



# DEALING WITH REFUGEES



A comparison of refugees  
after World War II in Europe and Palestine



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## Executive Summary

This paper examines refugee populations following World War II in Europe and Palestine, and common characteristics with the current Syrian refugee crisis.

Within fifteen years after the conclusion of World War II in Europe, all refugee camps had closed and their former residents were able to resettle or locally integrate. During this period, when the number of European refugees was gradually declining due to naturalization, the number of Palestinian refugees continued to grow. The descendants of refugees are not being naturalized in their countries of refuge, but rather are inheriting refugee status after being registered as refugees by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), a UN agency exclusively responsible for Palestinians. This disparity is not the result of UNRWA's lack of resources, it is actually rooted in the difference in attitude towards Israel and the Palestinians.

The United Nations Human Rights Committee's (UNHCR) mandate is settle refugees and lead them to self-sustainment in a new environment, while UNRWA embraces the policy of insisting upon the Palestinians' return to the birthplace of their grandparents. Moreover, UNRWA perpetuates the dependence of refugees and their descendants while retaining their refugee status.

This paper will compare the circumstances of those who were expelled from Germany after World War II, who also called for a right of return many years after integrating into society. Contrary to Palestinian policy, German politicians relinquished this claim, favoring the normalization of the relations with Eastern Europe while reducing political tension.

The aim of this paper is to show that there are alternatives to UNRWA's current policies. Retaining refugee status for an entire population group as refugees is not the optimal way to solve the problem. Accordingly, great care and effort should be taken to enable Palestinians, as well as the newly uprooted Syrians, to build new lives for themselves and to no longer serve as a destabilizing factor in the region.

## Introduction

By the end of 2015, the UNHCR reported a record high of 65.3 million refugees worldwide.<sup>1</sup> Of special interest, is the current situation of refugees and displaced persons from Syria and Iraq.<sup>2</sup> In voicing recommendations to better handle the Syrian refugee crisis, this paper will present a comparative analysis of three former refugee crises. Firstly, the refugees in Europe after World War II, with special focus on the immigration of ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe into Germany; secondly, the mass immigration of Jews into Israel shortly after World War II; and lastly, parallel to the second case, the pullout/flight of Arabs from Palestine to neighboring countries.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2016/6/5763b65a4/global-forced-displacement-hits-record-high.html>, accessed Sept 12<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Displaced persons, contrary to refugees, have not crossed an international border but are displaced from their home internally within their country. For definitions, see UNHCR Population database. <http://popstats.unhcr.org/en/overview>, accessed Sept 11<sup>th</sup> 2016.

# Facts and Figures



## Europe after World War II

### Background

During and after World War II, an estimated 60 million people were displaced from their homes.<sup>3</sup> Many of these returned at a different stage of the war or afterwards, so that the majority had returned to their home countries before the end of 1945.<sup>4</sup> These quick repatriations were even administered by the military.<sup>5</sup> Relief agencies entered the scene later, caring for those unwilling or unable to return, and had to be resettled in different countries. This group was made up of forced laborers and prisoners of war from Eastern Europe, who did not want to return to a Soviet regime, and Jewish Holocaust survivors.

In 1951, UNHCR registered 1.2 million refugees in Central and Western Europe.<sup>6</sup> The year of 1960 was declared by the UN as World Refugee Year, with additional efforts being made to dissolve the displaced persons (DP) camps, where people had been waiting for resettlement. The High Commissioner reported 160,000 non-settled refugees and another 40,000 in camps, for the autumn of 1958.<sup>7</sup> However, by the end of 1960, all DP camps in Europe had been closed<sup>8</sup>.

By 1961, the number of refugees again rose to 800,000<sup>9</sup>, a possibly due to the outbreak of civil war in Hungary in 1956.

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<sup>3</sup> 60 million according to M. Proudfoot cited in Harris/Wülker, *The refugee Problem of Germany*, Economic Geography Vol. 29 1953, p. 10.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Marrus, *The Unwanted: European Refugees in the Twentieth Century*, (OUP New York, 1985), p. 297.

<sup>5</sup> Ben Shepard, author of "The Long Road Home: The Aftermath Of The Second World War" (2011), radio interview Dec 31<sup>st</sup> 2015, on <http://www.npr.org/2015/12/31/461627659/europes-refugee-crisis-pales-in-comparison-to-world-war-ii-aftermath>, accessed Sept 11<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>6</sup> According to statistical material at [http://popstats.unhcr.org/en/persons\\_of\\_concern/TawNEk](http://popstats.unhcr.org/en/persons_of_concern/TawNEk), accessed Sept 12<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>7</sup> Statement by Dr. Auguste R. Lindt, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, to the Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly, 2 November 1959, at <http://www.unhcr.org/admin/hcspeeches/3ae68fb914/statement-dr-auguste-r-lindt-united-nations-high-commissioner-refugees.html>, accessed Sept 8<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/wwtwo/refugees\\_01.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/wwtwo/refugees_01.shtml), Sept 7<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>9</sup> [http://popstats.unhcr.org/en/persons\\_of\\_concern/1lQw7o](http://popstats.unhcr.org/en/persons_of_concern/1lQw7o), accessed Sept 12<sup>th</sup> 2016.

