

Simulation on the free movement of EU citizens

Introduction

The question addressed by this game is the free movement of EU citizens within the EU. While the background and many of the characters are real, the plot itself is fictional.

The port of Calais in northern France has increasingly become since 2011 a place of transit for asylum seekers from conflict-ridden countries like Syria, Iraq and Libya. They are seeking asylum in the UK, where they hope to build a better life. Calais has direct links by ferry with Dover. However, the local authorities in Dover have been refusing to grant access to asylum seekers on the ground that the city lacks both facilities and funds to accommodate them. In the meantime, the small French city finds it harder and harder to cope with the continuous influx of asylum seekers (currently over 3,000), whose improvised camps, widely known as 'the Jungle', are deemed as potentially dangerous in terms of health and security. Since it is very difficult to deport these asylum seekers back to their conflict-ridden countries, the Mayor of Calais is now threatening to close the port to all UK travellers unless the city of Dover agrees to take in some of the asylum seekers. This prospective closure however would clash with the basic principle of the free movement of EU citizens within the EU. Thus, in order to find a solution to this delicate situation, the European Commission has summoned a special roundtable discussion involving all the stakeholders.

Objective

All participating parties should reach a joint statement by consensus. The statement should stipulate the concrete steps and measures to be taken in solving this situation.

Participating parties (26 in total)

- European Commission representative (the first moderator) – Frank Paul
- Professor Marise Cremona – professor of European Law at the European University Institute (the second moderator)
- Mayor of Calais – Natacha Bouchart
- Director of the Port of Calais – Jean-Marc Puissesseau

- 2 French civil servants from the French Foreign Ministry – Sylvie Bermann (French ambassador to the UK) and Thierry Vallat (senior French diplomat)
- Chief of Calais Police – Fabienne Buccio
- Mayor of Dover – Chris Precious
- Director of the Port of Dover – Tim Waggott
- 2 British civil servants from Foreign & Commonwealth Office – Sir Julian King (British Ambassador to France) and Dr Rachel Aron (senior British diplomat)
- Chief of Dover Police – Paul Bernat
- 3 representatives of asylum seekers in Calais – *Ibrahim Zuabi, Farouq Tamer, Shayma Alfassi*¹
- 2 advocates for the rights of the asylum seekers from the No Borders Network – *Marie Dugarry* and *Michael Bale*
- President of P&O Ferries (the ferry company operating between Calais and Dover) – Helen Deeble
- French business lobbyist – *Maurice Lassalle*
- British business lobbyist – *Linda Huddleston*
- 2 representatives of the residents of the area in Calais where the refugee camps are located – *Valerie Bataille* and *Paul Satie*
- 2 representatives of the local residents of Dover – *Lucy Rockwell* and *Simon Fowler*
- 2 former refugees that received asylum in the Dover area a few years ago and have integrated with different degree of success – *Mustafa Ibrahim* and *Amira Halabi*

Role cards²

Frank Paul (first moderator)

You are the representative of the European Commission, which summoned this round table discussion. Your purpose is to help the parties reach a joint statement that would prevent a situation where the city of Calais refuses access to UK citizens. For such an outcome would violate the free movement of European citizens, one of the founding

¹ All the characters whose names are written with italics are fictional.

² Please also look through the background information in this document to find out more things that could help you prepare your position better.

principles of the EU. At the same time, given the EU's international status as a normative power who claims to work for the global common good, you also want an outcome that also benefits the asylum seekers involved. Especially since these asylum seekers have come from Syria, which is part of EU's neighbourhood and of the Union for the Mediterranean. Therefore, you will have to guide the parties involved in reaching a compromise that would not violate the free movement of EU citizens while improving the current situation of asylum seekers in Calais.

You are expected to assure a coherent and rational debate, that is, to prevent participants to deviate from the given topic or make arguments which are irrelevant to the matter at hand. Also, you need to make sure that the debate is open and inclusive, where all parties get the chance to express and defend their point of view without being interrupted. Thus, you must promptly intervene whenever participants talk over or obstruct one another, making sure that the dialogue does not degenerate into a quarrel.

Professor Marise Cremona (second moderator)

You are a professor of European law at one of the most prestigious universities in Europe and an expert on the principle of free movement for EU citizens. As the second moderator, your primary goal is to guide the parties in reaching a solution that avoids the violation of that principle, which is guaranteed by several European treaties and directives (see the background information in this document). You also aim at reaching a solution that improves the situation of the asylum seekers, who are currently experiencing hard living conditions in their camps in Calais. At the same time, just as the first moderator, you need to ensure a rational, coherent, open and inclusive debate, where the discussion sticks to the given topic and the parties respect each other.

Natacha Bouchart (Mayor of Calais)

You are the mayor of a city (approx. 125,000 population) on the northern coast of France which has become since 2011 a place of transit for asylum seekers, particularly from war-torn countries like Syria, Iraq or Libya, who are trying to seek asylum in the UK. They have established several improvised camps at the outskirts of the city, which have become known as 'the Jungle' and are currently hosting around 3,000 people. They live in very poor conditions, without proper sanitation, electricity or other basic utilities. These camps are a liability in terms of health and safety for both the asylum seekers and the local population. Moreover, the asylum seekers' means of subsistence are limited to casual, underpaid work

across the city and donations from various charities. They are seeking asylum in the UK and you have appealed several times unsuccessfully to the local authorities in Dover (the closest English city directly linked to Calais) to grant them asylum. For that reason, ten days ago you have threatened to block the Calais-Dover route and thus refuse British citizens access in Calais unless the Mayor of Dover or any other British authority offers asylum, over the following six months, to at least half of the 3,000 asylum seekers currently found in Calais.

Your main argument is that Calais cannot cope anymore with the presence of so many asylum seekers in the city. At the same time, they cannot be deported back to their war-ridden countries, so apparently the most appropriate solution is for them to get asylum in the UK, since there is where they want to go and that is why they ended up in Calais in the first place. Your threat to close the borders to British citizens might seem harsh, but this comes, as said above, after several failed, more diplomatic, attempts to persuade the Mayor of Dover to allow some of the asylum seekers in. However, you are willing to negotiate, especially regarding the number of asylum seekers to be taken in and the deadline given to the English counterpart (you are considering to extend it from six months to one year). Besides that, as a backup plan you could suggest redirecting some of the s to other countries, such as Sweden or Norway for example, who are more willing to offer asylum to war asylum seekers.

Jean-Marc Puissesseau (Director of the Port of Calais)

You are the director of the commercial port of Calais where ferries from and to Dover arrive and depart respectively. Most of the activity of your port is provided by the Calais-Dover route, so blocking that route would bring you substantial losses. In turn, this might lead to the loss of jobs, which would affect a significant section of the local population. At the same time, the growing numbers of asylum seekers in Calais indirectly affect the activity of the port, as some of them have tried to illegally board on ferries going to Dover. Also, increasingly fewer tourists are attracted by coming to a city that has such a serious problem with the asylum seekers, not to mention the several cases of anti-social behaviour in the port area on the behalf of some of these asylum seekers. Therefore, while you are totally against your mayor's threat to ban access to British citizens, you are favouring a solution that would see at least some of the asylum seekers moved from Calais as soon as possible.

