

The Situations of Refugees and Migrants in Egypt and European Countries



E C H R D

"The Situations of Refugees and Migrants in Egypt and European Countries"

Egyptian Coalition for Human Rights and Development

It is an initiative launched by Forum for Development and Human Rights Dialogue Foundation, and consists of 500 development associations and organizations in 9 Governorates, in order to promote Human Rights conditions in Egypt, strengthen partnerships, and exchange experience.

The NGOs and institutions participating in the initiative were distributed in 9 governorates: Cairo, Gharbia, Beheira, Alexandria, Beni Suef, Sohag, Luxor, Qena and Aswan.

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❖ **Introduction:**

Egypt has witnessed a large influx of refugees and migrants recently, which has prompted an escalation of attention to their situation and the challenges they face. Egypt is one of the popular destinations for the search for a better life, whether the reason is wars and conflicts in their countries of origin or the search for better economic opportunities. Refugees and migrants in Egypt are protected and supported by the government and international and local organizations, but there are still many challenges that must be addressed to ensure a dignified and safe life for these individuals.

Conflicts in the Middle East and the Horn of Africa have forced citizens of countries such as Sudan, South Sudan, Syria, Somalia, Iraq and Yemen to cross borders and seek protection elsewhere, and many arrive in Egypt, as it remains one of the preferred destination countries for refugees due to the low cost of living and favorable protection environment.

Hence, we find that Egypt has increasingly become a destination for many refugees and asylum seekers. Although some of them may consider Egypt at first just a transit country to arrive Europe or elsewhere, while others may wait for the situation in their countries of origin to improve to allow them to return. With the scarcity of resettlement and protracted conflicts in their countries of origin, resettlement and repatriation become unavailable and undesirable for many refugees and asylum seekers, and therefore they remain in Egypt voluntarily or forcibly indefinitely.

Since Egypt does not have a camp policy, refugees and asylum-seekers benefit from opportunities to live in urban areas alongside the host community where they can access services and opportunities that might otherwise not be available, and newly arrived asylum-seekers can benefit from the social networks of existing communities from their home countries.

There is no doubt that people are forced to migrate from their place of origin because of the prevalence of wars and armed conflicts, and the subsequent general chaos in the country, which is the main apparent reason for forced migration. People, who were residing in areas dominated by conflicts, wars, and security disturbances, were forced to leave, for fear of either death or injury, whether from the regime or armed terrorist groups, or for any other consequences of wars, and these apply to them the legal concept of asylum. Another reason for forced migration is the economic crises they have been exposed to, as their living capabilities have deteriorated, and they fled to

migrate outside the country, as a result of the subsequent economic depression, and the consequent search for job opportunities, or obtaining living subsidies from donors before the decision to migrate. There are various manifestations of social exclusion in the country of origin and they have suffered from them, manifested in marginalization, high unemployment rates, low wages, as well as the lack of justice that has increased with the recent events of the ongoing war.

Although the mentioned disadvantages reflect manifestations of social exclusion, they may come as a result of deprivation from work (exclusion from governmental work), as opposed to layoffs in the private sector, besides the exacerbation of the problem of unemployment among heads of households and young people, Thus the failure to ensure a regular and stable income. All of which is preceded by the provision of Low education for the majority of members of society, and limiting quality education to a specific group or class in society (such as private education). Most of the refugees attribute the reasons mentioned to the absence of social policies capable of promoting social progress and advancement.

International humanitarian law is affected directly by the positions of the parties to the conflict, and the positions of the other parties alike, and these results in unarmed civilians resorting to leaving and migrating their homelands in various legal and illegal ways under duress and not choosing. If the goals sought to be achieved by the rules of international humanitarian law are mainly to reduce the effects of military operations, mitigate their scourge, and impose humanitarian considerations in dealing with the inhumane effects of armed conflicts, this requires that the parties to the conflict abide by the humanitarian rules in the fighting. The purpose of military operations must stop at conquering the enemy and achieving victory over it, under the rules governing military operations.

It is worth noting that the provisions contained in the conventions of international humanitarian law tried to reconcile the normal situation of military necessity with humanitarian requirements, which led these rules to narrow the conditions for the use of necessity and even define its areas accurately. Therefore, we can say that this restriction is useful in limiting the interests of the parties to the conflict that affect the application of the rules of international humanitarian law, especially using the idea of military necessity by its rules under several names.

According to a statistic for the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), at the end of June 2023, about (110) million people were displaced forcibly from their homes because of persecution, conflicts, violence, Human Rights Violations, and events that seriously disrupt public order. That represents an increase of (1.6) million people (by more than 1%), compared to (108.2 million people) at the end of (2022). Therefore, one in 73 people is now displaced forcibly worldwide, with the majority –nearly 9 in 10 forcibly displaced- living in low- or middle-income countries.

The Number of Refugees globally reached (36.4) million people in mid-2023, an increase of (1.1 million people) by (3%) compared to the end of (2022). This figure includes (5.9) million refugees under UNRWA's mandate, (30.5) million refugees and people in refugee-like situations under UNHCR's mandate. Moreover, another (5.3) million people required International Protection.

In addition, the Protection Officer confirmed that Egypt is a pioneer in dealing with the refugee file, pointing out that the Egyptian State refused to place refugees in camps, since the beginning of the UNHCR in Egypt in (1954). While an official in the UNHCR Media Officer stressed that in cooperation with the Egyptian government, many services are provided, including health and educational services. The officer pointed out that (85%) of refugee children registered with the UNHCR have the right to enroll in schools and get educational services similar to Egyptians, besides health campaigns like obtaining vaccines or the (100) million health campaign.

Through this report, we will review some points related to the situation of refugees and migrants, especially in Egypt and some European countries through the following points:

1. International Refugee Protection
2. Refugee Situation in Egypt
3. Egyptian efforts to provide care and protection for refugees
4. Refugee Situation in Europe

1) International Refugee Protection:

International Protection is defined as: "Assisting a person by preventing abuse, ill-treatment or danger", "thwarting attempts to cause his disappearance", "satisfying, preserving and defending his need for safety", and "all activities aimed at ensuring respect for the fundamental rights of the

individual as defined in international law, in particular international humanitarian law, refugee law and human rights law".

The State is originally responsible for providing full protection to its citizens, and works to preserve their basic rights and safety from any attack, whether inside or outside the State because of the individual's association with the State and the rights he enjoys, including nationality that is the legal and basic bond between him and that State and grants him the protection of his rights. However, the refugee does not enjoy such protection, because his country of origin is unable to provide it or he is forced to flee his country to another in order to obtain safety and preserve his life. When the protection of this person is the responsibility of the international community, this is called international refugee protection or a temporary alternative to national protection.

In order to ensure that refugees enjoy international protection, States must be pushed to accede to international and regional conventions on refugees and to monitor the implementation of their obligations under those conventions. One of the most important principles stipulated in these charters is "the principle of non-refoulement and the principle of non-expulsion" and the treatment of refugees under humanitarian standards.

International Refugee Protection includes all work relating to the equality of women, men, girls, and boys of concern to UNHCR in the access to and enjoyment of rights under relevant laws, including refugee, human rights, humanitarian, and international laws.

➤ **Objectives of International Protection:**

International and non-governmental organizations interested in the issue of refugees seek to reduce asylum applications and refugee situations by encouraging States and institutions to provide appropriate conditions for the protection of human rights and the peaceful resolution of disputes.

In this regard, there is remarkable progress in dealing with some refugee cases in Africa, Central America, and Southeast Asia. On the other hand, we find that there are other cases of refugees, such as in the Horn of Africa, Palestinian refugees, and Syrian refugees who have been scattered within their countries and in neighboring countries and all over the world that still need solutions. So, the interdependence in refugee problems has led to the emergence of new refugee cases that need new methods and tools to protect them.

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Referring to the efforts of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to strengthen the International Refugee Protection, we can deduce the objectives that UNHCR seeks to achieve in cooperation with international bodies and organizations, whether governmental or non-governmental. Nevertheless, these goals always do not find the path to success paved, which limits the effectiveness of UNHCR's activity in achieving its objectives.

While the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCR) carries out protection and assistance measures per international standards, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) plays the same role under the rules of international humanitarian law and bears direct responsibility for the fate of refugees who are civilian victims of armed conflict or disturbances. As International Commission's intervention concerning refugees is covered by international humanitarian law in order to apply the relevant rules of the Fourth Geneva Convention and to attempt in their fieldwork to visit these refugees and provide them with the necessary protection and assistance.

The repatriation of refugees is one of the ICRC's main concerns. Even if it is not generally involved in repatriation operations, it requires the States and organizations concerned to specify exactly when and under what conditions they will return.

Furthermore, Protocol II (Article 17) also prohibits the forcible transfer of civilians, as their deportation may only be ordered on an exceptional basis, as stipulated in Article (7) of the Statute of the International Criminal Court, which considers the forcible transfer of populations a crime against humanity.

Refugees from among the populations of any neutral country in case of their residence in the territory of a belligerent state shall enjoy protection under the Fourth Geneva Convention, in the absence of diplomatic relations between their state and the belligerent states. In case of occupation of the state territory, the refugee who falls under the authority of the state of which he is a citizen enjoys special protection, as the fourth convention prohibits the occupying power from arresting this refugee, but rather prohibits it from prosecuting, convicting or deporting him from the occupied territories.

2) Section I: Refugee Situation in Egypt

Since the clash in Sudan began in April 2023, large numbers of people have been forced to flee to Egypt and other neighboring countries searching for protection. On the other side, the number of Syrians registered with UNHCR in Egypt has increased significantly from (12.800) at the end of 2012 to more than (153.000) people at the end of 2023 representing different social, economic and religious backgrounds. As a result of the crisis in Syria and Sudan, Egypt is now hosting the largest number of registered refugees and asylum seekers in its history.

Renewed conflicts and political instability in East Africa and the Horn of Africa, as well as unrest in Iraq and Yemen, have prompted thousands of people from South Sudan, Ethiopia, Iraq and Yemen to seek refuge in Egypt. As of April 29, 2024, the number of refugees registered with UNHCR has reached (324.048) refugees from Sudan, (156.191) from Syria, (41.733) from South Sudan, (35.612) from Eritrea, (18.281) from Ethiopia, (8.665) from Yemen, (7.908) from Somalia, (5.676) from Iraq and more than (54) other nationalities.

A report by the International Organization for Migration also showed that the current number of international migrants residing in Egypt reached (9) million migrants and refugees from (133) countries, exceeding (8%) of the population, by (50.4) males, (49.6%) females, with an average age of up to (35) years, representing (8.7%) of Egypt's population, and (56%) of them are concentrated in five governorates: (Cairo, Giza, Alexandria, Dakahlia and Damietta).

The report showed that 60% of international migrants living in Egypt (about 5.5 million people) have been well integrated into society for more than 10 years.

The number of refugees in Egypt is equivalent to the number of 3 or 4 European countries, and it puts pressure on the Egyptian economy in terms of the volume of demand for goods and services, in addition to its effects on the Egyptian labor market..

We would like to point out that Egypt does not adopt special or local laws to deal with migrants, but rather deliberately integrates them into the context of health care and education to varying degrees, and will continue to reject the policy of accommodation camps and refuse to isolate them in any way and under any name.

It granted them freedom of movement within the Egyptian state, and provided them with all health and educational services, based on Egypt's role in dealing with refugees, which prompted them to migrate and asylum..

A) Syrian Migrants:

Syrian refugees in Egypt are an important group of refugees who have faced great challenges and difficulties in their journey. Due to the ongoing conflict in Syria, they have migrated to Egypt in search of safety and protection, then Egypt currently accommodates one of the largest number of Syrian refugees in the region, and their future and impact on Egyptian society have shaped many social, economic, cultural and political aspects.

One of the reasons that prompted Syrian migrants and refugees to choose Egypt as the first stop for immigration is that Egypt has an ancient history with Syria, as well as a common culture and the similarity of customs and traditions, in addition to stable security, suitable weather and a fertile and suitable environment for work. Moreover, the facilities provided by the Egyptian government to Syrians from reducing accommodation and study expenses, and allowing their children to enroll in Egyptian public schools and treat them like Egyptian students. Furthermore, the presence of many embassies of Western and foreign countries in Egypt to deal with them in the matter of resettlement, besides the ease of residence in Egypt in terms of official papers and the legitimacy of their presence in addition to the ease of entry and exit from Egypt to Syria and vice versa.

Syrians in Egypt enjoy a set of rights that tend to improve their conditions and speed their integration, unlike what they face in other host countries of deportation, arrests, inhumane treatment, and camps where they are not qualified to live, in addition to racism.

Syrian migrants live in urban areas, mainly concentrated in Greater Cairo and the governorates of Alexandria and Damietta.

