY

France occupies a central position in Western Europe, bordering Germany, Belgium, and Luxembourg to the north and east; Switzerland and Italy to the east; and Spain to the southwest.



DEMOGRAPHICS

France has about 66 million residents. It has a wide variety of cultures, including Breton speakers in the north-west and Basques in the south. French is spoken throughout the country.



COHABITATION

Unmarried couples frequently live together in France, and the law distinguishes between live-in relationships that are unofficial (“en union libre”) and official (“en concubinage”).



EDUCATION

Children attend school up to the age of 16. Registration for primary school can be done at the town hall, and children without adequate command of French are placed in a course to learn the language.

Universities consider refugees international students, so they must pay tuition fees, and costs depend on the university and courses. But there are scholarships available, including some from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and some universities drop fees for refugees. Campus France is assisting refugees seeking higher education. Generally, while asylum applications are processed, there is no access to training courses for refugees, although volunteers might run French classes in some reception centers.



HEALTH CARE

France runs a universal insurance system, meaning all are covered, including asylum seekers. If annual household income is less than 9,534 euros, free health insurance is available; proof of income status may be necessary. Refugees may apply for health insurance by providing proof of residency status, marital status, and finances.



SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Same-sex marriages have been legal in France since 2013.



SHOPS

In small towns and villages, shops are generally open Monday to Saturday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. In urban centers, larger stores remain open throughout the day, as do supermarkets outside cities.



PHARMACIES

Most pharmacies are open during normal retail hours, but a “pharmacie de garde” can usually be found that is open on Sundays and sometimes at night.

If a pharmacy’s green cross sign is lit, that means it is open, but it might be necessary to ring a bell for late-night service. In cities it is easier to find 24-hour pharmacies.



PEOPLE

France has played an important role for centuries as a cultural trend setter and is noted for its great respect of

style, fashion, and intellect.

A sense of individuality is an important cultural characteristic, exemplified by the French passion for freedom of opinion. The French can be intolerant toward certain kinds of behavior that in their view undermine personal liberties.

TABOOS

Chewing gum in public is considered vulgar, and snapping one's fingers is also seen as highly impolite. The French speak a lot about politics, but it's often taboo to discuss one's vote.

FOOD, DRINK AND SMOKING

France has a culture of smoking, but it is banned in public places such as train stations. Smoking inside restaurants and bars is banned.

Wine is a staple drink for most French people, and many enjoy a glass with their meals.

Baguettes are adored in France, and people often wait patiently outside local "boulangeries" (bakeries) to get a fresh loaf in the morning.

Crepes, or thin pancakes, are hugely popular across France and can be enjoyed with savory ingredients such as cheese and ham for lunch or dinner or with chocolate sauce or fruit as a sweet treat. Creperie stalls can be found on many French streets, particularly in Brittany.

Traditionally, lunch during workdays was often eaten at local bistros. As French people now take shorter lunch breaks, this tradition is dying, but many bistros still offer a “menu du jour” (menu of the day), which includes two or three courses for a fixed price.

Restaurants serving halal food should be easy to find; it’s best to ask. Supermarkets offer halal meats, and national halal companies are growing.



RELIGION

The majority of French people are Catholic or nonreligious. There are about 5 million Muslims in France, mostly of Algerian origin. Relations between Muslims and non-Muslims have been mixed but generally good.

France abides by a strict code of “laïcité,” or secularism, with a very clear separation of church and state, in force since 1905. This translates to banning religious symbols in state schools (including the hijab) and, recently, the niqab in public.



A TYPICAL SAYING

“Les doigts dans le nez” (fingers in the nose) means that something is very easy to do.



A TYPICAL GESTURE

Making a ring with a thumb and forefinger and placing it over one’s nose is a way to say someone is drunk. Miming

playing a flute means that someone is talking to the point of being annoying.



SUPERMARKETS

Hypermarkets such as Géant, Auchan and Carrefour provide practically endless choices for shoppers, from food to housewares, but they are usually outside towns. Smaller supermarkets such as Aldi, Lidl and Netto can be found in towns and cities, providing budget-price food and drinks.



TRADITIONS

“La fête nationale,” or Bastille Day, is France’s most popular secular holiday, which commemorates the storming of the Bastille prison by French citizens in 1789, marking the start of the French Revolution. Fireworks and parades take place, and the event is an important family event.

On April 1, “Poisson d’Avril” (April fish), or April Fools’ Day, is celebrated, when children might try to stick paper fish on people’s backs as a lighthearted joke. Its origin supposedly dates back hundreds of years, when the pope changed the calendar so the New Year began on Jan. 1 and those following the old start of the year on April 1 were ridiculed as fools.



WEDDINGS

One of the highlights of French weddings is the beheading of Champagne bottles with a specially made saber. The

tradition is said to have been started by skilled swordsmen in Napoleon's cavalry who could gallop at full speed and swipe the tops off Champagne bottles held aloft by women.



WASTE AND RECYCLING

Districts manage their own waste. Generally they have disposal stations for recyclable materials. Unwanted electronic items can be disposed of by the shop where they were purchased.



FILMS

Le Havre: An elderly failed author ekes out a simple existence as a shoeshiner in the French port city of Le Havre. His life takes an unexpected turn when he helps a young African undocumented immigrant who is on the run from the police. The man helps shelter the boy from a tough inspector attempting to find undocumented immigrants in the city.

Entre les Murs (The Class): A French literature teacher struggles

to inspire his class of mostly immigrant students in a tough Paris school. After the children reject the traditional French writers on the syllabus, he is forced to start an unorthodox program that makes the students the center of a new creative form in literature.

Un Prophète (A Prophet): A petty criminal of Algerian background ends up in prison and is forced to navigate the tough inner workings of French prison life. He finds himself

rising up the prison hierarchy to become a leading figure among inmates, eventually earning the respect of rival Muslim and Corsican factions, but his promotion brings him more enemies.



BOOK

L'Étranger by Albert Camus: A breakthrough work in existentialism, "The Stranger" tells the story of a French-Algerian man who becomes detached from human feelings. On a beach in Algiers he murders an Algerian man, is arrested for the crime and is sentenced to death.



SOME ORGANIZATIONS THAT WORK WITH MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Provides assistance to migrants in such areas as voluntary returns, reintegration, countertrafficking, integration, and EU relocation.

Rue du Faubourg Poissonnière 31

75009 Paris

+33 (0) 1 40 44 06 91

iomparis@iom.int

www.iomfrance.org

International Refugee Rights Initiative: Rights in Exile Programme

Directory of resources for migrants and refugees in France

www.refugeelegalaidinformation.org

La Cimade

Provides legal assistance to asylum seekers and undocumented migrants in its reception centers and has two shelters located in Béziers and Massy. It also maintains a presence in several detention centers across France.

infos@lacimade.org

www.lacimade.org/en-region

Groupe d'Information et de Soutien des Immigrés (Group for Information and Support for Immigrants)

Specializes in law regarding foreigners. Its main services include free legal consultations to those in need, editing of publications and training sessions in law regarding foreigners.

villa Marcès 3

75011 Paris

[+33 \(0\) 1 43 14 84 84](tel:+330143148484)

gisti@gisti.org

www.gisti.org

Association Pierre Claver

Assists adult asylum seekers through education to successful integration in French society. Teaches language and social codes, through regular lessons and social, sport, art, and cultural activities and contact with French people. Refugees usually spend two years with the association before qualifying for a Pierre Claver scholarship (100 percent funded by the private sector, mainly by AXA) to enter college or professional training, and to get help with

creating a business, or finding a job. There are senior lawyers who provide pro bono legal assistance to Pierre Claver students as they seek asylum and residency.

Rue de Bourgogne 28

75007 Paris

+33 (0) 1 45 55 57 41

associationpierreclaver@orange.fr

www.pierreclaver.org

Association Revivre (Revive Association)

Dedicated solely to Syrian refugees in France to welcome, inform, and orient them and accompany them at all steps. Online service in Arabic, French, and English, directed by Sabreen al-Rassace.

Mairie de Paris 20e

Place Gambetta 6

75020 Paris

Metro: Gambetta lines: 3, 3 bis

Bus: 60, 64, 69

+33 (0) 6 34 15 22 40

refugiesrevivre@gmail.com

www.association-revivre.fr

France Terre d'Asile (France Country of Asylum)

Assists those seeking asylum in France, regardless of whether they have met the legal threshold of refugee or stateless. Promotes refugees' rights, integration, and access to employment, housing, and French language instruction.

infos@france-terre-asile.org

www.france-terre-asile.org

Secours Catholique (Catholic Relief) - Caritas France

Provides practical and moral support to all asylum seekers, regardless of faith. Volunteers (nonlawyers who have been given relevant training) support integration into French society and applications for asylum or residence.

rue du Bac 106

75341 Paris

[+33 \(0\) 1 45 49 73 00](tel:+330145497300)

www.secours-catholique.asso.fr

Forum réfugiés-Cosi

Welcomes refugees and defends the right to get asylum in the southeast of France providing social and legal assistance. Also works in refugees' countries of origin to promote human rights, the rule of law, and democracy.

Headquarters

rue de la Baisse 28

69612 Villeurbanne Cedex

[+33 \(0\) 4 78 03 74 45](tel:+330478037445)

Plate-forme d'accueil de Lyon

rue Garibaldi 326

[+33 \(0\) 4 78 03 74 45](tel:+330478037445)

Plate-forme d'accueil de Lyon

rue Garibaldi 326
69347 Lyon Cedex 7
+33 (0) 4 72 77 68 02

Plate-forme d'accueil de Nice

Boulevard François Grosso 75
+33 (0) 4 72 77 68 02

Plate-forme d'accueil de Nice

Boulevard François Grosso 75
06000 Nice
+33 (0) 4 97 25 46 30

Plate-forme d'accueil de Clermont-Ferrand

rue de Niel 34
+33 (0) 4 97 25 46 30

Plate-forme d'accueil de Clermont-Ferrand

rue de Niel 34
63018 Clermont-Ferrand Cedex 2
+33 (0) 4 73 14 36 00

Plate-forme d'accueil de Marseille

Boulevard d'Athènes 27
+33 (0) 4 73 14 36 00

Plate-forme d'accueil de Marseille

Boulevard d'Athènes 27
13201 Marseille Cedex 02

(address to change before
the end of 2016)

+33 (0) 4 91 50 28 16

direction@forumrefugies.org

info@forumrefugies.org

www.forumrefugies.org

HALAL

In most cities there are many foreign restaurants, many with cheap options for halal food.









Germany



POLITICAL SYSTEM

Germany is a federal democracy, so although ultimate power lies with the national parliament in Berlin (the Bundestag), each state (Bundesland) also has its own similar body (Landtag). The Länder are represented in the federal council (Bundesrat).

There are two main political parties in Germany, the center-right Christian Democratic Union (CDU, headed by Chancellor Angela Merkel) and the center-left Social Democratic Party (SPD).

The CDU commits itself to Christian values, although the party has many nonreligious and non-Christian members.

The SPD has traditionally been more popular with the working class. Both parties usually form coalition governments with other parties, with the SPD often linking with the Greens (Bündnis 90/die Grünen).

Although no far-right party has been in power since the fall of the Nazis in 1945, extremist sentiments still exist. The PEGIDA movement is an amalgamation of right-wing and far-right groups and has organized a number of mass rallies against Islam and immigration in Germany.

The Alternative for Germany proposes Euroskeptic, nationalist, and anti-immigration policies. The National

Democratic Party is a far-right group that has had marginal support in eastern Germany.



GEOGRAPHY

Germany is in the heart of Europe, with France to the west, Poland and the Czech Republic to the east, Switzerland and Austria to the south and Denmark to the north. Germany holds a leading position politically and economically in the European Union as the bloc's largest economy and most populous state.