Sylvie Bermann (French ambassador to the UK) and Thierry Vallat (senior French diplomat)

You are finding yourselves in the delicate situation of having to argue for the need of British authorities to grant access to at least some of the asylum seekers in Calais while trying to bring back the debate at a more diplomatic, unthreatening level. For, while the Mayor of Calais is rather addressing herself to her counterparts in Dover, you are mainly targeting your message to your own counterparts – the two British civil servants from Foreign & Commonwealth Office. You will argue that Calais is too small to host as many as 3,000 asylum seekers. Tens of thousands of asylum seekers have fled their countries, particularly from Syria, to come to Europe and many of them have been granted asylum by countries such as Germany, Belgium, Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, and even France itself. These particular asylum seekers however have arrived in Calais precisely because they are seeking asylum in the UK. British authorities should therefore grant asylum to these people, mainly for two reasons.

Firstly, the UK is one of the leading countries in terms of humanitarian aid and should aim at consolidating that status on the international scene (an argument to be developed and presented preferably by the ambassador). Secondly, the UK is still part of the EU and if the EU is dealing with the issue of asylum seekers seeking asylum in Europe – asylum seekers who, once again, cannot be sent back to their country – then the UK should share that responsibility with other member states (who have already granted asylum to thousands of refugees) and take in some asylum seekers (an argument to be developed and put forward by the other French diplomat). Faced with your British counterparts' argument that under the Dublin regulation it is the country where asylum seekers entered the EU that has to grant or not them asylum, you can reply that the regulation was not truly enforced, as the vast majority of asylum seekers have entered the EU through Greece and Italy but then managed to go to other member states in Western and Northern Europe.

Of course, you are willing to negotiate the number of asylum seekers that the UK would take in and the period of time when that could happen. You are ready to suggest that other British cities besides Dover could also grant asylum to some of the asylum seekers, which might persuade Dover's local authorities to make concessions. Also, you are willing to accept a solution where some of the asylum seekers would be given asylum somewhere else in France. In any case, in order to avoid a major diplomatic dispute, you cannot back up the mayor's threat to deny access to British citizens in Calais and you thus hope for a compromise based on shared humanitarian concerns rather than reckless threats.

Fabienne Buccio (Chief of Calais Police)

Your position is pretty much similar to the one of your mayor but more specific. In arguing that a small city like Calais cannot cope anymore with over 3,000 asylum seekers, you will stress the liability they represent in term of health and safety for both themselves and the local population. For example, you can point out the risk of a scabies outbreak (quite common in improvised, overcrowded refugee camps) as well as the rise on average by 25% of the crime rate over the last two years in the areas where the camps are located. Isolated cases of retaliation from the local population, ranging from misguided vigilante actions to blatant racist attacks, have increasingly occurred lately. Hence, you fear that an open, full scale confrontation between the asylum seekers and some of the locals is just a matter of time and you want to avoid that by all means. That is why you suggest their relocation in the UK or in other French cities in the case of those who are willing to accept asylum in France.

Chris Precious (Mayor of Dover)

Your starting point could be that Dover has long and proud tradition of providing refuge to people fleeing war and persecution, starting with the French Huguenots in the later seventeenth century and continuing with Jewish children at the outbreak of the Second World War. Indeed, Dover has already taken in a few dozen refugees in recent years, but its limited capacity and resources prevent the city of taking in many more asylum seekers, particularly in a period of harsh cuts imposed by the central government. Also, the local population fears that a massive influx of refugees might disrupt the cultural homogeneity of the city and potentially lead to conflicts between the locals and the new comers. Moreover, Dover has experienced lately an upsurge in extreme right-wing activities, including several nationalist and xenophobic marches over the last year that caused serious disruptions to the city and its population. Therefore, you fear that an influx of asylum seekers in Dover might only escalate such problems. However, you are willing to work towards a compromise with your French counterpart and suggest that your city takes in 200 asylum seekers in the course of the next year, although you will be ready to negotiate this number during the roundtable meeting.

Tim Waggott (Director of the Port of Dover)

You are vigorously dismissing the threat launched by the mayor of Calais not only because it would be a blatant breach of one of the fundamental principles of the European Union, but also because it would substantially affect the activity of the Port of Dover (although not as much as in the case of the Port of Calais). You do not necessarily have a

stance on how the asylum seekers' situation could be solved, but you are emphasising that that has nothing to do with the good relations between the two ports, whose link brings important benefits to both cities and both countries in general.

Sir Julian King (British Ambassador to France) and Dr Rachel Aron (senior British diplomat)

You will defend the position of the Mayor of Dover (preferably after consultations with him to agree upon a common strategy), stressing the city's lack of space and funds required to take in over 1,000 asylum seekers, but from a wider and more diplomatic perspective. In reply to your French counterparts' suggestion that the UK should share with other European countries the responsibility of helping asylum seekers, you will point out that Britain has been already doing that since the start of the crisis. More exactly, so far the UK has allowed in over 3,000 asylum seekers and provided £700 million aid – the largest in the EU – targeted at millions of asylum seekers from Jordan to Egypt to Turkey. You might add that half of the EU member states did virtually nothing in sharing the responsibility of helping asylum seekers. At the same time, you need to emphasise that according to the 2013 Dublin regulation, the member state that has to grant asylum to a person entitled to it is the first country where that person entered the EU.

Nevertheless, you admit that the UK could do more in helping asylum seekers but that must happen on a European scale, with all member states pledging to grant asylum according to their population size and economic situation. That is why Britain has already accepted to take in further 20,000 asylum seekers from Syria by 2020. However, as you understand how urgent is to alleviate the situation of Calais's 3,000 asylum seekers, you have been mandated by the British PM to take in, in addition to the 200 asylum seekers suggested by the Mayor of Dover, 500 more over the next three months in or around cities such as Bristol, Cardiff, Brighton, Aberdeen and Coventry.

However, you will emphasise repeatedly that regardless of the outcome of these negotiations, regardless, that is, of whether the UK will allow in any refugee or not, the Mayor of Calais's threat to block the Calais-Dover route and forbid the access of British citizens to Calais is absolutely unacceptable and irresponsible. You will underline the right to free movement of all European citizens guaranteed by the Maastricht Treaty, the Amsterdam Treaty as well as the Directive 2004/38/EC, regardless of the possible diplomatic disagreements between member states.

Paul Bernat (Chief of Dover Police)

You will support the position of the Mayor of Dover, focusing on how – given the city’s lack of funds and space – the arrival of over a thousand or even a few hundred asylum seekers over a relatively short amount of time could increase the crime rate in Dover. For if there is no public money to support them and the job market is not big enough to include them, how would these people support themselves? The likely aid provided by charities would not suffice, so an increase in thefts, for example, might be reasonably expected. This would only escalate the already existing tensions between various far right groups, on the one hand, and refugees and their left-wing supporters, on the other hand. Indeed, you fear possible violence on the behalf of the far right, with the likes of English Defense League and the South East Alliance, which have organised several demonstrations over the last year against the arrival of refugees, demonstrations which have often resulted in mayhem and violence across the city, not to mention the costs involved by policing such events (see background information in this document). In other words, the arrival of many asylum seekers in Dover would be highly problematic for both them and the local population. Since you are not a politician, you are ready to support the solution suggested by the Mayor of Dover and the two British diplomats.

Ibrahim Zuabi, Farouq Tamer, Shayma Alfassi (representatives of asylum seekers in Calais)

You are some of the informal leaders of asylum seekers in Calais’ Jungle and have come to this meeting to put forward the case for all of you to be granted asylum in the UK. Your intervention should have three main parts and it depends on you how you will distribute them between you. Firstly, one of you should be a Syrian refugee who will give a brief and suggestive account of the terrible realities of the civil war that forced you and other 3.8 million to flee your country (in addition to the nearly 7 million displaced internally), maybe including personal details that would enable the other participants to relate more to your case (see background information in this document).