Under the presidential decree issued in 2012, Syrian refugees have the right to enroll in public schools and access health services on an equal basis with Egyptian citizens.

Syrian refugees are distributed in all governorates, but most of them prefer to live in certain places that have become Syrian gatherings, such as the cities of: (6th of October), Obour and Rehab surrounding the capital, Cairo and others, and there are also numbers in the governorates of (Kafr El-Sheikh – El- Sharkia - Damietta - Alexandria - Mansoura).

Despite the presence of Syrian population centers, a percentage of them chose to reside in the countryside, neighborhoods and popular areas with a majority of Egyptians, and found in them a sense of acceptance from the host people that helped them integrate and endure alienation.

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The professions in which Syrians work in Egypt are concentrated in food of all kinds, the manufacture of sweets, textiles, the manufacture of furniture, electronics, restaurants and cafes, perfumes, and baked goods, and there is even a street in 6th of October City called Syrians Street and includes several cafes, restaurants and picnic places run by Syrians.

Therefore, you can notice an increase in the activity of Syrian singers and chanting groups in Egypt during the month of Ramadan 2024, unlike what was happening while they were in Syria, and the demand for them increases and their appointments are crowded in Egypt.

We also find educational centers, which are licensed by the Ministry of Social Solidarity, and spread in many areas, where they have become a destination for thousands of Syrian and even Egyptian students.

The owners of these centers worked to open them in areas that include large numbers of Syrians, such as "6th of October, Obour, Al-Shorouk, 10th of Ramadan" in the vicinity of the capital, Cairo, in addition to areas in the governorates of Damietta, Alexandria and others, in order to serve the Syrians. With the passage of time, these centers are no longer a destination for Syrians only, but many Egyptian students and numbers of Sudanese and Yemeni nationalities went to them.

Syrians in popular neighborhoods also opened small projects, which helped them live, and were widely accepted by the residents of these neighborhoods, who became regular customers, such as small restaurants, sewing workshops, and beauty salons.

➤ **The privileges granted by Egypt to the Syrians:**

Egypt is a living example of an Arab state that has offered so many privileges to Syrians who have arrived in its territory. The privileges Egypt has granted Syrians include the ability to live legally and safely in the country, working, and education in the country. In addition, Egypt has provided employment opportunities and educational possibilities for Syrians, while providing health care and basic social services. These privileges reflect Egypt's commitment to helping Syrian refugees and enabling them to build a new and stable life in the country.

Egypt granted privileges to Syrians beginning in 2011 after the start of the Syrian conflict. These grants have continued to date, with Egypt hosting thousands of Syrian refugees on its territory.

Egypt's grants to Syrians were a response to the humanitarian crisis Syria has faced as a result of the conflict. These grants aim to alleviate the suffering of Syrians and provide them with better chances of life under the difficult circumstances they face in their country.

The economic privileges granted by Egypt to Syrians include job opportunities and the establishment of small and medium businesses, in addition to obtaining work permits and residence permits. Egypt has also provided financial support to Syrians through aid programs and financial grants.

Egypt also promotes social and cultural privileges for Syrians by providing basic social services, such as health care and education, as well as psychosocial support. Egypt also encourages cultural communication and interaction between Syrians and the local community by organizing joint cultural and educational events.

With regard to the legal and human rights aspect, Egypt grants Syrians legal and civil rights that include the right to live, work, education and health care. Legal privileges also include access to courts, the judiciary, and the protection of human rights laws.

The most important of these privileges granted to Syrians are as follows:

○ **First: Exempting Syrians from visa fees to enter its territory:**

The Egyptian government decided to grant Syrians visas to enter its territory free of charge and without any consular fees, and this step came as an embodiment of Egypt's full support for the Syrian people and its keenness to alleviate their suffering and help them in their current plight.

○ **Second: Treating Syrian students as Egyptian students:**

This acknowledgment is as follows:

- ✓ Enrollment in public schools in Arabic.
- ✓ Exemption from paying the prescribed tuition costs for international students.
- ✓ Pay the prescribed fees for Egyptian students.
- ✓ Access to private schools.

Syrian students were struggling to enroll in Egyptian schools, due to the slow procedures for obtaining and renewing residence papers every year, which is prolonged for a large period of time, which leads to their inability to obtain education. So, the Ministry of Education issued in 2012/2013, a decision to

treat Syrian students the same as Egyptian students, provided that they are renewed annually.

In 2023, the decision was amended to allow Syrian refugee students (registered with UNHCR) in the various educational stages (first primary, first preparatory, first secondary) to re-register in Egyptian public schools, and to register again for those who did not register at the beginning of the school year.

The categories of Syrians who are entitled to register in public schools are:

- ✓ Those registered with the United Nations and have a valid residency regardless of its duration, and children of those attached to the Syrian embassy in Egypt.
- ✓ A person whose mother was Egyptian, even if she was separated from his father or widowed.
- ✓ Anyone who lives in a place where there are no suitable private schools is entitled to enroll in public schools if he so wishes.
- ✓ In addition to those who obtain an exception from the Minister, according to special cases approved by the Minister.

○ **Third: Medical Services:**

The Minister of Health issued a decision in 2012 to treat Syrian patients residing in Egypt at the same prices as Egyptians with regard to treatment in government hospitals.

○ **Fourth: Exempting Syrians from paying fines for residence accumulated on them due to breaking the residency**

The decision allows exemption from fines accumulated on Syrians, at an earlier time, but whoever violates after the decision, must pay the fine.

B) Sudanese migrants

Sudanese migrants are people who migrated from Sudan to other countries in search of a better life and new opportunities. The history of Sudanese migration dates back to a long time, as many Sudanese moved to Arab and African countries, or Europe and North America. Migration is often due to various reasons and motives such as economy, politics and the search for a better life.

Many countries are witnessing the movement of Sudanese migrants, as they are located in Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait and Egypt, in addition to African countries such as Uganda, Kenya and South Sudan. Western countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom,

Canada, Germany, the Netherlands and Australia are attractive destinations for Sudanese migrants due to economic opportunities and advanced levels of education and health.

There are many reasons and motives for Sudanese migration, some of which include the search for better job opportunities and improving the standard of living. Migration can also be the result of political or ethnic persecution, or armed conflicts in the country, others may migrate for education or medical treatment, and some consider migration an opportunity to escape poverty and unemployment and provide a better life for their families.

Sudanese migration has been greatly affected by the wars and conflicts that the country has witnessed over the decades, as internal armed conflicts and ethnic and religious conflicts have prompted many residents to flee and seek safety outside the country. Due to these wars and conflicts, the number of Sudanese migrants wishing to migrate to other countries has increased. It is important to understand this impact and help these migrants rebuild their lives and promote their integration into new societies.

➤ **History of Sudanese Migrants in Egypt:**

The history and background of Sudanese migrants in Egypt relate to trade and geographical movement between the two countries throughout the ages. Since the period of ancient civilizations, there has been the circulation of goods between Egypt and Sudan, which led to the presence of merchants and immigrants from Sudan in Egypt. The cultural, historical and religious ties between the two countries have also contributed to attracting Sudanese immigrants to Egypt and forming communities in the country.

Sudanese immigration to Egypt has been historic and has been going on for centuries. This is due to the economic, political, and social factors that pushed the Sudanese to migrate and seek job opportunities and a better life in Egypt. This migration began in the British colonial period and continued during the republican era, with a constant influx of Sudanese to Egypt in search of new opportunities. However, Sudanese immigration to Egypt has experienced changes in the number of migrants and their fields of work throughout the ages.

The history of cultural and historical relations between Sudan and Egypt dates back to ancient times, where the two cultures and civilizations were influenced by each other, as the two countries share a common history and cultural, linguistic and religious ties. In modern times, relations between Sudan and

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Egypt have developed in the fields of music, cinema, literature, arts and sports. These cultural relations have had an impact on Sudanese migration to Egypt, where migrants feel a sense of belonging to Egyptian culture and Sudanese culture at the same time.

The reasons and motives that drive Sudanese to migrate to Egypt vary, including the search for job opportunities, improving living conditions, education and health care. Sudan's political and economic stability also plays an important role in pushing migrants to seek a better life in Egypt. Other causes relate to violence, internal conflicts, and persecution of ethnic and religious minorities in Sudan. Sudanese immigrants in Egypt are a diverse society that includes many different socio-economic groups.

The United Nations International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimated the total number of Sudanese residing in Egypt at about (4) million Sudanese, about (56%) of whom are concentrated in the governorates of Cairo, Giza, Alexandria, Damietta and Dakahlia.

➤ **Sudanese Community**

- About 110,696 Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers registered with UNHCR in Egypt.
- 4 million Sudanese fully reside in Egypt, according to the International Organization for Migration.
- 37% of refugees residing in Egypt work in established jobs and stable companies.
- The average age of refugees residing in Egypt is 35 years, with a balanced ratio between males (50.04%) and females estimated (49.7%).

➤ **Egypt and the protection of Sudanese refugees:**

Al-Hussein Hassan, President of the Union of African Institutions for the Eradication of Slums, believes in Egypt's role in protecting Sudanese refugees:

- ✓ Egypt plays its international role in protecting refugees, and deals in a different way from a large number of countries that establish camps for them, noting: "Egypt does not have any refugees living in a tent, but on the contrary, they are provided with all services".
- ✓ The presence of refugees does not affect the development system, as a very small percentage receive support from civil society organizations, while the rest work, earn and serve the economy.
- ✓ Many refugees residing in Egypt are owners of giant development projects, and they have provided thousands of jobs for Egyptians. In addition, the services they provide at a distinguished level, which made the country a

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fertile environment for diversity and everyone flocks to provide its distinguished services, and the citizen is the beneficiary in the end, according to him.

- ✓ The presence of the Sudanese is welcome, and Egypt provides them with all the facilities through which they can enter its territory, given the difficult conditions there.
- ✓ There are initiatives by a large number of Egyptians to help Sudanese refugees and provide them with a helping hand in various ways, such as providing them with food, drink and free housing.

Sudanese live in the low-rent southern neighborhoods of 6th of October City, such as the areas of Beit al-Aila, Masaken Othman, and the sixth district, while Syrians, Yemenis, and Iraqis live in the neighborhoods of al-Mutamayez 1 and 2, and Ard El-Lewa area. The Sudanese are also spread and in the capital, Cairo.

Official statistics estimate their numbers in the Yellow Mountain area and the suburb of Ain Shams at more than (40) thousand families, they are also spread in the suburbs of Hadayek Al-Qobba and Abdeen, and Al-Sufi district in downtown Cairo is one of the most prominent sites that gather them.

➤ **Receiving Displaced People in Aswan Governorate**

Due to its geographical location on the Egyptian border with Sudan, Aswan is the first governorate in Egypt to receive Sudanese fleeing regiments since the outbreak of battles between the Sudanese army and the Rapid Support Forces.

With time and the influx of more, some areas in the governorate became famous for being dedicated to them, and the Sudanese gathering areas became called their own names, such as the Sudanese Street in the center of Aswan, or the Sudanese market, which is present on a weekly basis in the High Dam Port and Wadi Karkar.

With the passage of time, the places of concentration of Sudanese in Aswan increased, and they became more widespread in the streets of the governorate, and they had commercial activities and rented many apartments and houses.

One of the most distinctive gathering areas for the Sudanese now is Daraw city, which brought them together even before the war they are currently living in.

When you pass through Daraw in Aswan, you feel that you are in the State of Sudan, especially one of its streets, which has become Sudanese par excellence, as all its shops are occupied by Sudanese in various professions,

from restaurants to tailoring clothes and barbershops. It is remarkable that all their commercial activities take the Sudanese character as well as the sale of various Sudanese products that distinguish them, and attention is drawn to them with the music, songs and Sudanese folklore that you hear as soon as you pass through the place with people talking in the distinctive Sudanese dialect.

When wandering on the market street in the city of Daraw, we find that the vast majority of passers-by in it are from Sudan, whether renting shops or coming to buy their things, as well as the cafes in which they meet and are considered places of entertainment for them.

The people of Aswan believe that the Sudanese are brothers and received them very welcoming, and presented initiatives to help them and do not consider them refugees, so they settled with them and established a safe life. They live among them in safety and have a good relationship with them, consider them brothers to them, and help them provide homes and job opportunities.

About (9) initiatives were launched from Aswan, including providing food and accommodation at a reduced price or free. Among these (9) Initiatives, about (6) initiatives agreed to support the Sudanese by providing meals, namely: "Ababda and Besharia Association, Sanad Al-Khair Upper Egypt Youth, Karkar Kitchen, Eta'am Initiative, City Crepe Restaurant, Ahl Aswan". As for the accommodation initiatives, they came out of (3) places, namely the Aglika Hotel, which offers free rooms, the Key Camp "free tents", and the Hassaya and Al-Kroub Hostel "a room at a reduced price per night. For example, the Key Camp Hotel received (15) people in one week, as it is a hotel on the island of Hisa, west of Aswan. The hotel owner is in a private boat that transports the Sudanese from the anchorage of the island of Hisa to the camp, providing them with means of subsistence of food, drink, and other services at his own expense. The cost is completely free, especially since many tents can accommodate two people and others for (4) people, as those who go to the camp do not have enough money, to make them live in hotels.