## Germany

In Germany, a unique situation evolved with 12.5 million expellees coming to Germany, roughly two thirds of them to Western Germany.<sup>10</sup> These expellees were members of German minorities in Eastern European countries that fled local anti-German resentment after the war, as well as Soviet political persecution.<sup>11</sup> They had to be integrated socially and economically into heavily-destroyed post-war Germany. By the end of the 1950s, however, these expellees were largely considered integrated.<sup>12</sup> Although they remained as a distinguished group in the political sphere advocating special interests, including a right to return home, they merged with the general population economically and socially. In the mid-1990s, approximately 3.6 million of the refugees who had arrived between 1944 and 1949 were still alive.<sup>13</sup> Approximately a quarter of Germany's current population of 80 million are descendants from those refugees.<sup>14</sup>



## Israel 1948-49

At the end of WW II, there were about 650,000 Jews living in Israel.<sup>15</sup> After the establishment of the state and until 1964, approximately 1.2 million immigrants joined the Jewish population. Half of the immigrants were from Europe, and the remaining half were from Muslim countries in Northern Africa and Asia.<sup>16</sup> During the first three years of the state's existence alone, 700,000 arrived,<sup>17</sup> at a rate of approximately

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<sup>10</sup> Chauncy D. Harris, Gabriele Wülker, The Refugee Problem of Germany, *Economic Geography* Vol. 29, No. 1 (Jan. 1953), p. 11, at [http://www.jstor.org/stable/142127?seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](http://www.jstor.org/stable/142127?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents), accessed Sept 5<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Teaching Materials Flight and Expulsion, state authority for political education, 2010, Wolfgang Maron, Refugees and Expellees in North-Rhine-Westphalia (until 1960), p. 38, found at <https://www.politische-bildung.nrw.de/print/handreichung-flucht-und-vertreibung/index.html>, accessed Sept 12<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>13</sup> Rainer Münz, Ralf Ulrich, The ethnical and demographic structure of foreigners and immigrants in Germany, Data from the official statistics, in Richard Alba, Peter Schmidt, Martina Wasmer (editors), *society in focus 5. Germans and Foreigners: friends, strangers or foes? Empirical findings and theoretical explanations*, Westdeutscher Verlag Wiesbaden 2000, found at Leibniz-Institute for Social Sciences, [http://www.gesis.org/fileadmin/upload/forschung/publikationen/gesis\\_reihen/Blickpunkt/5/muenz.pdf](http://www.gesis.org/fileadmin/upload/forschung/publikationen/gesis_reihen/Blickpunkt/5/muenz.pdf), accessed Sept 12<sup>th</sup> 2016 p. 15.

<sup>14</sup> Article of Jan 7<sup>th</sup> 2015, Every second German an Immigrant?, Media Service Integration, at <https://mediendienst-integration.de/artikel/kermani-rede-jeder-zweite-hat-migrationshintergrund.html>, accessed Sept 12<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.jewishagency.org/society-and-politics/content/36566>, accessed Sept 15<sup>th</sup> 2016, population was 630,000 according to Sammy Shmooha, The mass immigrations to Israel: A comparison of the failure of the Mizrahi immigrants of the 1950s with the success of the Russian immigrants of the 1990s, *The Journal of Israeli History* Vol. 27, No. 1, March 2008, found at [http://soc.haifa.ac.il/~s.shmooha/download/Mass\\_Immigrations\\_to\\_Israel.pdf](http://soc.haifa.ac.il/~s.shmooha/download/Mass_Immigrations_to_Israel.pdf), accessed Oct 6<sup>th</sup> 2016, p.3

<sup>16</sup> Shmooha p.3.

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.jewishagency.org/society-and-politics/content/36566>, accessed Sept 15<sup>th</sup> 2016.



17,000 per month.<sup>18</sup> Although their change of residence was not based solely upon free choice, but due to their fear of, or having actually experienced, violence, they were defined as immigrants from their arrival, not as refugees. As a result, their numbers naturally dissolved into the general population.



## **Palestinians 1948-49**

The precise number of Palestinians that left (forced or fleeing voluntarily) of what became the state of Israel in 1948-49 is still debated. UNRWA estimates the number to be 750,000.<sup>19</sup> Of these originally displaced persons, 30,000-50,000 are still alive today.<sup>20</sup> In 1955, according to the report of the director of UNRWA to the UN General Assembly, there were 906,000 refugees registered with UNRWA.<sup>21</sup> By 1975, the number had grown to 1.6 million,<sup>22</sup> by 1982 to 1.9 million,<sup>23</sup> by 1995 to 3.1 million,<sup>24</sup> and by 2005 to 4.3 million.<sup>25</sup>

UNRWA is currently registering and providing services to about five million Palestinian refugees. UNRWA defines Palestinian refugees as: “persons whose normal place of residence was Palestine during the period 1 June 1946 to 15 May 1948, and who lost both home and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict. Palestine Refugees, and descendants of Palestine refugee males, including legally adopted children, are eligible to register for UNRWA services” (III.A.1. Consolidated Eligibility and Registration Instructions, CERJ 2009).<sup>26</sup> This definition was accepted by the UN, after a proposal by

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<sup>18</sup> Noman Lawrence, *Israel: Jewish population and immigration*, Bureau of the Census, Washington 1952.

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.unrwa.org/who-we-are>, accessed Sept 14<sup>th</sup> 2016, other sources quote numbers as low as 470,000: <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/myths3/MFrefugees.html#1>, accessed Sept 14<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>20</sup> 30,000 estimated in 2012 by bill proposed in US Senate, <http://www.timesofisrael.com/us-senate-dramatically-redefines-definition-of-palestinian-refugees/>, accessed Sept 14<sup>th</sup> 2016, estimation of 30,000 to 50,000 found for example in world heritage encyclopedia at [http://www.worldlibrary.org/articles/palestinian\\_refugees#cite\\_note-alg-2](http://www.worldlibrary.org/articles/palestinian_refugees#cite_note-alg-2), accessed Sept 14<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>21</sup> Found at <https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/9a798adbf322aff38525617b006d88d7/998720e728b76d88052565a800501900?OpenDocument&Highlight=2,registered,refugees>, accessed Sept 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016.