Secondly, you should describe the very hard living conditions that you are now experiencing in Calais, where you lack security, basic utilities, constant sources of income, access to health care and to education for your children etc. At the same time, you are aware that the current situation is also a liability in terms of health and safety for the local population and that you do not necessarily blame some of the reactions of adversity from

some of the local residents. In other words, it would be better for everyone in Calais if you would be granted asylum in the UK.

Thirdly, you should argue why you wish to be given asylum in the UK and how the UK, one of the richest countries in the world, could easily accommodate 3,000 people over a few months and you are not willing – at least not initially – to make any compromise over the number of people. However, the exact period of time for this resettlement may be subject to negotiation. Also, you will make it very clear that none of the 3,000 people you are representing is particularly interested in being given asylum in Dover but in any part of the country, preferably – but not necessarily – in multicultural urban areas, where they would be more likely to find work and integrate.

Marie Dugarry and Michael Bale (advocates for the rights of asylum seekers from the No Borders Network)

No Borders Network is a loose association of groups and individuals from Europe supporting freedom of movement for all people and particularly the rights of asylum seekers and economic migrants. You are two of the dozens of French and British activists respectively who have supported asylum seekers in Calais. You are blaming the French local and national authorities for not providing decent living conditions for the 3,000 asylum seekers (of which 1,000 are children or teenagers and 700 are women) as well as the British local and national authorities for refusing to grant asylum to these people. On a more general level, you are accusing all 28 EU member states for allowing in merely 200,000 out of the nearly 4 million people who fled Syria since 2011. In the meantime, a small and relatively poor country such as Lebanon has already received over 1 million Syrian asylum seekers. You are also criticising the EU itself and the European Commission in particular for not acting more decisively on the behalf of asylum seekers seeking asylum in Europe as hundreds of them have been dying in the Mediterranean Sea over the last few years in their attempt to reach the European shores.

However, you are focusing on Britain and France, who, besides being directly involved in this disagreement, arguably have a greater responsibility than other European countries to help asylum seekers coming from war-torn countries in the Middle East. That is due to both their imperialist role in that region (see the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916) and, more relevantly for today, their open support for the anti-governmental forces in Syria, thus fuelling a conflict that these asylum seekers did not want and had to run from. Moreover, you are denouncing the hypocrisy of these two countries who have been opposing the Assad

regime mainly on humanitarian grounds while failing to help some of the very people who are fleeing from that regime as much as they could and should have done.

While you oppose the Mayor of Calais' threat to block entry to British citizens, you completely support the demand of the 3,000 refugees to be given asylum in the UK. You will argue that besides its historical and moral responsibility, Britain clearly has the logistic capacity to grant asylum to all of them in much less than six months in appropriate conditions, namely: adequate housing and basic utilities, access to proper health care and education, provision of job opportunities that can assure a decent living. Just like the representatives of the asylum seekers, while you will try to oppose any compromise regarding the number of the people being granted asylum, you are willing to support a longer period of time for this resettlement to take place. However, in the plausible case that the British representatives will not agree to allow in all 1,000 asylum seekers, you are prepared, as a 'plan B', to argue for the resettlement of the rest of them in other EU countries (including France itself) in similarly appropriate conditions. Your ultimate goal, which is no subject to discussion, is that the current precarious situation of the asylum seekers in Calais' 'Jungle' finally comes to an end.

Helen Deeble (President of P&O Ferries)

You are the president of the ferry company operating between Calais and Dover. Although you also operate on other routes, a ban on British citizens entering Calais would affect your company to a considerable degree. You would thus have to reduce your staff, most of whom are local residents of Calais, and this would arguably not benefit the current mayor in the elections coming next year. Also, the customers on both sides of the Channel you have been serving over the last four decades would suffer for no reason. At the same time, you understand that the asylum seekers' presence in Calais is increasingly problematic for the city and the asylum seekers themselves. Moreover, your operations have been affected by repeated attempts of some asylum seekers to smuggle themselves into Britain by illegally boarding on your ferries. That is why you are willing to do anything in your power to help solving this crisis, including the free provision of transport for asylum seekers once a new location for them is agreed upon.

Maurice Lassalle (French business lobbyist)

You represent the businesses community of Calais, which is almost entirely relying on services, particularly retail and tourism. While you understand the drama that asylum

seekers are going through, you need to point out that their presence in Calais has been having a damaging effect on the local business, particularly on tourism. For example, two hotels situated in the vicinity of one of the camps have seen their profits decrease by 35% over the last three years, not to mention the drop in sales of other businesses from that area typically targeted at tourists (bars, restaurants, souvenirs shops etc.). This drop in profits led in turn to loss of jobs, which shows that when the businesses are affected the wider community also suffers.

With regard to the mayor's threat to deny access to British citizens in Calais, you oppose it firmly, as it would affect even more the local businesses, especially tourism. More precisely, British citizens make up to no less than 60% of the tourists visiting Calais. Moreover, one of the main target groups for the local property market is represented precisely by British citizens who are planning to retire and wish to buy a house in France but not far from their country. Thus, you would want to see Mayor Bouchart encouraging more Brits to come to Calais rather than threatening to block them at the border.

Linda Huddleston (British business lobbyist)

You represent the business community from Dover and the surrounding area. You do not have a clear-cut position with regard to the potential arrival of asylum seekers. On the one hand, there is a scarcity of jobs as Britain – although better off than other European countries – is still struggling to leave behind the economic crisis and is currently going through austerity. On the other hand, you realise that the asylum seekers could be useful for local business as cheap labour, in a period characterised by low wages and zero hour contracts. However, that is a delicate argument to make (even more so in the presence of the representatives of asylum seekers), so you need to find the appropriate phrasing for putting it forward. Despite this ambivalence, you will broadly support the position adopted by the Mayor of Dover, with which you have a fruitful collaboration that you do not wish to jeopardise. Also, you fear that the prospect of British citizens being denied access to Calais might affect businesses with operation on the both sides of the Channel, so you will essentially be in line with the British side in opposing the potential closure of Calais' port as a violation of a fundamental principle of the EU.

Valerie Bataille and Paul Satie (representatives of the residents of Calais)

As representatives of the residents of the areas in Calais where the asylum seekers' camps are located, you will reflect the divisions that exist within the community with regard

to these camps. (You will decide between the two of you who will reflect which position.) The first position, arguably more popular within the community, is in line with the one put forward by Mayor Bouchart, who has appealed to threats precisely at the increasing pressure of local residents to find a solution to the asylum seekers situation. Thus, you will argue that the asylum seekers represent a serious issue in terms of health and safety, including petty thefts, anti-social behaviour and the illicit disposal of garbage, not to mention the high risk of scabies outbreak. While not condoning violence, you claim that vigilante actions against some of the asylum seekers suspected to be guilty of theft or anti-social behaviour are understandable and that the current atmosphere in the city is potentially explosive. Hence, you will urge British authorities to allow in the asylum seekers and promise to back Mayor Bouchart's threat if otherwise.