A lecturer in the Aswan Literature Club specializes his motorcycle in providing moral support to the Sudanese and puts his phone number on Facebook to provide assistance, where he delivers food and medicine, and sometimes transports passengers. While the "Ahl Aswan" Initiative distributes food through (50) free meals a day, and provides housing for the Sudanese in

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the Nubian village of Karkar at a reduced and appropriate price. Without initiatives, border villages are also witnessing the opening of the doors of some houses to receive Sudanese families until the clashes there calm down. In addition, individual volunteers belonging to institutions or associations continue to flock to the arrival points of the Sudanese, whether at the Arqin border crossing or Karkar station, where transit buses stop, to provide food or medical assistance.

In the villages of Karkar, which is located about (20) kilometers south of Aswan, and adjacent to the bus station for land travel to Sudan, the people of this village did not stand idly by despite the weakness of their capabilities, and contributed through civil society and the village association in providing a helping hand to their Sudanese brothers. They hosted a number of them, especially that the villages of Karkar are adjacent to the first arrival station for displaced Sudanese in the outskirts of the city of Aswan, where the international station in Wadi Karkar, which includes dozens of buses coming from Sudan daily through the land border crossings. Karkar's houses have become open for free to house Sudanese brothers, especially the owners of large families that include children, women and the elderly, and try to provide living necessities inside the house from beds, furniture, household appliances and electricity, so that the Sudanese citizen can live by nature as if he were in his country completely.

The Sudanese Sheikh Karrar Al-Hussein said, in a press statement, that "the neighboring countries closed their borders with Sudan, except Egypt that was the refuge and safe haven for us. So, immediately we went to the Arqin crossing on the Egyptian border, and there we found every welcome from Egyptian officials, after we traveled the distance from Arqin to Abu Simbel and from there to Aswan in (5) hours, a distance that takes (3) hours only due to congestion on the international road Abu Simbel / Aswan. There we found feelings overflowing and the popular welcome, and the people of Aswan brought us together with them bonds of kinship and blood. So, I would like to thank the Egyptians and President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi and his men who facilitated difficult and provided treatment for patients who were weakened by the long hours of travel from Khartoum and then the city of Dongola and Halfa took us (48) hours by bus and with us women and children. We felt comfortable, safe and reassured upon our arrival in Aswan.

Furthermore, the Governor of Aswan issued his directives to provide cars to transport passengers coming from Sudan, starting from Karkar International

Station to the main railway station in Aswan in order to facilitate their movement and prevent land transport companies from exploiting them. He stresses that coordination has also been made with the heads of the Passports and Customs Authorities to intensify the number of employees specialized in the Arqin International Land Crossing to facilitate arrivals across the Egyptian-Sudanese border and complete entry procedures as soon as possible.

C) Yemeni Migrants:

Yemeni migrants in Egypt played an important role in the history of Egyptian society. Before the civil war in Yemen, there were close ties between Egypt and Yemen, as Yemenis came to Egypt for work, study or visit, and Egypt was an attractive center for Yemeni immigrants because of the job and education opportunities available there. In addition, Egypt's geographical location made it located on the main migration routes between Yemen and other regions in the region.

Before the civil war in Yemen, there was a strong presence of Yemeni migrants in Egypt. Yemenis used to come to Egypt for various reasons including work, education and visit. On the other side, Yemeni migrants have had a significant impact on their communities in Egypt and are contributing to the economic and cultural life of the country. There were also close ties between Egypt and Yemen that were strengthened through the exchange of cultures, customs and traditions between the two sides.

Yemeni migrants in Egypt have been affected greatly by the civil war in Yemen. Many Yemeni migrants have been forced to flee conflict and violence in their country and seek safe haven in Egypt, and they have faced significant challenges and difficulties in Egypt, where they have lost jobs, fixed accommodation and proper education for their children. These difficult conditions have caused a decline in the standard of living for Yemeni migrants and increased pressure on them to look for ways to survive and coexist in Egypt.

The devastating conflict in Yemen since 2015 has resulted in a severe economic and humanitarian crisis and the displacement of millions of Yemenis, most of whom – about 3.65 million – remained inside Yemen while many were displaced to other countries, such as Egypt, Sudan, Djibouti, Jordan, Malaysia and Somalia, in search of safety.

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According to the Yemeni embassy in Cairo, the number of Yemeni residents in Egypt ranges between (500) and (700) thousand, which is a significant increase compared to their number before the outbreak of the war, as it was only about (70) thousand. However, the number of Yemenis registered as refugees or asylum seekers with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is only (9,200).

Many Yemenis displaced from the war live in Egypt as residents with residency permits and are not registered as refugees or asylum seekers for a variety of reasons, such as wanting to retain the ability to return to Yemen at will. UNHCR routinely conducts the process of determining asylum for Yemenis in Egypt unless it considers resettlement or if their file needs further scrutiny, so most Yemenis registered with UNHCR are classified as asylum seekers rather than refugees. For the purposes of this report, all Yemenis registered with UNHCR are referred to as refugees.

Yemenis in Egypt hail from different parts of Yemen and belong to different social classes and cultural backgrounds, and most of them live in Cairo, on the western side of the Nile River, in what is officially known as Giza, specifically in the neighborhoods of Faisal, Ard al-Liwa, Mohandessin, and Dokki. Some Yemeni families also live in areas far from the city center, such as 6th of October City.

➤ **Education**

Since 2013, the Egyptian government has allowed Yemeni children to study in Egyptian schools for the same fees paid by Egyptian students. Before that, Yemenis could only study in Egyptian public schools if one of their parents received a scholarship to study at an Egyptian public university. The first Yemeni school in Egypt was established in 2017, and Cairo currently hosts three private Yemeni schools, teaching Yemeni curricula, two in the Mohandessin and one in Al-Haram. The Egyptian Ministry of Education does not accredit these schools, but they do have accreditation from the Ministry of Education in Yemen

➤ **Health**

After 26 September 1962 revolution, Yemenis began to travel to Egypt to receive medical care at an increasing pace, it was a relatively easy process as Egypt did not require visas for Yemenis at the time, and it was also one of the cheapest options for treatment abroad. Cairo's hospitals also provided generally better medical care than Yemen.

This tradition continued during the war, with Yemenis coming to Egypt to receive treatment for chronic diseases, such as cancer or liver disease, as

hospitals in Yemen, which are in a difficult situation, are not equipped to treat them. Yemenis injured in the war and fighting also go to Cairo hospitals for treatment, as Traveling to Egypt by medical visa is one of the most common ways for Yemenis to reach Cairo since the new measures were imposed on Yemenis.

➤ Daily living conditions

Egypt is a "gathering point" for hundreds of war-driven Yemeni families to meet their members from other countries in Europe and America in Egypt. For them, it is the right place for families to gather during the holiday seasons and to hold weddings for their sons and daughters, especially after the administration of former US President Donald Trump prevented Yemenis from bringing their relatives to American soil.

Some of these cases are not without the desire of some Yemeni families residing in the West to bring their young children to reside or spend periods to learn Islamic culture and the Arabic language in a moderate and moderate cultural environment where Egypt seems to be the best place for this.

The chain of Yemeni restaurants and cafes spread throughout Cairo, especially in Dokki and Manial that are the most prominent address of the Yemeni presence in Egypt, where the demand of Egyptians and Arabs is increasing remarkably. It is sometimes almost equal to its Yemeni customers, and Egyptians constitute most of its workers, and some of them seemed fluent in the Yemeni dialect in their communication with customers and also try to learn the arts of diverse Yemeni cuisine.

What is noticeable in these restaurants is that their meals combine all Yemeni cuisine dishes from Sana'a to Aden and from Hadramawt to Hodeidah.

The most important element in the Yemeni scene today in Egypt is the presence of modern Yemeni books and publications on the facades and shelves of Egyptian book fairs and libraries, from which they go to other Arab exhibitions, while Yemen's libraries lack them, and most of them are deprived of lovers of knowledge in it due to the current circumstances.

Some Yemeni publishing houses were recently established in Cairo that operate through limited headquarters, but are expanding their publications locally, regionally, and internationally, the most important of which is "Arwaqa" House, which seeks to issue about a hundred titles this year, especially in the fields of studies, research and translation into Arabic from several foreign languages.

D) Libyan migrants

A report by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) showed that since 2011, a large number of Libyans have fled the country, and Egypt has been one of the main destinations due to its close location and similarity in language and culture, with the number of Libyans in Egypt reaching about one million.

Hundreds of thousands of Libyans fled to Egypt after the killing of the former president Muammar Gaddafi on 20 October 2011. As many of them were accused of having participated in fighting for the pro-Gaddafi forces in 2011, or they publicly expressed their support for him. So, they fled to Egypt to survive themselves, due to the instability of the situation in the Libya after the spread of looting and killings and the control of armed militias on matters in Libya and the expansion of arrests and political assassinations of former political figures Those in the Libyan Republic and abroad.

The situation of Libyan refugees in Egypt is completely different from the situation of any political refugee; Egyptians always deal with Libyans as if they were their brothers. Before the revolution, Libyans used to come to Egypt to invest in it and buy real estate to live in, and one of the most important investments that Libyans have been interested in is investment in the media and artistic field. As they know that Egypt has many artistic talents and is strongly distinguished in this field, and there were many Libyan-Egyptian partnership in the artistic field, including Shaa Art Company, which was a Libyan production on Egyptian soil.

This illustrates the keenness of the General Authority for Investment and Free Zones in Egypt to prepare an integrated program for trainees from Libyan expatriates, which included providing a general idea of the authority and its institutional development, and introducing the tasks of all departments of the investment services complex, which include the land system and licenses, as well as technical government services, legal services, establishing companies and customer service, and presenting the investment opportunities available in Egypt.

Libyan investments are one of the most important and prominent effective investments in the Egyptian economy, as there are about (630) companies carrying Libyan contributions in Egypt, worth about (13) billion dollars now.

The number of members of the Libyan community in Egypt exceeded more than one million Libyans, and they participate individually and collectively in many Egyptian campaigns to support the economy and promote slums, some

of whom participated in the campaign of the artist Mohamed Sobhi to develop slums and also some of them donated large sums of money to the account of the "Support Egypt" fund.

On the other hand, there are great fears among the Libyan community, especially those who came to Egypt for political reasons after the overthrow of the regime of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, from returning to their country for fear of prosecution. As some of them belong to the former regime in Libya and others have previously declared their support for the Gaddafi regime, which makes their return to their country in the current circumstances difficult, if not impossible.

Therefore, many members of the Libyan community in Egypt prefer not to return to their country even though there is no prosecution for them, and prefer to live in Egypt away from the conflicts in Libya.

E) Iraqis migrants:

Iraqi migration to Egypt is an ancient and complex phenomenon that requires a thorough analysis of many aspects. Iraqis are migrating to Egypt in search of better opportunities to live and work, whether due to difficult political conditions or economic crises in Iraq. The backgrounds of Iraqi immigration to Egypt include a variety of social, cultural and economic conditions, and Iraqi immigrants in Egypt are considered one of the largest Arab communities in the country, and form an integral part of the social, economic and cultural fabric in Egypt.

Iraqi immigration in Egypt goes back to the long and deep ties between the two countries. Since ancient times, there has been a cultural and economic exchange between Iraq and Egypt. These bilateral relations also existed in many areas, such as trade, culture, education and diplomacy. Between Iraq and Egypt, as well as a deep friendship and close cooperation throughout the ages, which has led to a large presence of Iraqis in Egypt throughout the ages.

The historical relations between Iraq and Egypt date back to ancient times, when there was cultural and commercial exchange between the two countries. Throughout the ages, there has been close friendship and cooperation between the two peoples. Historically, Iraq and Egypt are Arab countries with a long history and rich cultural heritage, and through bilateral relations between Iraq and Egypt, there are important developments in various fields such as culture, trade, education, science and the arts.

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One of the main reasons is the political and economic situation in Iraq, where the country has experienced economic and security difficulties in recent decades. In addition, many Iraqis are looking for employment and education opportunities in Egypt, as Egypt is considered an ideal destination due to its rich cultural history and social and political stability. The historical relations between the two countries and the close communication between the two peoples also reinforced these reasons.