<sup>22</sup> *Palestinian Refugees Special Bulletin 2004*, Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs, Jerusalem, p. 2, found at <http://www.passia.org/publications/bulletins/Refugees/>, Sept 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016

<sup>23</sup> Joan Peters, *From time immemorial*, JKAP Publications 1984, p. 398.

<sup>24</sup> BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency & Refugee Rights, *Survey of Palestinian Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons*, Vol VIII 2013-2015 p. 33, found at file:///C:/Users/Intern%203/Downloads/Survey2013-2015-web.pdf, Sept 28<sup>th</sup> 2016

<sup>25</sup> UNRWA in figures 2005 [http://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/unrwa\\_in\\_figures\\_2005.pdf](http://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/unrwa_in_figures_2005.pdf), Oct 9<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.unrwa.org/resources/strategy-policy/consolidated-eligibility-and-registration-instructions>, accessed Sept 13<sup>th</sup> 2016.

the Commissioner General of UNRWA in 1965, to provide assistance to the third generation of refugees.<sup>27</sup>

## Syria and Iraq 2011-2016

Until now, 4.8 million Syrians have fled their country, the vast majority of which are seeking refuge in Turkey (2.7 million), Lebanon (1million) and Jordan (0.6 million).<sup>28</sup> Only a small percentage of these refugees are living in camps: in Turkey only 8 percent,<sup>29</sup> in Jordan 20 percent.

6.6 million Syrians are displaced within Syria.<sup>30</sup> In Iraq, 3.2 million were displaced since 2014.<sup>31</sup>

## Summary

It is striking that contrary to other groups of refugees, the UNRWA administered Palestinians are the only ones whose number has grown instead of diminished. It shall therefore now be analyzed which steps were taken that successfully reduced the refugee population in Europe, Germany and Israel.

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<sup>27</sup> UN documents A/6013(Supp), pp. 4, to be retrieved from <https://documents.un.org/prod/ods.nsf/xpSearchResultsM.xsp?search=>.

<sup>28</sup> <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>, accessed Sept 14<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>29</sup> [file:///C:/Users/Intern%203/Downloads/MigrantPresenceMonitoringIOMsitrep\\_eng.pdf](file:///C:/Users/Intern%203/Downloads/MigrantPresenceMonitoringIOMsitrep_eng.pdf) accessed Oct 5th 2016.

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.internal-displacement.org/database/country/?iso3=SYR>, accessed Sept 14<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>31</sup> [http://reporting.unhcr.org/node/2547#\\_ga=1.85296089.1580390441.1473143141](http://reporting.unhcr.org/node/2547#_ga=1.85296089.1580390441.1473143141), accessed Sept 14<sup>th</sup> 2016.

## Analysis

There are generally three courses an agency can take to care for refugees. The goal of all these courses was stated by the High Commissioner in 1959 as follows: “The ultimate aim of protection is to help the refugee to cease to be a refugee, which is achieved either by voluntarily reassuming the protection of the country of his nationality or by naturalization.”<sup>32</sup> So while the first option is repatriation, the other two possibilities that enable refugees to return to normal life are either by making them legal residents or even citizens in their country of refuge, or in a third country in which they are prepared to resettle.

Repatriation is generally the preferable course of action. It will, however, only be possible after solving the political conflict that initially caused the flight of refugees. “In recent years, there has been a new recognition of the fact that refugee situations usually persist for much longer than expected, that voluntary repatriation is often rendered impossible by continuing conflicts in countries of origin, and that the number of refugees who can benefit from resettlement in a third country is usually very limited.”<sup>33</sup> What remains as an open course is local integration, or at least, maybe as a first step in that direction, achieving the self-reliance of a refugee population: “Even in situations where local integration does not appear to be a viable solution for a refugee population, self-reliance should be vigorously pursued as it does not preclude eventual voluntary repatriation but rather facilitates sustainable reintegration.”<sup>34</sup>

Different measures will of course have to be taken in order to achieve such local integration where repatriation is impossible. Their integration in Europe, Germany, Israel and regarding the Palestinians shall now be compared.

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<sup>32</sup> Statement by Dr. Lindt, UN High Commissioner for Refugees 2 November 1959, found at <http://www.unhcr.org/admin/hcspeeches/3ae68fb914/statement-dr-auguste-r-lindt-united-nations-high-commissioner-refugees.html>, accessed Sept 8<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>33</sup> PROTRACTED REFUGEE SITUATIONS A discussion paper prepared for the High Commissioner’s Dialogue on Protection Challenges, Geneva, December 2008 p. 14 UNHCR/DPC/2008/Doc. 02, found at <http://www.unhcr.org/research/epau/4a1d43986/protracted-refugee-situations.html>, Sept 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

<sup>34</sup> Protracted Refugee Situations p. 14.



## Welfare and Money

Accepting refugees always incurs costs and presents a certain strain on the national economy. Most refugee movements are usually related to situations of war or armed conflict, which have a negative effect a country's economic situation, and often on that of the entire region. External support will therefore be needed.

