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# Preface

Since the refugee crisis in 2015 and 2016, North Macedonia has faced outbursts of xenophobia, racism and hatred towards refugees and migrants. Faced with the new crises in Afghanistan, the country sheltered part of the Afghan refugees which triggered – once again – a new wave of xenophobic and racist comments on social media and in the public discourse towards these categories of people. Unfortunately, young people are also affected by this narrative, that is they also have these negative feelings towards refugees, asylum seekers, migrants, as well as all people who are, in any aspect, different from them.

Unfortunately, formal education does not adequately educate young people to develop solidarity with refugees and stateless people, as well as of the importance of respecting the conventions and other legal instruments that the state is legally obliged to respect. Additionally, there is a noticeable lack of activities within informal education programs in regards to xenophobia, racism and hatred towards these groups of people, which results in an even greater knowledge gap among young people.

In order to provide education and create a positive narrative for refugees, asylum seekers and stateless people, the Youth Educational Forum created this Handbook with lectures on these topics. Eight lecturers from the three YEF programs, among which were law graduates, participated in the writing of the lessons, the preparation of the material and the exercises included in each of the lectures.

The project “Youth engagement and education for improving the narrative about refugees, asylum seekers and stateless people” within which this content was developed, is supported by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in North Macedonia, with finances from the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund, and is implemented by the Youth Educational Forum (YEF). The main goal of the project is to improve the narrative among young people and to develop general solidarity through the use of accurate data and information, regarding their perception of refugees, asylum seekers and stateless people.

STREET  
LAW

## Street Law

The Street Law program is aimed at educating young people about human, civil and political liberties and rights, democracy and the concept of the rule of law, the European Union and the process of European integration of the Republic of Macedonia.

The program is built upon the basic principles of informal education and interactive work methods and interactive lectures which differ from the traditional way of teaching in classrooms. The basic idea of Street Law is that democratic values are not inherited, but are taught daily and only by nurturing these values and their daily practice can we expect the existence of young people who are aware of their guaranteed liberties and rights and are active in the process of developing a democratic society, the realization of the principle of the rule of law and the strengthening of the just country.

The clubs and lectures are led by thirty young lecturers, who have previously successfully completed training for Lecturers in Street Law and have at least one year of experience as teaching assistants. The members of the body of lecturers are young people, mostly law students at the Law Faculties in the country, as well as law graduates, postgraduates in various fields of law and Masters of Law.

Within the program Street Law, a large number of events are organized every school year. Some of the more significant events include check-your-knowledge quizzes, a great number of public simulations of trials and criminal and civil court procedures, as well as simulations of the work of the European Union and United Nation bodies, and the decision-making process.

# Refugees

**Author:** Nikola Donev

**Duration:** 90 min

**Lecture Objective:** Introductory knowledge in the field of refugee law, learning about who is considered a refugee and the reasons why there are refugees. Destroying xenophobic rhetoric through youth education.

**Methodology:** Social Barometer – 20 min

**Purpose of the activity:** To test the opinions and prejudices of the participants regarding refugees, their awareness of the topic and the presence of incorrect information or ignorance.



For the first activity you will let the participants know that they have to choose one of two sides: FOR/I AGREE or AGAINST/I DO NOT AGREE. The lecturer reads the statements. The participants then chose one of the two possible sides. After every statement the lecturer calls the participants of the FOR and AGAINST groups to state their reasons for why they chose that side. An intervention by the lecturer in regards of opinions put forward by the participants is not required. After this activity the participants go back to their places.

STATEMENTS: (Depending on the time, not all statements need to be read or if there is a discussion regarding one statement)

1. Foreigners should be welcomed in our country.
2. The country should close its borders to migrants and refugees from Syria/Afghanistan/the Middle East.
3. Only refugees and migrants of the same religion as the majority in the country should be granted permission to enter.
4. Refugees increase the criminal rate in the country. Refugees/Migrants cause problems in the country.
5. Refugees/Migrants should have less rights than the citizens of the country in which they reside.
6. Refugees/Migrants should be sent back to the country of their origin.
7. Refugees/Migrants lie about their difficult situation because they have iPhones.
8. North Macedonia cannot receive refugees/migrants because it is not a financially developed country, therefore it is justified that it expels refugees/migrants.
9. The largest number of the refugees/migrants reside in highly-developed countries.

## THEORETICAL PART

### WHO/WHERE/WHY/WHICH RIGHTS?

**Duration:** 40 min

**Methodology:** Presentation and discussion

**Activity:** Distinguishing terms (15 minutes)

In this part of the presentation the lecturer should make a distinction between the terms: **Refugee, Migrant, Asylum seeker and Internally Displaced Person.**

**The criteria** by which these terms should be distinguished are: **Where are they located? Why? What would happen if they went back? Which rights do they possess?**

Term/Criteria	Refugee	Migrant	Asylum seeker	Internally Displaced Person
<b>Where are they located?</b>	Outside their own country	Outside their own country	Outside their own country	Inside their own country
<b>Why?</b>	Running away from danger of persecution (fear of persecution)	Because of other reasons which are not connected with the fear of persecution (education, work, etc.)	The reasons are not clear up until the end of the procedure	Running away from danger of persecution (fear of persecution) within the territory of their home country
<b>What would happen if they went back?</b>	They would be in danger	They can go back (there is no immediate danger)	It is dependent on the outcome of the procedure	They would be in danger
<b>What rights do they have?</b>	They cannot be returned to the country from which they are fleeing	It is dependent on the laws of the country	It is dependent on the outcome of the procedure	Under the rule of their country

**Table 1:** A summary of distinction of the terms

## INTRODUCTION TO THE DEFINITION OF A REFUGEE

**Duration:** 25 min

The definition of a refugee is defined in 2 international documents/acts – **The Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees from 1951 and the Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees from 1967:**

### **Article 1A(2): DEFINITION**

„...owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a citizenship and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.“

### **ELEMENTS OF DEFINITION:**

#### **CONDITION OF ESTRANGEMENT/ OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN**

„...is outside the country of his nationality... or who, not having a citizenship and being outside the country of their former habitual residence...“

#### **WELLFOUNDED FEAR**

„...well-founded fear... as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.“

#### **SERIOUS INJURY (PERSECUTION)**

„...persecuted...is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country...“

#### **CONNECTION TO CIVIL OR POLITICAL STATUS**

„...for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion...“

## WHAT RIGHTS DOES THE REFUGEE HAVE? (RIGHTS?)

Refugee Rights/UNHCR (2:40)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qpOEaBwFujo>

## DISCUSSION/VIDEOS

**Duration:** 30 min

**Activity:** REFUGEES ARE PEOPLE! REFUGEE RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS!

Repeating the definition of refugees

What does it mean to be a refugee? - Benedetta Berti and Evelien Borgman (5:43)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=25bwiSikRsl>

Stories of refugees

I AM A REFUGEE: Global refugees share their stories

<https://youtu.be/8bEK6gytwec> (6:30)

**If there is any extra time!**

Humanitarians on refugees and their stories – Lence Zdravkin

Lence Zdravkin: The railway is a map for every refugee

<https://youtu.be/KFMc45CUixc>

Refugees are guests in her home for eight years – Lence Zdravkin carries with her thousands of refugee stories

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cprvqcdg5Go>

## CONCLUSION (ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY DEPENDING ON TIME)

**Duration:** 20 min

**Methodology:** Social Barometer

For this activity you will let the participants know that they have to choose one of two sides: FOR/I AGREE or AGAINST/I DO NOT AGREE. The lecturer reads the statements. The participants then chose one of the two possible sides. After every statement the lecturer calls the participants of the FOR and AGAINST groups to state their reasons for why they chose that side. An intervention by the lecturer in regards of opinions put forward by the participants is not required. After this activity the participants go back to their places.

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5. Refugees/Migrants should have less rights than the citizens of the country in which they reside.
6. Refugees/Migrants should be sent back to the country of their origin.
7. Refugees/Migrants lie about their difficult situation because they have iPhones.
8. North Macedonia cannot receive refugees/migrants because it is not a financially developed country, therefore it is justified that it expels refugees/migrants.
9. The largest number of the refugees/migrants reside in highly-developed countries.