The Important periods of Iraqi migration in Egypt indicate a continuous presence of Iraqis in Egypt throughout the ages. However, some periods saw a heavy influx of Iraqis to Egypt, especially during the wars and conflicts in Iraq. For example, during the Iran-Iraq War and the Kuwait War, many Iraqis sought refuge in Egypt for safety and stability. Since then, Iraqis have continued to be present in Egypt on a regular basis.

Egyptian society has been affected by Iraqi immigration in many ways. One of the main impacts is the economic and commercial impact, as Iraqis contribute to the revitalization of the Egyptian economy through investments and business. In addition, Iraqis make an important cultural contribution to Egyptian society by exchanging experiences, knowledge, customs and traditions. Iraqis also play a role in strengthening cultural and artistic ties between Iraq and Egypt. At the same time, Egyptian society faces social and cultural challenges in coexistence and cultural understanding with Iraqis.

The formation of the Iraqi community in Egypt dates back to the first wave of Iraqi migration to Egypt after the Iraqi revolution on 14 July 1958, which included some Iraqi politicians, but it was not of a large size. After 2003, its numbers doubled significantly. However, the estimates of the number of Iraqi immigrants varied in the absence of official statistics, and the reason why it is difficult to count the number of Iraqi refugees for political or humanitarian reasons is that some Iraqis have entered Egyptian territory on tourist visas that expire within a specified period, but they have continued to settle illegally, and have lived and adapted relatively, due to the convergence between the cultural system of the Iraqi and Egyptian societies..

➤ **Iraqi refugees**

When we talk about Iraqi refugees, we are referring to people who have been forced to leave their country because of persecution and armed conflict. Iraq is one of the countries that has witnessed internal conflicts and long wars that have affected the lives of many. Iraqi refugees face many challenges in the

search for safety and a decent life in the countries where they are seeking refuge.

Various countries and international organizations provide support and assistance to meet the needs of Iraqi refugees, however, the problem still requires comprehensive and sustainable solutions to achieve a better future for these refugees and improve their living conditions.

Egypt witnessed four waves of Iraqi immigration, the first after the Iraqi revolution in 1958. The second wave occurred with the Iraqi-Iranian war (1980-1988) and the third was after the first Gulf War in 1991, in light of the collapse of economic conditions, followed by a fourth wave with the large displacement after the US invasion of Iraq in 2003.

There are no official figures on the number of Iraqis in Egypt, between a few thousand according to the UNHCR and tens of thousands according to unofficial estimates. However, it is certain that these numbers have declined significantly during the past recent years due to the relative security and political stability in Iraq, which prompted many Mesopotamian immigrants to return to the motherland.

The Iraqi community in Egypt, one of the oldest and largest Arab communities that settled on Egyptian Land during the past two decades, did not find it difficult to integrate into Egyptian society in light of the strong relations and mutual love that bind the two peoples, after tens of thousands of Mesopotamian fled to escape the scourge of war and destruction. It did not take the Iraqis long to learn about the map of Egyptian society, which helped them to assimilate early into it, whether through the old relations that unite them or the marriage and lineage, in addition to the economic entanglement through investment projects launched by Iraqis in many Egyptian cities.

A decade and a half spent by Iraqis in Egypt under the name of "refugees", but they succeeded in the rapid fusion of society, and proved their strong capabilities as key partners in supporting the locomotive of the economy, stressing that the adjective "asylum" is only a descriptive name that has nothing to do with the reality practiced on the ground.

In general, the Iraqis were able to make a big boom in the Egyptian economic market, especially real estate, as the capital they pumped succeeded in moving the stagnant waters in this investment field, which was suffering from a

significant decline due to the scarcity of liquidity and the state of inflation that was hanging over the atmosphere.

➤ **Living conditions**

The Iraqi community in Egypt chose special places, most notably the city of Rehab, the 6th of October in Cairo, and the cities of Mansoura and Alexandria (north of Cairo), and transferred with them part of the social and cultural heritage of Iraq. His arts emerged on the streets, food and drinks became part of life in those neighborhoods, and the Egyptians knew bread and falafel Baghdadi and Dolma and Kebab rice and Saray.

Iraqis in Egypt have experienced an alternative homeland, enriching and being influenced and leaving clear imprints on Egyptian society behaviorally, intellectually and culturally, helped by the fact that Egyptians are able to deal with all nationalities, and have a social willingness to accept the other, whatever his culture, a societal advantage that has made Egypt a suitable place for millions of Arabs in recent years.

An Iraqi character, where passers-by stop shops and cafes that have taken Iraqi names have characterized some neighborhoods of the city. In addition to markets and schools that are characterized by a remarkable Iraqi density. Part of the Iraqis work in the management of small factories, commercial companies and restaurants, as well as technical work in the field of satellite TV, in the preparation, presentation and output, and some resorted to buying apartments and shops, and only rented them and obtained the proceeds.

Iraqis believe that Egypt is one of the countries where they do not feel alienated, and prefer to reside in Egypt as refugees, although they do not receive salaries from the United Nations, while Iraqi refugees in Europe receive fixed grants. This is due to their harmony and preference for the customs of Egyptian society over Western societies.

3) Egyptian efforts to provide care and protection for refugees:

We would like to point out that the cost of hosting 9 million refugees in Egypt amounts to more than (10) billion dollars annually. The Egyptian government also bears this cost despite the economic crisis that Egypt is suffering from.

Egypt hosts a diverse community of refugees and asylum seekers; the majority come from countries in protracted crises. The Egyptian Government maintains its unwavering commitment to ensuring that the needs of all refugees and asylum-seekers, regardless of nationality, are met, while also strengthening the resilience of host communities. Egypt attaches great

importance to the tripartite relationship, which seeks to enhance cooperation and cohesion between humanitarian, development and peace efforts.

Egypt's geographical location and the political situation in a number of countries in the region have contributed to Egypt's transformation into a transit and destination country for refugees, who enjoy various basic services.

➤ **At Domestic Level:**

Refugees enjoy basic services like Egyptian citizens, like freedom of movement in light of the Egyptian state's adoption of a policy based on not establishing camps or detention centers for refugees or asylum seekers. In addition, although Egypt is one of the countries receiving the lowest levels of funding to cover the needs of refugees, it continues to provide all basic services enjoyed by Egyptian citizens in various sectors.

As for the field of health, the executive regulations of Law No. (2) of 2018 on universal health insurance stipulated the inclusion of foreigners residing in Egypt and refugees in the comprehensive health insurance system. Many health campaigns have been expanded to include refugees and asylum seekers, such as the "100 million health" campaign to detect and treat hepatitis C virus, the anti-polio campaign, and the campaign to detect obesity and stunting among primary school students.

As for the field of education, children from Arab countries benefit from educational services and the right to attend public schools without discrimination between them and Egyptian citizens.

➤ **At Regional Level:**

Egypt was keen during the year of its presidency of the African Union to submit concrete and implementable proposals on the situation of refugees at the First Global Forum for Refugees and the Aswan International Forum for Peace and Development. As well as its accession to the Organization of African Unity Convention Governing the Various Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa of 1969.

It has also supported the efforts made within the framework of the League of Arab States to support refugee issues, through three strategies:

- The Arab Strategy for the Protection of Refugee Children in the Context of Asylum in the Arab Region, which was launched in 2019.
- The Arab Strategy for Protection from Sexual Violence in the Context of Asylum and Displacement

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- The Arab Strategy for Access to Public Health Services in the Context of Asylum and Displacement in the Arab Region.

➤ **At International Level:**

Egypt has acceded to the United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951 and the Optional Protocol of 1967, in addition to its active role in reaching the New York Declaration in 2016, which stressed the importance of supporting existing international mechanisms to enhance the protection of the rights of refugees.

In addition, Egypt joined the Global Compact on Refugees adopted by the United Nations in December 2018, and actively participated in the Global Refugee Forum held for the first time in Geneva in mid-December 2019.

Among the most prominent international praises for Egypt's policies towards refugees, as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) stressed that the protection environment for refugees in Egypt was characterized by stability, in light of the continued hospitality of Syrian refugees by the Egyptian government. The head of mission of the International Organization for Migration in Egypt, Laurent de Boeck, stated that Egypt always emphasizes exceptional attention and commitment to all those who are in Egypt.

Furthermore, the former representative of the World Health Organization in Egypt, John Jabbour, praised the inclusion of Egypt's guests in the 100 million-health campaign. The representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Egypt, Karim Atassi, praised the inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers in the presidential campaign "100 million health" to treat people with hepatitis C free on an equal basis with Egyptians.

A joint report by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the World Food Program (WFP) and the International Labor Organization (ILO) stressed the keenness of the Social Fund for Development to ensure the provision of financial and non-financial services to Egyptians and Syrian refugees alike.

➤ **Legislation and policies relating to refugees**

Egypt's national legislation rarely refers to refugees and asylum seekers in general, with the exception of Article 91 of the 2014 constitution, which states that Egypt will guarantee political asylum to non-citizen nationals who have been persecuted for defending human rights, peace and justice, and prohibits the extradition of refugees. Many of the rights granted to refugees under

international and regional laws are therefore more powerful than national laws.

It is worth noting that in June 2023, the Council of Ministers approved a draft law to issue a foreigners' asylum law to regulate the asylum of foreigners, and to establish a committee to manage their affairs.

4) Section II: Refugee situation in Europe:

European countries have always been known as a symbol of democracy and human rights, but this is only theoretically, as there are some European countries that violate the rights of refugees who were forced by circumstances to flee their homelands in search of a shelter for them to. These violations varied between laws and legislation, tightening legal procedures, and sometimes up to racist and physical attacks. Perhaps the most prominent of these countries are: UK, France, Germany, Greece, Spain, and Turkey.

The attitudes of these hardline European countries regarding their handling of the refugee file and the imposition of many restrictions to prevent these refugees from reaching them can be understood through some international official statistics on the number of refugees.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, by the end of 2022, Europe hosted more than a third of the total refugees globally (36%). The number of refugees in European countries increased from (7) million at the end of 2021 to (12.4) million at the end of 2022, as millions of refugees from Ukraine sought safety in neighboring countries, and Germany is the second largest refugee-hosting country in the European region, after Turkey, hosting nearly (2.1) million. Refugee by the end of 2022.

According to the EU Asylum Agency, the number of asylum seekers in EU countries has increased over the past two years. In 2022, their number reached about one million people, and in the first half of 2023, asylum applications increased, by (28%), compared to the same period last year. Moreover, Syrians, Afghans, Venezuelans, Turks and Colombians constitute the main asylum seekers with (44%) of applications, and about (519) thousand asylum applications were submitted between January and June, and asylum applications were the highest in the first half of this period of the year since 2015-2016.

The agency indicated that Germany received the largest number of applications with (30%) of the total, then Spain (17%) and France (16%), due to the exposure of many European countries "under pressure to decide on

these applications". While the number of files awaiting resolution increased by (34%) in 2022, and the response came positively to about (41%) of applications in the first phase.

The cases of refusal of asylum and immigration within these European countries are related to procedural matters related to the application, in addition to the exertion of pressure by some parties and politicians belonging to the extreme right on the government. Thus the emergence of a trend among some Europeans rejecting the issue of the flow of migrants and refugees to their countries.

Therefore, the situation of refugees in these six countries: UK, France, Germany, Greece, Spain and Turkey and how they are treated will be addressed.

A) United Kingdom:

In 2022, UK recorded a record number of refugees, according to the World Bank, the number of refugees reached about (382,989) people, while the number of immigrants, according to the British Office for National Statistics, reached about (606) thousand people.

In August 2023, the Ministry of Interior announced that the number of asylum applications pending a decision reached a record level, about (175,457) people who were awaiting a preliminary decision at the end of last June, an increase of (44%) over the same period last year, when the number of pending applications reached (122,213) applications.

Also, there was an increase in the number of people waiting for more than (6) months for a preliminary decision on their applications. The number of these people reached (139,961) people in June 2023, the highest in nearly 20 years, an increase of (57%), compared to the same month of 2022 when the number of these people reached (89,231) people.

The latest figures showed that around 90% of those who arrived in the UK on small boats between June 2022 and the same month in 2023 sought asylum.

In January 2024, the Ministry of Interior announced that the government had fulfilled the pledge made by Prime Minister Rishi Sunak in December 2022 to end the backlog of 92,000 asylum cases by the end of 2023.

It confirmed that more than (112) thousand asylum cases were dealt with in 2023, and the rate of granting asylum was (67%), which is lower than the 2022 level of (76%).