The second position is markedly more sympathetic with the asylum seekers' situation. While you understand the frustration and concerns of some of your fellow citizens of Calais, you think that improving the living conditions of 3,000 people who fled their country because of war or persecution should be the main priority of all parties involved. You could talk about how you and other local residents visited the camps on several occasions and helped the asylum seekers with food, clothes and medicine. You also mention the core French Republican values of freedom, equality and fraternity and suggest that the French authorities should start acting in accordance with them. At the same time, you support the asylum seekers' desire to go to the UK and you can bring up Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that "Everyone has the right to seek and enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution." You are stressing the urgency of improving the situation of asylum seekers as soon as possible, most importantly by relocating them in adequate housing. This would benefit both them and the local residents unhappy with their presence in the city, while also preventing any deterioration of the good relations between your city and Dover.

Lucy Rockwell and Simon Fowler (representatives of the residents of Dover)

As representatives of the residents of Dover, you will reflect the divisions that exist within the community with regard to the possible arrival in the city of more asylum seekers. (You will decide between the two of you who will reflect which position.) The first position will argue that the very limited space, the lack of public funds the scarcity of jobs and an overburdened NHS make Dover incapable of hosting so many newcomers at once. Also, you fear that the crime rate might increase with the arrival of asylum seekers in the city (just as it

happened in Calais), especially given the already poor economic situation. Indeed, you fear that there might be radical Islamists among the asylum seekers, as the media has warned already in recent weeks, while are other simply do not qualify for refugee status, as they do not come from war-torn countries. At the same time, you would find it absolutely unfair if the refusal to allow in asylum seekers would lead to British citizens being denied access in Calais. In your opinion, the two things have nothing to do with one another, and British citizens should not have their right to free movement violated just because they refuse to grant access to asylum seekers.

The second position is significantly more sympathetic with the asylum seekers. You will ask the participants at the roundtable how they would feel if, after escaping their war-ridden country, two of the wealthiest and supposedly most democratic countries in the world would pass to one another the responsibility of granting you the asylum you are fully entitled to under international law (see background information in this document). You find it unacceptable that neither UK nor France did more to improve the situation of these people and that now they are arguing who should help them. While conceding that the city of Dover as such has limited space and resources available, you will argue that that the asylum seekers could be hosted in adequate camps around Dover where they would wait to be relocated somewhere else across Britain. Stressing that they wish to settle in the UK in general and not necessarily in Dover, your intervention is primarily targeted at the two British senior civil servants present at the meeting, as the Mayor of Dover has limited scope to help all of the 3,000 asylum seekers.

Mustafa Ibrahim and Amira Halabi (former asylum seekers, currently living in the Dover since 2011)

You are two of the few dozen asylum seekers that have already been given asylum in Dover since 2011. Your cases are contrasting and it is up to you to decide who is what. One of you has got a job in a barber shop, already made friends (among both native and immigrant communities) and declares to feel at home in Dover. You found the locals to be polite and welcoming, but you understand their reluctance towards a massive influx of asylum seekers to their city. You feel that such an influx would lead to tensions between the two groups, which would also affect immigrants like yourself who are already living there. Nevertheless, you express your solidarity with the refugees, not forgetting that not too long ago you were in the same situation as them, and hope that British authorities will eventually grant them asylum in other parts of the country.

The other is a less successful story of integration: you did not manage to find work or make any friends and confess to be unhappy in Dover. Your impression of the locals is that most of them are unfriendly, even xenophobic, and you have several personal examples to support this (try and think of one). Thus, you are discouraging the asylum seekers to come to the UK, or at least to Dover, and advise them to seek asylum in other countries, such as Germany or Sweden, where the economic conditions are better and the people more welcoming. Indeed, you have a cousin living in Hamburg and you are currently following the formal procedures to join him there with your spouse and two young kids.

Rules of procedure

We want to avoid complicated rules of procedure in order to keep this meeting as informal as possible, so that all parties can feel relaxed and confident. The timetable is to be decided closer to the date of the simulation.

1. Moderators

The meeting will be run by the two moderators, Frank Paul (representative of the European Commission) and Professor Marise Cremona (expert in European law). These two roles require eloquent participants with good moderation skills. The moderators must make every effort to be fair and avoid any kind of bias as well as to ensure that all discussions are relevant and as productive as possible. The moderators must decide upon the seating arrangement and the duration of each intervention. They will guide the debate and at the end draft a list of solutions to the issue at hand from which the stakeholders will then choose one by voting.

2. Stakeholders

All the other participants – the stakeholders – are encouraged to remain seated throughout the meeting and must attend all the contributions to the debate, not just their own. Any participant who cannot avoid missing more than fifteen minutes from the roundtable must register in advance their anticipated absence with one of the moderators. However, participants may leave the room for short periods of time without the permission of the moderators. Participants should remember at all times the importance of the three ‘C’s’: cooperation, compromise, and consensus. All parties must at all times behave in accordance

with the norms prevailing in a civilised debate and should avoid any kind of disruptive behaviour, defined as behaviour that is hostile, aggressive, rude, or in any way interferes with the flow of the meeting. In the event of disruptive behaviour by one or more parties, the moderators may issue a formal warning to them. If they fail to co-operate after two formal warnings, moderators may require them to be silent for a specified time or (as a last resort) even order them to be expelled from the meeting for a specified time. It is left to the two moderators to acknowledge instances of "disruptive behaviour", which may include open hostility, verbal abuse, constant interruption, raising of voices, delaying tactics, sleeping, a refusal to follow the rules of procedure, a refusal to co-operate in decision-making, or consulting with another party in a manner that interferes with the smooth flow of the debate.

3. Structure of the debate

The debate is divided in three sessions. In the first one, every stakeholder will have between 5 and 10 minutes to present their position on the topic at hand, followed by a break. Afterwards, there will be a session of interventions – no more than 5 minutes each – on what has been said during the opening statements. The parties who wish to intervene need to express their interest with the moderators during the break. Verbal requests are not acceptable, nor is speaking out of turn. Speakers may not be interrupted by anyone but the moderators. After this second session and a further break, the two moderators will list the possible solutions to the problem at hand that they will have identified by then on the basis of the contributions made by all parties. All these potential solutions must ensure that the freedom of movement of British citizens is secured. The meeting will then proceed with the voting process.

4. Voting

All parties will vote for their preferred solution from the ones listed by the moderators. The voting process will be verbal and open, made by roll call in order of seating, and recorded by the two moderators. Once the vote has been declared open, no-one will be allowed to speak other than to cast their vote. Each stakeholder (e.g. the Chief of Dover Police) or group of stakeholders (e.g. the representatives of Calais's asylum seekers) has one vote, equal in importance to any other vote. Thus, for example, although there are three representatives of the asylum seekers, their vote will count as one, not three. The only exception will be the representatives of local residents of both Calais and Dover: they start from different positions and might not agree until the end of the debate, so each one of these

representatives has one vote. Once all votes have been cast, the moderators will tally the vote and immediately announce the result. The decision on a tally will be final. In case two or more solutions receive an equal number of votes, there will be a further round of discussion, not longer than 10 minutes, followed by a vote between these remaining solutions. If there is still a stalemate, then the meeting must conclude without achieving its goal to reach a consensus. All parties must commit themselves to respect the outcome of the vote regardless of their own preference.

5. Point of Order

If, during the sessions, any participant feels that the meeting is running in a manner contrary to these rules, he/she may rise to a point of order. The moderators may overrule or accept the appeal. If accepted, the moderators may make an immediate ruling, or ask that participant to speak on the point of order for a maximum of one minute (but he/she may not speak on the subject of the debate). The moderators will then immediately rule on the point of order.