# Asylum seekers

**Author:** Lejla Tutikj

## Brainstorming exercise on the topic of asylum seeking

**Duration:** 5-10 minutes

Perform this exercise before beginning the lecture. This way the participants can take part in collective brainstorming and they will have the opportunity to showcase their prior knowledge. Additionally, ask the participants to write down any questions they have regarding this topic, or to state what specifically interests them and what they want to learn from this lecture. That way you will have the opportunity to make a comparison at the end of the lecture and refer to any questions you might have missed.

## Discussion

Do this exercise in case you find, based on the previously conducted exercise, that the participants have a certain level of foreknowledge regarding the specific topic.

Discussion questions:

1. Are you familiar with the term asylum, what it means and to which persons it is granted to?
2. Do you think that asylum should exist and why do you think so?

## Asylum

The term "asylum" comes from the Latin word *asylum*, which literally means refuge or shelter. Interpreted in a broader context, asylum covers all the protection one country provides to refugees on its own territory, as a separate category of persons. Namely, asylum is granted to a person who is not able to seek protection in the country of which they are citizen or in which they reside (if they are a person without citizenship), and because of fear of persecution based on race, faith, nationality, belonging to a certain social group or political movement.

## Asylum seekers/asylees

An asylum seeker is a person who is seeking international protection. Seeking asylum in another country means that a person asks of the country to provide them with international protection from dangers such as war, violence and persecution. In countries with individualized procedures, an asylum seeker is a third-country citizen or a person without citizenship who has submitted an asylum application, and in relation to which a final decision has not yet been made by the competent authority. Not every asylum seeker will eventually be recognized as a refugee, but every recognized refugee was originally an asylum seeker. In which case, an asylum seeker is a refugee who has had their request for asylum granted by a certain country.

\*Link to the video regarding distinction of terms: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E1E\\_tia9n8Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E1E_tia9n8Q). Together with the participants take a look at the video made by UNHCR.

## Process for granting the right to asylum in the Republic of North Macedonia

Seeking asylum in a foreign country is a human right. As a separate legal category, although it is envisaged and guaranteed in accordance with international law, it can still be concluded that it is an institution of national character, especially since the conditions and the process for obtaining the right to asylum are left to be regulated by each state individually in accordance with its own legislation. In support of this, is the fact that despite efforts to introduce special regulation in an international legal instrument that will guarantee the right to granting asylum, the states continue to, i.e. still do not have an international obligation to recognize the right to asylum of one person. On the contrary, asylum is the exclusive right of the state that approves it, and is within its sovereign authority and in accordance with its economic and political situation.

Which people are granted asylum?

Our state, after previous fulfilment of the pre-arranged conditions and conducting of an appropriate procedure, recognizes the right to asylum of two categories of people, i.e. a person with recognized refugee status and persons under subsidiary protection.

1. A **recognized refugee** is a foreigner who, upon examination of their application, is found to meet the conditions laid down in the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees. Namely, this is a person who owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of which they are a citizen and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country. Also, if it is a person without citizenship, that person is outside the country in which they had their usual place of residence, and cannot or because of such fear does not want to, return to it.

2. A **person under subsidiary protection** is a foreigner who does not qualify as a recognized refugee, but who will be granted the right to asylum because there are serious reasons to believe that if they return to the country of which they are a citizen, or if it is a person without citizenship, they return to the country of their previous permanent residence, will face a real risk of suffering serious injuries. In that regard, serious injuries are considered: death penalty or execution, torture, inhuman, degrading treatment or punishment and the like.

Which institution is competent?

The competent institution before which the procedure for recognition of the right to asylum is conducted and which decides on the submitted requests, is the Ministry of Interior. Specifically, within this ministry, i.e. in the Sector for Foreigners and Immigration Issues, there is a special Department for Asylum and Immigration.

Course of the procedure

1. Expressing the intention to submit a request for granting the right to asylum is done at a border crossing or inside our country, at the nearest police station or within the Reception Centre for Foreigners. The statement is made in front of a police officer.

2. The police officer before whom the intention is expressed, has the obligation to register the person with their personal data, photograph them, take a fingerprint and issue them a copy of the certificate of expressed intention to submit a request for granting the right to asylum. Thereby, the person is directed to the Asylum Sector at the Ministry of Interior to submit a request within 72 hours.

3. The request is submitted in two ways, i.e. in writing or orally on record. The procedure is conducted in Macedonian, or if that is not possible, in the language of the country of origin or in a language understood by the applicant. Upon submission of the application, the applicant is photographed and fingerprints are taken, then they are issued a certificate confirming their status as an asylum seeker, as well as being allowed to stay in our country for the duration of the procedure.

The final decision to be made by the Asylum Department depends on a prior proper



analysis of all the facts and circumstances of each individual application and for each individual case separately. In that regard, the asylum seeker is obliged to submit all documents as soon as possible and to present all relevant information and data that will justify the submitted request.

Apart from inspecting the documentation, the officials from the Asylum Department make the decision on the basis of a conducted hearing of the applicant. During the hearing, the public is excluded, with the exception of a representative of the High Commissioner for Refugees, an interpreter/translator and a person providing legal aid. The person providing legal aid is present, because during the entire procedure, the applicant is entitled to free legal aid in accordance with law.

This hearing is conducted in order to give the applicant the opportunity to present all relevant facts and evidence of the existence of fear of persecution or in other words to meet the conditions under the Convention and the Protocol recognizing refugee status. A record is kept for the hearing, which is later signed by all participants in the procedure.

4. Within 6 months, the Asylum Department should make a final decision. Thereby, three types of decisions can be made:

- A decision rejecting the request for granting of the right to asylum.

This decision must contain all the reasons why the request is denied, and they should be properly explained. At the same time, it is necessary to state legal advice (initiating a procedure before the Administrative Court), as well as a deadline within which the person is obliged to leave our country, this is of course after the decision is effective, which means after the decision is adopted by the Administrative Court.

- A decision for granting refugee status
- A decision for granting the status of a person under subsidiary protection

#### Rights and obligations of asylum seekers

After submitting an application for granting the right to asylum, applicants acquire certain rights that they enjoy during the procedure. First of all, asylum seekers acquire the right to reside in our country, as well as the right to accommodation within the Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers or elsewhere, which is determined by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, if the applicant expresses the need for such a thing.

These persons acquire the right of access to basic health services and social protection rights in accordance with national regulations.

Furthermore, throughout the entire duration of the procedure, they have the right to a translator and interpreter, as well as the right to free legal aid. They also have the opportunity to work within the Reception Centre or outside of it, in a place designated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Politics.

On the other hand, these persons during the procedure, up until a final decision is made, have certain obligations that they are obliged to respect. Firstly, they are obliged to stay in the Reception Centre or in another place for accommodation determined by the Ministry of Labour and Social Politics. Furthermore, if they are accommodated in another place, outside the Reception Centre, they have the obligation to inform the competent body (Ministry of Labour and Social Policy) about any possible departure and leave that place only when they have received permission to do so. They are also obliged to respect the house rules of the Reception Centre or any other place where they are accommodated, as well as to not show violent behaviour.

Additionally, during the procedure, up until the final decision, it is necessary for these persons to cooperate with the competent ministry, to submit all the necessary documents and to present all relevant data for the decision-making. Last but not least, it is necessary to undergo health examinations, treatment and missed vaccinations at the request of the competent authorities in case of danger to human health.

Rights and obligations of a person with granted refugee status and persons under subsidiary protection

After the completion of the procedure, and the making of a final decision by the competent authority, persons with granted refugee status and persons under subsidiary protection acquire certain rights and obligations.

In this regard, persons with granted refugee status enjoy the same rights and obligations as the citizens of our country, with the exception that these persons do not have the right to vote, as well as not being able to start a business, establish an employment relation and set up associations or political parties, in cases when the law stipulates as a condition that the person has citizenship of our country.

As far as the persons under subsidiary protection are concerned, in terms of their rights and duties, they are equal to the foreigners who are allowed temporary residence on the territory of the Republic of North Macedonia.

**Summary of the lecture through several specific steps, using the UNHCR pedagogical approach. It is implemented in three steps, i.e. by asking questions and obtaining concrete answers.**

**1. Where?**

We ask where these people have moved, i.e. whether they are in their own country or abroad.

**2. Why?**

We ask why they moved, i.e. whether they moved because they were in danger and had no choice but to move or for some other reason.

**3. Rights?**

We ask what rights these people have, as well as what local and international documents provide in regards to their rights. Additionally, can these persons be sent back to the country from whence they came, do they have the right to work, to be educated, i.e. what rights do these persons have.

