

Issue 10 | October 2016

**EUV**  
EURVOICE

# **Movement Across the European Union**

€1.00

# The Migration Crisis

## Insight from the People Living on Front Line States

### Background

The European migrant crisis or European refugee crisis began in 2015, when a rising number of refugees and migrants made the journey to the European Union (EU) to seek asylum and for better living standards, travelling across the Mediterranean Sea or through Southeast Europe.

The number of deaths at sea rose to record levels in April 2015, when five boats carrying almost 2,000 migrants to Europe sank in the Mediterranean Sea. Germany and Hungary are the countries who has the highest number of migrants.

Syria's civil war is the worst humanitarian crisis of our time. Half the country's pre-war population — more than 11 million people — have been killed or forced to flee their homes.

The EU plans to relocate migrants who reach the EU from countries at the EU's external frontiers—like Italy, Greece, and Hungary—to countries which have few arrivals. The plan is to relocate 160,000 people across the EU over the next two years. This decision was reached following months of negotiations to overcome the reluctance of governments.

### Malta

The migration crisis has been effecting Malta for years. Considering the lack of resources and low capacity on the island, more should be done on mitigation rather than on management. Tackling the root causes of migration in countries of origin would not only be beneficial to migrants and Malta, but also to the rest of Europe.



## **Hungary**

Many migrants passed through Hungary when the refugee crisis started, with the aim to reach Germany and other EU countries. Trains were full of migrants, making students unable to go home during the weekend because of the lack of space on these trains. The East Railway Station in Budapest for example, was full of migrants, whilst others slept inside the train station or in the square outside.

They came through our borders and some of them just went inside our gardens, causing panic amongst Hungarians.

When the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, announced that Germany would accept every refugee without imposing quotas, the migrants started heading towards Germany. The police provided security as best they could for the moving crowds as they transitioned through the country, but the situation simply got worse over time. The Hungarian government therefore decided to allocate buses to transport migrants to Hegyeshalom, the Hungarian city closest to the Austrian border.

When the EU proposed the resettlement quota, Hungary conducted a referendum that was held on 2 October 2016, where Hungarians voted on whether to accept this quota or not. The turnout was too low, with just 44% of the electorate exercising their democratic right, forcing the referendum to be invalidated. However, 98% of those that did vote chose to reject the quota. It was a failure for some and success for others. It was certainly a victory for the Hungarian government, who had claimed that the nation had officially rejected the quota, regardless of the invalidity of the referendum.

## **Bulgaria**

Bulgaria is interesting because it is a country that

can also be considered as one of migrant origin. In Bulgaria many people go abroad in order to find better paying jobs and better state of living. Our salaries are very low and therefore so our lifestyle suffers as well. Many young people cannot find a job and are still living with their parents. Even if you have a job you cannot afford to buy an apartment. It is also very hard to rent one, with the price in the Capital as high as 150 Euros per room (with an average salary of 250 Euros after taxes). Even if two people are working and sharing an apartment they still cannot pay for it.

Another problem is that there are no jobs in smaller cities. If a Bulgarian wants to make a living he or she has to go to the Capital, where there are already too many people that are forcing rent prices to rise whilst restricting parking spaces.

One good thing is that we have foreign investment and outsourcing companies that employ young Bulgarians. The salaries are much higher than the national average, allowing for a better way of life. Many foreigners also come to Bulgaria for work at these companies (usually call centres) because of the higher salaries when compared to the situation in their own countries.

When I was working at one of these call centres I had colleagues from Greece, Romania, Hungary, Serbia, Poland, Italy, and even Russia and Tunisia. The thing with this kind of work is that it is too stressful and stability is not guaranteed because the company may stop the project at any point forcing us into unemployment.

## **Macedonia**

Macedonians migrate from the country for many reasons: work, religion, and culture, amongst others. Poverty is the main factor for leaving the country, forcing many to seek a brighter future abroad. People from neighbouring countries also move to Macedonia, driven out by prosecution, propaganda, and poverty.

# Living in Another Country

## Tips and Tricks

### **The Italian in Belgium...**

I had the opportunity to spend my Erasmus student year in Brussels, Belgium. First I feel the need to say that Belgians will help you deal with any kind of problem you could go through; they are quite welcoming. In order to integrate quickly into your new society you'll need to learn the local language. They appreciate your effort and your willingness even if you are struggling with the language. If you move there as a student, most of the Belgian universities offer free language courses, especially in the region of Wallonia.

Don't be afraid to use public transport: it is efficient and not very expensive. For Brussels you won't need a car; there are cycle tracks everywhere and a good metro system.

Each country in Europe has its unique traditions and culture, its gestures, food and lifestyle. In order to not create conflicts it is necessary to know these characteristics. It is a common belief that the weather influences the mood of the people. If one lives in a very sunny country and then moves to a cold one, they will be more stressed, and this can pose a challenge.

### **The Macedonian in Serbia...**

Living in another country that is not a member of the European Union has its good and bad sides. Myself and most Macedonians believe that the EU is primarily an economic union of states and only then a political one. This means that the greatest benefit of being an EU Member State is the internal single market with its standardised system of laws. We strongly believe that this would make our lives and economy better, but also make it easier to move from one country to another if they are already in the European Union than if they are not.

### **The Bulgarian in Hungary...**

I spent about one year living in Hungary, where I read for Hungarian studies and won a scholarship via Erasmus. This meant I had the opportunity to spend my third year of studies in Szeged, Hungary.

I met many nice people there, locals and foreigners, whilst practicing both English and Hungarian. The prices were similar to those in Bulgaria but life was much better there. I would encourage everyone to travel to explore these new horizons and opportunities that might not be available in your own country.