The UNHCR has developed care and maintenance programs for these situations, thus a minimal living standard is guaranteed. On the other hand, the willingness of the international community to make donations will decrease over time as new refugees call for assistance. It must therefore be preferable, as already mentioned above, to lead a refugee community to self-reliance.<sup>35</sup>

Europe was devastated after World War II. The American Secretary of State, George Marshall, identified this as a risk to political stability, since "Economic crisis (...) produced social dissatisfaction, and social dissatisfaction generated political instability."<sup>36</sup> He therefore led the US to implementing the European Recovery Program, known as Marshall Plan, investing extensively into the European economy. In a period of four years (1948-52), the United States spent \$12 billion, the majority of this amount in products, especially machines to modernize industry and agriculture.<sup>37</sup> The main recipients of the aid were the UK, France, Italy and Germany.<sup>38</sup> Germany had to pay back one third of the donated sums, which it did until 1971.<sup>39</sup> Other European countries received larger portions of their assistance as grants, and had to pay back even less.<sup>40</sup> With a population of roughly 328 million in Western Europe,<sup>41</sup> only \$9 per inhabitant were paid every year under the Marshall program. Added to this amount are individual loans that were given out before the Marshall Plan was implemented.<sup>42</sup> All this money was not directed specifically towards refugees, but rather to general economic recovery. However, only through reviving the economy could the refugees

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid. p. 13.

<sup>36</sup> Henry Kissinger in the Harvard Gazette 2015, <http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2015/05/reflections-on-the-marshall-plan/>, accessed Sept 22<sup>nd</sup> 2016.

<sup>37</sup> <http://marshallfoundation.org/marshall/the-marshall-plan/history-marshall-plan/>, accessed Sept 22<sup>nd</sup> 2016.

<sup>38</sup> Susan Stern, The Marshall Plan 1947-1997: A German view, p. 4, found at [http://www.marshallfoundation.org/library/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2014/05/Marshall\\_Plan\\_1947-1997\\_A\\_German\\_View.pdf](http://www.marshallfoundation.org/library/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2014/05/Marshall_Plan_1947-1997_A_German_View.pdf), Sept 20th 2016; color chart at <http://marshallfoundation.org/library/documents/marshall-plan-payments-millions-european-economic-cooperation-countries/> Sept 22<sup>nd</sup> 2016.

<sup>39</sup> Stern p. 4.

<sup>40</sup> For details refer to Statistics & Reports Division Agency for International Development, The Marshall Plan, November 17, 1975, at [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/Pdacs197.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pdacs197.pdf), Sept 26<sup>th</sup> 2016

<sup>41</sup> [http://www.geohive.com/earth/his\\_proj\\_europe.aspx](http://www.geohive.com/earth/his_proj_europe.aspx), Sept 25th, 2016.

<sup>42</sup> For example the British loan of \$ 4.34 billion from 1945 whose last installment was paid in 2006, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/news/britain-pays-off-final-installment-of-us-loan-after-61-years-430118.html>, Sept 26th 2016.

which remained in Europe and the expellees in Germany be integrated, that is, find a job, provide for themselves and start networking with the local population.

Israel too faced a difficult economic situation in its first years while needing to care for all the arriving immigrants, while its exports amounted to less than a third of its imports. The imports were first financed with short-term bank loans; from 1951 they were financed by American aid, reparations from (West) Germany and bonds sold to private investors, mainly from the US.<sup>43</sup> German reparations were fixed at 3.5 billion German marks (equaling at the time \$830 million),<sup>44</sup> payable in money and goods over a period of twelve years from 1952 (which amounts to roughly \$70 million a year).<sup>45</sup> From the US, Israel received \$100 million in a bank loan in 1949, followed by loans averaging \$63 million every year until 1965.<sup>46</sup> The sale of Israel bonds generated roughly \$50 million per annum in its first years.<sup>47</sup> Together, that creates an income of \$200 million per year for a population of on average 1.5 million, or \$133 per capita per year, a third of which was in repayable loans.

The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), in operation for three years (1943-1946), had total expenditures of \$3.6 billion;<sup>48</sup> and the International Refugee Organization, succeeding UNRRA, operating from 1946 to 1950, had an annual budget of \$155 million, but only about \$90 million were actually paid to the organization each year.<sup>49</sup> The UNHCR, began its operations with a budget of only \$300,000 in 1950.<sup>50</sup> However, by 1952, the de facto budget had already risen to \$760,000<sup>51</sup> and by 1955 the UN Refugee Fund assembled funds of \$3 million for emergency aid and long term solutions.<sup>52</sup> With this relatively small amount of money, all the programs of the UNHCR, not only those in Europe, were financed. The UNHCR

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<sup>43</sup> <http://lib.cet.ac.il/pages/item.asp?item=4123> Sept 21st, 2016

<sup>44</sup> Historic exchange rates <http://www.history.ucsb.edu/faculty/marcuse/projects/currency.htm#tables> Sept 22nd 2016.

<sup>45</sup> <http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/Hebrew/collections/personalsites/Israel-Germany/Division-of-Germany/Pages/Reparations-Agreement.aspx> Sept 21st, 2016.

<sup>46</sup> Jeremy Sharp, US Foreign Aid to Israel, report to Congress 2015 p. 26, at <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL33222.pdf> Sept 21st 2016.

<sup>47</sup> Chart in slide show found at <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1110315015165/Chalamish.pdf> Sept 25th 2016.

<sup>48</sup> [http://www.yadvashem.org/odot\\_pdf/Microsoft%20Word%20-%205900.pdf](http://www.yadvashem.org/odot_pdf/Microsoft%20Word%20-%205900.pdf), Sept 25th, 2016.

<sup>49</sup> International Refugee Organization, International Organization, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Feb., 1948), p. 130, University of Wisconsin Press, at <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2704212>, Sept 25th, 2016.