**Exercise in the format of a quiz intended for the end of the lecture**

Prepare a set of questions with offered answers in the form of a quiz. You can use the examples listed in the following link, adapted to the specific topic of the lecture, of course:

[https://www.sfyouth.eu/toolkit/explore\\_global\\_issues/Refugees/RefugeesQuiz.pdf](https://www.sfyouth.eu/toolkit/explore_global_issues/Refugees/RefugeesQuiz.pdf).

Additionally, you can conduct an online quiz prepared by the UNHCR with the participants, which is available on the following link: [https://www.unhcr.org/neu/wp\\_quiz/unhcr-global-trends-2019-refugees-quiz](https://www.unhcr.org/neu/wp_quiz/unhcr-global-trends-2019-refugees-quiz)



# Stateless people

**Author:** Ivana Petkovska

## Discussion questions

**Duration:** 15 min

(Through the questions listed, open a discussion among the group participants to see if they have any prior knowledge of the topic)

1. What do you think the term citizenship means?
2. Do you all have citizenship and to which country?
3. Do any of you maybe have more than one citizenship?
4. Do any of you have no citizenship at all?

## The term citizenship

Each state has three basic characteristics, and those are population, public governance and territory. Citizenship is a connection between the individual and the state from which certain rights and obligations arise, so through this connection the relation between the persons and a specific country is seen. Each country independently regulates the way in which citizenship can be acquired, and there are criteria which are accepted by almost all countries, and those are:

1. Acquisition of citizenship by way of heritage (in cases where children receive the citizenship of their parents)
2. Acquisition of citizenship by way of birth on the territory of a country
3. Acquisition of citizenship by way of naturalization (persons who live for a long period of time in the territory of a country can acquire citizenship if they have not acquired it by way of the previous two criteria)

Unfortunately, there are occurrences in the world where we can meet people who have no citizenship, i.e. those people are called stateless. Stateless people are persons whom no country recognizes as its own. Stateless people have difficulties accessing human rights and liberties which are guaranteed within one country. So for example, they may have difficulties accessing the right to education, the right to health care or employment, and so on. Also very often stateless people are under threat to being taken into custody by the police because they do not have personal identification documents (ID card, passport, driver's license, etc.)

Watch the videos with the participants:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DdfboA\\_AH0I&t=75s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DdfboA_AH0I&t=75s)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8TRgTS1QjBA&t=71s>

Marko and Ivan are children who live together on the same street and have been friends since an early age. Unfortunately, Ivan does not have citizenship to any country. While enrolling in high school, Marko enrolled in high school, while Ivan could not complete his secondary education because he did not have personal identification documents (birth certificate, citizenship, etc.)

#### Why does this phenomenon of stateless people occur?

There are several reasons behind a person not obtaining citizenship of any country. Every country has its own laws governing the manner in which a person can acquire citizenship. However, every law has its gaps and shortcomings, so a situation can arise where one person cannot acquire citizenship.

Another factor that could have an effect is when people move from the countries where they were born, and so a child born in a foreign country may risk losing their citizenship if that country does not allow them to acquire citizenship on the basis of birth or if their country of origin (where the parents come from) does not allow the parent to transfer the citizenship to their child. Another reason that appears, and which was more common in the past than today, is the change of the borders of one country or the emergence of new country. For example, in countries where nationality is acquired only by origin of a citizen, statelessness will be passed on to the next generation.

Finally, the last reason for a person to be without citizenship is the withdrawal of citizenship. In some countries there are rules that if you live in another country for a longer period of time, then your citizenship can be revoked. Additionally, the state may have a discriminatory policy at a certain time, so that a specific ethnic community may be deprived of its citizenship.

Elvis and his mother live in Macedonia. For years Elvis could not go to school because he did not have citizenship and did not have personal documents to enrol in school. So he studied alone at home and helped his mother. Elvis eventually received the documents. Now he continues his education at school.

Watch the videos with the participants:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qAGTBY42s5Q&t=91s>

#### Stateless people in the Republic of North Macedonia

Statelessness is a problem that our country also faces. The most common reason for the occurrence of statelessness among children in Macedonia is not registering births and names. This problem is most often faced by children belonging to the Roma community, especially if they were born at home or if their parents do not have valid identity documents, such as a birth/marriage certificate and a valid ID card. If the parents do not register the birth of their child within the legally established period of 30 days, it is necessary for them to initiate a procedure for additional registration of birth or name, and to submit additional documents as evidence.

A separate problem occurs if the mother of the child is not entered into the Registry of births, i.e. her name and birth is not registered and there is no birth certificate. In such cases, the parents of the children face serious administrative obstacles and most often these children do not have the opportunity to be entered into the Registry of births.

A particular problem in the procedure for additional registration is the fact that the authorities enforcing the registration often insist that the parents provide DNA analysis, as the strongest evidence of the blood connection and family relation of the child. However, preparing this analysis is expensive, and therefore inaccessible, for socially vulnerable parents. All of this additionally complicates the procedure for entry into the Registry of births and leads to the occurrence of statelessness only due to not registering the birth of the child and not having a birth certificate.

Our country strives to provide protection to stateless people, so there are several protection measures for children who do not have citizenship of any country. So, children who were born on the territory of the Republic of North Macedonia, and whose parents do not have citizenship of our or another country, will automatically acquire citizenship of the Republic of North Macedonia in order to reduce the percentage of stateless people.

#### How is citizenship acquired in our country?

In our country, according to the Constitution of the Republic of North Macedonia and the Law on Citizenship, there are 4 ways in which citizenship can be acquired, namely:

1. Heritage
2. Birth on the territory of the Republic of North Macedonia
3. Naturalization
4. International agreements

Citizenship of the Republic of North Macedonia is acquired by a child who was found or born on the territory of the Republic of North Macedonia whose parents are unknown, or have unknown citizenship or are without citizenship.

If a person without citizenship submits an application for acquiring citizenship of the Republic of North Macedonia by naturalization, it can be acquired if they have permanently lived on the territory of the Republic of North Macedonia for at least six years and meet the other conditions prescribed by the law.

Persons acquiring citizenship by naturalization are required to take the following oath:

„I swear on my honour that I will be loyal to the country Republic of North Macedonia and I will respect the Constitution and the laws and I will fulfil the duties of a citizen of the Republic of North Macedonia.“

The application for acquiring citizenship is submitted to the Ministry of Interior (MOI), which further needs to decide whether the person will acquire citizenship or not.



# YOUTH ACTIVISM



## Youth activism

The Youth Activism Program began its work in 2011 when there was a need to start a program that would focus on informal education related to youth activism, which would provide space for creative and free expression and engagement of young people to undertake activities themselves that will change the current state in which they operate.

The program aims to reduce the gap in communication between young people and institutions and to improve youth organization through the integration of young people regardless of demographic and social status as well as cultural, ethnic and sexual orientation. The priority of its action is to recognize, respect and promote tolerance among young people to increase their participation and influence in the decision-making process at local and national level.

Program members have the opportunity to join the Activism clubs in Skopje, Tetovo, Bitola and Veles and to conduct and participate in activities such as organizing events, actions, workshops, exhibitions and performances. The program has about 100 members who actively use various work skills, multimedia and art techniques as a tool for youth activism.

# In the shoes of refugees

**Author:** Pande Eftimov

Session development <b>"IN THE SHOES OF REFUGEES"</b>	
<b>GOALS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To familiarize participants with the foreseen terms;</li><li>• For participants to identify with these categories of people through play;</li><li>• Visual representation of the problems faced by these categories of people;</li></ul>
<b>TERMS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Refugees;</li><li>• Asylum seekers;</li><li>• Migrants;</li><li>• Stateless people</li></ul>
<b>RESULTS:</b>	Participants are familiar with the theoretical concepts provided for the session
<b>RESOURCES:</b>	<a href="https://www.unhcr.org/618bc1d64">https://www.unhcr.org/618bc1d64</a> <a href="#">Street Law. Students book for civil and political liberties and rights</a>

**Link to the game -**

<https://wettransfer.com/downloads/3c9486600426f94de05a47050a46569f20211128160903/5042a5>

## KEY ACTIVITIES:

### **ACTIVITY 1**

The meeting begins with a short game to build team spirit, concentration in realization or a simple energizer for introduction. (5-10 minutes)

### **ACTIVITY 2**

The next activity is the joint adoption of the rules of the game that is provided for this session. First you present the game and visually point out all the fields. The preparation by making the rules is done before the start of the game, before the goals of the game and the final message are defined.