6. Votes of ‘no confidence’ in the moderators

While it is understood that all meetings will be run on the basis of mutual respect and understanding, it may be necessary in extraordinary circumstances – and solely as a last resort – to censure or remove one of the moderators or even both of them. If any participant feels that the moderator/s is/are not giving fair time to all stakeholders, is/are being excessively partisan, is/are failing to keep order, is/are clearly failing to maintain the smooth progress of the meeting, or is/are otherwise failing to fulfil their duties in the best interests of the meeting, that stakeholder may call for a vote of no confidence. If another stakeholder, from a different group of stakeholders, seconds the motion, it will immediately be put to a vote, and requires the support of at least two-thirds of the parties present to be successful. The moderators may not vote, but must record the name of the participant making the motion. If the vote goes against the moderator/s, the group may issue a verbal caution, remove the moderator/s from the meeting room for a specified time, or arrange temporary or permanent replacement of the moderator/s by an alternate. This will be decided either by consensus, or by a verbal vote, with each stakeholder or group of stakeholders having one vote, and a simple majority prevailing. Again, the moderators may not vote. No more than two votes of ‘no confidence’ may be called in any one meeting, and no one participant may make such a call more than once during the simulation.

7. Observers

Anyone may visit the meeting during a session, observe the proceedings, and come and go as they wish, but may not address the meeting unless expressly asked to by the moderators, nor address other visitors in anything above a whisper, nor disturb the meeting in any way. Anyone who disrupts the proceedings may be cautioned by the moderators, who may also expel any observer from the room except organisers and faculty advisors. Tutors may also attend but only coach and assist participants during the two breaks. They cannot interfere with, interrupt or address any meeting, cannot overrule the moderators, and have no voting rights. Above all, they should avoid giving advice on procedures and general goals, leaving this to the discretion of the organisers.

8. Amendments to the rules

None of these rules may be changed except by faculty advisors and organisers of the meeting.

A note on community spirit. The organization and running of the simulation is built around an implied and unspoken code of honour regarding the behaviour and community spirit of participants. All participants – including the two moderators – are asked to conduct themselves at all times in a responsible and community-spirited manner. In the unlikely event of misbehaviour by a participant (e.g. damage to property, creating a public disturbance, breaking the law, etc.), that participant must bear full responsibility for all consequences.

Background information

EU legislation on the free movement of citizens

Citizens of the European Union have the right to move freely and live in another EU country, subject to any conditions set out in the EU's treaties. This free movement of people is one of the fundamental principles of the EU, stipulated since its very foundation in 1957.

The main piece of legislation on the free movement in the EU is the Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States.

This directive specifies the rights that EU citizens and their family members have under the freedom of movement as well as the cases in which they can be refused access to and expelled from another member state. Thus, EU citizens with a valid identity card or passport may:

- Enter another EU country, as may their family members - whether EU citizens or not - without requiring an exit or entry visa.
- Live in another EU country for up to 3 months without any conditions or formalities.
- Live in another EU country for longer than 3 months subject to certain conditions, depending on their status in the host country. Those who are employed or self-employed do not need to meet any other conditions. Students and other people not working for payment, such as those in retirement, must have sufficient resources for themselves and their family, so as not to be a burden on the host country's social assistance system, and comprehensive sickness insurance cover.
- Have the right to be treated on an equal footing with nationals of the host country. However, host authorities are not obliged to grant benefits to EU citizens not working for payment during the first 3 months of their stay.
- May be expelled if they behave in a way that seriously threatens one of society's fundamental interests.
- May be refused entry to another member state if they are suspected of carrying diseases that the World Health Organization considers to have epidemic potential.

EU legislation on asylum seekers

According to the EU, an asylum seeker is a person submitting a request for refugee status. The asylum seeker is not granted refugee status unless the member state decides they qualify, following a defined legal procedure. The criterion used by member states to grant refugee status and, thus, the definition of what a refugee is as stipulated by the 1951 Geneva Convention: an individual fleeing his or her country due to a “well-founded fear of persecution based on his or her race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group”.

The right to asylum of those who meet the above criterion is guaranteed by Article 18 of the 2000 Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union: “The right to asylum shall be guaranteed with due respect for the rules of the Geneva Convention of 28 July 1951 and the Protocol of 31 January 1967 relating to the status of refugees and in accordance with the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Treaties’).”

There are some optional special rules for asylum applications made at the border, but there is no rule saying that an application must be refused because it was made at the border, or because the applicant entered the territory without authorization. However, the Asylum Procedures Directive (2013/32/EU) states that an application might be inadmissible if the asylum-seeker gained protection in a ‘first country of asylum’, or has links with a ‘safe third country’. The application of these rules does not mean that the asylum-seeker is not a refugee; rather it means that another state is deemed responsible for resuming protection, or for assessing the asylum application.

Article 6 (2) of the aforementioned Directive obliges state responsible to resume protection to ensure that individuals have an effective opportunity to lodge an application as soon as possible. Article 43 permits the processing of asylum applications at the border.

Finally, turning away an individual, whether at the border or elsewhere within a state’s jurisdiction, thereby putting the individual at risk of torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, is also prohibited by Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Mass media materials

Calais mayor threatens to block port over immigration row with Britain

'It would be illegal,' Natacha Bouchart says, 'but today I want to make a strong gesture towards the UK'

By **Henry Samuel**, Paris

3:30PM BST 03 Sep 2014

The mayor of Calais has threatened to blockade the northern French ferry port if Britain fails to provide more financial support to tackle thousands of migrants seeking to reach the UK illegally.

Nathalie Bouchart, the centre-right Calais mayor, said she may order such “illegal” action unless Britain makes a “strong response” to help deal with a rising tide of migrants from war-torn countries including Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan and Afghanistan who sleep rough and try nightly to stow away in lorries and ferries. These still view Britain as an “Eldorado”, she insisted.

The migrant issue costs Calais 10 million euros per year, the mayor claimed.

“I can take the decision to block the port. I have ways of exerting pressure,” Miss Bouchart said after a meeting with Bernard Cazeneuve, the interior minister on Tuesday night in which both agreed to open a new day centre for all migrants and a night shelter for migrant women and children.

“(A blockade) would be illegal, but I want a strong response today from the British,” said Miss Bouchart, who accused the Conservative Government of demanding tough security in the port while washing its hands financially.

“For the past ten years, there has been zero response from the British Government. Today, it’s an emergency, so we expect at the very least them to say they have received the message, that they are coming to see for themselves and that they will at least offer compensation,” she said.

Mr Cazeneuve, who met Teresa May, the Home Secretary last Friday, in London, also asked her to “participate financially to secure the port”.

The Calais mayor said that Mr Cazeneuve had agreed to a night shelter for women and children migrants, as well as a day centre, probably in a children's summer camp three miles from Calais.

But he refused to consider her plea for an overnight unit for 400 adults, which he said would act as a “magnet” – an accusation levelled against the notorious Sangatte centre, shut in 2002. Around 1,300 Asians and Africans are squatting and sleeping rough around the port, with the numbers rising weekly, particularly from Eritrea.

Source: The Telegraph website

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/france/11071633/Calais-mayor-threatens-to-block-port-over-immigration-row-with-Britain.html>

Calais mayor threatens to block port if UK fails to help deal with migrants

Natacha Bouchart says such a move would be illegal, but she wants to send a strong message to Britain

Agence France-Presse in Paris

Wednesday 3 September 2014 04.18 BST

Last modified on Monday 5 October 2015 17.11 BS

The mayor of Calais has threatened to shut down the port unless Britain helps to deal with the hundreds of migrants there trying to cross the Channel.