### **The Maltese in the United Kingdom...**

Living in the UK made me realize the importance of interacting with the locals to get the proper feel and essence of your new country. Being such an international country it is also quite easy to cross paths with other EU nationals during your stay. This helps to further extend your social circles.

# The European Union - Pros and Cons

## Advantages

### 1. Tax Free Trading Among Members

One of the biggest benefits that are offered to the member countries of the EU is that they are free to trade with other members at no additional taxation. This helps to keep prices of goods and food down in these countries.

### 2. Opens Up More Opportunities

Movement between all of the countries in the EU is completely free and open for all citizens. This opens up many more job and education opportunities for people. Especially ones who are in poor countries.

### 3. Culture Is Not Lost

The EU has never had an “official language” and doesn’t interfere with the cultural aspects of any country. This helps to ensure that, while you are part of the union, you are also your own country.

### 4. A Common Currency

All of the member countries of the EU have the same type of currency, the euro. This makes doing business, traveling or moving to other countries, and buying things much simpler. It also creates a sense of unity among the countries.

### 5. No Conflict Between Nations

There are strict guidelines followed for any issues that occur within the EU. This prevents any of these countries from getting into large political or economical problems with one another and promotes peace throughout the continent.

## Disadvantages

### 1. Communication Barriers

It becomes very difficult for the EU to communicate with all of its citizens because they all speak different language. This also impact the feeling of unity among its members. It makes it harder to bring people together.

### 2. Shared Wealth Is Not Always Good

Large and wealthy countries that are members of the European Union, like Germany, have to share their wealth with much smaller and poorer countries. This prevents any one country from becoming too powerful, which is a bad thing for countries that have the ability to become world leaders.

### 3. Leaving Is A Problem

Once a country decides to join the EU, it is extremely difficult for them to leave it. This makes many people uneasy from joining, because if it negatively effects their country, there is little that they can do about it

### 4. Discriminates Against Potential Members

In order to join the European Union, you must be a part of Europe. Europe’s borders are largely undefined, which gives the EU the power to pick and choose who they would like to join the union.

### 5. Takes Power From Governments

The European Union has power over the government in these countries. This means that if they do not like a political leader, they can simply kick them out of office. It is very simple for this to breach the lines of corruption and cause major problems in government sectors.

# Countries Joining the European Union

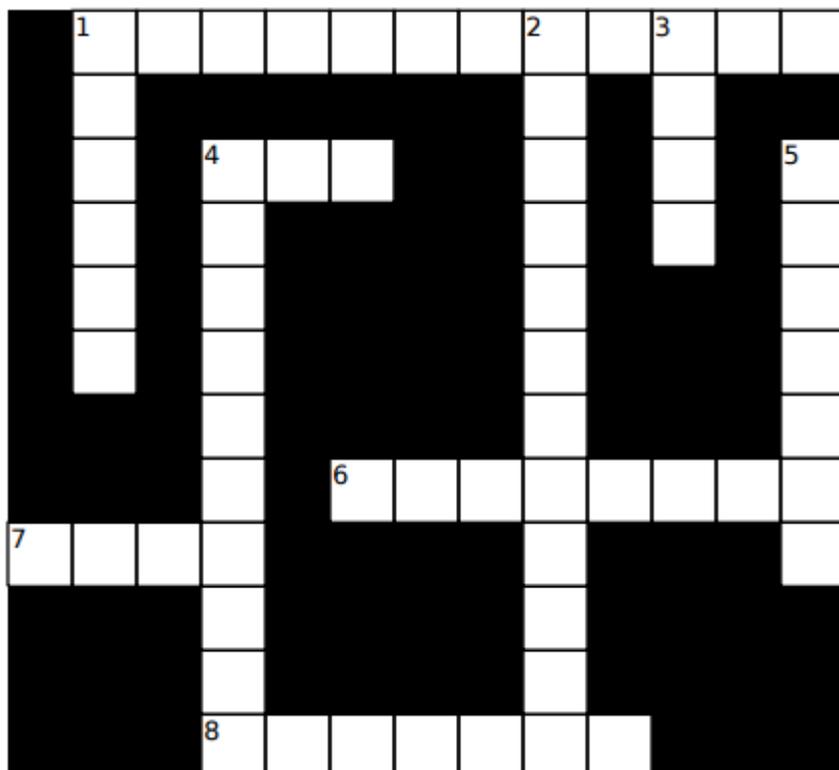
As more and more countries attempt to join the European Union, it must be stressed that these countries first fulfil the Copenhagen criteria, with particular attention being given to human rights, the rule of law, both of which must be in line with the values that inspired the foundation of the European Union.

Any country that meets these standards should be more than welcome to join the Union.

## The More You Know - GLOBALISATION

The phenomenon of globalization began in a primitive form when humans first settled into different areas of the world; however, it has shown a rather rapid progress in recent times and has become an international dynamic which, due to technological advancements, has increased in speed and scale, so that countries in all five continents have been affected and engaged.

Globalization is defined as a process that, based on international strategies, aims to expand business operations on a worldwide level, and was precipitated by the facilitation of global communications due to technological advancements, and socioeconomic, political and environmental developments.



### Across

1. Number of official languages.
4. Number of countries signing European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) Treaty.
6. City of headquarters of the EU.
7. Name of the currency.
8. Most populous EU Member State.

### Down

1. Number of stars on the EU flag.
2. Number of Member States in the European Union.
3. City where the Founding Treaty of the original members was signed.
4. Site of the EU Parliament.
5. One of the official languages from the smallest member nation of the EU.