The idea of this activity is for the participants to agree on concrete, specific rules. And then vote for them together. This way, they will agree on their own, consistently follow the rules and follow them unobtrusively. (Depending on the dynamics, age, and the mental and cognitive abilities of the participants in this session – the rules to follow could simply be explained.) (15-20 minutes)

### **ACTIVITY 3**

Following the rules of the game, you continue with the theoretical part (see attachment) in which you can use a brainstorming session to come up with appropriate definitions of the terms refugee, asylum seekers, migrants, stateless people. (10-15 minutes)

### **ACTIVITY 4**

Once they understand the general concept, move on to the game.

It is very important in this part that the group facilitator helps only when it is really necessary. The participants have to move through the fields independently and all of them have to reach the end independently.

The idea is to identify with these categories of people through practical play. (25-30 minutes)

### **ACTIVITY 5**

At the end of the exercise you can discuss the results obtained by the participants in order for them to see that there are always people in their environment who do not have the same views and understandings as them.

### **Discussion questions:**

- How did you feel while playing the game?
- How did the communication between you go?
- Was moving through the field difficult?
- Did you move because you were in danger or because you had no other choice?
- Do you know the rights of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants?
- What is the real situation with these groups of people?

# **Foster family – shelter for the child-refugee**

**Author:** Elena Nikoloska

**Goals:** Participants thoroughly consider a lesser-known topic in our society. Expanding and deepening the knowledge about the refugees and the difficulties they face during their journey. The participants are introduced to the concept "foster family". Participants are introduced to different forms of fostering.

**Terms:**

Refugee

Foster family

**Key points:**

- Introducing the terms
- Introduction to the title "Foster family – shelter for the child-refugee"
- Children's rights
- The impact of the foster family on the problem of neglect of child-refugees
- Barriers to performing this form of care

## Lecture description:

The meeting starts with an energizer, for example:

### Delhi Business

This game can be called after any type of local transport. Choose the number of "drivers". Assign a certain number of passengers that each driver should take. (Make sure the participants are counted correctly so that no one is left without a ride!) Ask the drivers to go around the room making noises and to look for a passenger. Passengers are seated behind or next to their driver to make it look like they are in a vehicle. Now all the "vehicles" are driving around as if in traffic, beeping their horns and shouting at other drivers and vehicles.

The session begins with a quick brainstorming session. It is very important to start from the previous knowledge of the participants and for them to have the opportunity to identify with real situations related to the refugee crisis and child-refugees. The facilitator aims to guide discussion through the possible prior knowledge of the participants, thus approaching the term "refugee" which is then defined.

The two terms that need to be defined are "refugee" and "foster family". Additionally, attention will be focused on the importance and need for the concept of "a foster family" in the society in which we live. Additionally, a short explanation of how this form is realized will be given in the short presentation.

For this lecture it is important to remember that the participants are high school students who probably do not have experience with this topic and equal interest should not be expected from all of them.

After getting acquainted with the two key terms and the concept of foster family, the facilitator should mention that the migrant status of the child should never be an obstacle to accessing basic health services and enjoying the rights of the child, such as the right to education, the right to health care, the right to protection from exploitation, **the right to a family**, etc.

Then the theoretical part is presented up until **the first point**.

## ACTIVITY 1: Privilege walk game

The facilitator needs to prepare as many cards as the number of participants. Then write down the status of the person on each of cards. For example: child-refugee, child in their homeland, child cared for in a social institution, child cared for in a foster family, (can be added). Roles can be repeated.

Participants draw a role card and do not show them to each other, the facilitator reads a few statements, and participants should take a step forward if they feel that their role enjoys that right or agrees with the statement. The participants line up in a straight line, and the facilitator reads the following statements:

- I have a right to uninterrupted education
- I have a right to a family

- If I have a problem of local importance, I can contact the mayor of my municipality
- I am not discriminated against
- I feel comfortable speaking in public and stating my opinions
- I can exercise my rights of health insurance and social security
- One or both parents graduated from university
- If you have immediate family members who are doctors, lawyers or work in any profession that requires a degree
- If you almost always find that members of your race, sexual orientation, religion and class are widely represented on television, in newspapers and media in a POSITIVE way
- If you feel confident that you will not be followed, bullied or watched under strict supervision while shopping

Ask those left behind to describe how they feel, and then those who came forward to describe how they felt leaving others behind.

Then, as role cards are repeated, ask those on the same level to stand together and see if everyone has the same role.

### **Discussion questions:**

1. Who moved forward? Why are they in front? Should they be in front? How can they contribute to equalizing differences and achieving a just society?
2. Who stayed behind? Should they be behind? How do they feel? What can be done to move them forward?

Continuing with **the first point** of the theoretical part.

## **ACTIVITY 2**

Divide the participants in three groups. The first group should write about the benefits of the foster family form; the second group should write about the disadvantages of the foster family form. Let the third group be called SUPERVISION.

Both groups have a working time of 10 minutes, and then both groups present what they have written to the supervisors. Their task is to find a way to fill the gaps in this way and then present the same to the facilitator.

The frameworks for this activity are completely open and the participants can think in any way.

You continue with the second point of the theoretical part. You talk about the barriers which we face when performing the foster family form. During the lecture you make a brief comparison with what the second group did in the previous exercise, your goal is to see if they found the key points from the second point of the theoretical part of this lecture. When you come to the conclusion from the second point, make a brief comparison with what the first group did in the previous activity.

You can supplement the theoretical part with potential new things that were presented in the previous activity.

## **True story**

"I had the sudden urge to contact our social worker and tell them that we would want to be added to the list of foster care for child-refugees – the news came the next day saying that the refugee camp at Kale was closing and we got a call from the Ministry of Interior. We were asked if we felt capable of caring for a teenager from Eritrea. She was 17 and an orphan. Trembling, we said yes, knowing nothing more about her.

She arrived the next day, with only the clothes she was wearing and with very little possessions, extremely exhausted after her arduous journey.

It was obviously a challenge in so many ways, yet such a blessing. Communication was extremely hard at the beginning, especially since there were no translators speaking her language in our area. For meetings we often had to use a language phone line, which provided a translator through the phone, but other than that, we relied on Google Translate and online dictionaries. At first, cooking for her was difficult because her diet is completely different from ours, but we really enjoyed getting to know her culture and trying new food and spices, and this was a great way to connect with her.

We tried helping her build a relationship with others from her culture and we were hosts to six other girls for Eritrean Christmas on the 7th of January, the day they usually celebrate. Despite needing some time to get support, she now has access to local education and grows in confidence. She is so polite and hardworking and she has received a lot of positive feedback from her teachers. She is a Christian and we bought her a Bible in her native language and she enjoys going to church with us.

Our wonderful young lady was a blessing to us. Her life was so hard and we shared tears as she told her story to lawyers and social workers, but she remained positive and she is now trying to make the most of her opportunities. She was recently asked to go and talk to social services about her experiences in this country, and was nominated by her college for an award ceremony in our area.

I was very nervous about taking care of a refugee and had no idea what to expect, but she is very much part of our family and we are very happy to take care of her. Fortunately, she seems to be happy with us too, as she recently gave us ten out of ten for our care. Our hope is that we can be as much of a blessing in her life as she was to us."

Discuss the emotions evoked by this story in the participants. To check what they have memorized and learned, you need to do a short reflection exercise, quiz or develop a discussion. If you develop a discussion, there is a possibility that not all participants will be involved with their opinion, so try to do a reflection exercise which involves all participants.

## **Theoretical part:**

### **Refugee**

Refugees are people who have fled war, violence, conflict or persecution and crossed the international border to find security in another country. They often have to flee with little more than just clothes on their backs, leaving behind homes, property, work, and loved ones.

Refugees are defined and protected under international law. The 1951 Refugee Convention is a key legal document and defines a refugee as someone who cannot or does not want to return to their country of origin due to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for race, faith, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion.

The definition of a refugee is declarative, i.e. the person is a refugee as soon as they meet the criteria contained in the definition. This would necessarily take place before the refugee status is formally established. Until such a determination is made, it must be assumed that those who have crossed the international border to avoid the risk of serious harm in their country of origin are refugees and should be treated as such.