“I could take the decision to block the port ... I could bring pressure to bear,” Natacha Bouchart told reporters in Paris after meeting France’s interior minister, Bernard Cazeneuve.

“It would be illegal,” she recognised, “but today I want to make a strong gesture towards the British.”

Bouchart took issue with the immigration policy of the UK which, she complained, was “considered as an Eldorado” by immigrants.

She also reproached London for demanding increased security at the Calais port without contributing enough to the project, which, she said, cost €10m (£8m) a year.

Bouchart said she had not discussed the possibility of blocking the port with the interior minister, aware that he could not back such a measure.

“But I told him that I hoped he would have some strong negotiations with the British.”

Cazeneuve, who was in London last Friday, had called on the British to help financially with security at the port, a ministerial source said.

Bouchart and Cazeneuve also agreed on opening a day centre in Calais for migrants, many of them from Africa, and a night shelter for women and children.

There are about 1,300 migrants in the northern French port. Most are from Eritrea or Somalia and are hoping to reach England rather than seeking asylum in France.

People fleeing war-torn Syria are adding to the rising numbers.

A Red Cross centre was opened in 1999 but rapidly became overcrowded, holding 2,000 people before it was closed in 2002, rather than the 800 it was built for.

Source: The Guardian website

(<http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2014/sep/03/calais-mayor-threatens-block-port-uk-fails-help-migrants>)

Why is there a crisis in Calais?

BBC

3 October 2015

Attempts by migrants to cross the Channel from France into England continue unabated, causing delays and disruption to train services.

In the latest incursion, **100 migrants broke through a fence and entered the Eurotunnel terminal**, with some making it into the tunnel itself.

In the same week, **a man died near the tunnel entrance in Calais - the 13th migrant to die** trying to reach the UK since late June.

But many migrants are undeterred, although the numbers trying to get across the Channel have fallen - in July, some 2,000 migrants a night were trying to get into the terminal, compared to 150 in August.

The migrants, who are living in camps known as "the Jungle" on the edge of Calais, attempt to stow away on lorries headed for Eurotunnel, or **jump or cut security fences** to try to hide on Eurotunnel trains themselves. They also try to board lorries bound for cross-Channel ferries.

Extra security, including fencing, paid for by the UK, has been put in place.

In August, **the UK and France signed an agreement on new measures to help alleviate the crisis**, including a new command centre to help tackle the trafficking gangs.

How long has this been going on?

While the scenes of thousands of migrants storming the tunnel over the summer were unprecedented, the issue is far from new. In 1999, the controversial Sangatte refugee camp was opened in Calais, attracting thousands of would-be asylum seekers and people traffickers.

Its closure in 2001 and 2002 - on the orders of France's then minister of the interior, Nicolas Sarkozy - led to riots. Since then migrants have continued to arrive in Calais and build makeshift camps near the port. French authorities estimate there are about 3,000 people currently living in "the Jungle", although other estimates put the number higher.

The issue made headlines again in September last year after a ferry bound for the UK was **stormed by about 235 illegal migrants**.

The Home Office said the UK Border Force and the French authorities together prevented more than 39,000 attempts to cross the Channel illegally in 2014/15 - more than double the number prevented the previous year, while Eurotunnel, which operates the Channel Tunnel says it has blocked 37,000 attempts since January.

How strong is security in Calais?

French and UK authorities, and cross-Channel operators, continue to bring in measures to improve security, but migrants are still breaching barriers.

The Calais Chambers of Commerce has responsibility for the security of the port. Last autumn the UK government pledged £12m over three years to help France tackle the problem.

Earlier this month, the UK announced a further £2m for a new secure zone at Calais for UK-bound lorries. It later confirmed it would provide further £7m for measures to improve security at Calais and the entrance to the Channel Tunnel. The UK is also building a fence, known as the "**National Barrier Asset**", around the terminal at Coquelles.

The port is now protected by 16ft (5m) fences topped with coils of razor wire and CCTV, with the gates and exterior guarded by heavily-armed French riot police.

Eurotunnel has spent £9.2m on security in the first six months of 2015 alone, including money for fences, cameras, infra-red detectors and extra guards.

What are French police doing?

French police have been widely criticised for taking migrants off lorries, driving them a few miles away then releasing them - free to walk back to Calais. But many undocumented migrants are arrested - reportedly **more than 18,000 in the first half of 2015**.

The problem, police say, is that there are simply too many to arrest and deal with. They also say their focus on the motorway is safety, so getting people off the road is the priority. Extra French police have been deployed to Calais to try to cope with the volume of migrants.

French authorities are also struggling to stop illegal migrants **crossing its border from Italy**, where more than 60,000 people are thought to have arrived by boat from Africa already this year.

Why is the UK seen as a target?

The situation in Calais is part of a wider migration crisis in Europe - caused largely by the displacement of people from war-torn countries such as Syria, Afghanistan, and Eritrea, and also North Africa.

Many want to claim asylum in the UK. Others want to enter the country incognito to remain as illegal workers.

Natacha Bouchart, Mayor of Calais, has said illegal migrants perceive Britain as a "soft touch" for benefits, and a better place to find jobs in the black economy than France - although **studies do not necessarily back up this view**.

The British Red Cross said most migrants wanted to make the move because they believed there was a better prospect of finding work in the UK, or because they speak English and want to use the language. Others have relatives in the UK, or are drawn by **a belief that there is better housing and education available**.

The UK is certainly not alone as a target destination. According to the **EU's statistics body Eurostat**, Germany saw the most non-EU asylum seekers in 2014 - almost 203,000 - followed by Sweden, Italy, France, Hungary, and then the UK.

But the huge influx of migrants into Europe has seen asylum applications soar. Germany - the most popular destination - says it is expecting 800,000 refugees to arrive this year.

Where are the migrants coming from?

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees' representative in France, Philippe Leclerc, said most of the migrants in Calais were fleeing violence in countries such as Syria, Eritrea, Somalia and Afghanistan.

According to data from the UN Refugee Agency, Eritrea topped the list of countries of origin for people seeking and making asylum applications in the UK during the 12 months to the end of March 2015.

The UK and France both have a range of aid programmes in place in an attempt to address the root causes of the migrant crisis.

How many migrants make it to the UK?

The short answer is, no-one knows. Home Secretary Theresa May has conceded that "a number" of migrants do make it across, but has not given specific figures. The Home Office says it has neither official figures or estimates for the number of illegal migrant crossings.

There were **25,020 applications for asylum** in the year ending March 2015, but the figures are not broken down by point of entry, so there is no way of knowing how many of those people travelled through Dover. A Home Office spokesman said this was for security reasons. Both Kent Police and Kent County Council also say they do not hold official figures - although the leader of Kent County Council has said its children's social services department is under "enormous strain" because of the number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children entering the Port of Dover. The county is currently caring for more than 600 under-18s, council leader Paul Carter said.

What is Operation Stack?

Operation Stack is an emergency procedure used by Kent Police to park freight vehicles on the M20 in Kent - essentially turning it into a giant lorry park.

It has been used since 1996 whenever there is disruption to cross-Channel services, generally as a result of migrant activity, bad weather, or industrial action. The road is closed in three phases, depending on how much space is needed. It can remain closed for days at a time, with thousands of Calais-bound lorries sitting dormant, leading to severe delays in areas of Kent.