Among the most culturally distinct regions are Catholic Bavaria in the south; the post-communist east, which remains less developed; and the most cosmopolitan and socially radical city, Berlin.



DEMOGRAPHICS

About 80 percent of Germans have no known descendants from outside the country, but there are many ethnic Germans who arrived from Eastern Europe and Russia after World War II or from what was then the Soviet Union as it collapsed.

The largest ethnic minority group is the German-Turkish community. Germany has also witnessed migration from Poland, Greece, Italy, Spain, Iran, Afghanistan and Arab countries.



RELIGION

Germans are increasingly nonreligious, but the country is culturally Protestant. More than 35 percent of residents follow no religion, Roman Catholics and Protestants each account for about 30 percent, Muslims make up about 3 percent, and the rest are Christians of other denominations, Buddhists, Jews and others.



HEALTH CARE

The country has high-quality universal health care, with compulsory insurance paid by employers and employees. Health care access for refugees, for the first 15 months they are in Germany, is limited to emergencies and cases of acute pain or illness.



EDUCATION

Primary schools are generally state-run and compulsory for children. Secondary schools are generally split into three categories: Gymnasiums for elite students, Realschule for intermediate pupils, and Hauptschule for vocational pupils. Students at elite schools are much more likely to attend universities than those in the other streams.

Tertiary education is split into two levels: one for vocational learning, with apprenticeships, and an academic stream for degrees and postgraduate qualifications.

Universities are world class, and fees for attending are minimal, especially compared with those in some other European countries. To attend a university, students must hold the necessary qualifications from a German school.

Those who studied abroad must prove they have the aptitude to take courses. Different universities and subjects have different requirements.

Foreign students can often attend a Studienkolleg to obtain the necessary qualifications to study at a university.



PEOPLE

Much of German culture and tradition has survived globalization, but most Germans also feel proud to be European citizens. Old-fashioned stereotypes of efficient and organized Germans can rattle some in the younger generations.



TABOOS

The Nazi period and the Holocaust have left Germans with a deep sense of shame, so making jokes about Adolf Hitler or Jews, displaying the swastika, and denying the Holocaust not only are considered taboo but also could lead to arrest.



COHABITATION

Although for decades Germany was mostly conservative, the student rebellions in the 1960s irreversibly changed the country's nature. People of different sexes often live together, as friends or lovers. Many couples choose not to marry, and more and more Germans are opting out of having children.



SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Same-sex relations among adults are legal and are considered unremarkable by most Germans. It is not unusual to see male or female couples kissing or holding hands on the street, gay bars, or pride marches in larger towns and cities.

Same-sex marriage is not legal, but couples may have registered partnerships granting them most of the same rights as legally married couples. Employers may not discriminate against LGBT employees, and most people do not tolerate anti-LGBT comments in the workplace.



PHARMACIES

Pharmacies offer a range of over-the-counter and prescription medicines.

Late-night and standby pharmacies offer services at night or on Sundays and holidays. Their locations are posted on the doors of other pharmacies in the area.



SUPERMARKETS

The cheapest stores are Aldi, Lidl, and Netto. Rewe and Edeka are the most expensive



FOOD, DRINK AND SMOKING

Each state in Germany has its own smoking laws, so it is best to check with locals about where smoking is and isn't allowed. It is considered impolite to smoke in other people's houses or near nonsmokers, children or pregnant women.

Drinking beer and wine is a big part of German culture, although drinking to excess is often frowned on. Many Germans don't drink, and it is seen as perfectly fine not to drink in the company of others who do.

One of the best examples of German multiculturalism is döner, which is similar to the Arabic shawarma. Brought over by Turkish immigrants, döner is now a much-loved dish and is commonplace across the country. Döner meat is grilled on a spit, thinly sliced, and packed into warm bread. Salad and chili or yogurt sauce is usually piled on top, according to the customer's taste.

A favorite nonalcoholic German drink is apfelschorle, which is a blend of apple juice and sparkling water.

Currywurst is popular with late-night revelers across the country. First, a grilled or fried pork sausage (Bratwurst) is sliced and seasoned with ketchup, mustard, and a generous dash of curry powder. French fries often accompany the dish.

Turkish butchers offer halal meat, and halal sections can be found in most supermarkets.



WASTE AND RECYCLING

Recycling is widespread in Germany, and residents are expected to separate their household waste. Many glass

bottles can be returned for a refund, and other glass items can be deposited in designated bins, sorted according to color.

There are separate containers for other recyclable materials and for waste. Generally, black bins are for general waste, blue for paper, yellow for plastics and brown or green for organic materials such as food.

Ask a neighbor or shop assistant to clarify, since colors can vary from state to state. A good online resource is www.howtogermany.com



TRADITIONS

The Rhenish Carnival is mostly celebrated in the states of North Rhine-Westphalia and Rhineland-Palatinate and is characterized by its colorful parades and parties. A million people pack the streets of Cologne during Carnival, many in costumes.

Volksfeste are a cross between beer festivals and fun fairs and are popular throughout Germany.

The best-known Volksfest is Oktoberfest, drawing locals and others from around the rest of the world since 1810. The festival takes place in Munich in Bavaria every September over 16 days, with huge beer halls catering to millions of visitors each year.

On Nov. 11, to celebrate the life of St. Martin of Tours, a Roman soldier who found Christianity and turned to a life of charity and asceticism, children sing songs about him. A torchlit parade begins at a church and moves onto public

squares. When the procession reaches the end, a bonfire is lit, and pretzels are shared.

During the four weeks leading up to Christmas, German town centers are transformed into open-air markets, with vendors selling mulled wine, food, and seasonal items. Entertainment is often provided by choirs, bands, or dancing troupes.



A TYPICAL SAYING

If someone says, “Das ist nicht mein/dein Bier” (That is not my/your beer), he or she is saying, “That is none of my/your business.”



A TYPICAL GESTURE

Pointing an index finger to the head means that somebody is crazy.



BOOK

Russian Disco by Wladimir Kaminer: Although this book won't be listed among the greats of literature, it is a lighthearted look at immigrant life in Germany, written by a Russian immigrant who tries to integrate himself into local community, with often hilarious consequences.



FILMS

Gegen die Wand (Head-On): A German-Turkish 40-year-old man's life is on the rocks after the death of his wife. His life takes him from one bar to the next, and in an alcoholic stupor he deliberately drives his car into a wall. Sent to a psychiatric clinic, he meets a German-Turkish woman who asks him to marry her so she can escape her restrictive parents, leading to a life of lies, pain and rejection.

Almanya (Germany): A feel-good comedy about a group of Turkish guest workers adapting to life in a strange new country. Germany, their new home, offers them different opportunities and a better shot at life, but integrating and becoming German proves to be a conundrum, forcing them to examine what they want to adopt from European culture.

In der Fremde (Far From Home): Directed by German-Iranian filmmaker Sohrab Shahid Saless, it tells the story of a group of immigrants to Germany in search of a better life. Instead they are faced with a life of daily drudgery, boredom and loneliness.

La Pirogue (The Pirogue): This Senegalese-French-German production follows a fisherman in Senegal who sets off for Spain with a group of migrants hoping to start a better life. But the small boat must first make an arduous, nerve-racking, dangerous crossing on the unpredictable Atlantic Ocean, where the pilot needs to muster all his knowledge, skill and fortitude to overcome the perilous waters.



SOME ORGANIZATIONS THAT WORK WITH MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Provides assistance to migrants in such areas as voluntary returns, reintegration, countertrafficking, integration, and EU relocation.

Taubenstraße 20-22

10117 Berlin

+49 30 278 778 11

iom-germany@iom.int

www.germany.iom.int

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) - Germany

Zimmerstraße 79/80

10117 Berlin

+49 30 202 2020,

gfrbe@unhcr.org

www.unhcr.org (in German only)

Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees)

Frankenstraße 210

90461 Nürnberg

+49 911 943 6390

info@bamf.bund.de

www.bamf.de

Pro Asyl

Advocates for the rights of refugees in Germany and in Europe. Offers legal advice and help with asylum

applications. Investigates human rights violations and campaign for an open society in which refugees receive protection. In each state is a Flüchtlingsrat, part of the Pro Asyl network, focusing on individual contact and support.

+49 692 423 1420

proasyl@proasyl.de

www.proasyl.de

Welcome to Europe (w2eu) - Germany

Updated comprehensive information in Arabic, English, Farsi, and French about Germany's asylum laws and how to apply, Dublin III, help for minors, detention, deportation, family reunification, medical assistance, and work.

www.w2eu.info/germany.en.html

RefugeeGuide.de

Provides information about Germany, its culture, and its people, in response to questions asked by arriving refugees. Available online and downloadable in 17 languages.

LOCAL FOOD

Each country has its own typical and relatively cheap street food.



PIZZA



BAGUETTE



BURGERS



PIZZA



FISCH



CRÊPES



POMMES



BAKED POTATOES



HOTDOG



PAELLA



CROISSANT

Greece



POLITICAL SYSTEM

After several years of domination by a military dictatorship, Greece became a democracy again in 1974. The country has a history of strong far-left and far-right elements, although most

Greeks have voted for the center-left Panhellenic Socialist Movement or the liberal-conservative New Democracy.

Greece has been battered by an economic crisis, which has seen the left-wing Syriza come to power in 2015, led by Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras.



GEOGRAPHY

Greece lies at the crossroads of Europe, Asia, and Africa, which has made it an entry and departure point to and from Europe for millennia.

The country occupies the southern point of the Balkan Peninsula and lies just across the Mediterranean Sea from Turkey (also sharing a small land border), Italy, and North Africa. Thousands of islands dotting the sea belong to Greece. The capital is Athens.



DEMOGRAPHICS

There are about 11 million Greeks, and some 3 million live in Athens. There is a sizable Albanian minority. In 2015 more than 800,000 migrants and refugees from Asia entered Greece.



EDUCATION

Refugee children have access to free schooling according to the law, but the bureaucratic processes in place at schools might delay enrollment. Children may enroll in local schools if they have refugee status, are from a region considered dangerous, had an asylum application made, or are third-country nationals residing in the country. Some reception centers offer classes in Greek and computing.



RELIGION

Greek Orthodoxy is the prevailing religion, and it has done much to shape the country's character.



PEOPLE

Like in many rural areas, Greeks in villages have strong attachment to their traditions and customs, but cities tend to be more socially progressive. Far-right groups have been active in harassing and sometimes assaulting refugees, but for the most part, Greeks are very welcoming to foreigners, and there are plenty of organizations and individuals helping new arrivals.

TABOOS

Greeks have been hit hard by the economic crisis, so discussions of the situation should be conducted with awareness of the widespread hardship it has brought on ordinary people.

COHABITATION

Family is a central institution in Greece, which has led to a lower cohabitation rate than in other EU countries. In 2012 only 8 percent of births in Greece were outside marriage — the lowest rate in the EU.

SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Same-sex relationships have been legal in Greece since 1951, and same-sex civil unions were legalized in 2015, but marriage and adoption are not permitted for same-sex couples.

SHOPS

Many stores open at 8:30 a.m. or 9:00 a.m., close for a few hours in the afternoon, reopen in the early evening, and then close at 8:30 p.m. or 9 p.m. Hours vary, depending on the day, the kind of business and the size of the store. Most businesses are closed on Sunday.

SUPERMARKETS

Marinopoulos-Carrefour and Lidl are the biggest chains in Greece, and Galaxias and Sklavenitis are also popular.



FOOD, DRINK AND SMOKING

Greece has a very high rate of smoking compared with the rest of the EU, and despite a smoking ban in public areas, enforcement can be weak.