<sup>50</sup> <http://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html>, Sept 25th 2016.

<sup>51</sup> Yearbook of the United Nations 1952, p. 500, <http://www.unmultimedia.org/searchers/yearbook/page.jsp?bookpage=500&volume=1952>, Sept 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

<sup>52</sup> Yearbook of the United Nations 1955 p. 197, <http://www.unmultimedia.org/searchers/yearbook/page.jsp?volume=1955&page=207&searchType=advanced>, Sept 25th, 2016.

population statistics for 1955 reached 15 million people of concern worldwide,<sup>53</sup> which provide \$0.2 for every person.

By contrast, the UNRWA already received a budget of \$54.9 million from the UN General Assembly in 1950, of which \$38.9 million were actually promised to the organization by various contributors.<sup>54</sup> This means that the 750,000 refugees received an equivalent to \$52 per person.

	Budget	Population	Average Allocation (per person per year)
Marshall Plan	\$12 billion over twelve years	328 million	\$9 (partly in loans)
UNHCR de facto Budget	\$3 million in 1955	15 million	\$0.2
UNRWA de facto Budget	\$38.9 million in 1950	750,000	\$52

**Table 1: Average allocation per refugee population according to historical programs.**

In addition to international aid, national welfare measures will simplify integration. On the other hand, investing in infrastructure and economic development generally must be the priority of spending after conflict, and not welfare measures for individuals.

In Israel, little welfare was provided in the 1950s, for example, there was no unemployment insurance.<sup>55</sup> In Germany, a special tax program was implemented, known as the balance of burdens ("Lastenausgleich"): an additional tax was levied on property that survived the war. The revenue, however, was being used for building of housing, and only sometimes for individual compensation.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>53</sup> [http://popstats.unhcr.org/en/persons\\_of\\_concern](http://popstats.unhcr.org/en/persons_of_concern).

<sup>54</sup> Interim Report of the UNRWA Director to the General Assembly, October 6<sup>th</sup>, 1950, <https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/EC8DE7912121FCE5052565B1006B5152>, Sept 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

<sup>55</sup> Smooha p. 8.

<sup>56</sup> Wolfgang Maron, Refugees and Expellees in North-Rhine-Westphalia (until 1960) p. 33.

## Housing

The most urgent need of a refugee is a place to live.

With repatriation, housing is simple, in a refugee camp of tents or simple huts. The longer the course of repatriation remains impossible, the more such housing becomes insufficient. A long period in such circumstances is also detrimental from a sociological and psychological perspective and inhibits the possibilities of later reintegration. On the other hand, the hope of leaving the camp and starting anew is a source of fresh hope, as already noticed by High Commissioner Lindt in 1959: "Up to now their conversation centered around their unhappy memories of the past. The past was their present. (...)The camp clearance programme has brought a new atmosphere into the camps. The refugees now start to discuss the future and a life outside camp, in normal homes which offer a private life".<sup>57</sup>

The expellees in Germany were initially relocated to rural areas due to food and housing shortages in cities.<sup>58</sup> As time passed, new villages, town districts and even whole towns were built for the expellees.<sup>59</sup> These areas can be recognized even today by their street's names. Usually people coming from the same area of Eastern Europe were settled together, which preserved some sense of belonging. However, the geographical separation from local populations also hindered integration. The different parts of a town did eventually merge after one or two generations.<sup>60</sup>

In Israel, as well, immigrants were assigned to rural areas, but for the reason of populating uninhabited places and with a goal to establishing new settlements.<sup>61</sup> In many cases, people were moved to these locations before permanent housing was built there, living in provisionary tents and huts.<sup>62</sup>

The housing conditions of Palestinian refugees vary in the West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. The first-response aid in most cases was of course camps made of tents,<sup>63</sup> which were replaced by more permanent shelters, which many refugees replaced with houses by themselves. However, this process can be obstructed, as seen in Lebanon when there was a prohibition of new construction and bringing of building

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<sup>57</sup> Statement by Lindt to the General Assembly 1959.

<sup>58</sup> Maron p. 29.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid p. 34.

<sup>60</sup> Maron pp. 34.

<sup>61</sup> Lawrence, Israel 1952 p. 24.

<sup>62</sup> Lawrence p. 26.

<sup>63</sup> In some cases, French refugee camps built for Armenians (El Buss and Rashidieh in Lebanon) or military barracks from World War II (Neirab, Syria) could be used.



material into refugee camps.<sup>64</sup> However, even when building structures are improving, the camps are often overpopulated and infrastructure is poor.<sup>65</sup> There are camps which have developed into municipal districts and blend in with the surrounding quarters, others have remained quite isolated. Generally, the interconnection, especially socially, with surrounding settlements is found less in the West Bank and Lebanon, whereas the ties are better in Gaza, Jordan and Syria (that is, before 2011).<sup>66</sup> Moving out of the camps is not encouraged,<sup>67</sup> and it is socially undesirable, as it would cut ties with family and neighbors who often originally fled from the same village.<sup>68</sup> Thus, the population density increased over the years. In Jordan, only 18 percent of the Palestinian refugee population are still living in camps,<sup>69</sup> in the West Bank, its share is 25 percent,<sup>70</sup> and in Lebanon reaches 53 percent.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>64</sup> Ghada Hashem Talhami, *Palestinian Refugees: Pawns to Political Actors*, Nova Science New York 2003, p. 101, found at <https://books.google.co.il/books?id=n8LsPA3mTBYC&printsec=frontcover&hl=iw#v=onepage&q&f=false>, accessed Oct 6th 2016, US Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2008 Vol.1*, p. 1989, found at [https://books.google.co.il/books?id=qHolsCdgvFc&pg=PA1989&lpg=PA1989&dq=palestinian+refugee+camps+construction+restrictions&source=bl&ots=RC5IJH89fT&sig=uaedEOuX9GqirMq5-auin96WjdY&hl=iw&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwj\\_g87W0cXPAhWBnxQKHerLAM0Q6AEIMzAC#v=onepage&q=palestinian%20refugee%20camps%20construction%20restrictions&f=false](https://books.google.co.il/books?id=qHolsCdgvFc&pg=PA1989&lpg=PA1989&dq=palestinian+refugee+camps+construction+restrictions&source=bl&ots=RC5IJH89fT&sig=uaedEOuX9GqirMq5-auin96WjdY&hl=iw&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwj_g87W0cXPAhWBnxQKHerLAM0Q6AEIMzAC#v=onepage&q=palestinian%20refugee%20camps%20construction%20restrictions&f=false), accessed Oct 6th 2016.