Between 1996 and the end of 2007, Operation Stack was implemented 95 times for a total of 145 days. It has been used intermittently since 2007 but rarely for more than a few hours or a day or two at a time. However, June and July of this year saw "unprecedented" use of the tactic, **according to the Freight Transport Association (FTA)**.

In August, the government announced the **temporary use of Manston Airfield in east Kent to hold freight lorries** bound for Dover.

Source: BBC website

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-29074736>

UK to accept 20,000 refugees from Syria by 2020

BBC

7 September 2015

The UK will accept up to 20,000 refugees from Syria over the next five years, David Cameron has told MPs.

The prime minister said the UK had a "moral responsibility" to those living in camps bordering Syria while doing all it can to end the conflict there.

Vulnerable children and orphans would be prioritised in what would be a "national effort", Mr Cameron said.

But Labour said the 20,000 figure was inadequate and secured an emergency Commons debate on Tuesday.

Commons Speaker John Bercow agreed to a Labour request for a three-hour debate about the wider crisis in Europe, with shadow home secretary Yvette Cooper urging the prime minister to reconsider his response.

Ms Cooper insisted Britain must also help refugees who have made it to Europe as well as Mr Cameron's current proposal to take more from camps surrounding Syria.

In his two hour statement to Parliament, Mr Cameron also revealed that two British-born nationals believed to planning terrorist attacks on the UK were killed in an RAF drone strike in Syria last month.

Earlier on Monday, France announced that it would take in 24,000 refugees over the next two years.

'Safe route'

Mr Cameron told MPs that the suffering of the Syrian people and others trying to make it to Europe in recent weeks was "heartbreaking" and that the UK was stepping up its effort to help those displaced by the conflict.

He told MPs that the existing **Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme**, in place since early 2014, would be expanded, with an additional 20,000 people currently living in camps in Syria, Turkey and Jordan being resettled in the UK by 2020.

refugees in the UK:

- **20,000** more refugees will be resettled in the UK by 2020
- **4,980** Syrian asylum seekers have been allowed to stay since 2011
- **25,771** people applied for asylum in the UK in the year to end June 2015
- **2,204** were from Syria
- **87%** of Syrian requests for asylum were granted
- **145** Syrian asylum seekers have been removed from the UK since 2011

Source: Home Office

People brought to Britain under VPR have been granted Humanitarian Protection, a status normally used for people who "don't qualify for asylum" but would be at "real risk of suffering serious harm" in their home country.

They can stay for five years, have the right to work and access public funds. After five years they can apply to settle in the UK.

Mr Cameron told MPs many of those to be given sanctuary would be children, describing it as the "modern equivalent of the Kinder transport" during World War Two.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees would be responsible for identifying those most in need, with all those considered for resettlement to be subject to security checks.

'Extra compassion'

The government, he said, would work with the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and councils in England to ensure the maximum capacity was available and the commitment could be "properly delivered on the ground".

"We will continue to show the world that this country is a country of extra compassion, always standing up for our values and helping those in need," Mr Cameron said.

After that, Mr Cameron said the government would have consider, in co-operation with local councils, how it would be financed.

'Proud tradition'

The PM defended his response to the migrant crisis - which has been criticised in recent days - insisting the UK was giving £1bn in humanitarian aid to Syria and that by accepting refugees directly from camps it was discouraging people from taking the "potentially lethal" crossing across the Mediterranean.

Tory MPs welcomed the move and although Labour leader Harriet Harman said the government was doing the "right thing" she said there was an urgent need for action now and questioned whether there was scope to accept more than 4,000 this year.

"Is being British to be narrow, inward looking, fearful of the outside world, or is it about being strong and confident and proud to reach out to those seeking refuge on our shores? It must be the latter."

She also called on the government to reconsider its refusal to accept any refugees currently in southern and central Europe.

The SNP's Westminster leader Angus Robertson said it was "appalling" that only 216 refugees had been given sanctuary so far under the VPR scheme while veteran Labour MP Sir Gerald Kaufman said the UK's efforts stood in stark contrast to that of Germany, which had effectively accepted 10,000 refugees in a single day.

Save The Children urged the government to come to the aid of the 3,000 or so unaccompanied children who had travelled to Europe, saying it would continue "a proud British tradition of giving lone children a second chance in Britain".

But UKIP leader Nigel Farage said Syrian refugees should be considered as part of the UK's annual asylum process and he would be seeking assurances that no-one given refuge posed any threat to UK security.

Source: BBC website

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-34171148>

Refugee crisis: EU 'first country' rule change puts pressure on UK to take in more asylum seekers

A system obliging refugees to register in the first European country they enter looks set to be abolished

Leo Cendrowicz, Oliver Wright

Tuesday 19 January 2016

The rules obliging refugees to register in the first European country they enter look set to be abolished under a radical revision of the European Union's asylum system. The move could be problematic for David Cameron ahead of Britain's EU referendum.

The EU's system, part of the so-called Dublin regulation, has been widely ignored during the migrant crisis in which more than a million refugees have streamed into Europe.

However officials say the rules were never properly applied anyway, as most refugees landed on deserted beaches in Greece and Italy, and made their way over land to other countries such as Germany and Sweden.

The move for reform, reported in today's Financial Times, comes after Greece, in particular, came under criticism for failing to set up basic facilities for refugees.

However, it will mean that the richer countries of final destination, like Germany, will have to establish major registration and fingerprinting infrastructure to cope with the hundreds of thousands of expected refugees.

It could also mean that Britain may find it more difficult to send refugees back to neighbouring EU states. One of the main arguments of the British campaign to remain in the EU is that the Dublin regulations allow the UK to deport asylum-seekers if Britain is not the first European country that they arrived in.

If those regulations were to be changed the UK might be forced to accept refugees who have managed to enter the country from across the Channel, regardless of where they first arrived in Europe. This could further encourage migrants to head for Britain.

The Out campaign was quick to make capital over the planned change.

"This change would appear to provide an incentive for asylum-seekers to get across the Channel," said a spokesman for Vote Leave.

"This is further evidence that as part of the EU the UK does not have control over migration or asylum policy."

Much will depend on the detail about how the new rules will work. With no land border with any other country in the passport-free Schengen zone, Britain is not expected to see a strong surge in migration.

The Dublin system was already undermined last September when German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, lifted her country's right to return Syrian refugees to the first country of entry. Ms Merkel has already called for the EU to revise the Dublin rules to cope with the refugee challenges.

The Dublin rules date back to a 1990 convention in the Irish capital, and came into force for the first 12 signatories in 1997. However, officials have long criticised them, suggesting they

could not be applied in countries like Greece and Italy with long, unprotected coastlines. “It looks like Dublin will have to be sacrificed if we want to save the Schengen system,” an EU official said.

The EU Home Affairs Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos told MEPs last week that a revision of the Dublin system would be unveiled in March. “Dublin should not just be a mechanism to allocate responsibility, but also a solidarity instrument among member states. It must be revised deeply; it was adopted in a totally different landscape,” he said.

Six European countries have already reimposed border controls and suspended their Schengen membership in an effort to contain the large influx of refugees.

In his state of the union address to the European Parliament last September, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker promised a reform of the Dublin system. “It is time we prepare a more fundamental change in the way we deal with asylum applications – and notably the Dublin system that requires that asylum applications be dealt with by the first country of entry,” he said.

The European Council President Donald Tusk said that the EU had “no more than two months to get things under control” or face “grave consequences”.