### **Foster family**

The concept of caring for minors in a private home of a state-certified caregiver, known as a "foster parent" or with a state-approved family member. The child's accommodation is usually arranged through the government or a social services agency. The institution, group home or foster parent receives reimbursement of expenses unless they are a family member. In some countries, relatives or "related" caregivers of state-sponsored children receive a financial compensation.

Every day, more than 40,000 families around the world are forced to flee their homes due to community violence, war, famine, natural disasters, and persecution.

Along the way, refugee families are sometimes separated due to death, illness or imprisonment. When family reunification is not possible, the best option is for a foster family to take care of you.

**Refugee foster families** are stepping up to provide a home for children who are often separated from their families for years.

All of these children on the road have suffered losses - some of them have experienced the tragic loss of family members and friends, and all have lost the stability and carefree life that all children deserve.

### **1. How does this concept affect the problem of neglect of refugee children?**

This is where the true meaning of the lecture begins. The facilitator should emphasize that this is an extremely important and sensitive topic. Also, the facilitator should try to convey the theoretical part in a conversational style and thus get closer to the participants. Did you know that there are about 19.5 million refugees who can no longer live in their homes?

Families and children have to leave their homes as a result of political conflicts, persecution and natural disasters. Through these horrific experiences, many are left homeless or without a family. Seeing their family members being killed, the destruction of their land and their lives, they often feel hopelessness and despair from the trauma and loss. They are forced to leave their home countries and go out into the wilderness of the world.

After the severe trauma from their homes, this is not the only horror these children and their families face. Child-refugees are left without their parents. Sometimes they are killed in war, sometimes whole families are separated because one of the members fails



to cross the border, while the others continue the journey in the hope that one day they will meet again.

It is therefore necessary to provide shelter to refugee children left alone, without care for any reason. One of the main forms of care is exactly such foster families. Previously, an authorized person checks the situation in the family that is a candidate to take care of a child-refugee. Once the authorized person determines whether all the conditions are met, the same family becomes a **certified foster family**.

The role of the foster family is to provide conditions for the refugee child to enjoy their rights and receive the necessary care that every child deserves. Parental care and family atmosphere have a positive impact on the mental state of children. And with that we see the positive impact of this form on society.

## **2. Barriers we face in trying to execute this form...**

This form provides a variety of different services for young people. Some young people need more help to heal from past trauma and are placed in a therapy care program. As young people mature and gain independence, they often graduate into foster care, providing themselves with a life of less supervision and gaining the ability to live on their own. Many young people in the program can adjust with a mentor, who will be a positive role model and help them adjust to the customs and culture of the country in which they are located. Many young people also have a teacher who helps them learn in the new education system and develop positive learning habits.

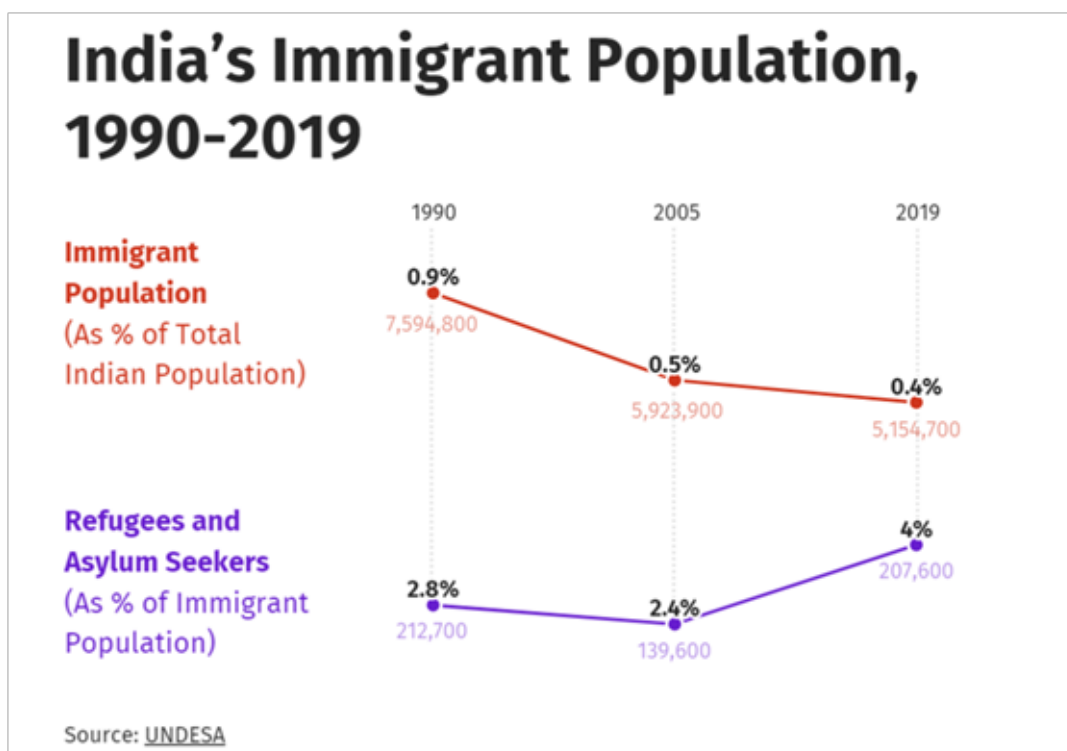
There are also language barriers that we face in performing the form of foster family, children placed in foster families are always accompanied by someone precisely because of language barriers, because it is impossible to hire an interpreter who will be available non-stop.

In Western European countries, this is an established practice because there have been families living for years who migrated from the countries where the unaccompanied children come from - Syria, Afghanistan and so on. When a child is cared for in a family in which there is no language barrier, no cultural or religious differences, then it is much easier for them to integrate into society.

# An example of migration movements in the world - Indian immigration to Canada vs. the USA

**Author:** Elena Ilievska

In recent years the number of Indian immigrants has risen rapidly, rising by almost 2% in just 5 years. It is no secret that throughout history the Indian population has undergone mass migrations, for many different reasons. But why is there no slowdown in migration? Is the USA still the best option for these migrants? Or is Canada taking away the title from the US as the “most favourable” country for Indian citizens?



Picture 1: Indian Migration Statistics 1990-2019

In order to answer the first question, i.e. “Why is the number of Indian immigrants growing?” we need to go back to the socio-political situation of India in recent years.

In 2018, while Kumar and his wife were having dinner in their home in the state Gujarat in northern India, they could not have imagined that just five minutes later they would find themselves under their own table, hiding from stones that would not only destroy their windows, but also their tranquillity. Immediately after the attack, Kumar heard the engine of a car, and when he saw the vehicle, he noticed a sticker from the then ruling party, BJP (a nationalist party, which is known for violent attacks on those who are not committed to the Hindu religion). Over the next few months the situation only worsened, Kumar was beaten, and when he tried to report the incident to the police, he was stopped by BJP members. Not long after he was informed that his life was in danger, he had no choice but to flee. A few days later, he and his wife waited for the first flight to Mexico to reach their final destination, the United States.

At the same time, in Mumbai, India, a mother and wife, Zohra faced a similar fate, but unlike Kumar, her journey took her to Canada. Although similar, her story had several differences. First, Zohra's husband and children were Canadian citizens.

On the one hand, the process for her visa was easier, but still it lasted 6 months, which means that Zohra was separated from her loved ones for half a year. Her children were still young, the oldest was only ten years old, feeling the absence of the mother which could not be fulfilled by her husband, who during that half year went through hell.

Between responsibility with the children, eight hours of work, and the constant battle with the Canadian government over Zohra's visa, he could barely stand on his own two feet, but the day he hugged his beloved again, he was sure his long-term sacrifice was worth it. Finally, on December 21 of that year, Zohra was reunited with her family.

Through Kumar's story we learn about the many more morbid aspects of immigrant life. There were many other Indians in the refugee camp, some traveling for years, others losing loved ones, and the stories of death, rape, and theft seemed to be the only thing they all had in common.

Fortunately, Kumar was still with his wife, and they were both healthy and alive, he used to think that what they were going through was terrible, but compared to the others there, he came to the painful conclusion that in fact, they were lucky.