Family and friends will often gather and consume wine, beer, or spirits. Tea and coffee are also popular.

Souvlaki are chunks of meat, usually pork or chicken, grilled on skewers and served in pita bread with salad and tzatziki (a sauce made with yogurt, cucumber, garlic, salt and olive oil). Gyros are made of meat (usually lamb or beef) that has been grilled on a rotisserie and served in a flatbread with salad and tzatziki — like shawarma but with blended meat and different toppings.

Halal meat can be found in supermarkets. Ask around for halal restaurants. Arabic, Indian and Iranian restaurants are likely to serve halal food.



PHARMACIES

Pharmacies have a lit green cross outside the store.

Pharmacists can provide advice and first aid. Providing an insurance card reduces prescription charges.

Pharmacies are typically open until 8:30 p.m. Some are open through the night. Those with standard hours post the addresses of area pharmacies that are open later.



TRADITIONS

Apokries, or Carnival, precedes Lent (a period of fasting and penance before Easter) and is a fun and colorful time when people dress up and attend parties.

On Clean Monday, the first day of fasting, families gather to eat seafood and vegetables or fly kites in public spaces.

Tuesday (rather than Friday) the 13th is considered unlucky for many Greeks.



A TYPICAL GESTURE

Nodding the head backward or raising the eyebrows means “no.” then. Tilting the head to the side means “yes.”



A TYPICAL SAYING

“Parakalo, borite na epanalabete pio arga?” (Please, could you repeat that a bit more slowly?)

“Den milao kala ellinika.”

(I don’t speak Greek fluently.)



FILMS

Theia apo to Chicago (The Auntie From Chicago): Life in a sleepy corner of Greece is disturbed when the sister of a reticent retired general returns home after 30 years in Chicago. She brings new ideas to the conservative household, beginning with the aim of marrying off the general’s shy daughters.

Xenia: Two teenage Albanian brothers set out on a journey to Greece to find their absent Greek father and come to terms with the recent death of their mother. Their path sees them face ghosts of Greece's past as their mission to gain Greek citizenship soon becomes an existential battle.

Nyfes (Brides): It is 1922, and some young mail-order brides from Greece and elsewhere board a ship to America to start a new life with their unknown future husbands. One woman is promised to a tailor in Chicago but on the journey meets an American war correspondent who challenges the patriarchal views about women in rural Greece.



HEALTH CARE

By law, refugees have access to free health care if they don't have insurance or financial means to get treatment. This means that they may get free medication and access to hospitals and may be assessed at hospitals, medical centers and health care centers. Recent reports suggest that the government's tight financial situation has meant that asylum seekers have suffered and received limited access to health care. They can sometimes get access to treatment only after they get approval from a committee with stringent criteria.



BOOK

Eleni by Nicholas Gage: The author tells the story of his mother, who was murdered during the Greek civil war for

hurrying her children out of a village that becomes occupied by communist guerrillas. As an adult, he begins a hunt for her killers.



SOME ORGANIZATIONS THAT WORK WITH MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Provides assistance to migrants in such areas as voluntary returns, reintegration, countertrafficking, integration, and EU relocation.

Dodekanisou Street 6

Alimos, 17456

+30 210 99 19 040

iomathens@iom.int

www.greece.iom.int

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) - Greece

+30 216 20 07 800

great@unhcr.org

www.unhcr.gr (in Greek only)

Greek Asylum Service

Manages all asylum claims.

+30 210 69 88 660

asylo.gov.gr

twitter.com/greekasylum

Welcome to Europe (w2eu) - Greece

Provides an updated list of different services.

www.w2eu.info

Metadrasi - Action for Migration and Development

Offers services for refugees that are not provided by the government. This includes translation and protection for unaccompanied refugee children.

[+30 210 52 01 792](tel:+302105201792)

[+30 210 52 01 794](tel:+302105201794) (for an interpreter)

metadrasi@gmail.com

www.metadrasi.org

Greek Council for Refugees (GCR)

Offers Interpreters, legal aid, social support, an intercultural center, Greek and English language courses, computer courses, and learning support.

Solomou Street 25

10682 Athens

[+30 210 38 00 990](tel:+302103800990)

www.gcr.gr

Greek Forum for Refugees

Provides assistance to refugees and asylum seekers during the asylum procedure to protect their rights and to assist their integration into Greek society. A network of refugee communities in Greece. Languages: Greek, English, French, Arabic, and Farsi.

Navarchou Notara 12

106 83 Athens

+30 213 02 82 976

+30 694 84 08 928

www.refugees.gr

Hellenic Red Cross

Provides a hotline and telephone information about asylum procedures, residence permits, and legal issues. Offers mediation and facilitation with institutions and services, support, and guidance in Greek, English, French, Arabic, Dari, Kurdish, and Russian.

1 Lykavittou Street,

Athens 106 72 (Monday to Friday 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.)

+30 210 36 13 848

+30 210 51 40 440 (hotline)

pr@redcross.gr

www.redcross.gr

Arsis

Offers unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable groups legal aid, social counseling and assistance with asylum applications, relocation, family reunification, and housing applications.

Tenedou 21B (near Amerikis Square)

Athens | Call to find out hours for consultations.

+30 210 82 59 880

www.arsis.gr

Aitima

Provides legal and social support to asylum seekers and refugees, as well as people in detention.

Tripou Street 4

117 41 Athens

(Tuesday and Wednesday 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.)

+30 210 92 41 677

aitima@freemail.gr

www.aitima.gr

Doctors of the World - Greece

Offers medical care in open polyclinics, social pharmacy, social support, psychological support, shelter for vulnerable groups, mobile unit care for vulnerable populations, damage reduction program for addicts, and intercultural mediation.

Sapfous Street 12

105 53 Athens

+30 210 32 13 150

info@mdmgreece.gr

mdmgreece.gr

Doctors Without Borders (MSF)

Provides first assistance, medical and psychological support, shelter, water, sanitation and essential relief items at reception centers and transit camps. Also provides updates on crisis situations.

Xenias Street 15

115 27 Athens

+30 210 52 00 500

info@msf.gr
www.msf.org

Babel Day Center

Offers psychological and psychiatric support for migrants and refugees. Interpreters available.

Loannou Drosopoulou 72 (near Platia Amerikis) Athens
(Wednesday and Thursday 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. | the rest of the week 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.)

[+30 210 86 16 280](tel:+302108616280)

[+30 210 86 16 266](tel:+302108616266)

babel@syneirmos.gr

Klimaka

Offers shelter for asylum applicants and refugees with mental disorders, social support, psychological support, and psychiatric care.

Dekeleon Street 50

Keramikos 11854

[+30 210 34 17 162](tel:+302103417162)

www.klimaka.org.gr

Praksis

Offers primary medical care, with general practitioners, pediatricians, gynecologists, dentists and pharmacists.

Stournari Street 57

10432 Athens

(Monday to Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.)

+30 210 52 05 200

+30 210 52 05 201

info@praksis.gr

www.praksis.gr

ADVERTISING

In many parts of Europe, advertising features scantily clad men and women.







Italy



POLITICAL SYSTEM

Italy is a republic with a multiparty democratic system, with parties allocated seats according to the percentage of votes won. This ensures a highly diverse but often volatile political scene, in which smaller parties in coalition governments can pull their support from more dominant parties, leading to an imbalance in power.

The two largest parties had been the center-left Democratic Party and the center-right People of Freedom Party. In 2013 the People of Freedom Party dissolved, and the re-formed Forza Italia, headed by controversial former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, and the New Center-Right arose in its place.

A new colorful political character, Beppe Grillo, has risen to prominence, promising to shake up Italy's politics, although his populism and lack of experience have attracted controversy.



GEOGRAPHY

Italy is one of the most culturally diverse countries in Europe, and its geography represents this as it stretches

south from the Alps into the Mediterranean. Across the water to the east lie the Balkans, and to the south is Africa.

The country is generally split between the richer, more cosmopolitan north, and poorer, more leftist south. The northern areas have a longer history of industrialization and general economic development, while the south is more rural, relying on traditional industries such as farming and fishing or state subsidies, with generally higher rates of unemployment and less complex infrastructure.



DEMOGRAPHICS

The country's population is divided along regional lines. For centuries before Italian unification (generally accepted as when Rome was made the capital of Italy in 1871) the country was split into city-states and regional kingdoms shaping different identities. Italy has become a cultural and linguistic patchwork with strong feelings of regional identity. This is seen most vividly at football matches between competing regional sides. There are growing communities of people from the Middle East, the Balkans, Romania and China.



RELIGION

Inside Rome is the city state The Vatican, which is the home of the Roman Catholic Church. This is one reason why Catholicism is a key part of Italian identity. However, growing immigration from Africa and the Middle East is

gifting Italy with a more multicultural mosaic, with Islam a particularly strong new religion in the country.



PEOPLE

Italy is one of the stylemakers of Europe, and the country's proud past has given the country an immense sense of purpose. Italians are known for their design, and the country has perhaps the best-appreciated cuisine in the world.

However, Italy has its fair share of problems with corruption and badly run public services, which some say has given rise to constant threats from the far right and organized crime, such as the infamous Mafia criminal syndicate, which is particularly prominent in southern Italy and the island of Sicily.



EDUCATION

All minors, whether Italian or not, must go to school until the age of 16, and children of asylum seekers are granted the same access to public schools as Italians.



HEALTH CARE

Italy has high-quality health care, with the National Health Service providing free medical care to citizens and residents. All asylum seekers benefit from the National Health Service, just as Italian citizens do; migrants are granted largely the same rights.



COHABITATION

Despite Roman Catholicism's strong presence in the country, cohabitation with partners has dramatically increased. There are still regional differences, with nonmarital unions more common in the north than in the south.



A TYPICAL GESTURE

Italians use as many as 250 gestures to express themselves. Some people suggest that the huge number of nonverbal forms of communication were devised by market sellers or for communication while under foreign occupation. One popular sign is to dig a finger into a cheek to say that something is very tasty.

SAME-SEX MARRIAGE



Same-sex sexual activity was legalized in 1890, and civil unions were permitted in May 2016, granting same-sex couples some of the rights that married partners have but stopping short of marriage and adoption.



FAMILY

Italian society is still very family oriented, and parents, children, grandparents, and extended relatives often gather on weekends for home-cooked meals.



PHARMACIES

Italian pharmacies follow a rota system, so there should always be one available at night and on holidays. Each pharmacy displays its hours and lists nearby late-night clinics.



SHOPS

Shops generally open at 9 a.m., close for lunch from 1 p.m. to 3:30 or 4 p.m., and then stay open until anywhere from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. Most are closed on Sundays.



SUPERMARKETS

Popular supermarkets include Esselunga (in the north), Carrefour, Coop, Conad, and Unes.



FOOD, DRINK AND SMOKING

Smoking is forbidden in all public buildings.

Wine is one of the most popular beverages in Italy, and the country boasts some of the best wines in the world.

Pasta is a staple in Italy and comes in a variety of shapes and sizes with different names, from long thin durum wheat noodles like spaghetti to sheets used in dishes such as lasagna.

Even fast food for Italians can be a culinary delight. Search out places offering pizza “al taglio,” or by the slice.

Another spot to get a quick snack is at a “rosticceria,” which serves savory pastries and other delicious dishes.

Some restaurants and takeaway places serve halal meat and usually have signs indicating this.



WASTE AND RECYCLING

Garbage is disposed of by municipal waste disposal teams, but there are different services from region to region. In the north, it is generally mandatory for households to separate landfill waste, recyclable materials, and organic waste.



A TYPICAL SAYING

“Chi dorme non piglia pesci”
(Those who sleep don’t catch fish).