➤ **Asylum conditions in the UK**

Despite the many advantages of obtaining refugee status in the UK, there are a number of disadvantages that cannot be overcome, including:

- Difficulty in accessing asylum procedures:
 - ✓ Many refugees and asylum seekers suffer from a lack of legal support that can help them understand the procedures and submit their applications correctly.
 - ✓ Access to immigration and asylum offices may require long commutes or costly public transport, and this poses an additional barrier for people who may have limited resources.
- Long delays in processing asylum applications:
 - ✓ Although the asylum seeker is given the regular acknowledgment letter, which is a temporary replacement for the ARC registration application card, it is only valid for a maximum of 60 days. While the asylum procedure also includes appeals, additional legal proceedings in the event that the initial application is rejected, this procedure requires additional time to consider appeals, and legal reviews, which leads to a delay in obtaining a final decision, which may expose the asylum seeker to deportation in any Time.
 - ✓ There is usually a specific period for submitting an asylum application and a review and appeal procedure, asylum seekers must adhere to the specified deadlines and time limits, otherwise this may lead to the rejection of the asylum application or further complicate the procedures.
 - ✓ Upon arrival in the UK, the asylum seeker must obtain a British visa from the British Embassy, and it is important to know that this requirement is not limited to Britain only, but applies to all countries that have signed the Dublin Regulation.
 - ✓ A refugee who may be granted asylum in the UK must be aware that this right is granted to him for only three years. At the end of this period, he can be returned to his country of origin, although individuals in this case may not be eligible for permanent residence in the UK.

➤ **Examples of the repercussions of delayed processing of asylum claims:**

The delay in processing asylum seekers' claims, while they remain in notorious detention centers, has affected the health and psychological conditions of asylum seekers, as:

- ✓ According to Liberty Investigates and the Scottish Refugee Council, between 2016 and August 2022, at least 140 asylum seekers died while waiting in government-provided accommodation, including 21 suicidal deaths, with the total number of deaths rising to a record high from 4 in 2019 to 38 in 2020, 48 in 2021, and 27 by the end of August 2022.

- ✓ British humanitarian associations and organizations documented a number of suicide attempts among asylum seekers, ranging from actual attempts to suicidal ideation. A poll showed that 87% reported suicidal thoughts or self-harming tendencies, according to Medical Justice.

➤ **Immigration and Asylum Law:**

The British government has taken strict policies in the file of immigration and asylum, through legislation and legal mechanisms in dealing with the file of refugees and illegal immigrants, due to the continuous increase in the number of refugees in the country, with the delay in deciding on old asylum applications.

The new Immigration and Asylum Act "Safety of Rwanda" is a milestone in Britain's immigration and asylum policy, as it will prevent anyone arriving in the country illegally from seeking asylum, and will be deported either to their home country or to the so-called safe third countries, namely Rwanda, which the British government has long criticized until 2021 for "extrajudicial killings, deaths in custody, enforced disappearances, and torture".

Theoretically, the law would send some migrants to the UK to Rwanda where their asylum application would be considered, and if their application was accepted, they would remain in Rwanda, and if it was rejected, Rwanda could not deport them anywhere other than the UK, although it is unclear what would eventually happen in this scenario.

One of the objectives of the law would be to prevent entry to the UK for those who do not hold a visa, which would allow immediate deport without the need for a long wait before the courts, and allow the government to withdraw the nationality from people without their knowledge, if the government believes they are eligible for it elsewhere.

Its worth noting that as of April 2023, sending Rwandan migrants had cost the British government £220 million (\$274 million), rising to £665 million after sending the first 300 people to East Africa. According to official government figures, it would cost around £170,000 (a pound equals \$1.29) on average to deport a single refugee to the African country.

Therefore, the law has come under a series of criticisms, particularly from rights groups, because it violates Article 31 of the 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention, which states that it does not matter whether a refugee enters the country of asylum legally or illegally, and that states

cannot impose penalties on refugees for crossing borders illegally when seeking protection.

B) France:

According to the World Bank, France hosted about 612,934 refugees in 2022, which was confirmed by the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons (OFFRA), in its annual report, that France exceeded the threshold of half a million refugees on its territory at the end of 2022, with more than 56,000 asylum applications accepted last year.

In January 2024, the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless (OFPR) confirmed that it had received "142,500 applications for international protection, including 123,400 asylum applications for the first time" during 2023, an unprecedented level of asylum applications in France, representing an increase of 8%, which is lower than the European average of 15 to 20%. Furthermore, Afghans come with more than 17,500 asylum seekers, followed by Bangladesh (8,600), Turkey (8,500), the Democratic Republic of Congo (8,000) and Guinea (7,000).

➤ **Conditions for asylum in France:**

Although there are many advantages after asylum in France, there are some disadvantages and disadvantages that refugees in France suffer from, which are:

- The asylum process in France is very long and complex, ranging from several months to years.
- Waiting in reception centers or makeshift camps for a large period due to the increase in the number of applications submitted by refugees, and at the same time, sometimes reception centers lack resources and provide health care and social support.
- ✓ Conditions for receiving asylum seekers in France have been criticized by various human rights organizations. Despite efforts to improve these conditions, many reception centers are overcrowded, under-resourced, and fail to provide adequate health care and social support. This inadequate infrastructure and limited assistance can exacerbate the already difficult conditions faced by individuals seeking asylum.
- Exposure to the risk of arrest and deportation while awaiting a response to asylum claims.
- ✓ While waiting for their asylum claims to be processed, asylum seekers in France are at risk of detention and possible deportation: detention centers, while designed for short stays, have faced criticism for inadequate living conditions and concerns about the treatment of detainees.

➤ **Examples of delayed processing of asylum claims:**

✓ On 24 December 2022, 54-year-old Tunisian migrant Hadi, was still looking to regularize his legal status and was seeking residency papers in France, even though he arrived there 23 years ago. Although he submitted all the required documents to the immigration department, the French authorities did not grant him residency, which left him in a state of depression and mental disorders.

Hadi said: "10 years after I arrived in France, I submitted a complete file with all the required papers, and I hoped very much at the time to take advantage of the right of seniority stipulated by law to enjoy permanent residency, but the authorities handed me an administrative receipt valid for only three months".

He continued: "The competent department of the French police continued to renew the permit every 3 months for two years without any significant progress on my residence application". He pointed out: "When I objected to this complex situation, the police officer in the province arrogantly replied: If you do not like this situation, you can return to your country or we will deport you at any time".

He added: "I changed my address and submitted a new application and file, and after many procrastinations my file was rejected again".

✓ **An Algerian immigrant said:** "After more than 17 years in France, I returned to square one. I submitted my full file accompanied by the employment contract and payroll more than once and in several circles, but the answer was always rejected without justification, is there more than this injustice and oppression?", which made him think about suicide due to the blockage of the horizon in front of him. Although he works as a cook in a restaurant, enjoys a permanent contract with his employer, has a contract to rent a shop in his name as well, and speaks French well, all this did not intercede for him to obtain residency.

➤ **Immigration Law:**

Since 28 November 2012, migrants in France have been subject to the so-called "Valls Act", named after Interior Minister Manuel Valls under President François Hollande, which details the conditions for obtaining residency papers for irregular migrants.

The exceptional acceptance of regularization of the status of foreigners, who entered the country irregularly, provided for in the Law on the Entry and Residence of Foreigners and the Right to Asylum, is divided into two types of

residence permits, the first is called "private and family life", and the second includes employees and "wage earners".

Immigrants who want to obtain a residence permit "private and family" must prove by any means that they have been on French territory for at least 10 years.

As for the category of employees and wage earners, they must reside in France for at least 5 years, work 8 months for the past two years accompanied by payroll, or submit 24 payrolls during the five years, and they are also required to have a permanent employment contract for the current job or a promise of employment.

Until the French government published, on 26 January 2024, in the Official Gazette the official text of the new immigration law, which the National Assembly refused to discuss. However, the parliament formed a committee that responded directly to the demands made by the extreme right led by Marine Le Pen, who stated that the law represents an ideological victory for the National Front party. It endorses the principle of national preference that the extreme right has long advocated, and this means, as many French people see it, abandoning the principle of equality, which is the principle on which the French republic is based since the revolution, in addition to freedom and fraternity.

The philosophy of law views migrants and refugees as evils that must be reduced, which is inaccurate because they are an essential part of the backbone of economic life in France.

❖ **The most controversial changes in the law:**

a) Regularization of the status of illegal immigrants:

- Settlement was possible for anyone who worked illegally, and anyone whose services the labor market needed. The settlement is now conditional on three years of illegal residence and 12 months of work for the last two years.
- A one-year residence permit will be issued, provided that the worker has resided in France for at least three years and has a clean criminal record, and this concerns professions in which France suffers from labor shortages, such as construction, restaurants, social services, etc., and the decision excludes jobs for students and seasonal workers.
- In order to facilitate the asylum procedure, the law stipulates in Article 62 the establishment of offices under the name "France de la Asylum"

throughout France, and staff from the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless (OFPRA) will be present to process asylum applications for new arrivals in France.

b) Offence of illegal residence:

- Illegal residence will be considered a "criminal offence", punishable by a fine of 3,750 euros and a three-year ban on entry to the territory.
- Individuals under the age of 13 can also be deported upon arrival in France, and foreign parents whose children hold French nationality can be deported.
- Article 37 of the law facilitates the issuance of further orders to leave French territory (OQTF), especially for minors as young as 13 years. The Constitutional Council considered that there are sufficient guarantees to preserve the rights of migrants, because administrations must take into account the time the foreigner has spent on French territory, in addition to his association with France, without neglecting humanitarian considerations related to the status of the minor.

c) Deportation of delinquents:

- Previously, deportation measures only covered those who posed a threat to state security, especially after the expansion of the application of the terrorism law. In the new law, deportation procedures extend to those sentenced to ten years or more in prison in criminal cases.
- The new law gives the authorities more powers to expedite deportation procedures for some migrants and regularize the status of foreign workers in understaffed professions.

d) Obligation to leave French territory:

- The law ratifies the regulation of decisions for foreigners whose asylum has been rejected. Once the asylum application of a foreigner in an irregular situation is rejected by the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless (OFPRA), the administrative authority must issue a decision that he must leave French territory, unless the authorities decide to grant him the right of residence for another reason.
- This measure is accompanied by the suspension of medical care for foreigners whose right to asylum has been definitively denied.
- A foreigner cannot be accommodated within the emergency residency system, "while awaiting deportation", which is the case for many migrants who pass through camps in northern France, for example. A temporary exception will be provided in the event of a "serious condition to the point of preventing departure".

e) Social benefits/Aids:

- To enjoy social benefits/aids: family grant, housing grant and other benefits/grants, unemployed foreigners must prove their residence in France for at least 5 years, and the period is reduced to 30 months for workers, and assistance to persons with disabilities will not be affected by this measure. In the past, foreigners were entitled to this aid immediately.

f) Family reunification:

- The law tightens the conditions for family reunification, and the applicant must prove his residence on French territory for 24 months (compared to 18 previously), with the need for an adequate and regular source of income, and the minimum age of the spouse for family reunification has been raised to 21 years.
- To claim to join their families in France, people invited through family reunification must demonstrate "knowledge of the French language" that enables them to communicate in simple sentences.

g) Commitment to the "Principles of the Republic":

- The law allows the authorities to refuse to grant a residence permit to a foreigner, if he refuses to sign a "contract of commitment to respect the principles of the republic," in which he undertakes to respect "personal freedom, freedom of expression, equality between women and men, human dignity and the emblem and symbols of the republic," or if he exhibits behavior that he "does not respect his obligations".
- To grant a residence card (ten years) and to obtain French citizenship, foreigners must demonstrate a minimum level of knowledge of the French language.

h) National Court of Asylum:

- Concerning appeals of refusals by the Office for the Protection of Refugees (OFPR), it is mentioned under Article 70 that hearings can be held before the National Court of Asylum (CNDA) with only one judge (compared to three in the past).

Therefore, Several French associations defending the rights of migrants criticize what they describe as "indirectly imposing certain professions on migrants/refugees and supporting leaving them a large margin to change jobs".

They stressed that the new law will make "unconditional access to health care or social benefits, and family reunification, difficult for them in France". With regard to housing, for example, the law will delay access to housing benefits for unemployed migrants by five years, which could have an impact Too

much for them and their families, and may lead to homelessness, especially with the tightening of conditions for access to social assistance for unemployed migrants. Therefore, the essence of the new law is based on the logic of screening migrants, not on the logic of facilitating the procedures for receiving them for integration as the government claims.

In addition, France Land Asylum NGO, which operates more than 34 refugee centers in France, expressed concern that hundreds of migrants and asylum seekers, including children of minors, would leave shelters and return to streets and camps for fear of arrest, after learning that the Ministry of the Interior would send staff to count them and obtain full information on their legal status in France.

C) Germany:

Germany, Europe's largest economy, is the top destination for irregular migrants and asylum seekers arriving in the EU, and the situation has worsened following the Ukrainian refugee crisis over the Russian war in Ukraine.