Picture 2: Indian immigrants, waiting at Delhi Airport after being deported back to India

October 2019 is the year when Kumar and Zohra's stories split in reverse. Kumar is back in India, deported, along with his wife, waiting at Delhi Airport, hopeless. Their visa application was rejected, along with their asylum application, and when they later tried to cross the US border illegally, they were immediately deported. Zohra on the other hand got her visa, and at the moment you are reading this, she is also a legal citizen of Canada, with all rights and duties.

Let us recall our second question, "Is the US still the best option for migration?" From the stories of Zohra and Kumar we can conclude that it is not. It is true that in 2019 the number of Indian immigrants in the United States reached 2 million, but how exactly did those people live?

The most popular visa option in America is the H-1B visa, which due to the Trump Administration is also the most restrictive option. Let's take Kumar as an example, and imagine a reality where his visa application is not denied. The only way for this to happen is if Kumar were to apply for a job at a particular company that would send and arrange

all the paperwork needed for him to apply for this visa. In other words, not only would he work for this company, but the same company would be his sponsor. But because of the complex process of applying for such a visa, the number of companies that would undertake such a duty is very small.

But let's say Kumar has found a job with a company that is willing to take on all that responsibility. What if he decides to change his job position or his entire career path?

In that case, if he fails to find a new sponsor within just two months, his visa will be revoked, and when it comes to applying for citizenship, the waiting period can reach up to 30 years. US law has not always been so rigorous and restrictive, but after such a long tenure, president Trump has left serious problems behind.

We have reached our third and final question, "Is Canada taking away the title from the US as the 'most favourable' country for Indian citizens?" The short answer would be, yes, but how?

Canada has much fewer restrictions when applying for citizenship, the state provides a number of different residency programs, but we will stick to the most famous, "Express Entry immigration system". Unlike the United States, this program allows individuals with all skills to get a chance at permanent residence, without the need for a sponsor or a job. The system is fast, which means you would get a response in less than six months. If you remember Zohra, her story is not over.

After several years of living as a Canadian citizen, she was able to bring the rest of her family to Toronto, where each of them applied for permanent residency. As a family, all of them had the opportunity for a better life, where no one persecutes them because of their religious or political views. They managed to preserve and cherish their traditions and customs.

The current socio-political situation in India is really frightening, every day citizens are forced to leave their families and homes in search of a better tomorrow.

This lecture gave its focus to events in foreign countries, but the fact is that our country also needs to improve a great deal on this front so that we can call ourselves allies.



DEBATE

## Debate

The Youth Educational Forum has been implementing the Debate Program since the beginning of the organization, when in 1999 the Youth Educational Forum was established for the first time under the name of the Citizens' Association "Debaters". Today, the Debate Program has 19 years of successful implementation at the national level, through debate clubs in several cities in Macedonia.

YEF's Debate Program is conducted for the development of research capacity, critical thinking, argumentative speaking and effective communication among young high school students in Macedonia. By developing individual skills in young people, the Debate Program increases their participation in social events. In this way the educational process is improved and through the learning process, the basic values of a democratic society are supported.

The manner of working within the Debate Program is built on the principle of active involvement of high school students and university students in the learning process. The content of the program enables students to practically apply and supplement the knowledge gained in their formal educational process and to enrich their skills. Debate lectures are held once a week in debate clubs run by certified lecturers who have received training for debaters, lecturers and judges; they take place according to an established curriculum, which is periodically revised in accordance with the needs of the debaters and the international debate association.

# Mass media and their portrayal of the refugee crisis

## Part 1

**Author:** Kristina Peeva

### **Concept:**

1. Media and influences (20 minutes)
  - 5 minute break
2. Refugees in media – terminology and language (40 minutes)
  - 10 minute break

### **Lecture objectives:**

In the first part of the lecture participants should be familiarized with:

- Media and their power to shape public stances and opinions
- Use of language in the portrayal of refugees and different strategies
- Use of images and video in the portrayal of the refugee crisis

### **Media and influences**

Mass media, regardless of form, printed, broadcasted as audio or video or posted on the Internet - have the power to shape public opinions and beliefs. The purpose of media in democratic societies is to inform, raise awareness, prompt activities, and to educate. The last function as entertainment is the most dominant in mainstream media.

When speaking about the function of informing, a news piece in the media reality is almost never transmitted neutrally as it stands, it is practically impossible. It has to be shaped and filtered. When journalists shape information, they often have a tendency to comment on them or to take a stance. This kind of news processing can influence public stances and activities towards refugee crisis policies. The media can be sympathetic towards refugees and asylum seekers, but they can also put together a discriminatory narrative which causes animosity with the help of propaganda and misrepresentation. There are multiple reasons for media to create narratives for certain topics. Most often, they are economically dependent on financial or political institutions. And so, the media defend their opinions. There is also a tendency for some journalists to abuse their power of influence and to represent their own opinions as opposed to a neutral point of view. By careful manipulation of language and images, media can tell "the story they want to tell" to their benefit, instead of presenting objective information aimed at determining the truth about refugees' suffering.

This can negatively influence the identity of refugees and their integration and assimilation into the host country. Contrary to this, not all publicity is negative. As part of the function of raising public awareness and activities, media can choose to serve and present a positive narrative in order to put pressure on and catalyse action towards improvement of the political climate, as well as the conditions and help that is provided to refugees. In the course of this session we will analyse the use of language, image and personal stories when describing refugees, which will help to understand how media can influence public perception and refugee policy.



## Use of language in media

### Terminology

Language is the basic and extremely important tool of media. Through the use of language, a specific image of refugees can be subconsciously created which the public most often takes as factual. When it comes to refugees, the initial problem of abuse of language, starts in the terminology itself, which is used to segregate refugees from migrants and asylum seekers. The improper use and intermixing of these terms can cause confusion and unjust rejection of and animosity towards refugees.

Because of this, when using these terms, it is always of enormous importance to accurately and precisely define them upfront, in order to understand why these terms are key to "colouring" the reality with which refugees are faced.

"Refugees are people escaping armed conflicts or persecution... An asylum seeker is someone who claims to be a refugee, but whose claim is not validated... [Considering that] migrants [are people who] choose to relocate not due to a direct threat or persecution... but in order to better their lives."

A typical example of how interchanging these terms can shift the lives of refugees: refugees are protected under the Refugee Convention of 1951, in which it is stated that "the host country is obligated to provide care to refugees". However, if they are misclassified as migrant, that would mean they cease to have the right of protection under this Convention. By using this umbrella term - migrant, media can influence multiple subjects.

First, the country, so that it denies these refugees and returns them to their original conditions, which could lead to the rights of refugees slipping through their fingers. In a pejorative sense, some media play a different game. For example, the BBC has strictly kept to the use of the term migrant, whose use they defend by saying it is referring to all people in the process of relocating who have yet to complete the legal process of seeking asylum. In contrast to this, ever since 2015 Al Jazeera has decided to replace the term "Mediterranean migrant crisis" with "Mediterranean refugee crisis".

With this, they have completely changed the existing narrative of governments. It has put them in a position where they can no longer avoid the situation and abuse media's naivety about "the crisis". Al Jazeera's adaptation has helped raise awareness on an international scale and had elevated the importance of language in media and the consequences of improper use of terms.

### Metaphors

Aside from the interchanging of terms and misclassification of refugees, there are additional strategies for describing the crisis which are in use. A typical example are metaphors.

One study of British media showed that the use of metaphors which connect refugees with water, criminality and dishonesty, prevails. Metaphors about water - words like "a flood" or "waves" imply a large number of people. That is that refugees are trying to enter the country in huge numbers. By association, these metaphors can cause negative connotations - the danger that a flood or a wave poses, the damage that "an influx" of a large number of refugees can cause. By using metaphors, media actually creates subconscious connections in order to manipulate peoples' thinking. Guiding them to dangerous and negatives interpretations which can influence public stances and opinions. This attitude is not limited only to British media. Similar findings can be noted in any form of media relating to refugees and in many other places in the world.

By representing refugees as "an unwanted disaster and by removing any human aspect" from them, media instil a sense of fear into the population which makes them see refugees a threat, not only to themselves, but also to their country and its national interests.

Another term which is abused by media when reporting on refugees is the metaphor of "burden". This word creates a feeling of additional obligations. In the sense of animosity and close-mindedness towards refugees, because the host country has an obligation to provide financial recompense and work places.

This narrative makes it seem to the general public as if existing citizens' finances and jobs will be taken away, that is as if there is a possibility or threat that refugees will "steal" jobs from citizens. When such language is in use, combined with fake or provocative news and images, it has the potential to increase the proclivity towards hatred of refugees. Furthermore, it can convince people to support politicians who want to take action against refugees or subconsciously make politicians use similar dehumanizing words.