TRADITIONS

Italians festivals often revolve around religious feasts. One popular event is Pasquetta, celebrated on the first Monday after Easter, when families mark the beginning of springtime by going on picnics.

On All Saints’ Day, Nov. 1, Italians visit the graves of their ancestors and decorate the burial places with flowers.

Italians have a mythical figure much like Santa Claus or Father Christmas. On Jan. 6, an old lady known as Befana is said to travel through Italy flying on her broomstick, dropping off presents for well-behaved children.

One popular secular celebration is Liberation Day on April 25, which marks the end of fascist rule in Italy in 1945.



FILMS

The Cardboard Village (Il Villaggio di Cartone): An Italian priest sees his church close its doors during his final days of service because of slumping religious observance in the country. As the pews are removed and crosses taken down, a group of homeless migrants from North Africa settles into the sparse space. The priest finds a new calling to help the men — an endeavor that combines faith with humanism.

Pummaro (Pummarò): An African medical student recently arrived in Italy seeks out his missing brother, who worked as an undocumented farm laborer to help his sibling with college fees. The film deals with identity and racism in 1980s Italy, as well as exploitation of unseen undocumented immigrants with little awareness of their rights.

Besieged (L'Assedio): In Italy an African refugee finds work as a domestic helper for an English pianist. Infatuated, the musician attempts desperately to woo her with gifts and a marriage proposal. She says she will accept his advances on one condition: that he secure the freedom of her husband from an African jail.



BOOK

The Periodic Table by Primo Levi: A collection of stories named after the table of elements, it retells Levi's life as a Jewish

chemist who faces the consequences of fascist Italy's suspicion and hatred. Soon his Jewish identity becomes a danger to him, and he must go on the run and risk his life fighting the system.

SOME ORGANIZATIONS THAT WORK WITH MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Provides assistance to migrants in such areas as voluntary returns, reintegration, countertrafficking, integration, and EU relocation.

Via Nomentana 62

00161 Rome

+39 06 4423 1428

iomrome@iom.int

www.italy.iom.int

Welcome to Europe (w2eu) - Italy

Provides updated comprehensive information in Arabic, English, Farsi, and French about Italy and organizations assisting new arrivals with issues such as legal advice, counseling, minors, detention, deportation, family reunification, medical assistance, and work. Also provides a list of places to eat and sleep in various cities.

www.w2eu.info

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) - Italy

Via Alberto Caroncini 19

00197 Rome

+39 0680 2121

www.unhcr.it

Associazione Studi Giuridici sull'Immigrazione (Association for Juridical Studies on Immigration)

Focuses on all legal aspects of immigration. With a pool of lawyers, academics, consultants and civil society representatives, ASGI's expertise is in various areas relating to refugees and migrants, including anti-discrimination and xenophobia, children's and unaccompanied minors' rights, asylum and refugee seekers, statelessness, and citizenship. ASGI lawyers are in many Italian cities.

+39 01 1436 9158

+39 04 3250 7115

segreteria@asgi.it

info@asgi.it

antidiscriminazione@asgi.it

(service against discrimination)

www.asgi.it

Consiglio Italiano per i Rifugiati (Italian Refugee Council)

In Catania, Caserta, Salerno, Bologna, Milano, Bergamo, Verona and Gorizia.

Via Montecallo 6 | Aprelea

+39 06 6920 0114

cir@cir-onlus.org
www.cir-onlus.org

Centro Astalli - Servizio dei Gesuiti per i Rifugiati in Italia (Astalli Center - Jesuit Refugee Service in Italy)

Accompanies, serves and advocates on behalf of refugees and other forcibly displaced people, focusing on education, emergency assistance, health care, livelihood and social services.

www.centroastalli.it

Croce Rossa Italiana (Italian Red Cross)

Ensures that people affected by conflict can get basic health care that meets universally recognized standards.

Via Toscana 12

00187 Rome

[+39 06 4759 6281](tel:+390647596281)

[+39 80 0166 166 \(free\)](tel:+39800166166)

international.relations@cri.it

www.cri.it

Fondazione Migrantes (Migrants Foundation)

Provides assistance in basic needs like housing and health care. Publishes weekly information bulletins and analyses of legislation and policy concerning migrants.

Via Aurelia 468

00165 Rome

[+39 06 6639 8452](tel:+390666398452)

segreteria@migrantes.it
www.migrantes.it

Medici Senza Frontiere (Doctors Without Borders)

Runs a number of projects, including search and rescue operations, psychological care centers, and a reception center for migrants and refugees.

Via Magenta 5 | Third Floor | Rome.

[+39 06 8880 6000](tel:+390688806000)

msf@msf.it

www.medicisenzafrontiere.it

Centro Welcome (Welcome Center)

Provides assistance to women and children in health care, language classes, professional training, and family reunification. A social center for immigrant families.

Viale Romania 32

00197 Rome

[+39 06 8530 0916](tel:+390685300916)

cwelcome@tiscalinet.it

www.centrowelcome.org

Caritas Rome

Via Delle Zoccolette 19

00183 Rome

[+39 06 661 77 001](tel:+390666177001)

[++39 06 696 864 125](tel:+3906696864125)

www.caritas.it

Medici per i Diritti Umani (Doctors for Human Rights)

Via dei Zeno 10

00176 Rome

+39 069 784 4892

posta@mediciperidirittiumani.org

www.mediciperidirittiumani.org

ARCI Associazione Ricreativa e Culturale Italiana (Italian Cultural and Recreational Association)

Offers information, support, and advice.

Via dei Monti di Pietralata 16

00157 Roma

+39 800 905 570

www.arci.it

WARNING / NOT ALLOWED SIGNS

Many things are explained with signs. This does not always make things more understandable.









Orario di apertura
Lunedì - Domenica
07:00 - 21:00



The Netherlands



POLITICAL SYSTEM

The Netherlands is headed by a monarch, with real power in the hands of the Cabinet, which is the government's main executive body.

The complex nature of government and emphasis on coalitions is supposed to encourage power sharing and consensus. Parliament is elected by the people, with seats allocated according to the percentage of votes won.

The largest parties are the center-right People's Party for Freedom and Democracy and the center-left Labor Party. The nationalist, anti-immigration Party for Freedom, headed by Geert Wilders, is an important political force.



GEOGRAPHY

The Netherlands is one of the most densely populated countries in the world. It is on the North Sea, with largely flat, low-lying land, making it prone to flooding.



DEMOGRAPHICS

The Netherlands' population is about 17 million, with the majority Dutch speakers. Much of the country's immigrant population comes from former colonies such as Indonesia

and Suriname, but also Turkey, Morocco and Eastern Europe, and non-Dutch ethnic groups account for about 20 percent of residents.



EDUCATION

Like the Dutch, refugee children must attend school until they are 18. Refugee children up to the age of 12 go to elementary school, and students 12 to 18 first go to international schools until their level of Dutch is sufficient to attend regular classes. An integration program is offered at reception centers to adults who have asylum status, and there are educational and vocational training classes available, depending on a refugee's asylum application stage.



RELIGION

Religion is considered a private matter. The majority of residents are nonreligious. About a quarter are Christian. There are also sizable Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist communities.



HEALTH CARE

Health care in the Netherlands is through insurance, with lower-paid residents getting free access to medical treatment. Asylum seekers technically have the same standard and rights of health care as Dutch citizens, but accessing it can be confusing for many people not familiar

with the system. Information should be provided at reception centers. Asylum seekers generally have access to basic health care, general practitioners, and hospitalization.



SHOPS

Shops generally open at 9:30 a.m. (later on Monday, at 11 a.m.). They usually close weekdays at 6 p.m. and Saturday at around 5 p.m. Most shops are closed on Sunday, but in many places they open on the first Sunday of the month, known as Koopzondag.



PEOPLE

Dutch liberalism has defined the country's progressive attitudes toward drugs, sex, and multiculturalism, and people expect their open-minded culture to be respected. Some of its most visible signs are in the coffee shops (which sell marijuana) and red light districts (an area of cities where there is a concentration of sex shops and sex workers, who are often seen in windows with red lights).



COHABITATION

Partners who live together for more than a few years are granted cohabitation legal status, which can help with getting mortgages and with other joint undertakings. Many people are choosing this form of relationship and have children without marrying, although many still choose to wed later in life.



SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

The Netherlands was the first country in the world to legalize same-sex marriage, in 2001.



PHARMACIES

Pharmacies are found across the country, with larger towns offering 24-hour services. Prescribed medication is often covered by health insurance.



SUPERMARKETS

Some of the most popular supermarkets in the Netherlands are Albert Heijn and Dirk. The more budget-price options are Lidl and Aldi.



FOOD, DRINK AND SMOKING

Smoking is banned in public places (except in some outdoor areas), including on public transport. Smoking marijuana in public is legal, and some coffee shops are allowed to sell it according to regulations.

Dutch beer is world famous, and some of the larger brands — like Heineken, Grolsch and Bavaria — are exported around the world.

Fish is central to Dutch cuisine and can be found at fast food outlets and restaurants.

Herring is the Netherlands' best-loved fish and is typically enjoyed raw and pickled. Dutch people usually enjoy this

dish by holding it above their heads and biting upward.

A “kroket” is a mix of meat ragout, béchamel or other sauce, and potato, shaped into a small roll and then deep-fried. “Kroketten” are popular snacks and are sometimes served on bread.

French fries are another popular snack food and are accompanied by mayonnaise, ketchup, curry sauce, satay, or pickled vegetables.

“Krentenbollen” (currant buns) are a much-loved snack, eaten with butter or cheese for a more substantial meal.

The vegetable concoction “stampot” (mash pot) is an old favorite in the Netherlands and usually involves a mixture of pickled cabbage, onions, and carrot served with a grilled sausage.



WASTE AND RECYCLING

There are deposits on some glass bottles and jars, which can be returned to shops and exchanged for shopping credit. There are generally separate stations in public places for recyclable materials such as plastics. Two bins are provided to residents: one for food waste, such as peelings, and one for other household waste.



BOOK

The Diary of a Young Girl by Anne Frank: The real-life writings of a teenage Jewish German girl in Amsterdam who was forced into hiding when the Nazis invaded the Netherlands

and ordered its Jews sent to death camps. Her musings are thought provoking, insightful and heartbreaking.



TRADITIONS

Pakjesavond (St. Nicholas' Eve) is celebrated on Dec. 5 and sees Sinterklaas (St. Nicholas) travel through Dutch towns accompanied by servants known as Zwarte Pieten (Black Pete), which have become controversial characters in modern-day Netherlands.

To celebrate King Willem-Alexander's birthday on April 27, people dress in orange, decorate with orange, and serve orange foods and drinks — "oranjegekte," or orange madness — since the royal family is of the House of Orange.

When a newborn baby is visited, "beschuit met muisjes," a type of biscuit, is usually eaten.



A TYPICAL GESTURE

People tap the center of their forehead to signal that a person is crazy.



A TYPICAL SAYING

"Zoals het klokje thuis tikt, tikt het nergens" (The clock ticks at home like it ticks nowhere else) means "There is no place like home."



FILMS

Infiltrant (Infiltrator): Sam, a Dutch-Moroccan police officer is reprimanded by his superiors after assaulting a known wife beater. Suspended, Sam has one last chance of redemption in the police force by catching one of the Netherlands' most notorious drug dealers in a sting operation.

Die Nieuwe Wereld (The New World): At an airport, a cynical Dutch cleaner, Mirte, strikes up an unlikely relationship with a West African refugee who refuses to accept her aggressive responses when he tries to start a friendship with her.