<sup>65</sup> For details on each camp visit <http://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work>.

<sup>66</sup> Sari Hanafi, *Governing Palestinian Refugee Camps in the Arab East: Governmentalities in Search of Legitimacy*, American University of Beirut, 2010, pp. 20, found at <http://burawoy.berkeley.edu/Public%20Sociology,%20Live/Hanafi/Hanafi.Governing%20Refugee%20Camps.pdf> Sept 27th, 2016.

<sup>67</sup> Nina Gren, *Occupied Lives: Maintaining Integrity in a Palestinian Refugee Camp in the West Bank*, American University in Cairo 2015, p. 136, found at [https://books.google.co.il/books?id=YrvRCgAAQBAJ&pg=PA136&lpg=PA136&dq=moving+out+of+refugee+camp+PLO&source=bl&ots=nY9Qg0QypU&sig=RlaYhR2kUBb75fRM\\_ByoG2NxcqA&hl=iw&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiKypSExcXPAhXIQBQKHExAZgQ6AEIPzAE#v=onepage&q=moving%20out%20of%20refugee%20camp%20PLO&f=false](https://books.google.co.il/books?id=YrvRCgAAQBAJ&pg=PA136&lpg=PA136&dq=moving+out+of+refugee+camp+PLO&source=bl&ots=nY9Qg0QypU&sig=RlaYhR2kUBb75fRM_ByoG2NxcqA&hl=iw&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiKypSExcXPAhXIQBQKHExAZgQ6AEIPzAE#v=onepage&q=moving%20out%20of%20refugee%20camp%20PLO&f=false), accessed Oct 6th 2016.

<sup>68</sup> J. Ginat, Edward Joseph Perkins, *The Palestinian Refugees: Old Problems - New Solutions*, University of Oklahoma Press, 2001, p. 142, found at [https://books.google.co.il/books?id=U8tEaXB-q3wC&pg=PA142&lpg=PA142&dq=choice+of+residence+palestinian+refugees&source=bl&ots=ZJpOq9FGJM&sig=sVIIgi7C8562RpQX9D3aq6somHc&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjWgeSTnP3OAhXEnRoKHc6ZD\\_sQ6AEIOjAF#v=onepage&q=choice%20of%20residence%20palestinian%20refugees&f=false](https://books.google.co.il/books?id=U8tEaXB-q3wC&pg=PA142&lpg=PA142&dq=choice+of+residence+palestinian+refugees&source=bl&ots=ZJpOq9FGJM&sig=sVIIgi7C8562RpQX9D3aq6somHc&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjWgeSTnP3OAhXEnRoKHc6ZD_sQ6AEIOjAF#v=onepage&q=choice%20of%20residence%20palestinian%20refugees&f=false), Sept 27th 2016.

<sup>69</sup> <http://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/jordan>, Sept 27th 2016.

<sup>70</sup> <http://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/west-bank> Sept 27th 2016.

<sup>71</sup> <http://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/lebanon> Sept 27th 2016.



## Civil Rights and Citizenship

Of course, to become self-reliant, minimal civil rights and status must be granted to refugees to enable them to work and acquire property. In cases of integration or resettlement, residency status and citizenship mark an important step into the new society.

In Germany and Israel, the arriving refugees were granted citizenship automatically. They were accepted as belonging to the state, since they had to leave their homes specifically because they were German or Jewish. Citizenship, or at least equal legal standing, was granted via Article 116 of the Basic Law that was passed on May 23, 1949.<sup>72</sup> Pre-dating federal legislation, state laws to the same effect were passed. In Israel, even before the passing of the Israeli Nationality Law in July 1952, Jews that resided in Israel for six months had a right to vote and were subject to compulsorily military service, so in essence, they were treated as citizens.<sup>73</sup>

In the Casablanca Protocol of 1965, the League of Arab States agreed not to grant citizenship to Palestinians living in their territory in order to safeguard the Palestinian identity and the right of return.<sup>74</sup> However, they also called upon each other to grant Palestinians the right of employment, to issue travel documents and to treat them as equal citizens. The Protocol is not binding,<sup>75</sup> and the measure of its implementation is different from state to state.

In Jordan, the refugees arriving in 1948-49 were granted citizenship, only those arriving in the wake of the 1967 war did not receive citizenship.<sup>76</sup> In Syria, before the civil war, Palestinians did not receive citizenship, but they did actually enjoy an almost equal status, and could work in whatever profession they chose.<sup>77</sup> In Lebanon, this is not the case, Palestinians remain largely without civil rights and some professions are barred to non-citizens.<sup>78</sup> Lebanon is especially cautious not to naturalize the Palestinians, as this would unbalance the Christian-Muslim relationship in the country.