### **Use of language and images to make a statement**

Aside from mixing terminology and using metaphors, language is used to connect refugees to the phenomenon - terrorism. In an article, "The Daily Telegraph" states that "people who gave money to help millions of refugees of the civil war in Syria [were]... unintentionally supporting terrorism...". This has the potential to create an all-encompassing stereotype which presents people as terrorists.

It is even more dangerous because of the regional association of Syria, the misinformed can conclude that because "all Syrians are terrorists", it must be true that "all Muslims are terrorists"; a dangerous and subjective conclusion.

Additionally, citizen journalists on social media such as Twitter have contrasting images where they compare children and male refugees, and simultaneously suggest that the images of children are the true definition of what a refugee should look like, while the men are not true "refugees", but Muslim terrorists instead. As a result of this depiction by media, Syrian military older men, who have escaped conflict without their families were generalized as Muslim terrorists.

This not only causes segregation of refugees through untrue labelling, but it can cause racial hatred, in this case Islamophobia, and can cause disharmony in the country's population and between countries. This has the potential to create an "us vs them" mentality, based on power and domination of the other.

One Polish magazine gives a good example of convincing language and images; in one issue, its cover shows a white woman being attacked by three male pairs of dark skinned hands, with the title "Islam's rape of Europe".

By combining provocative terms with suggestive images, media can create disinformation which could have a catastrophic effect on refugee policy, potentially limiting the number of refugees who could be allowed to enter a country.

"The CNN effect" - when a political action is provoked by real time media coverage in order to create "a call to action" - it can easily rally the public in support of their politicians. In the case of the US president, he was able to implement travel bans on several countries to limit the flow of refugees, including "certain nations with a majority Muslim population" (e.g. Syria and Yemen) and with time reduce the limit of permitted refugees, from 45,000 in 2018 to 30,000 in 2019, with further goals to reach 18,000 in 2020. If it wasn't for the disinformation and mislabelling of the media, the public may not have felt threatened by the refugees and may have chosen to dismiss the need for such aggressive anti-refugee policies. .

# Mass media and their portrayal of the refugee crisis

## Part 2

**Author:** Kristina Peeva

### **Concept:**

1. Refugee in media – photo and video (20 minutes)  
- 5 minutes break
2. Handing out materials and analysis (10 minutes)
3. Debate (40 minutes)
4. Feedback from debate (20 minutes)

### **Lecture objectives**

In the second part of the lecture, participants are familiarized with the use of photographs and videos in media. The second part of the lecture is related more to generating an appropriate solution to the ways of representing the refugee crisis by media. In the first part we were familiarized with the positive and negative portrayal of refugees.

A main factor of the negative image of refugees created by journalists and the public is that refugees are "a burden" and a threat to the economy and identity of the host country. In order to challenge this opinion, in this part, participants will need to develop critical thinking and to think towards finding an appropriate solution to this problem. As opposed to the typical exercises and quizzes, the most appropriate way of evaluating knowledge and further development of ideas is through debate.

In order to evaluate previously acquired knowledge of the topic, an appropriate topic for the debate would be "Media should depict refugees as valuable contributors to society, and not as victims of their circumstances".

### **Use of photos and videos in media**

The image of refugees is depicted through photographs and films in media, and with a large history behind it. Using these channels to send a message about refugees has a direct influence and can generate positive and negative public reception and spreading of information.

Such broadcasted media have a tendency to focus on two perspectives when talking about portraying refugees in media. The first, that is the one which is based on data and facts, groups refugees as statistics and presents generalized facts typical of the use of the abovementioned metaphors. The other focuses on the personal story of refugees, their lives' journey and the challenges which they face, and such stories are reliant on an emotional and sympathetic reaction of the audience.

### **Photographs as a statistic**

"Socio-psychological studies [have shown] that... portraits up close are... images which will most probably cause sympathy in viewers [and] images of groups... [aim to] create an emotional distance between viewers and the subjects depicted".

By distancing consumers of media from the personal details of refugees, media can change the way they are perceived, shifting the focus from the humanitarian crisis to questions of national security and the burden on society.

This can provoke a feeling of fear and threat in the public which can influence political decision-making. Australia, for example, has many refugees who arrive by boat every year.

This illegal means of entering the country comes about due to being unable to legally gain entrance through the Program for controlled migration. In an Australian newspaper, an article shows photographs of a boat filled with male refugees with the title "there is no more space for boat people". This image plays into multiple stereotypes of the audience in order to misrepresent refugees as a direct threat to the economic stability of the country – they can steal Australian jobs and endanger the security of the borders – instead of focusing on the fact that "migrants often bring enormous benefits to their adopted countries".

Here, media is focused on the mass movement of "boat people" and the means through which they attempt to gain access to the country, to justify why "illegal" refugees are a threat.

Although these photographs are selective, political and limited by their individuality, they create support for the policies which defend borders and protect the sovereignty. Presenting refugees as faceless and criminalized, the public was led to believe that the threat is imminent and significant, which has prompted Australian political parties to begin a contest of promises "for the strengthening the Australian borders and stopping the flow of boats".

Connecting photographs and language gives media the capability to motivate their audience in a more powerful and emotional way, increasing the likelihood of creating a political movement for change.

## **Personal stories**

Despite photographs being used to sway the public and depict refugees as a threat to the country, they are also used to show the breadth of the humanitarian crisis.

By focusing on personal accounts and photographs – often depicting a vulnerable upset and suffering female refugee – media can prompt interest and create empathy or anger in their audience. This is called "the effect of the identifiable victim". Such was the case of the photograph of the drowned child Alan Kurdi, which is seen below. Before being published in September 2015, there were few photographs of dead bodies showing the struggle and the dangers with which refugees crossing borders are faced.

## **The death of Alan Kurdi; Flickr**

The photograph showed the humanitarian side of the refugee crisis and "became [a leitmotif] for the suffering of Syrian asylum seekers". Although the photograph caused "the CNN effect", it is important to understand what kind of action was taken and how effective it was. In Europe, especially in Germany, the limit of refugees has significantly increased to allow legal entrance of over 1 million refugees.

Contrary to this, although Britain and Australia vowed to increase the immigration scheme to 12,000 and 20,000 refugees respectively, until April 2016 Australia resettled only 187 refugees, while the UK only 1,602. After only a year, most of these schemes were neglected.

This may show that although the image of Kurdi was a sudden influence, prompting emergency actions and a change of the refugee immigration scheme, it did not result in a substantial long-term change of attitudes.

## Evaluating knowledge

### Debate format

#### First round

Affirmative team 1 - Presenting affirmative arguments (10 minutes)

Negative team 1 – Presenting negative arguments (10 minutes)

Discussion period in the team – questions from other participants to debaters (10 minutes)

\*This period is used by the teams to prepare their answers

#### Second round

Affirmative team 2 – Answering or refuting negative arguments (10 minutes)

Negative team 2 – Answering or refuting affirmative arguments (10 minutes)

Discussion period in the team – questions from other participants to debaters (10 minutes)

#### Optional\* Third round

The third additional round will motivate participants to further develop their arguments

### Declaring a winner

In order to determine which team presented the most convincing arguments, a for/against vote can be made to grade each team. (10-15 minutes)

### Instructions and rules of the debate

- Prepare instructions and a list of rules to help participants while they prepare for the debate.
- Introduce a time frame in which they need to prepare for the debate and rules about how to present their material.
- Allow participants who are not debating to be judges in the debate to help them learn to be objective in the grading of their peers' performance.
- Determine whether students who are not debating will be allowed to vote.
- Provide resources which will help participants learn about debates and their structure.
- Consider holding a practical debate in order to help participants understand the process.
- Choose the format you plan on using.

- Consider whether students should prepare short “case arguments”, which also include their reaction to the process of debating and how they managed to reach a consensus in their team.
- Research controversial news, insightful and stimulating topics in order to prompt a dynamic and energetic discussion in the classroom. Participants will have a higher likelihood to be authentic when debating a topic they can connect to.
- Prepare grading rubrics and deliver them to the judges before the debate begins.
- Begin the debate, allowing students as great autonomy as possible.