Shouf Shouf Habibi! (Hush Hush Baby!): Touted as the Netherlands' first multicultural film, this lighthearted comedy focuses on a Moroccan family in the Netherlands and its members' culture clashes. On the brink of adulthood, a fun-loving son must face difficult decisions about which identity to follow.



SOME ORGANIZATIONS THAT WORK WITH MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Provides assistance to migrants in such areas as voluntary returns, reintegration, countertrafficking, integration, and EU relocation.

Carnegielaan 12
2517 KH The Hague
+31 703 181 500

missionthehague@iom.int
www.iom-nederland.nl

Dutch Refugee Council

Defends the rights of refugees and asylum seekers and helps them build new lives.

Surinameplein 122

1058 GV Amsterdam

Postbus 2894

1000 CW Amsterdam

[+31 020 346 7200](tel:+31203467200)

info@vluchtelingenwerk.nl

www.vluchtelingenwerk.nl

Amsterdams Solidariteits Komitee Vluchtelingen (Amsterdam Refugee Solidarity Committee)

Provides legal assistance and social support, including shelter, to undocumented refugees.

Frederik Hendrikstraat 111c

1052 HN Amsterdam

[+31 020 627 2408](tel:+31206272408)

askvsv@dds.nl

www.askv.nl

Ros

Offers advice and information on rights of residence, medical care and education; free Dutch language lessons; mediation for legal support; temporary emergency housing; assistance with return to land of birth; support in

organization, advocacy, lobbying and protest; space for worship.

Hang 14

3011 GG Rotterdam

+31 062 538 3472

stichtingros@hotmail.com

www.stichtingros.nl

Kruispost

Provides medical and psychosocial care for the uninsured, the homeless and asylum seekers.

Oudezijds Voorburgwal 129

1012 EP Amsterdam

+31 020 624 9031

kruispost@oudezijds100.nl

www.oudezijds100.nl

Stichting Gast

Helps refugees in Nijmegen and surroundings with housing, food, and advice.

Tweede Walstraat 19

6511 LN Nijmegen

+31 024 329 4250

info@stichtinggast.nl

www.stichtinggast.nl

Stichting Landelijk Ongedocumenteerden Steunpunt

(National Support Point for Undocumented Migrants)

Works on issues relating to the living conditions of

undocumented migrants.

Hang 14

3011 GG Rotterdam

+31 107 470 156

info@stichtinglos.nl

www.stichtinglos.nl

International Network of Local Initiatives With Asylum Seekers (INLIA)

Provides counseling hours for asylum seekers on the street.

Jacobijnerstraat 5

9712 HZ Groningen

+31 050 313 8181

inlia@bart.nl

www.inlia.nl

Wereldhuis

Offers information, counseling, education, and empowerment by and for undocumented migrants.

Nieuwe Herengracht 20

1018 DP Amsterdam

+31 062 282 1472

info@wereldhuis.org

www.wereldhuis.org

PORK

Many pork products are sold in supermarkets and at butcher shops.



PORC



CARNE DE CERDO





VARKENASVLEES



FALUKORV



CAPICCI DI MAIALE



XOIPINO



CARNE DI MAIALE



XOIPINO



CARNE DI MAIAL



SCHWEINEFLEISCH

Spain



POLITICAL SYSTEM

Spain is a constitutional monarchy: The king is the head of state, but real power lies with the democratically elected government, led by the prime minister. The Cortes Generales is the name of the Spanish parliament, and powers are divided between the lower house (Congress of Deputies) and the upper house (Senate).

The four main national political parties are the center-right Peoples Party, the Spanish Socialist Workers Party, the left-wing Podemos, and the liberal Citizens party. Regional parties are also important players, and the Basque region and Catalonia have strong independence movements.



GEOGRAPHY

Spain's mainland borders Portugal, Andorra, and France. Spain also has important territories of the Balearic Islands in the Mediterranean and the Canary Islands in the Atlantic Ocean. In addition, the country has an exclave in France and sovereignty over some small territories on or just off the North African coast, including Ceuta and Melilla, which are surrounded by Morocco.



DEMOGRAPHICS

Most of Spain's residents are native born, and about 14 percent are immigrants. Most hail from former Spanish colonies in Latin America, Africa and Asia, and others come from North and West Africa, and Eastern Europe.



RELIGION

As many as three-quarters of Spaniards identify as Catholic, while a sizable minority have no religious beliefs. Up to 5 percent are Muslim, Protestant, or Buddhist. Liberal social attitudes predominate, particularly in urban areas, although as with other parts of the world, attitudes can be more socially conservative in rural parts.



EDUCATION

All must attend school from 6 to 16, and children of asylum seekers are given access to local schools. How children are introduced into the school system and taught the local language depends on the rules of the autonomous authorities; generally they are provided with integration or preparatory classes or extra guidance from class tutors, while other regions offer no services.



HEALTH CARE

Spanish law grants asylum seekers the same access to health care services as citizens have. This includes access to

psychologists for those who have experienced torture or other trauma, although there are no specific structures to deal with such patients. The Spanish National Health System provides free public health care to the populace and is increasingly being managed by autonomous authorities.



PEOPLE

Spain is known for its late nightlife, and many Spaniards enjoy staying out in town late into the night, drinking, eating, socializing, dancing, and generally enjoying life. People often have a strong sense of attachment to their town or region, which emphasizes the diverse nature of the country.

In 711, Muslim armies - known as the Moors - from North Africa invaded and ruled over much of the Iberian Peninsula for nearly 800 years. The legacy of the Arab rule can be seen in the languages of Spain, the food, art, place names and architecture.



TABOOS

Spaniards love to debate politics, but certain subjects can be taboo, such as the Spanish Civil War and subsequent Gen. Francisco Franco era, and should be handled with tact and caution.



COHABITATION

In the past 20 or so years, Spain has witnessed a massive turnaround in attitudes toward cohabitation, and now over 40 percent of births are outside marriage.



SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Spain was the third country in the world to legalize same-sex marriage, in 2005.



PHARMACIES

Pharmacies are generally open from 9:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Monday to Friday and close for lunch 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. On Saturdays, pharmacies often close at 2 p.m. and many are not open Sunday. In cities and larger towns, you will generally have pharmacies taking turns to open throughout the night and holidays, and the location of the closest one will be noted on the doors of local pharmacies.



SHOPS

Shops are generally open Monday to Friday from 9:30 a.m. but from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. are often closed for the famous Spanish siesta, a tradition dying out in bigger cities. Some smaller shops close at 2 p.m. on Saturdays, but major stores stay open throughout the day Monday to Saturday up to 9 p.m. The vast majority of stores stay closed on Sundays.



WASTE AND RECYCLING

Next to most garbage bins are separate stations for recycling. Blue bins are for recycling paper, green with a narrow slot for glass, and yellow for plastic and some metals.



FOOD, DRINK AND SMOKING

Some supermarkets are Alcampo, Mercadona, Carrefour, and Lidl. Consum and Bon Area are in Catalonia.

Smoking is banned at indoor public places such as bars and cafes and in some outdoor spaces such as around hospitals and playgrounds.

Wine and beer are regularly consumed during meals and social hours. Some people drink brandy or wine before noon, particularly older generations, but this can be viewed as an old custom rather than problem drinking.

Spain is famed for its cuisine, ranging from delicious bar snacks and tapas — including a potato omelet known as tortilla — to more substantial fare. This includes one of the country's best-known dishes: paella, a rice dish cooked in stock and with saffron, served with seafood, chicken or rabbit. Pork and wine often feature prominently in Spanish dishes.

In major cities most butchers have halal meat, and many restaurants serve halal meals, particularly North African and Middle Eastern ones.



FESTIVALS

Easter Week: Leading up to Easter are spectacular Passion of Jesus Christ parades, when the religious make solemn processions through city centers cities, often donning medieval outfits and carrying crosses.

Festivals take place in most Spanish towns and cities during summer and often relate to the country's agricultural past or religious feasts. These street festivals are known for their color and vigor, with live music, drinks, food and entertainment continuing late into the night.

The Tomato Festival: The world famous tomato fight takes place in Bunyol, near Valencia, every August, and brings together thousands of tomato lovers from around the world.

The Running of the Bulls: For eight days each year in July in Pamplona, about 2,000 people participate in running in front of a stampede of bulls that are set loose in one part of the city and run through the narrow streets until they enter a bullfighting arena. The fiesta comes from a time when villagers herded each year's bulls from the fields to the bullring, where they would be killed.

FILMS

Biutiful (Beautiful): A sympathetic man in Barcelona finds money by helping undocumented immigrants find work. When he finds out he has a terminal illness, he decides to allow a refugee mother and her child stay at his apartment with his two children. But when a group of Chinese immigrants die from a faulty gas heater he installed, he is overwhelmed by feelings of guilt and despair.

Les Cartes de Alou (Letters From Alou): As an undocumented immigrant, Alou is forced to travel around Spain looking for work. After a string of menial jobs, Alou sets off to Barcelona, where he begins work with other migrants and finds himself on the wrong end of the law once again.



BOOK

Don Quixote by Miguel de Cervantes: This is one of the greats of world literature, published at the beginning of the 1600s. It tells the story of a budding but hapless knight who goes on a quest around Spain to find adventures and perform acts of chivalry.



A TYPICAL SAYING

“Tiene más lana que un borrego” (He has more wool than a lamb) means that somebody is rich.



A TYPICAL GESTURE

If people move their index and middle fingers down their face from an eye, it means they have no money.



SOME ORGANIZATIONS THAT WORK WITH MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Provides assistance to migrants in such areas as voluntary returns, reintegration, countertrafficking, integration, and EU relocation.

Calle Fernando el Católico 10 | 1º B

28015 Madrid

+34 914 457 116

iommadrid@iom.int

www.spain.iom.int

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) - Spain

Legal advice and protection for refugees and asylum seekers in Spain

+34 915 563 503

+34 915 563 649

spama@unhcr.org

www.acnur.es

Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado - CEAR (Spanish Commission for Refugee Aid)

Provides temporary shelter, legal aid and advice, social and psychological support, education and job placement, and language support. Works with Accem, the Red Cross, and others to implement government programs for refugees.

Avenida General Perón 32, 2º, 28020 Madrid

+34 915 980 535

+34 915 980 592

colabora@cear.es

www.cear.es

Accem

Works to create awareness and improve the living conditions of people at risk of social exclusion, including refugees and undocumented migrants. Offers legal help and advice, job training, temporary housing, and other social placement programs. Along with CEAR, the Red Cross, and others, plays an important role in implementing the Spanish government's refugee programs.

+34 915 327 478

+34 915 327 479

accem@accem.es

www.accem.es

La Cruz Roja (Spanish Red Cross)

Provides for the needs of new arrivals in Spain. Works with CEAR, Accem, and others to implement government programs for refugees.

Avenida Reina Victoria 26

28003 Madrid

+34 902 222 292

informa@cruzroja.es

www.cruzroja.es

Andalucia Acoge (Andalucia Welcomes)

Offers legal advice and support and information and help to access housing, jobs, education, and health care through a federation of nine associations with 21 centers in Andalucia and Melilla.

Cabeza del Rey Don Pedro 9 bajo, 41004 Sevilla

+34 954 900 773

acoge@acoge.org

acoge.org

**Servei d'Atenció a Immigrants, Emigrants i Refugiats -
SAIER (Service Center for Immigrants, Emigrants and
Refugees)**

Provides services and information in various languages to new arrivals in Barcelona regarding migration, asylum, and voluntary return.