Between January and August 2023, German authorities registered around 205,000 asylum applications as of the end of August, an increase of 77% from 2022, in addition to the 1.1 million Ukrainian refugees who found refuge in Ukraine.

However, that figure is well below 722,000 applications in the whole of 2016, as conflicts in countries such as Afghanistan and Syria have sparked a migration crisis in Europe.

According to the authorities, an estimated 280,000 foreign nationals currently reside in Germany without a valid residence permit and are forced to leave the country, and about 80% of them have been allowed to stay because the authorities have not been able to deport them for legal or status-related reasons. The number of migrants who can be deported immediately is approximately 54,000.

Also, Berlin alone saw the number of asylum seekers increase by 40% in the first eight months of 2023 compared to the previous one. It has registered more than 20,000 refugees, half of them from Ukraine and the rest mainly from Syria. In August alone, nearly two thousand non-Ukrainian asylum-seekers arrived at the first registration center in Berlin.

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In 2023, more than 351,000 people applied for asylum in Germany, and the percentage of Syrian applicants is estimated at 31.3%. Thus, Syria topped the largest number of initial applications for 2023 with more than 102,000 initial applications, an increase of about 45% from 2022, according to the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees in Germany (BMAF).

By the end of June 2023, the number of those who have to leave Germany has reached 279,000, of whom about 225,000 have obtained "tolerant residency" according to the German Interior, and the rest must leave immediately.

According to official data of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, the nationalities of asylum seekers in Germany for the year 2023 concern the nationalities of Muslim-majority countries, the first is Syria with more than 71,000 applications, then Afghanistan with about 40,000, then Turkey with about 35,000, then Iraq with about 8600, and Iran with about 7700.

Statistics on 11 January 2023, show that from the beginning of January to the end of December 2022, (217,774) people sought protection in Germany, representing an increase of more than (47%) compared to 2021, in which (145,233) asylum applications were submitted. Most of those seeking protection in 2022 came from Syria (70,976), Afghanistan (36,358), Turkey (23,938), Iraq, and Georgia. Of these initial applications, 24,791 relate to children born in Germany under the age of one.

The number of Syrian refugees is estimated at 923,000 asylum seekers by the end of 2022, according to the Federal Statistical Office in Germany.

Over the past years, the rate of rejection of asylum applications was large, reaching about 48% in 2022, while in 2021 it reached 61%. The figures show that the rejection rate among Iraqis reached 53.86%, and among Turks 51%, while it was almost non-existent among Afghans and Syrians, and here the conditions of the country play a major role in whether or not to accept.

Nevertheless, despite the conditions of war and instability, Germany deported in 2021 and 2022 about 1,100 Syrians, 471 Iraqis, and nearly 12,000 Afghans, in addition to 665 Algerians, 199 Moroccans, and 284 Tunisians, according to data from the German parliament. While European countries from the Caucasus and Balkan regions remain in the lead due to the existence of reception agreements for deportees with them.

➤ **Conditions for asylum in Germany:**

Despite the advantages that Germany offers to refugees, there are some disadvantages to keep in mind:

- Refugees have to wait a long time, as refugees in Germany can suffer from formal procedures such as determining the address or registration of residence, health insurance, residence, and other transactions, as well as the refugee may be summoned for interrogation by the German Federal Agency for Migration and Refugees, which may lead to delays in refugees' access to asylum.
- Refugees may have to live in overcrowded shelters and in inadequate conditions, where refugees are housed in the camp for 3 to 12 months until their asylum application is considered by acceptance or rejection, and they may face racial discrimination, especially in housing and employment, as well as threats of extremist violence.
- Exposure to certain restrictions in travel and movement within Germany or travel to other countries, either due to residency restrictions or due to financial challenges.
- Germany does not give most people from Syria and Iraq a Schengen visa, because it knows that the purpose of the visa is asylum, not tourism.

➤ **Legal mechanisms and procedures in dealing with refugees:**

The high number of refugees has caused a resurgence of far-right rhetoric and calls for a halt to the admission of more refugees, and in the face of mounting pressure from right wing parties, including the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), the government has been forced to admit that Germany can no longer absorb additional refugees. Therefore, it is necessary to combat illegal immigration, and the Government has adopted a new package of measures that tighten restrictions against immigration and establish new controls on the admission, reception and integration of asylum seekers, **the most important of which are:**

a) The passage of a law in 2017;

The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) is allowed to check the phones of asylum seekers without prior permission to determine their identities and nationalities – including children – if they do not have the ability to obtain identity papers. However, some asylum seekers with identification papers were forced to surrender their phones for testing.

Under the law, German authorities can check the mobile phones of asylum seekers who cannot present a valid passport upon arrival in order to verify the identity information provided.

The law also aims to prevent "abuse of asylum", according to authorities. Because many of those who arrive in Germany after fleeing their countries of origin cannot present a valid passport or official documents

proving their identity and nationality, searching their phones has been deemed an "effective way" to detect "fraudulent attempts".

b) Reduction the extension of financial assistance for migrants/refugees:

Each foreigner arrived at an initial reception center, was fed and housed, and received 182 euros (\$194) in cash a month to "meet his or her essential personal needs".

The new strict measures prevent asylum-seekers from sending this amount to their country of origin by introducing a card that allows migrants to buy what they need from shops, so that this amount is credited to this card, thus knowing how the refugee disposes of this amount.

After leaving the initial reception center, asylum-seekers are usually distributed over several dwellings and receive monthly sums of money (410 euros per person and 738 euros per couple) over the course of 18 months, an amount that increases after the expiration of this deadline (502 euros per person and 902 euros per couple).

The new tightening also provides for a longer waiting period for the monthly increase for up to 36 months, as previously asylum seekers, after being distributed over several dwellings, received monthly sums of money of up to 410 euros per person and 738 euros per couple, after which they increased to 502 euros per person and 902 euros per couple..

c) Strengthening border checks with Austria, the Czech Republic, Poland and Switzerland, with a view to limiting the access of foreigners to its territory, as well as speeding up the examination of asylum applications for a six-month appeal to the Court.

In October 2023, the German government launched temporary border checks at crossings with Poland and the Czech Republic, halted the voluntary admission of refugees from Italy, and announced plans to tighten deportation laws, which could lead to irregular imprisonments of migrants.

d) On 14 September 2023, the German government announced that it was freezing a voluntary agreement with Italy to receive irregular migrants and asylum seekers. The German government accused Rome of "failing to fulfill its obligations" under the "Dublin Regulation" on the regulation of asylum to EU countries, which states that "migrants' asylum applications must be evaluated in the European country where they first arrive, not in the place where they end up".

e) On 20 May 2023, the German government proposed the need to reform the European asylum system, by granting governments the power to prevent

refugees from entering European territory in case of rejection of their applications and deport them to safe third countries, with the establishment of transit centers in which the refugee is placed and is legally considered outside Europe, which means that it is difficult for him to appeal the decision to reject his asylum application except once, which is for it an opportunity for an organized and humane distribution of refugees among the countries of the bloc.

German Family Affairs Minister Lisa Paus also indicated that the German plan proposes to exclude unaccompanied minors and families with children under 18 years of age from cross-border asylum procedures.

f) On 18 January 2024, the German parliament "Bundestag" approved a series of measures to tighten the country's immigration and asylum policy, through the enactment of legislation aimed at facilitating the deportation of rejected asylum seekers and increasing the length of their detention, **whereby:**

- **The German government estimates that the package of measures will increase deportations of asylum seekers from Germany by about 600 additional deportations annually.**
- **The measures give police significant powers to carry out deportations, such as group housing searches for those whose asylum claims have been rejected, and not prior notification of scheduled deportations of those who have been "tolerated" (i.e., suspension of deportation) unless they have children under 12, who must be informed one month in advance.**
- **It also extends the maximum period of detention upon departure from 10 days to 28 days, so that detained deportees are prevented from escaping, and the authorities are given sufficient time for the deportation process, as well as the rapid expulsion of smugglers, as well as those who commit serious crimes, including so-called "Arab gang members".**

In remarks on the matter, German Interior Minister Nancy Weiser said the new measures were aimed at facilitating the deportation of illegal refugees more quickly and effectively, adding: "We will make sure that people who are not entitled to stay in our country are forced to leave more quickly".

She pointed out, "Applying the current immigration policy more strictly led to a 27% increase in deportations of asylum seekers in 2023, with 16,430 illegal immigrants deported from the country".

D) Greece:

The number of refugees in Greece has fluctuated, sometimes witnessing an unprecedented rise, and at other times witnessing a significant decline.

On 13 April 2024, the Greek Ministry of Immigration announced that the number of asylum seekers trying to enter the country from Turkey decreased significantly during the month of March, noting that congestion in the identification centers, registration and residence of expatriates continued to decrease.

It revealed that (2231) migrants arrived from Turkey illegally in March 2024, a decrease of about (42%) compared to the previous February. While the total decrease, compared to September 2023, exceeded about (80%), and this number does not include arrivals from eastern Libya, where the number of these asylum seekers reached (333) migrants last March, down from (528) in the previous February.

The total figures for arrivals by sea and land issued by UNHCR confirm this downward trend, as the UNHCR recorded, in March 2024, the arrival of (2,568) migrants by land and sea, compared to (4,282) last February, while (11,650) migrants were registered in September 2023, representing a total decrease of about (78%) between September 2023 and March 2024.

The total number of third-country nationals residing in the 33 registration centers across Greece fell to 23,245 in March from 27,554 in February, 15.6%. Compared to January 2024, when the number of residents in asylum centers reached 31,367, the decrease was (25.9%).

The number of refugees and migrants arriving in Greece by sea more than doubled in 2023, compared to the same period in 2022, according to data from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Data dating back to the period between 1 December and 13 August 2023, showed that (10,790) refugees and migrants arrived in Greece by sea routes. During the same period in 2022, the number of sea arrivals did not reach (5,216) migrants, and most of the arrivals came from the Palestinian territories (1,394), followed by Afghans (717 migrants), Somalis (636 migrants), Syrians (516 migrants), and finally Eritreans (536 migrants).

That is, the same percentages recorded in 2022 are repeated in 2023 in the same order, when 943 Palestinian immigrants, 832 Afghan immigrants, 805 Somali immigrants, and 508 Syrian immigrants arrived in Greece last year. At the same time, the number of refugees and migrants arriving by land during the first eight months of 2023 reached (3,538) migrants.

While the total arrivals in 2022 reached (6022) migrants, but the number of refugees and migrants who died trying to cross in 2023 is much higher, as according to UNHCR data, the number of drowned and missing on the eastern roads of the Mediterranean reached (693) people until August 15, compared to (343) people during 2022.

According to the World Bank, in 2022, the number of refugees in Greece reached 160,761. On 7 January 2022, according to UNHCR data, (4109) migrants were able to reach the Greek islands from Turkey last year, compared to (9714) migrants in 2020, and (60) thousand in 2021, and at the height of the migration crisis in 2015, the number reached (856,723) in 2019.

At the end of 2021, the Greek refugee services confirmed a clear decrease in the number of refugees and migrants residing on the Greek islands in the eastern Aegean. According to Greek circles, the total number of refugees is about 3,503 migrants living in the camps of, Chios, Samos, Leros and Kos. According to previous statistics, the number of migrants there was still about 17,000 in December, of which 7,100 live on the island of alone.

According to statistics, Greeks consider immigrants to be the biggest problem in the country. About 76% of Greeks are critical of the government's policy towards the refugee crisis.

➤ **Conditions for asylum in Greece:**

- Although in the asylum interview, there is an opportunity to explain the reasons that forced the refugee to leave his country and why they cannot return and will determine whether they will be granted asylum in Greece or not, it is impossible to predict in advance how long the final decision will wait. There is no rule regarding the length of the interview, some interviews are concise (about one hour), and some interviews are very long (more than 6 hours). Therefore, the interview can be very stressful for the applicant, and it is possible after a long period of waiting or during the interview that the asylum application is finally rejected.
- If a refugee misses the interview and fails to justify his absence with a valid certificate, such as a medical certificate or a statement from a public authority, the asylum office will consider that he has practically withdrawn his asylum application. It means that the asylum application will be officially stopped, reflecting the omission of the low material matters of refugees who are unable to reach asylum offices, especially since these offices are located at a considerable distance from the refugee camps.

➤ **Legal procedures and mechanisms towards refugees:**

On 15 February 2020, the Greek government tightened its asylum policy after 7 months of assuming responsibility, by drawing up plans to build a floating wall, 2.7 kilometers long and 50 centimeters above water, that repels migrant boats, and to build centers for the deportation of violators at the border. But the plans are still being debated.

The Greek government has said the floating wall should be built "with non-military specifications and specific prescriptions to carry out the mission of maritime agencies in managing the refugee crisis".