# Integration of refugees and migrants

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## **Structure:**

Part 1: Defining basic terms (refugee, migrant, integration) – 25 minutes  
Break – 5 minutes

Part 2: Preconditions and barriers to integration – 30 minutes  
Break – 10 minute

Part 3: Cultural integration – 20 minutes

End

## **Part 1: Defining basic terms**

### **Objectives of part 1:**

In the first part participants:

- Are familiarized with the meaning of key terms in the lecture
- Learn to distinguish terms with similar meaning
- Learn the basics of migration legal framework in the country

Refugee: persons outside their own country of origin who have a need for international protection due to fear of persecution or serious threat to their life, physical integrity or freedom in their country of origin as a result of persecution, armed conflict, violence or serious disruption of the public peace.

**It is key,** that refugees cannot be returned to their country of origin while the threat of persecution, violence, war, etc. lasts.

Integration: integration is one of the three possible "permanent solutions" for refugees (the other two are voluntary return to the country of origin and relocation to a third country). It is a complex and dynamic process which requires dedication from both sides; namely, from the refugee it demands a preparedness to adapt to the host country without giving up their cultural identity, and from the host community it demands for it to accept the refugee and fulfil their rights.

**It is key,** that the definition is broad because the process of integration is broad and complex. When a layman hears or says the word "integration", they are most likely thinking of **cultural integration**, but cultural integration is preconditioned on gaining certain economic, health, political and other rights.

Refugees are forced to leave their country because of persecution, armed conflict or other type of direct threat to their life or physical integrity. Leaving the country of origin is most often neither voluntary nor desired; it is often sudden, so the refugee has no time to adjust to their new reality. Hence, some refugees maintain a strong sentimental connection to their country of origin, as well as a desire to return to it when conditions

allow for it, i.e. when the threat to their life or physical integrity ceases to exist. However, in many cases, returning is not possible in the foreseeable future, and so integration should be based that the refugee will try to find a permanent solution to their situation in the host country.

Those migrants who emigrate because of economic reasons, are, on the other hand, less likely to want to return to their country of origin, because the economic conditions in said country are exactly what prompted the migrant to leave it. Those conditions are unlikely to change to great enough degree in the foreseeable future to prompt a desire in the migrant to return to their country of origin.

## Quiz

Question 1:

Person X from country Y has completed their higher education, but they cannot find work because the job market for their profession in their country is non-existent. They do not have their own income, live off their sick and feeble parents, are feeling defeated and powerless. One day they decide to leave the country where they live and go in search of a better life. Person X is a refugee:

- A. Correct
- B. Incorrect

Question 2:

Which of these rights, which is guaranteed to the refugee by international agreements, is imperative and most important?

- A. The right of not being returned to their country of origin
- B. The right to education
- C. The right of repatriation (i.e. returning to their country of origin)

## Part 2: Preconditions to integration

### Objectives of part 2

In the second part, participant:

- Are familiarized with the terminology which is used to describe the process of integration
- Are familiarized with the rights guaranteed to refugees and migrants according to domestic law
- Are familiarized with the field situation, i.e. the barriers which are put in front of refugees during the process of regulating their legal status

In order to begin the process of cultural integration, it is first necessary for the refugee to gain access to the basic rights listed in international legislature which regulates the status of refugees. In the process of gaining access to these rights, a refugee is faced with many barriers. Some of these are listed below.



## **Legal support during the process of receiving refugee status**

Every refugee begins as an asylum seeker. The asylum procedure is oftentimes long and complex. For its duration, the refugee is placed in a Refugee and Asylum Seeker Reception Centre or other form of temporary accommodation. In this country, legal support is provided by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, other international organizations and domestic non-governmental organizations (for example MYLA - Macedonian Young Lawyers Association).

They facilitate communication between refugees and the state and represent the right of refugees, but despite that, the administrative procedures for obtaining asylum can last several years. During this procedure, refugees are allowed temporary stay in the country on the basis of a permit for temporary stay, which limits their access to political and other rights.

## **Health care**

While waiting for their status to be regulated, they do not have a unique citizens' number. A unique citizens' number is necessary in order to access secondary and tertiary health care. While they are located in a Reception centre or another temporary accommodation, they receive ad hoc health care from the Red Cross.

## **Education**

Until the determining of their legal status, child-refugees have the right to education in the Reception centre or other type of temporary accommodation. If they wish to enrol in secondary vocational education, they need to submit a birth certificate.

However, refugees often leave their country of origin with incomplete personal documentation, which is an administrative barrier to the access to education. Nevertheless, according to our Law on temporary and international protection, refugees have - at least de jure - an equal right to education, and any kind of discrimination, including discrimination on the basis of citizenship and nationality, is forbidden.

An additional all-present barrier is also the language barrier, which our system has limited capabilities to address.

## **Temporary work permit**

After the legal status of the refugee is regulated, they have the right to a temporary work permit. In order to gain that permit, the refugee needs to submit exhaustive personal documentation to the Employment Agency, which includes a detailed description of academic and professional experience. After obtaining the temporary work permit, the refugee cannot change the job for which the permit was issued.

If they do change their job, their work permit can be revoked, and they can face a penalty fee. If the work permit is revoked, the process of reissuing a permit is long and painstaking. A temporary work permit is issued for a period of one year.

## **Family reunification**

According to the Strategy for Refugee and Foreigners' Integration into the Republic of Macedonia 2017-2027, "family plays a critical role in helping people rebuild their lives and can provide critical support for adapting to new and difficult conditions.

Family connection can also lessen the feeling of loss which follows many refugees, who aside from their family, have lost their country, friend network and life as they knew it."

In order to gain the right to family reunification, refugees first need to submit documents that they have health insurance, a physical address, and a large enough source of finances which could support the family reunification applicant and their family. Additionally, the refugee has the right to family reunification only after 3 years of receiving the status of refugee.

The strategy mentions that "such a delay of family reunification is in contrast to the basic principles of integration when the wellbeing of people and the sustainability of the process of integration are disrupted by the inexistence of a united family".

## **Detention**

According to the Law on foreigners, an asylum seeker can be detained up to 12 months, although it is recommended that the detention does not last for more than 24 hours, unless absolutely necessary.

## **Naturalisation**

After the refugee has lived in the country at least 6 years (or 8 if they have a status of a person under subsidiary protection), they can apply to receive a Macedonian citizenship. In order to gain citizenship, they need to submit exhaustive documentation, including a birth certificate and details of criminal records in their country of origin.

## **Exercise**

You are a representative in the Parliament of North Macedonia 2.0. Before you is the task of completely reconceptualising the legal framework for migration, with an accent on refugees and asylum seekers. To what do you pay the most attention, keeping in mind the need to facilitate the process of integration of refugees?

Is a well-conceived legal framework the only precondition to a quality migration policy? What is necessary other than good laws?

## **Part 3: Cultural integration**

### **Objectives of part 3**

In the third part, participants:

- Are familiarized with the process of cultural integration and its barrier in short

The abovementioned barriers to integration are problematic because they give the refugee a turbulent beginning to their stay in the host country. After they pass a longer time in isolation, having no opportunity to have contact with the culture and language of the host country, they will likely have problems with further integration.

Even after all the painstaking administrative processes are concluded, the refugee is met with a long process of cultural integration. The term cultural integration refers to the process of adjustment of the refugee to the cultural norms of the host country, then resocialization and building of social network, familiarization with the details of the economy and work market, learning the language, etc.

Even after all the administrative procedures are finished, the refugee is faced with exceptional xenophobia and discrimination because of their personal characteristics. Humans are often guided by fear, and when faced with something which causes fear and discomfort, they seek simple - and often incorrect - explanations.

And so, it is not rare that refugees are the target of accusations that they "dishonestly limit the job opportunities/steal the jobs of" the domestic population, and the accusations that refugees are sources of infectious diseases are not unheard of.

Although the state can play a significant role in the softening the xenophobic tendencies of the domestic population, the acceptance of refugees is an organic process, which is helped by the integration of refugees.

The more integrated the refugees are, the more visible they are to the domestic population; and the more visible they are, the more likely it is that the domestic population will understand their lives' stories and accept them.

### Exercise

On one day before the second round of the local elections in the country this year, the Minister of Justice went before national media with a triumphant statement that a new Refugee and Foreigner Reception Centre will not be built. He framed this decision as a joint success of the citizens and the government. Keeping in mind the cultural integration of refugees, do you see something problematic with this statement by the Minister, and why?