Avenida Paral·lel, 202, 08015 Barcelona

[+34 932 562 700](tel:+34932562700)

saierinfo@bcn.cat

www.bcn.cat

**Welcome guide for refugees in Catalonia, in Spanish,
Catalan, English, and Arabic:**

refugee.gencat.cat

**Useful Barcelona information, in Spanish, Catalan and
English:**

ciutatrefugi.barcelona

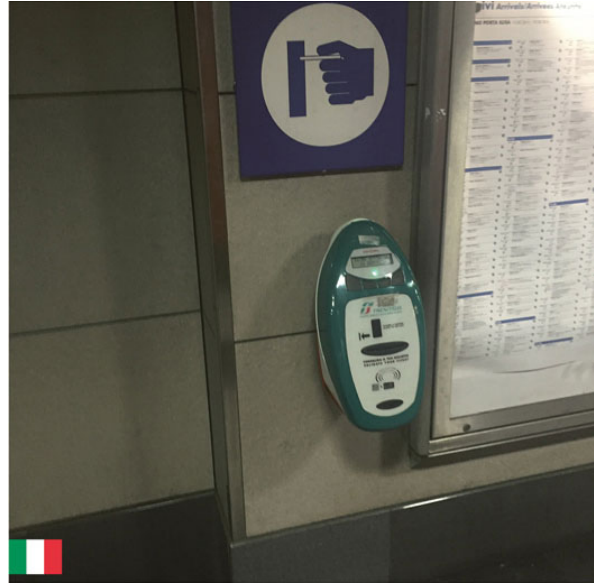
PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Be aware of how to validate tickets when using public transport. Between bigger towns, buses are by far the cheapest way to travel.









Sweden



POLITICAL SYSTEM

Sweden operates under a constitutional monarchy. The head of state is King Carl XVI Gustaf, but real power lies with the prime minister and his democratically elected government.

Sweden's welfare system has been generous and the political system more left-leaning than in most other parts of Europe. The country's center-left Social Democratic Workers' Party has dominated the post-World War II political landscape, but times are changing.

In recent years, Sweden has seen a rise in right-wing sentiments. During the 2014 elections, the nationalist Sweden Democrats Party got almost 13 percent of the popular vote, making it the third-largest party in the parliament. Other far-right groups have also seen a rise in support.

Unlike most other EU countries, Sweden does not use the euro as its currency and has no plans to replace the krona in the near future.



GEOGRAPHY

Sweden is in Scandinavia, in the north of Europe. Its neighbors include Finland (with which it shares a long

history of migration and cultural exchange), Norway and Denmark. The country is mostly forest, and it has mountain ranges, tens of thousands of lakes, and a small amount of farmland.



DEMOGRAPHICS

There are close to 10 million Swedes, and many have roots in neighboring Finland, Arabic-speaking countries, Iran, and the former Yugoslavia. In 2010 about 14 percent of the population was foreign born, and tens of thousands of migrants from Syria, Eritrea, and other countries enter Sweden each year.



RELIGION

Many people in the country are nonreligious, but historically Swedes followed Lutheran Christianity. This form of Protestantism became a key component of Swedish identity, even if few people attend church today. Islam is Sweden's second-largest religion, and there are also Hindus, Jews, and others.



EDUCATION

Children over the age of 1 often attend preschool, and attendance in school is mandatory for Swedish children 7 to 16. Children of asylum seekers have the right to attend school and have classes in their native language. However, because of the number of refugees Sweden is trying to

integrate into the system, it can take months before they attend classes. Youths 16 to 19 nearly always have to attend preparatory courses in Swedish before going on to further learning, such as vocational training.



HEALTH CARE

Swedish health care is free for residents and is funded by taxes. Child refugees are granted the same access as Swedish residents, but adult refugees receive free medical care only for examinations, emergencies, prenatal exams, and a few other instances. As of 2013, undocumented migrants have the same access to health care as refugees do.



TABOOS

Women's rights and feminism are important ideals in Sweden, and sexist comments are completely taboo.



PEOPLE

Although Sweden is known as one of the most open-minded European countries. Many people remain to some degree self-reliant, introverted, and proud of their traditions.



COHABITATION

Cohabitation has a longer tradition of acceptance in Sweden than many other parts of Europe. By the end of the 1970s, about 96 percent of married Swedish women previously

lived with a partner outside marriage. Today more than half of children are born outside marriage.



SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Same-sex marriages have been legal since 2009, and gay and lesbian relationships have become common.



PHARMACIES

Pharmacies are typically open during normal working hours, but in most areas some are open all night, including holidays. A 24-hour health information hotline is available at 1177.



SHOPS

Monday to Friday, most shops are open from 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Saturdays from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Some department stores in cities are open 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Sundays but are generally closed on public holidays.



IKEA

Everything needed for the home can be found at this Swedish institution. The furniture requires at least some assembly.



SUPERMARKETS

There is a range of supermarkets in Sweden, including MatDax, Lidl, ICA, Coop and Hemköp.



WASTE AND RECYCLING

Practically all household waste in Sweden is sorted for recycling. By law, recycling stations can be no more than 300 meters from any residential area, giving Swedes no excuse not to recycle their waste. Most recyclable waste is deposited in special containers at apartment blocks or at nearby stations. Glass bottles may be returned for small deposits at some stores.



FOOD, DRINK AND SMOKING

Sweden enforces strict no-smoking rules in public places, barring lighting up in restaurants, bars and many other public areas. If a person asks to smoke in someone else's home — although it's legal and even if the weather outside is bad — the answer will almost certainly be “no.”

Alcohol is widely consumed in Sweden. Sweden is part of the Vodka Belt, and vodka is popular across all ages. Outside of bars, beer, wine and spirits are generally available only at state-owned Systembolaget shops, which operate according to strict licensing hours. Generally they close at 8 p.m. at the latest and are closed completely on Sundays and holidays.

Coffee drinking is a popular social pastime in Sweden, and friends and colleagues make sure they get in at least one “fika,” or coffee drinking session, each day.

“Sill” (pickled herring) is a staple dish and is not to be missed, as a treat with drinks or with bread or potatoes for a more substantial meal.

Sweden is well known for its “köttbullar” (meatballs), which are served with sauce and lingonberry jam.

Kebabs and falafel are popular late snacks, particularly in Malmö, where the dish was brought over by Middle Eastern immigrants.

“Surströmmingsskiva,” one of the longest-standing culinary traditions of Sweden, is often a stomach-churning concoction for outsiders. It consists of herring fermented in barrels, and the result is a pungent, foul-smelling fish dish. For this reason, it is almost always enjoyed outdoors in summer.



FESTIVALS

Midsommarfesten: Celebrated during the height of summer, Midsommarfesten is a quaint celebration in which Swedes like to dance around a pole decked with flowers and leaves. It owes much to the country’s agricultural past and is a continuation of those traditions, even after migration out of the countryside.

Valborgmässoaften: To see off Sweden’s long, cold, dark winters and welcome in the spring, Swedes like to celebrate by lighting bonfires in anticipation of the warmer months.

Första Maj: On May 1, Workers’ Day, Swedes demonstrate. The nation’s strong left tilt comes to life with hot-blooded passion and pageantry.

FILMS

Svinalängorna (Beyond): A Swedish woman living in a housing project gets news that her mother is on the verge of dying. The crisis forces her to address her painful experiences as a child, chiefly the alienation of her Finnish parents and how her father tried to escape his second-class status through alcohol and violence.

Det Nya Landet (The New Country): This heartfelt feature film is said to have paved the way for multicultural cinema in Sweden. It follows the contrasting life of a teenage Somali boy and 40-year-old Iranian man who meet in a refugee camp. They set off across their new homeland with a former Swedish beauty queen as they run from the police and their pasts.

Utvandrarna (The Emigrants): Based on two novels from a four-part series, “Utvandrarna” is about the journey of a mid-19th-century Swedish family that leaves the poverty of rural Sweden for a new life in America. There they must come to terms with their new status as immigrants and adapt to life as farmers in the U.S. Midwest.

BOOK

The Days of His Grace by Eyvind Johnson: Set in northern Italy during the early medieval period, “The Days of His Grace” is a loosely historical novel focusing on a family when Frankish King Charlemagne invades the area.



A TYPICAL SAYING

“Jag pratar inte så bra svenska.”

(I don't speak Swedish very well.)

“Kan ni prata lite långsammare, tack?” (Could you speak a bit more slowly, please?)

“Jag lär mig svenska.”

(I'm learning Swedish.)



SOME ORGANIZATIONS THAT WORK WITH MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

Welcome to Europe (w2eu) Sweden

Provides updated comprehensive information in Arabic, English, Farsi, and French about Sweden's asylum laws and how to apply, Dublin III, help for minors, detention, deportation, family reunification, medical assistance, and work.

www.w2eu.info/sweden.en.html

Swedish Refugee Advice Center

Offers legal counseling and assistance concerning asylum, family reunification, citizenship and other matters regarding to the Aliens Act.

Gyllenstiernsgatan 14

115 26 Stockholm

(Monday to Wednesday 9 a.m. to
1 p.m.)

[+46 200 880 066](tel:+46200880066)

info@sweref.org
www.sweref.org

FARR - Swedish Network of Refugee Support Groups

Offers legal advice to rejected asylum seekers and runs voluntary health clinics for undocumented migrants. An umbrella organization with offices in different parts of Sweden.

Box 391
101 27 Stockholm
[+46 8710 0245](tel:+4687100245)
info@farr.se
www.farr.se

Kontrapunkt

Offers a wide range of assistance, including legal advice, language classes, networking, food, and clothing. It is very efficient, and — unlike the Swedish Refugee Advice Center — it is organized by volunteers.

www.kontrapunktmalmo.net

Läkare i Världen (Doctors of the World - Sweden)

Provides care to undocumented migrants who do not have access to health care. Its medical clinic mainly serves EU citizens and third-country nationals who have visas in an EU country. It doesn't deny anyone health care, but for undocumented people, they can often access better health care through the regular health system. It also provides legal advice for people who have been denied asylum.

Box 390 06
100 54 Stockholm
+46 086 646 687
info@lakareivarlden.se
www.lakareivarlden.se

Caritas Sverige

Offers undocumented migrants legal counseling on reapplication or return, as well as material assistance, with branches around the country.

Ölandsgatan 42
116 63 Stockholm
+46 85 5602 000
www.caritas.se

Ingen Människa Är Illegal (No One Is Illegal Network)

Provides practical support to people who live undocumented in the country after their asylum applications are rejected. The website offers more information in various languages and contact information for different locations.

www.ingenillegal.org

Red Cross Sweden

Provides support, information, and care for migrants and refugees in Sweden.

Hornsgatan 54 | Box 175 63
118 91 Stockholm
+46 77 119 9500

info@redcross.se

www.redcross.se

Läkare Utan Gränser (Doctors Without Borders)

Medical referral service for undocumented migrants in the Stockholm area.