In early December 2020, the Greek government recently passed a new law that prohibits NGO workers and volunteers from speaking about abuse, neglect or deprivation in refugee camps in Greece, the secrecy law.

Under the new law, workers working inside refugee camps in Greece, including volunteers and civil servants, may not share any information related to camp operations or its residents publicly or with the media, which applies even after they stop working there.

That is, NGO workers will not be allowed to talk about any possible violations against asylum seekers or even talk about the inhumane conditions they are going through, such as overcrowding and fragile infrastructure, as well as the scarcity of water and food and extremely poor sanitary conditions.

Therefore, the law represents a new step in the Greek government's gagging chain, especially in terms of highlighting the suffering of asylum seekers in the camps, and the mechanism for implementing the law is unclear, but its passage indicates the government's intentions to suppress completely refugee issues.

According to "Forbes", the law is the latest step in what has been described as a crackdown on NGO workers and volunteers since the right-wing New Democracy party took power in mid-2019.

In addition, the Greek authorities have created a new residence permit for illegal immigrants living in the country, which concerns migrants residing in Greece for at least three years, who can obtain an employment contract or a "promise to employment" document".

In a measure that could affect the daily lives of several thousand migrants, living in Greece, the Ministry of Labor, Migration and Asylum has created a new residence permit for undocumented workers, by amendment No. 56/7 of 14 December 2023.

To apply for this specific residence permit, a person must obtain a job offer from a Greek employer, and be a resident of Greece for three years, not 7 years

as required by the old legislation. It should be noted that this decision concerns people who arrived in the country before 30 November 2023, and therefore does not apply to migrants who disembarked after this date.

According to the instructions of the new Greek Minister of Immigration, Notis Mitarakis, asylum applications on the Greek islands must be decided within (25) days at the latest to decide on the first asylum application. This period is much less than the current period of up to long months, and (60) days in the event of an appeal, after which the one whose application is rejected will be deported. It is not yet clear whether the procedures for deciding on asylum applications will actually become faster, even under the new amendments Rejected asylum appeal by rejecting their asylum applications, which makes the period longer.

According to the new amendments, refugees will be detained in designated centers without being allowed out of them for the duration of the examination of their applications. So far, asylum seekers on the Greek islands have been allowed to move freely on the island where they live, but that looks set to change as Greek government detention centers on the islands are completed. Through the new amendments, the Greek government is seeking to deport initially 10,000 refugees, five times the number Greece has deported to Turkey since the 2016 Turkey-EU refugee deal. Although the deal has led to a significant drop in the number of refugees from Turkey to Greece since March 2016, the numbers have begun to rise again in recent months. Deportations were a key part of the agreement, but Greece has deported only a small number of refugees, due to the long processing time it takes.

The Minister of Immigration told parliament: "During the first half of 2024, four new biometric data collection centers will be opened, three in Athens and one in Salonica, to increase staff".

He added, "A migrant who came here legally, works here legally, pays taxes and contributions, and applies for the renewal of his residence permit, has been suffering for years".

The minister stressed that by the first half of 2026, the digitization of 850,000 immigration files will be completed, reducing the time required to process applications.

E) Turkey:

The issue of refugees in Turkey in particular is a thorny crisis with multiple dimensions; it is the largest refugee-hosting country in the world, due to several reasons, the most important of which are:

- **First** is related to the legal status of asylum in Turkey, as the 1951 Convention limited the right of asylum to Europeans who left their country after World War II, and then amended that Convention with the 1967 Protocol, which abandoned that geographical restriction to include refugees from other countries. However, Turkey has not signed the final version of the protocol and has made amendments to it that make recourse to it by non-EU states a temporary or conditional right, followed by either resettlement in a third country, voluntary return to the country of origin, or a change in the situation in the country of origin.
- **Second** is that the refugees have turned into a political pressure card, in addition to the fact that there is a popular segment in Turkey that believes that it is affected by the presence of refugees, especially in times of political and economic crises.
- **Third**, there are some cultural and social differences.

Turkey hosts refugees of various nationalities, but a large proportion of them are Syrian refugees, with Turkey sheltering some 3.6 million Syrians registered under the "temporary protection" law, which Turkish authorities say automatically applies to all Syrian asylum seekers. Therefore, the Turkish effort may appear at first glance to be aimed primarily at Syrian refugees.

On 4 April 2024, the Migration Department of the Turkish Ministry of Interior revealed the total number of foreigners with a residence permit throughout the country, reaching (1,129,958) people.

Of these foreigners, (617,222) people live in Turkey with a short-term residence permit, (172,638) foreigners with a student permit, (125,714) with a family permit, and (214,384) with a residence permit for various other reasons.

The number of Syrian refugees under temporary protection across the country reached 3,120,430.

Compared with the latest statistics issued by the Immigration Department on 22 February 2024, it is clear that the number of Syrians in Turkey has decreased in less than two months by approximately (39) thousand refugees, as the number of Syrians subject to temporary protection in the previous statistics reached (3,158,724) people in all Turkish states.

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The total number of Syrians who were deported/resettled to third countries between 2016 and 2024 amounted to 65,927 Syrians from all Turkish provinces.

Istanbul receives the largest number of refugees, including more than 530,000 Syrian refugees. In second place comes Gaziantep, which receives more than (450) thousand, and the cities of Urfa, Hatay, Mersin, Bursa, Izmir and Ankara receive large numbers of refugees.

On 24 December 2023, in the statistics of the Presidency of the Immigration Department for the number of Syrian refugees and all foreigners residing in the country, the total number of foreigners holding residence permits reached (1,104,280) people throughout Turkey. Among these foreigners, there are (644,846) people in Turkey with short-term residence permits, (156,621) with student permits, (115,888) with family permits, and (186,625) with residence permits for other reasons.

The total number of Syrians subject to the "temporary protection" clause in all Turkish states reached (3,226,141) people. Comparing the number of Syrians according to the statistics of the last Turkish Immigration Presidency and the statistics of the beginning of 2023, the number of Syrians in Turkey decreased by (309) thousand people.

The total number of Syrians resettled to third countries between (2016-2023) was (63,213) Syrians.

On 16 July 2023, the Presidency of the Turkish Immigration Administration revealed that the total number of migrants throughout the country reached (4,893,753) people.

The percentage of immigrants in (1169) neighborhoods throughout Turkey exceeded (20%) of the total Turkish population in those neighborhoods, including (54) neighborhoods in Istanbul.

In late 2019, the Turkish authorities announced that they had received about 460,000 people who are in the country illegally, including 200,000 Afghans, 70,000 Pakistanis, 55,000 Syrians, 12,000 Iraqis, 12,000 Palestinians, and 9,000 Iranians, but it is unclear how Turkey identified these people without registering them.

About 115,000 asylum seekers applied for protection in 2018, including 70,000 Iraqis and 40,000 Afghans, compared to about 35,000 Afghans and 15,000 Iraqis in 2019.

Therefore, Turkey plans to speed up the deportation procedures for irregular migrants and refugees, as it plans to return (200) thousand Syrian refugees to their country during 2024, as part of its comprehensive strategy for migration management and border security. The most prominent steps in this strategy were in late 2017 and early 2018, when Istanbul and nine other provinces on the border with Syria suspended the registration of newly arrived asylum seekers.

➤ **Legal procedures and mechanisms towards refugees:**

Turkey's legal mechanisms have varied in their dealings with refugees/illegal immigrants, the most important of which are:

- Launching an operation to repatriate Syrian refugees as part of what it called at the time the "voluntary return to safe areas" in northern Syria. According to Interior Ministry statements in October 2022, more than half a million Syrians returned to their country voluntarily, while the authorities deported nearly 20,000 due to "security issues"
- Launching security campaigns targeting what the Turkish authorities call "irregular migrants / refugees". The campaign was launched especially in major Turkish provinces such as Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir, where many cases of deportation were recorded, which included hundreds of foreigners of different nationalities, led by Afghans and Syrians, during the months of June and July 2023, 36,000 irregular migrants were arrested, of whom 16,000 people were deported.
- In February 2022, Turkish Deputy Interior Minister Ismail Çatakli said that temporary and international protection applications would not be accepted in 16 provinces: Ankara, Antalya, Aydin, Bursa, Canakli, Düzce, Edirne, Hatay, Istanbul, Izmir, Kirklareli, Kocaeli, Muğla, Sakarya, Tekirdağ and Yalova.

He stressed that applications for residence permits by foreigners will not be accepted in any neighborhood where the percentage of foreigners is 25% or more of the population, and registration has already been closed in 781 neighborhoods throughout Turkey because the percentage of foreigners in it exceeded 25% of the population.

- In June 2022, Interior Minister Suleiman Soylu announced that starting July 1 the percentage would be reduced to 20%, and the number of neighborhoods closed to the registration of foreigners increased to 1,200, with the cancellation of temporary protection status for Syrians who entered the country without submitting a permit application.
- **Not to tolerate the penalty for violating immigration laws in Turkey, which are:**

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- ✓ Request to leave Turkey within a short period and this penalty is the most famous for foreign violators. They are required to leave Turkey immediately according to the conditions for leaving Turkey.
- ✓ Compulsory deportation outside Turkish territory after the arrest takes place inside one of the deportation centers.
- ✓ Preventing entry into Turkish territory after departure for a time commensurate with the period of stay in Turkey without residence.
- ✓ Pay fines before departure to the person who wishes to avoid the ban on entry to Turkey.

As the fine for expiry of the visa in Turkey for Palestinians/ Syrians / Moroccans is \$ 50 for the first month, and then \$ 40 for each month of delay.

- ✓ Mandatory attendance at one of the centers of the Presidency of Immigration in Turkey to settle the situation and remove any violations that do not require departure.

F) Spain:

The Spanish government's interest in the issue of illegal immigration and refugees increased, after the increase in the number of migrants after 2015, and the emergence of problems related to how to deal with them after European countries tried to withdraw from dealing with this file.

The number of migrants/refugees arriving in Spain doubled, making the migration route from Morocco to the Iberian Peninsula the most active in Europe, where Spain ranked first in terms of the number of migrants/refugees, as Spain is the most attractive option. Since 2018, Spain has turned into a preferred destination for illegal immigrants and refugees, receiving about (57,000), compared to (52,678) in 2017.

Spain succeeded in reducing the number of illegal immigrants in 2023 by (70%), primarily due to a sharp decrease in the number of people crossing to the Iberian island from Morocco after the tragedy in Melilla in June 2022, where (23) migrants were killed after thousands tried to cross the fence and enter the Spanish enclave. As well as reducing migrants/refugees to the Canary Islands, by (3.3%), although the islands still receive about a hundred people daily.

On 19 June 2023, the "Spanish Commission for Refugees" reported that Spain received a record number of asylum and international protection applications in 2022. However, the government rejects applications at rates exceeding the European average, as Spain received (118,842) asylum applications in 2022, which is the third highest number in the European Union, but the decision on

the applicants' files included only (16.5%) of them and received protection compared to the European Union average of (38.5%). Spain refused to grant any form of International protection for 95% of Colombians and 96% of Peruvians in 2022.

While on 16 March 2024, the Spanish Committee for Refugee Assistance announced that about (27,657) people sought asylum from 1 January to 29 February 2024, which is (15%) more than in the same period in 2023, as the number did not exceed (24,025) people. The majority of applicants are from Venezuela (37.8%), Colombia (28.5%), Peru (7.4%), Senegal (5.2%), and Morocco (2.8%).

It said, "Only one in ten applications were resolved positively, and four out of ten applications were rejected, mostly by people from Colombia, despite being the most dangerous country in America for human rights defenders, and Somalia is the country with the highest acceptance rate".

It pointed out that in the first two months of the year, applications at border posts increased "significantly", rising from 2% at the end of 2023 to 5% in 2024, the committee said. Overall, in 2023, 163,220 people sought asylum in Spain, an increase of 37% over 2022".

Also, on 11 January 2024, the Spanish government announced that it had received more than (163) thousand asylum applications in 2023, most of them from Latin American citizens, an unprecedented number in the country that made it ranked third among the European Union countries in terms of receiving the largest number of applications. The Spanish Office for Asylum and Refugees received about (163,218) applications for international protection, an increase of (37%) over 2022, the highest number since the establishment of the office in 1992".

It confirmed that (92,963) requests for protection were considered, and only (11,371) of the applicants received permanent protection, a small share that constitutes about (12%) of the applications processed, and protection was granted in particular to individuals from Afghanistan, Syria, Nicaragua, Colombia, Honduras, and Mali. However, Spain granted a higher number of temporary residence permits on humanitarian grounds (41,478) in 2023, most of them Venezuelans.

➤ **Conditions for asylum in Spain:**

There are some potential disadvantages of asylum in Spain, including:

- **Complicated asylum procedures:** The asylum application procedure in Spain can be complex and time-consuming, which can lead to delays in obtaining the necessary protection.