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<sup>72</sup> <https://www.bundestag.de/dokumente/textarchiv/2014/kalenderblatt/279526>, entered September 6th 2016; Judgement of the German Supreme Civil Court, BGH 17.02.1993 XII ZB 134/92, MDR 1993, 1086.

<sup>73</sup> Lawrence p. 28.

<sup>74</sup> Protocol to be found at <http://www.refworld.org/docid/460a2b252.html> accessed Oct 5th 2016

<sup>75</sup> BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency & Refugee Rights, Survey of Palestinian Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons, Vol VIII 2013-2015 p. 63, found at file:///C:/Users/Intern%203/Downloads/Survey2013-2015-web.pdf, Sept 28th 2016.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid pp. 18.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid p. 17.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid pp. 20.

Palestinians emigrating to Egypt, Kuwait or Saudi Arabia are without a secure status, and are in essence stateless foreigners.<sup>79</sup> Generally, the situation in Northern Africa is better than in the Gulf States and Egypt.<sup>80</sup>

## Work

The first step to integration addresses the economic aspect, and it is achieved by joining the work force. This important step is actually a prerequisite for general integration. If this is the only step taken, and no psychological support is available, or there is no societal recognition of the refugee's hardship or the loss of social, then criticism can soon follow.<sup>81</sup> Despite this, it is the minimum requirement and possibly the only step a country can afford to offer after conflict.

In Germany, the economy recovered quickly from the war in the 50s, as the expellees were a welcome source of manpower for the growing industries, especially for coal mining in central-western Germany.<sup>82</sup> Generally speaking, western countries were in search for manpower, which led the way to displaced persons being allowed to immigrate according to their skills and abilities, and according to their age and origin.<sup>83</sup> The International Refuge Organization, in its effort to resettle displaced persons, was quite occupied with matching the DPs to the demands of the accepting states.<sup>84</sup>

In Israel, there was almost no unemployment in its founding years; however, most non-European immigrants were employed in government-organized activities, such as forestation, reclamation and construction.<sup>85</sup> While these were certainly activities that had to be carried out, they were not employment opportunities that would provide long-term economic stability for a family. So the immigrants holding jobs in these industries can hardly be considered to have been integrated into the national economy.<sup>86</sup> In the long term, social division between European and Oriental Jews began to form; a gap that is still evident.<sup>87</sup>

Economic integration runs parallel with legal status for Palestinians: where secure residency or even citizenship is granted, they are integrated into the labor market;

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<sup>79</sup> Badil pp. 21.

<sup>80</sup> [http://www.badil.org/phocadownload/Badil\\_docs/publications/handbook/ch1.pdf](http://www.badil.org/phocadownload/Badil_docs/publications/handbook/ch1.pdf) Oct 5<sup>th</sup> 2016 p. 13.

<sup>81</sup> Maron p. 38.

<sup>82</sup> Maron p. 32.

<sup>83</sup> Shepard radio interview.

<sup>84</sup> Michael Marrus, *The Unwanted: European Refugees in the Twentieth Century*, OUP New York, 1985 p. 344.

<sup>85</sup> Lawrence p. 27.

<sup>86</sup> Lawrence p. 28, Smooha p. 8.

<sup>87</sup> Smooha pp. 8.

where status is lacking, they are employed in low-paying, seasonal jobs and unemployment is high.<sup>88</sup>

## Recommendations and Conclusions

The Palestinians are denied citizenship by Arab countries to safeguard their right of return and to ensure that their refugee status will be passed on to future generations. Of course, there is also a humanitarian argument: for the UNRWA to provide assistance to the Palestinians for whom no one else is taking responsibility, they have to be defined as being within the Agency's mandate. But that mandate could easily be interpreted or changed to register them as descendants of refugees and provide for them.<sup>89</sup>

Interestingly, German national law also passed on the status of expellees to the descendants of the original expellees, a ruling that was only abolished in 1993. This was part of the campaign to preserve the possibility of return, especially since the borders and any land claims were not settled in international law until after Germany's reunification.<sup>90</sup>

However, Germany treated the issue of a right of return differently. There was awareness of the danger that the expellees might be radicalized. Thus, they were at first not allowed to organize outside of political parties<sup>91</sup>. For administrative and cultural purposes, advisory councils were established in municipalities where expellees settled.<sup>92</sup> The expellees' party did participate in the federal government from 1953 until 1957, but has not had parliamentary representation since.<sup>93</sup> When the Social Democrats rose to power in 1969, they sought reconciliation with East Germany, which included not insisting on compensation or for the return of expellees. At this point, support of the right of return had entered in mainstream politics, but only for parties'

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<sup>88</sup> Again, the situation is comparably worse in Lebanon and the Gulf states and better in North Africa and Jordan. compare Badil survey pp. 17, details: <http://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/lebanon>, Oct 9<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>89</sup> Einat Wilf, *Winning the War of Words, Essays on Zionism and Israel*, pp. 27, found at <http://www.wilf.org/English/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/WinningWarWords.pdf>, Oct 13<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>90</sup> Winfried Halder, *Refugees and Expellees in North-Rhine-Westphalia (1960s until today)*, in *Teaching Materials Flight and Expulsion* pp. 54.

<sup>91</sup> Maron p. 35.

<sup>92</sup> Maron p. 35, Halder p. 42.