Fredsborgsgatan 24

trappor 4 Box 47021

100 74 Stockholm

[+46 855 609 808](tel:+46855609808)

info.sweden@msf.org

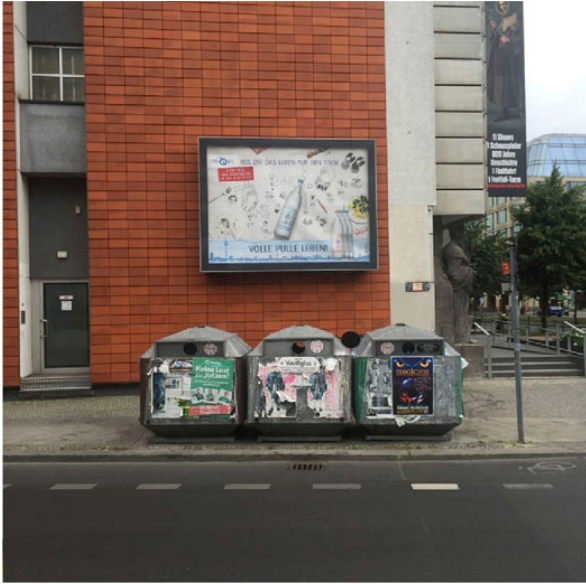
www.lakareutangranser.se

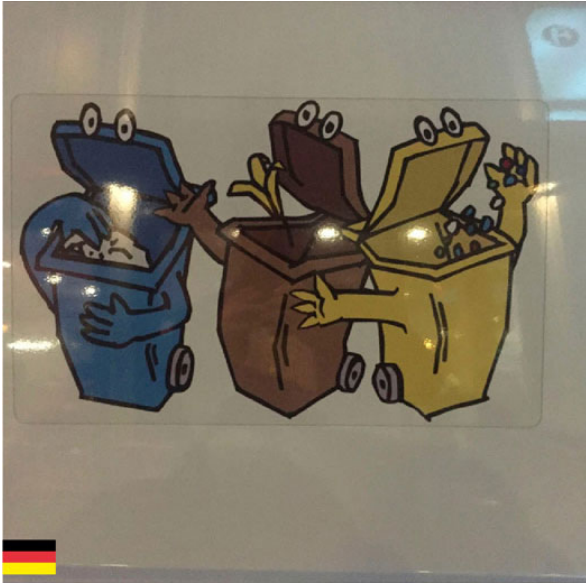
RECYCLING TRASH

Recycling trash is common throughout Europe yet very different, depending on location.









United Kingdom



POLITICAL SYSTEM

Queen Elizabeth II is the head of state, and although she has an important place in the formalities and expressions of government, her political powers are largely ceremonial.

The U.K. is made up of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, each seeing itself as having a different culture and being somewhat separate. The U.K. uses the pound sterling and has not adopted the euro. Northern Ireland shares the island of Ireland with the Republic of Ireland, which is a separate country and uses the euro. In June 2016, a referendum on U.K. membership in the EU saw a majority vote to leave the bloc. While the vote was not binding, the government said it would respect the outcome of the referendum. Negotiations with the EU are ongoing.

Scotland has its own parliament, and Wales and Northern Ireland have assemblies, but all send ministers to Parliament in London, where most major laws are decided.

Northern Ireland is now largely peaceful, but for decades the Troubles — as the conflict was known — raged in the country, pitting largely Protestant Unionists, who wanted to remain part of the U.K., against mostly Catholic Nationalists, who wanted to join the Republic of Ireland.

The center-right Conservative Party and the center-left Labour Party have dominated British politics over the past century. Other, smaller parties also win seats. The Scottish National Party is Scotland's largest party, and Plaid Cymru campaigns for Welsh independence. A referendum on Scottish independence in 2014 saw voters choose to stay in the U.K., but the debate continues.



GEOGRAPHY

The British Isles are an archipelago northwest of continental Europe, between the North Atlantic Ocean, the North Sea, and English Channel. Its temperature is much milder than other areas at the same latitude, thanks to the Gulf Stream, which warms what would otherwise be a frigid northern clime.



DEMOGRAPHICS

The U.K. is a multicultural society with its population largely representative of the country's colonial past. There are large minority groups from the Caribbean Islands, the Indian subcontinent, and Africa.

Today there are many recent migrants from Eastern Europe, Spain, France, South America, and other parts of the world.



RELIGION

The country is largely Christian but nonchalant about practices and church attendance, and a large number of people follow no religion. There are also large Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, and Jewish communities.



HEALTH CARE

The National Health Service is run by the government and is funded by taxes, providing free health care to residents and citizens. Access to health care is generally open and free to asylum seekers who are on s.95 or s.4 support. While all — including refused migrants who have had their asylum cases dismissed — have access to urgent and emergency treatment, they may be charged for treatment. Charges are at the discretion of the hospital and may be written off. Refugees and asylum seekers in Scotland have the right to free NHS care but must show documentation or ID.



EDUCATION

All children ages 5 to 17 must attend school, which is free of charge. If children pass their A levels or other valid qualifications, they may attend university. High tuition fees and difficulty in obtaining loans can prove a challenge for some refugees, but there are groups offering grants to limited numbers of refugees.



PEOPLE

British people are known to be polite and generally friendly and helpful to strangers. They can also be proud — and sensitive — about their culture.



FOOD, DRINK AND SMOKING

Smoking is forbidden in all indoor workplaces in England, including pubs, restaurants, and other public areas, and the law is strictly enforced.

Drinking alcohol is seen by many as a central part of being British, and on the weekends, people usually go out drinking with friends. Town centers at night can become lively — sometimes intimidating — places, with many drunken revelers on the streets.

Fish and chips is the U.K.'s best-known national dish, although it is declining somewhat in popularity. Fish, usually cod, is dipped in batter, deep-fried, and served with thick-cut fried potatoes. It's often served with mushy peas, gravy, or curry sauce poured on top and seasoned with salt and vinegar before being wrapped in paper.

Indian food is hugely popular in the U.K., and even small villages sometimes have an Indian restaurant. Chicken tikka masala is a spicy, creamy curry that was supposedly invented in the U.K. and has been called the new national dish.

Sandwiches are popular light lunches or snacks and can be found in most shops — from cheese and onion to salmon and cream cheese.

Owing to its high-caloric makeup, a fry-up, or full breakfast, is more of a treat than a daily routine and is usually enjoyed on the weekends. Cafes — known as greasy spoons — are the best place to find them, and this filling meal usually comes with beans, sausage, egg, bacon, tomato, and toast.

Every Sunday, families in the U.K. sit down for another long-honored tradition, Sunday roast. Meat — usually chicken, beef, lamb, or pork — is slowly roasted and accompanied by potatoes, vegetables, and gravy.



TRADITIONS

Modern football began in England, and the sport remains hugely popular, particularly the FA Cup final. Cricket, rugby, and horse racing are also commonly watched.

The queen remains something of an institution and a popular figurehead for the country, with news and gossip on the royal family eagerly followed.



TABOOS

British people often go to great lengths to avoid insulting or offending people, so it is best to be indirect when being critical. Jumping queues is considered very impolite and might elicit angry stares or confrontation.



COHABITATION

Premarital cohabitation has become a norm in the U.K., and about half of babies are born outside marriage.



SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Same-sex marriage has been legal in England, Wales, and Scotland since 2014. It is still illegal in more religiously observant Northern Ireland, where same-sex couples are limited to civil partnerships.



A TYPICAL GESTURE

The reversed two finger peace sign is an insult in the U.K. People flap a hand close to their face to say it's hot.



A TYPICAL SAYING

"It's raining cats and dogs" means it's raining heavily.



PHARMACIES

Pharmacies can be found in most areas and are open during normal working hours. Some larger stores such as Boots and Superdrug have in-house pharmacies. Most pharmacies close on bank holidays and Sundays, but there are 24-hour stores in most areas.



SHOPS

Shops are generally open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday, although in bigger cities some stay open late. Most

shops are open on Sundays from late morning until about 5 p.m., and there are usually smaller family-run independent shops that stay open in the evening.



SUPERMARKETS

There is a large range of supermarkets in the U.K. — including budget retailers Aldi, Iceland, and Lidl; reasonably priced chains such as Morrisons and Asda; and more expensive names like Waitrose and Marks & Spencer.



WASTE AND RECYCLING

Most people in the U.K. recycle, and this can be done by separating waste with bags and bins designated for different recyclable materials. Bin men come once a week to take away garbage, and wheelie bins should be placed on the street on these days.



BOOK

The Remains of the Day by Kazuo Ishiguro: Japanese-British Ishiguro details the stuffy confines of an aristocrat's home and the restrictions of relationships in the English class system from the perspective of a loyal and humble butler.



FILMS

My Beautiful Laundrette: Portraying the lives of a South Asian family in fractious 1980s Britain, “My Beautiful Laundrette”

takes a humorous look at race relations in London. A Pakistani-British man, Omar, resumes a relationship with Johnny, a white boy he knew in school and is now a punk. The two lovers take over a rundown laundrette owned by Omar's uncle. The movie addresses racism, class, and homosexuality in a country undergoing rapid economic and social changes.

Bend It Like Beckham: A Indian-British teenager becomes obsessed with football but is stopped from taking it up by her conservative parents, who view it as an unsuitable sport for a girl. Despite this, she perseveres and plays for a local women's team, winning games for the club and the eventual acceptance of her parents.

It's a Free World: A recently unemployed woman starts a successful but illegal recruitment agency from her home. This brings her into contact with illegal immigrants who are looking for work, along with a Polish man with whom she falls in love, making her view her foreign clients through new eyes. This encourages her to assist an Iranian man who is on the run after being told he will be deported and likely face imprisonment in Iran.



SOME ORGANIZATIONS THAT WORK WITH MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Provides assistance to migrants in such areas as voluntary returns, reintegration, countertrafficking, integration, and EU relocation.

Belgrave Road 11
London SW1V 1RB
[+44 \(0\) 207 811 6000](tel:+442078116000)
ops@iomlondon.org
www.unitedkingdom.iom.int

Refugee Action

Provides practical advice and assistance for newly arrived asylum seekers and is committed to their settlement through community development work.

Victoria Charity Centre 11 |
Belgrave Road
London SW1V 1RB
[+44 \(0\) 207 952 1511](tel:+442079521511)
info@refugee-action.org.uk
www.refugee-action.org.uk

Refugee Support Network

Works with young people affected by displacement and crisis, enabling them to access education at all stages of their migration journey. It also runs a higher education program.

Scrubs Lane 8 | Suite 4.1
London NW10 6RB
Advice line
[+44 \(0\) 759 758 3228](tel:+44207597583228) or
[+44 \(0\) 800 331 7292](tel:+442078003317292) on Mondays 2-5p.m. or Thursdays 2-5p.m.
www.refugeesupportnetwork.org

Refugee Council

Works directly with refugees, supporting them to rebuild their lives.

PO Box 68614 | London E15 9DQ

+44 (0) 207 346 6700

www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

Migrants Resource Centre

Provides immigration and asylum advice services.

Eurocentres 56 | Eccleston Square | 2nd floor | London SW1V 1PH

+44 (0) 207 834 2505

info@migrants.org.uk

www.migrantsresourcecentre.org.uk

British Red Cross

Helps vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers in the U.K. and enables victims of conflict and disaster to contact their families.

Moorfields 44 | London EC2Y 9AL

+44 (0) 344 871 1111 (domestic)

+44 (0) 207 138 7900 (from abroad)

www.redcross.org.uk

Amnesty International

Provides current information on the risks refugees face in their country of origin. Runs a campaign on refugees and asylum and is part of the “Still Human, Still Here” campaign.