- **Long wait:** There can be a long wait to research and decide on an asylum application, as studying the asylum file for one-person takes at least two years, which can increase the psychological pressure on refugees.
- **Conditions of detention:** In some cases, refugees can be held in detention centers for long periods pending the processing of their claims, a period not exceeding 6 months, which can be uncomfortable.
- **Discrimination and racism:** Some refugee people may face discrimination and racism in Spain, affecting their integration into society.
- Shifting the protection axis to the issue of foreigners reduces safeguards and provides institutions with a basis for implementing border control policies that are not in their interest to protect, but rather to prevent the entry of foreigners. It means that the asylum policy – protection – falls within the policy of police control, whose main objective is to avoid the so-called "addressing effect", not to protect people to whom international human rights law applies.
- According to Mónica López, director of programs at CEAR (Spanish High Commissioner for Refugees), reception centers and homes are currently targeting people in the period of their application for international protection, so if asylum continues and the person receives refugee status or subsidiary protection, he can leave the reception centers, but without providing him with housing.

➤ **Legal procedures and mechanisms towards refugees:**

Spain's legal mechanisms have varied in their dealings with refugees/illegal immigrants, the most important of which are:

- On 11 May 2021, the Spanish Parliament approved the discussion of an initiative calling for the legalization of migrants living in the country irregularly, while the European Parliament votes on a "new migration and asylum pact", imposing restrictions on asylum and migration to the old continent.

The Spanish initiative calls for the implementation of mechanisms that allow undocumented migrants living in Spain "to leave the state of hiding and lack of rights".

- Recently, in the past five years, the government has increased its spending on foreign aid to 11 countries in North and West Africa in an attempt to curb immigration, and the majority of this money has gone to strengthen police and military services in those countries.
- Spain has also cooperated with Moroccan security forces, as well as European Frontex forces to monitor jointly the border fence, in order to return migrants intercepted along the Moroccan-Spanish border.

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- Ratify the amendment of some articles of the Foreigners Code by adding the decision to immediately return irregular migrants who manage to reach Ceuta or Melilla, which now empowers the Spanish authorities to immediately expel illegal migrants who cross the barbed wire fence from Morocco, without the opportunity to apply for asylum or assess the risks they may face if returned.

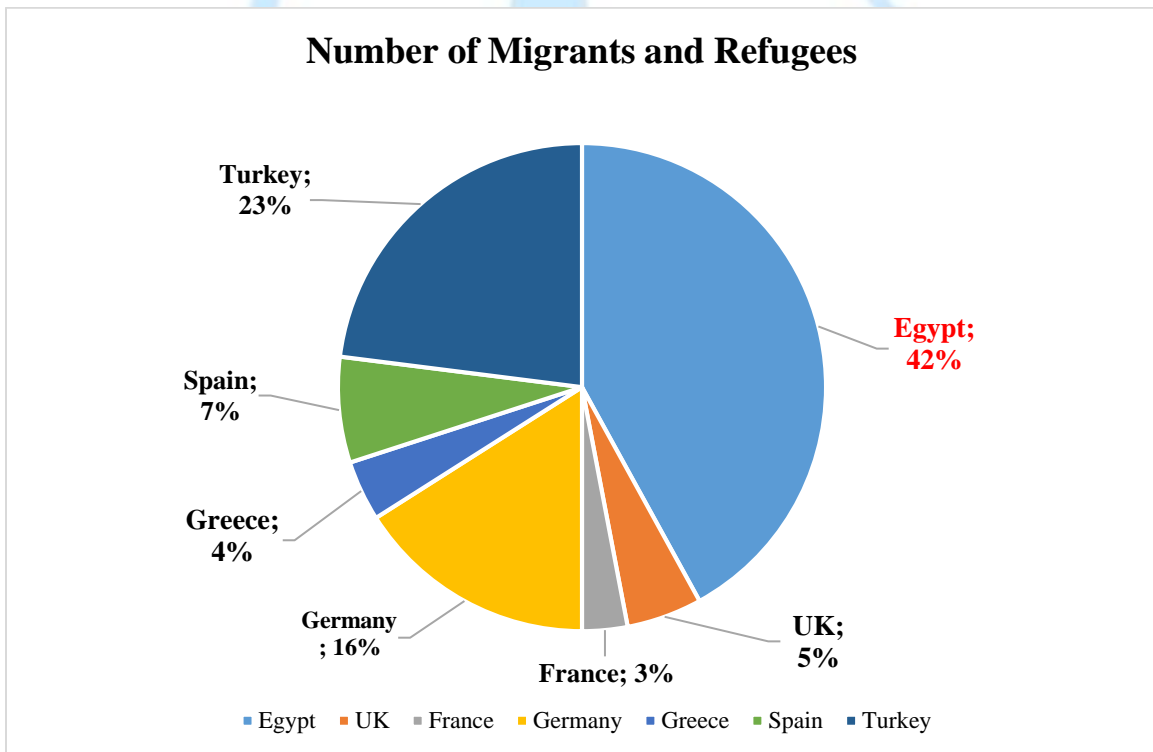
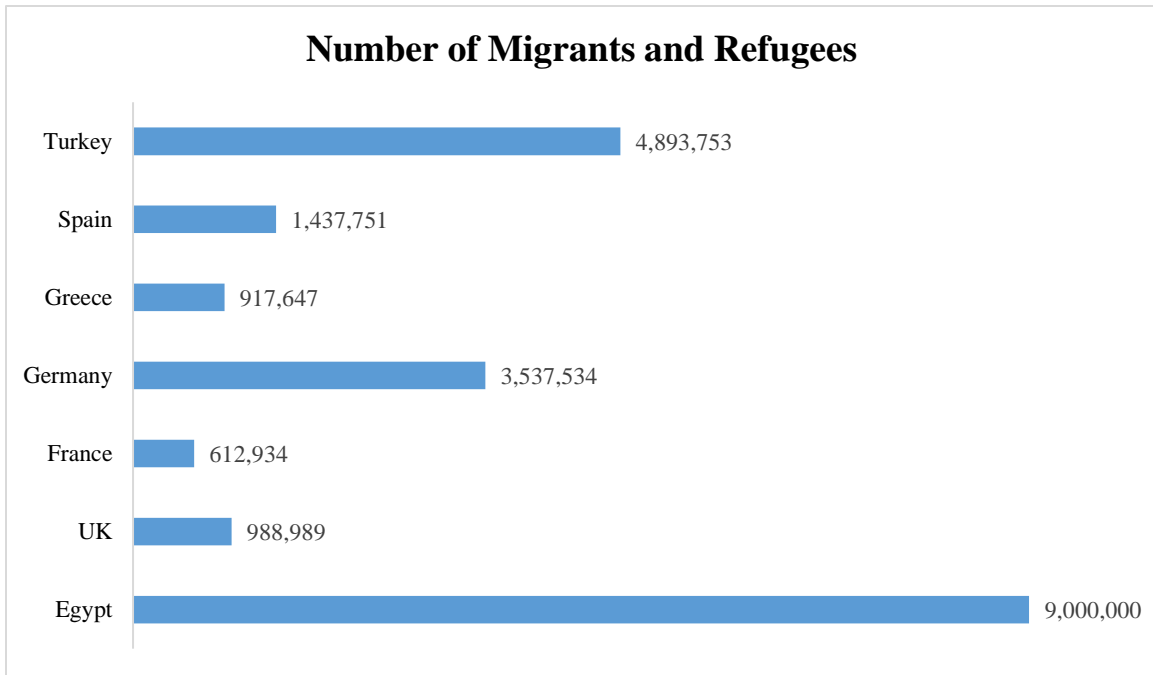
The amendment stipulates that "migrants caught on the border lines separating the cities of Ceuta and Melilla while trying to cross border fences into Spain will be prevented," and what international human rights organizations describe as "refoulement" will be applied against them.

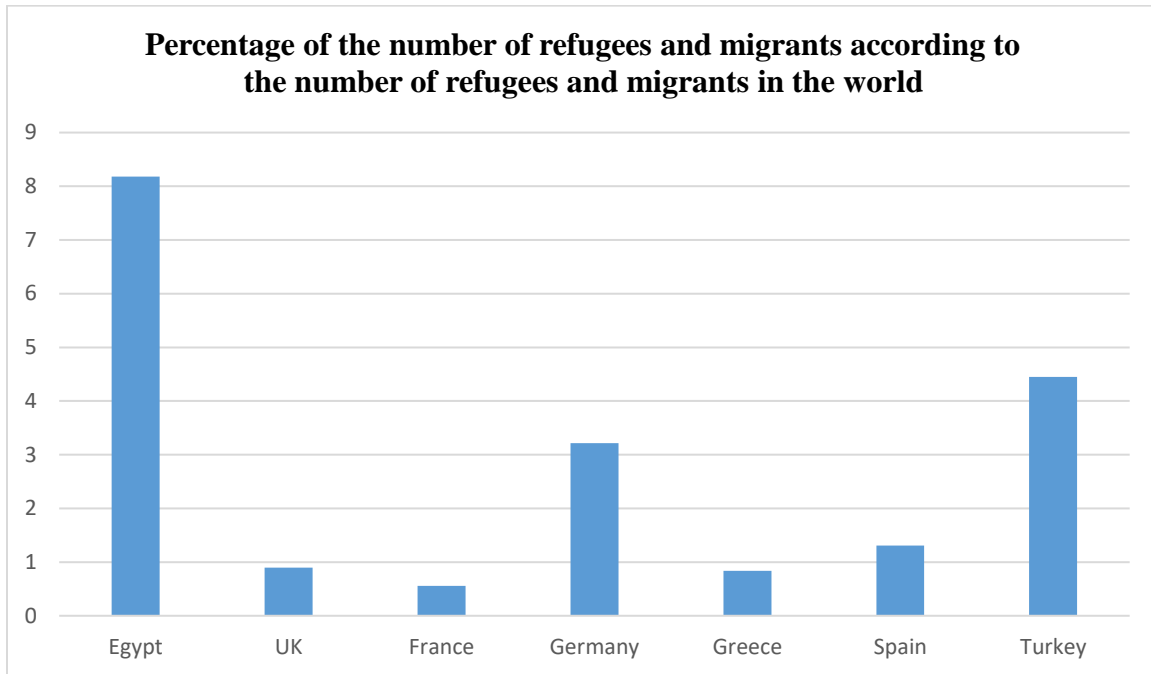
- Opening offices on the border between Ceuta and Melilla specialized in accepting political and humanitarian asylum in Spain, with the aim of receiving applications for political asylum for Africans on the border between Ceuta, Melilla and Moroccan territory.



E C H R D

Charts





❖ **Conclusion:**

In the end, we must commend the great efforts made by the Egyptian citizens and government in welcoming refugees despite the difficult economic conditions.

Since ancient times, Egypt has embraced refugees on its territory, living among Egyptians and receiving all public services just like any Egyptian citizen, but recently Egypt has witnessed the presence of a large number of refugees.

Egypt is a party to the 1951 United Nations Convention and the 1969 African Convention on Refugees. Most asylum seekers and refugees live in cities, and UNHCR handles the registration, documentation, and determination of refugee status for asylum seekers and refugees in Egypt.

The Egyptian government allows UNHCR-registered people to regularize their residency through renewable six-month residence permits. However, persistent barriers to registering with UNHCR and obtaining or renewing residence permits have left many asylum-seekers and refugees undocumented

or with expired permits, increasing their vulnerability to exploitation, ill-treatment and deportation.

Millions of refugees across the country suffer violence, persecution and discrimination, and some of them become members of armed groups.

There are also other challenges faced by refugees related to limited access to livelihood opportunities as well as the language barrier faced by non-Arabic speaking refugees. Some also lack sustainable formal education that can support their development. In addition, a large number of refugees and asylum-seekers rely on humanitarian assistance to meet their basic needs and access medical or psychosocial support.

We stress the importance of concerted international efforts to find sustainable solutions to refugee issues through a comprehensive perspective that takes into account the integration between the humanitarian and development dimensions. In addition, there is a need to mobilize the necessary resources in order to meet the humanitarian needs of refugees and support host countries based on the principle of equitable sharing of burdens and responsibilities. Moreover, we emphasize the importance of the international community to provide the necessary assistance to refugees.

Controlling the refugee issue within countries is a shared responsibility between governments, society, and refugees themselves, as the refugees must abide by the regulations and laws in new societies, which reduces the environment of aversion to the refugees. On the other hand, NGOs that deal with displacement and asylum issues must contribute to spreading awareness and a culture of acceptance of the other. Furthermore, the governments must issue laws and oblige individuals to them, as well as provide places for migrants that do not lack services so that they do not feel alienated and hated for the society that hosts them.