<sup>93</sup> Brigitte Beier, *Die Chronik der Deutschen*, Chronik Verlag im Wissen Media Verlag GmbH, Gütersloh/München 2007 p. 386, found at <https://books.google.co.il/books?id=Za5BeIUnNwoC&pg=PA386&lpg=PA386&dq=vertriebenenparteien+bundestag&source=bl&ots=3KHj7xQwv&sig=XoFLByDJ9LG4XbagE7E20cwDKDs&hl=iw&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewj3h4iBrLTPAhVCSBQKHfICAYsQ6AEIITAA#v=onepage&q=vertriebene&f=false>, Sept 29<sup>th</sup> 2016.

pre-election lip service.<sup>94</sup> There still were political groups that demanded both thorough integration and equality in German society, as well as the right of return, as part of a unified Europe.<sup>95</sup> However, their supporters faded and the topic disappeared from public discourse as integration succeeded and exercising the right return became less and less feasible, as well as less attractive.<sup>96</sup>

The rapid betterment of the economic situation in Germany certainly had an important role to play in convincing the expellees accept their new home. It must also be recognized that the process of accepting the expellees in Germany was certainly facilitated by the fact that they were ethnical Germans. However, cultural differences did exist, since some communities had been disconnected from Germany for some time, in some cases for several hundred years.

Cultural differences were even greater in Israel between European and Oriental Jews. However, a common faith and fate created a sense of belonging that was strong enough to form a society, despite initial discrepancies and discriminations.<sup>97</sup>

The Palestinian refugees find themselves among Arab communities where cultures would be expected to be sufficiently similar to make integration possible. This was also UNRWA's original mandate:

The UN General Assembly Resolution 393 (V) (at paragraph 4 and 5) "considers that, without prejudice to the provisions of paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948,<sup>98</sup> the reintegration into the economic life of the Near East, either by repatriation or resettlement, is essential in preparation for the time when international assistance is no longer available, and for the realization of conditions of peace and stability in the area; and instructs the Agency to establish a reintegration fund which shall be utilized for project requested by any government in the Near East and approved by the Agency for the permanent re-establishment of the refugees and their removal from relief".

By not abandoning Resolution 194, this mandate is somewhat comparable to the ambiguity of German politics until 1990: keeping the claim for return alive, at least from a legal perspective, while focusing on the integration and re-establishment of refugees in their area of relocation. Such integration could eventually, by necessity, lead to a decrease in actual interest to return. But at least in German-Eastern Europe

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<sup>94</sup> Maron p. 37.

<sup>95</sup> Maron pp. 36.

<sup>96</sup> Halder p. 50.

<sup>97</sup> Smootha p. 9.

<sup>98</sup> Which reads: "resolves that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible".

case, surrendering the claim to return has not harmed the involved states in the long term, and it has facilitated positive cooperation from which both sides benefit.

Nevertheless, UNRWA's mandate has changed and no longer strives for integration. The Agency states: "UNRWA's contemporary mandate is to provide relief, human development and protection services to Palestine refugees and persons displaced by the 1967 hostilities in its fields of operation".<sup>99</sup> The attitude towards the Palestinian refugees is thus no longer pro-active aimed at helping refugees establish themselves independently in a new life, but simply preserving and possibly improving living conditions, and acting as a provider of public services.<sup>100</sup>

An end to the civil war in Syria, let alone the establishment of a stable and democratic state, is not expected to take place in the near future. This means that repatriation not a readily available option for Syrian refugees, and it will not be for some time. Therefore, resettlement is necessary and taking place: approximately 1.1 million Syrians have requested asylum in Europe,<sup>101</sup> 48,000 are being resettled to Canada and 53,000 are being considered for resettlement in the USA.<sup>102</sup> The bulk of refugees, however, will probably remain in the Middle East, where their refuge carries the risk of creating a second refugee population, identical to that of the Palestinians, who are unable to return, and unable to move forward.

There might be hope in the fact that there is less of a political interest to keep the Syrians as a distinct homeless group, contrary to the Palestinians who can be used as a tool to apply political pressure against Israel. The phenomenon of an ever-growing Palestinian refugee population is both a practical and a psychological hindrance to a stable peace between Israel and Arab nations. From a pragmatic perspective, Israel will never agree to the return of five million refugees after a peace agreement, and psychologically the Palestinians will find it hard to settle for a peace that does not include a right of return after this dream has been nurtured for decades.<sup>103</sup>

The only viable solution lies with host countries and the Arab world taking responsibility for both Syrian and Palestinian refugees. Across Europe, skepticism and resistance against accepting additional refugees from a foreign culture and linguistic group are growing. At some point, Europe's capacities to integrate more refugees will reach a point of destabilization, and that situation will surely be negatively exploited. To prevent this and make the process more effective, integration should be directed to

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<sup>99</sup> <http://www.unrwa.org/who-we-are/frequently-asked-questions#history> Sept 29<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>100</sup> Riccardo Bocco, UNRWA and the Palestinian Refugees: A history within a history, *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, Vol. 28, Nos 2 & 3 UNHCR 2010 p. 234, found at <http://www.unrwa.org/userfiles/201006109359.pdf>, accessed Oct 6<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>101</sup> <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/asylum.php> Oct 5<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>102</sup> <http://www.unhcr.org/protection/resettlement/573dc82d4/resettlement-other-admission-pathways-syrian-refugees-updated-31-august.html> Oct 5<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>103</sup> Wilf pp. 26.

countries with a culture similar to that of the refugees. Based on Germany's experience after WW II, their integration could provide fresh manpower and ideas to the host states, whereas letting them remain a homeless population in camps will further destabilize the region.