New Inn Yard 17-25

London EC2A 3EA

+44 (0) 207 033 1500

sct@amnesty.org.uk

www.amnesty.org.uk

European Union

SOME ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR THE EU

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

The U.N. refugee agency. It leads and coordinates international action to protect refugees and resolve refugee problems. Each European country has its own page on this website.

www.unhcr.org/europe.com

www.unhcr-northerneurope.org

www.unhcr-centraleurope.org

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

An intergovernmental organization that takes a lead role in migration management and assistance to migrants and refugees in need, including internally displaced people. Each European country has its own page on this website.

www.iom.int

www.eea.iom.int

ECRE provides for the **Asylum Information Database (AIDA)**, which maps asylum procedures, reception conditions, and detention in Europe, with country reports and links to articles concerning migrants and refugees.

www.asylumineurope.org

ECRE also provides for the **European Legal Network on Asylum (ELENA)**, a network that extends across most European states and involves some 500 lawyers and legal counselors, with a regularly updated index.

www.ecre.org

European Council of Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)

A pan-European alliance of 90 nongovernmental organizations protecting and advancing the rights of refugees, asylum seekers and displaced people.

www.ecre.org

Refugee Aid App

An app for vulnerable asylum seekers. It shows the location of and types of aid available on a map, with information about operating hours. All the aid shown is from trusted official aid organizations. Aid categories include legal, administrative and information; food; shelter; water; aid for parents and children, unaccompanied children, women and men; health; education; and toilets and showers. The app is currently available only in Greece, the U.K., Italy, Belgium, Slovenia and Bulgaria (with other countries coming soon). Features include listings of aid nearby; map views of aid nearby, using color-coded category icons; and push notifications when there is urgent news in particular locations.

www.refugeeaidapp.com

Info4Migrants

Independent information in multiple languages about legal status, living, education, and employment in the U.K., Sweden, Finland, Spain, Austria, and Bulgaria.

www.info4migrants.com

News That Moves

An Internews initiative in multiple languages that provides updated news and useful links and dispels rumors in Greece, Macedonia, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Austria, Germany, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Turkey.

www.newsthatmoves.org

Refugee Text

An automated service that delivers information via SMS and other platforms to refugees, in partnership with trusted content-providing organizations.

refugeetext.org/

Welcome to Europe (w2eu)

Independent information in English, French, Farsi and Arabic, including extensive country information on legal procedures and contacts for relevant organizations.

www.w2eu.info

www.live.w2eu.info

Far-right parties in the EU

Far-right parties are present in several European countries. These are a list of these countries where far-right parties had significant results in the last legislative elections.

Center / left wing / others **Far-right**

HUNGARY 2014 ***(FK+J):65,1%**

POLAND 2015 **PiS: 37,6%**

AUSTRIA 2016 **FPÖ: 35%**

SWITZERLAND 2015 **SVP: 29,4%**

DENMARK 2015 **DF: 21,1%**

FINLAND 2015 **PS: 17,6%**

FRANCE 2012 **FN: 13,6%**

SWEDEN 2014 **SD:13%**

UNITED KINGDOM 2015 **UKIP: 12,9%**

BULGARIA 2014 **** (NV+A): 11,82%**

GREECE 2015 **ChA + EK: 10,7%**

THE NETHERLANDS 2012 **PVV: 10,1%**

SLOVAKIA 2016 **SVP:8,0%**

CZECH REPUBLIC 2013 **ÚSVIT: 6,9%**

GERMANY 2013 **AfD: 4,7%**

ITALY 2013 **LN: 4,1%**

BELGIUM 2014 **VB: 3,7%**

***FIDESZ-KDNP + JOBBIK**
****NFSB/VMRO + ATTAKA**

HUNGARY

Parliamentary republic

Parliamentary elections: 06/04/2014

30% **FIDESZ-KDNP + JOBBIK:65,1%**

Hungarian Civic Union -
Christian Democratic People's Party
(FIDESZ-KDNP): 44,9%
Unity (MSZP-DK-E14-PM-MLP): 25,57%
Movement for a Better Hungary
(JOBBIK): 20,2%
Others: 9,33%

POLAND

Parliamentary republic

Parliamentary elections, 25/09/2015

Center/left/others: 62,4% **PiS: 37,6%**

Law and Justice (PiS): 37,6%
Civic Platform (PO): 24,1%
Kukiz'15 (K): 8,8%
Modern (.N): 7,6%
United Left (ZL): 7,6%
Polish People's Party (PSL): 5,1%

AUSTRIA

Federal parliamentary republic

Presidential election: 24/04/2016*

Center/left/others: 65% **FPÖ: 35%**

Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ): 35%
The Greens (GRÜNE): 21%
Austrian People's Party (ÖVP): 11%
Soc. Dem. Party of Austria (SPÖ): 11%
Others: 21%
***(1st round)**

SWITZERLAND

Parliamentary constitutional monarchy

Legislative elections: 18/10/2015

Center/left/others: 70,6% **SVP: 29,4%**

Swiss People's Party (SVP): 29,4%
Social Democratic Party of
Switzerland (SP): 18,8%
FDP. The Liberals (FDP): 16,4%
Christian Democratic
People's Party (CVP): 11,6%
Green Party of Switzerland (GPS): 7,1%
Others: 12,8%

DENMARK

Parliamentary constitutional monarchy

Legislative elections: 18/06/2015

Center/left/others: 79,9% **DF: 21,1%**

Social Democracy (SD): 26,3%
Danish People's Party (DF): 21,1%
Left - Denmark's Liberal Party (V): 19,5%
Unity List - The Red-Greens (EL): 7,8%
Liberal Alliance (LA): 7,5%
Others: 17,9%

FINLAND

Parliamentary republic

National Assembly: 19/04/2015

Center/left/others: 82,4% **PS: 17,6%**

Centre of Finland (KESK): 21,1%
National Coalition Party (KOK): 18,2%
True Finns (PS): 17,6%
Social Dem. Party of Finland (SDP): 16,5%
Green Alliance (VIHR): 8,5%
Left Alliance (VAS): 7,1%
Others: 10,9%

FRANCE

Semipresidential republic

National Assembly: 10/06/2012

Center/left/others: 86,4% **FN: 13,6%**

Socialist Party (PS): 29,4%
Union Popular Movement (UMP): 27,1%
National Front (FN): 13,6%
Left Front (FG): 6,9%
Europe Ecology the Greens (EELV): 5,5%
Others: 17,5%

SWEDEN

Parliamentary constitutional monarchy

General election, 14/09/2014

Center/left/others: 87% **SD:13%**

Social Democratic
Workers' Party (S): 31,0%
Moderate Coalition Party (M): 23,3%
Sweden Democrats (SD): 12,9%
Environment Party
The Greens (MP): 6,9%
Others: 25,8%

UNITED KINGDOM

Parliamentary constitutional monarchy

Legislative elections: 07/05/2015

87,1% **UKIP: 12,9%**

Conservative and Unionist
Party (CON): 36,9%
Labour Party (LAB): 30,4%
**United Kingdom Independence
Party (UKIP): 12,6%**
Liberal Democrats (LD): 7,9%
Others: 9,2%

Sources: www.parties-and-elections.eu / www.electionguide.org / www.europa.eu

Far-right parties in the EU

Far-right parties are present in several European countries.
These are a list of these countries where far-right parties had
significant results in the last legislative elections.

BULGARIA

Parliamentary republic

Parliamentary elections: 05/10/2014

92,3% **NFSB/VMRO+ATTAKA: 11,82%**

Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria (GERB): 32,67%
Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP): 15,40%
Movement for Rights and Freedoms (DPS): 14,84%
Reformist Bloc (RB): 8,89%
National Front & Bulgarian National Movement (NFSB-VMRO): 7,3%
Bulgaria Without Censorship (BBC): 5,69%
Attack (ATAKA): 4,52%
Alternative for Bulgarian Development (ABV): 4,2%
Others: 6,5%

GREECE

Parliamentary republic

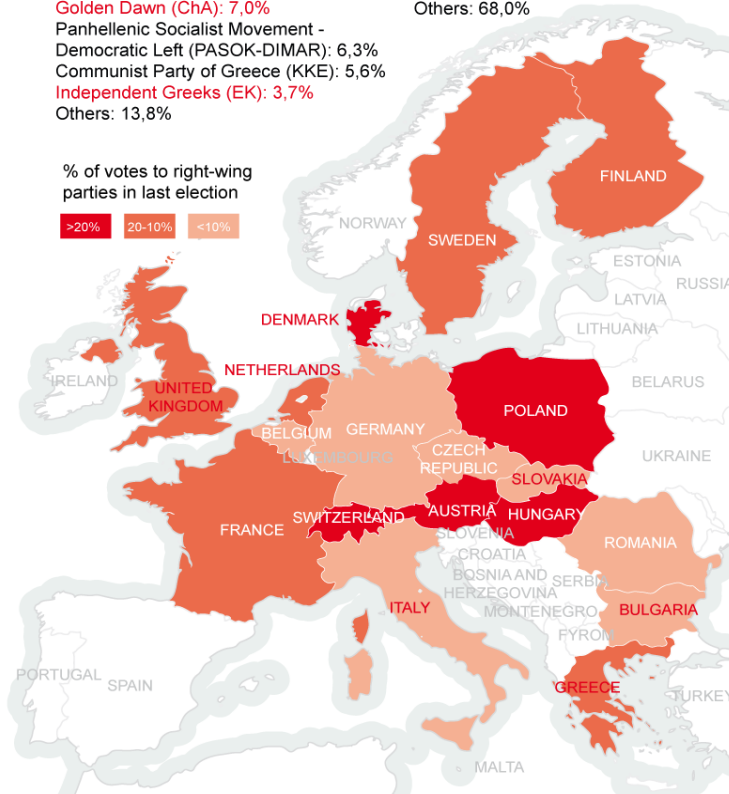
Presidential elections: 20/09/2015

89,7% **ChA + EK: 10,7%**

Coalition - Radical Left (SYRIZA): 35,5%
New Democracy (ND): 28,1%
Golden Dawn (ChA): 7,0%
Panhellenic Socialist Movement - Democratic Left (PASOK-DIMAR): 6,3%
Communist Party of Greece (KKE): 5,6%
Independent Greeks (EK): 3,7%
Others: 13,8%

% of votes to right-wing parties in last election

>20% 20-10% <10%



THE NETHERLANDS

Parliamentary constitutional monarchy

Legislative elections: 12/09/2012

Center/left/others: 89,9% **PVV: 10,1%**

People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD): 26,6%
Labor Party (PvdA): 24,8%
Freedom Party (PVV): 10,1%
Socialist Party (SP): 9,6%
Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA): 8,5%
Democrats 66 (D66): 8,0%
Others: 12,4%

SLOVAKIA

Parliamentary republic

Legislative elections: 05/03/2016

Center/left/others: 92% **L'SNS: 8,0%**

Direction-Social Democracy (SMER-SD): 28,3%
Freedom and Solidarity (SAS): 12,1%
Ordinary People and Independent Personalities (GPS): 11,0%
Slovak National Party (SNS): 8,6%
People's Party Our Slovakia (L'SNS): 8,0%
Others: 68,0%

GERMANY

Semipresidential republic

Legislative election: 22/11/2013

Center/left/others: 95,3% **AfD: 4,7%**

Christian Democratic Union of Germany (CDU): 34,1%
Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD): 25,7%
The Left (LINKE): 8,6%
Alliance 90/The Greens (GRÜNE): 8,4%
Christian Social Union in Bavaria (CSU): 7,4%
Free Democratic party (FDP): 4,8%
Alternative for Germany (AfD): 4,7%
Others: 6,3%

ITALY

Parliamentary republic

Legislative elections: 24/02/2013

Center/left/others: 95,9% **LN: 4,1%**

Five Star Movement (MCS): 25,6%
Democratic Party (PD): 25,4%
Forward Italy (PDL): 21,6%
League North (LN): 4,1%
Civic Choice (SC): 8,3%
Others: 15%

BELGIUM

Federal parliamentary constitutional monarchy

Legislative elections: 25/05/2014

Center/left/others: 96,3% **VB: 3,7%**

New Flemish Alliance (N-VA): 20,3%
Christian Democratic & Flemish (CD&V): 11,6%
Open Flemish Liberals & Democrats (Open Vld): 9,8%
Socialist Party. Different (SPA): 8,8%
The Flemish Greens (GROEN): 5,3%
Flemish Interest (VB): 3,7%
Socialist Party (PS): 11,7%
Reformist Movement (MR): 9,6%
Others: 19,2

REFUGEES WELCOME

Migrants and refugees will often run into expressions of welcome as well as hostility.