Source: The Independent website

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/refugee-crisis-eu-first-country-rule-change-puts-pressure-on-uk-to-take-more-asylum-seekers-a6822096.html>

EU border controls: Schengen scheme on the brink after Amsterdam talks

Passport-free area faces being suspended for two years, as senior diplomat says of refugee influx: ‘This cannot continue’

Ian Traynor in Brussels and **Helena Smith** in Athens

Tuesday 26 January 2016, 07.17 GMT

Last modified on Tuesday 26 January 2016 10.39 GMT

EU governments have placed a large question mark over the future of Europe’s passport-free travel zone, signalling an extension of national border controls within the 26-country Schengen area in response to the immigration crisis.

As Europe scrambled to put together a coherent answer to the biggest challenge the union has faced, EU interior ministers meeting in Amsterdam on Monday compounded a sense of gloom and confusion in the face of ever rising numbers of people heading into Greece from Turkey.

Klaas Dijkhoff, the Dutch migration minister, said the governments were to ask the European commission for permission to extend and prolong the border controls from May because the numbers of refugees reaching Europe were not diminishing.

Under the rules governing the open travel area, governments could suspend the Schengen system for two years, dealing a potentially terminal blow to a scheme that has been in place for more than 20 years. “These measures are inevitable at this point in time,” said Dijkhoff of the likely suspension.

Following eight hours of talks in the Dutch capital, the Austrian interior minister, Johanna Mikl-Leitner, said: “Schengen is on the brink of collapse.”

In the past week, national leaders and senior EU officials have made increasingly alarmist pronouncements on Schengen’s future, warning that the travel zone could crumble within weeks and bring with it the risk of union dissolution.

The countries bearing the brunt of the mass influx of more than 1 million asylum seekers in the past year rounded on Athens, with Austria bluntly dismissing Greek arguments and warning that it could be kicked out, at least temporarily, of the Schengen area. Germany and Sweden echoed the criticism. Between them, the three countries have taken in about 90% of asylum seekers over the past year, but are reining in their liberal admissions policies.

Vienna last week triggered a chain reaction of curbs on refugee movement by announcing plans to cap the numbers allowed in over the next four years. Sweden has already imposed stringent national border controls and Germany is mulling whether to suspend Schengen for two years.

Mikl-Leitner rejected Greek arguments about the difficulties of patrolling its maritime borders with Turkey and explicitly warned Athens about a Schengen expulsion. “Greece has one of the biggest navies in Europe,” she said. “It’s a myth that the Greek-Turkish border cannot be protected.”

The Swedish home affairs minister, Anders Ygeman, said of Greece: “If a country doesn’t live up to its obligations, we will have to restrict its connections to the Schengen area.”

EU governments have been seized by a rising sense of panic, desperate for the numbers of arrivals to slow down while all the evidence points in the opposite direction. About 35,000

have made the sea crossing from Turkey to Greece since the beginning of the year, a 20-fold increase on the same period last year.

“We don’t have any good options, only bad options on the table,” said a senior diplomat in Brussels. “This simply can’t continue. There’s agreement among the member states on that.” Meanwhile, as the numbers arriving via Turkey have shown little let-up, three EU commissioners were in Ankara in what has turned into quasi-permanent negotiations with the Turkish government aimed at getting them to stem the flow.

The EU-Turkey pact shows little sign of delivering and the EU also cannot agree on how to fund the €3bn (£2.3bn) price tag promised to the Turks, although Germany wants to pay Turkey more. A joint statement from the German and Turkish governments following Berlin negotiations last Friday referred to the €3bn bill as merely a “first” payment.

Pressure on Greece also highlighted further divisions in an EU riven several ways over the refugee crisis. Italy, Luxembourg and the European commission all talked down the prospects of punishing Greece or expelling it from the Schengen system.

“There is no plan to exclude Greece from anything,” said Natasha Bertaud, the commission spokeswoman on immigration. She confirmed, however, that an EU mission was in Macedonia last week exploring how to strengthen the vulnerable country’s border with northern Greece.

Following Austria’s announcement of immigration curbs, countries on the Balkan route between Greece and Austria have followed suit, meaning that hundreds of thousands could end being kettled up in Greece unless there is an EU policy breakthrough.

Although the EU’s border agency Frontex has no mandate to operate in Macedonia, member governments have sent a total of 57 police and immigration officers to the country.

Athens responded angrily to the pressure. The migration minister, Yiannis Mouzalas, said Greece was being scapegoated in an EU “blame game”. “The European crisis will be a humanitarian crisis in Greece with thousands of trapped refugees and migrants,” he warned.

Greek officials pointed out that they have so far spent €2bn managing the migration wave. “That’s money we really don’t have,” said one. “Tell me: where’s the European solidarity?”

The Syriza-led government says that ringfencing the eurozone’s weakest link would be tantamount to turning it into a huge refugee camp at a time of acute social hardship.

Echoing those fears, analysts said suspension from the border-free zone could easily reignite scenarios of ejection from the single currency, which Athens only narrowly averted last summer. “It’s a symbolic act,” said economics professor Theodore Pelagidis, a fellow at the

Brookings thinktank. “It would be interpreted by investors that Greece could face the danger of being ejected from the eurozone in the not so distant future.”

Regional experts said next month’s EU summit between heads of state would be critical. By then, officials deployed by Brussels will have completed a Schengen evaluation report expected to play a decisive role in determining whether Greece should remain in the zone.

“The February meeting will give us a better sense of whether the EU-Turkey deal is delivering,” said Mujtaba Rahman, head of European analysis at Eurasia group, a risk consultancy. “The real power lies in Germany. For Merkel, it is really important to deliver a substantial reduction in refugee numbers by the time of local state elections in mid-March,” he said.

There was a widespread perception, he said, that Greece had not done enough to process migrants properly, including setting up camps or hot spots where refugees could reside before their relocation. “Germany and others have become very frustrated with the lack of progress,” he said. “Now they are at risk of having a solution imposed upon them.”

Source: The Guardian website

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/25/refugee-crisis-schengen-area-scheme-brink-amsterdam-talks>

8 reasons Europe’s refugee crisis is happening now

By Liz Sly

September 18, 2015

A complicated mix of war, weather and logistical considerations lies behind the extraordinary influx of refugees and migrants into Europe this summer. Here are eight of the reasons that the biggest migration of people to the continent since World War II is happening now. The most important is No. 1.

1. The war in Syria.

Syria’s war has ground on for four years without end in sight. There is no meaningful diplomacy to end it. At least 250,000 have died. It is no wonder people want to escape. Syrians represent half of this year’s unprecedented surge, which is in turn double the number

the year before. In other words, without s, the influx of people seeking sanctuary in Europe would be roughly where it was last year.

That was a record year, too, as was the year before. An upsurge in conflicts worldwide has fueled record levels of displacement worldwide in recent years. People also are fleeing conflict in countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Eritrea, Somalia and Niger. But with s accounting for the bulk of those, this is turning into the year when Syria's war washed up on the shores of Europe.

2. The route to Europe got a lot easier.

Until recently, the sea crossing from Libya to Italy had been the preferred route for all the migrants and refugees fleeing to Europe. A far shorter and less dangerous sea route exists from Turkey to Greece. But the journey from Greece through the Balkans to the northern European destinations preferred by refugees was far more complicated than the one leading through Italy. After Macedonia lifted harsh measures aimed at preventing refugees from entering the country in June, the route through the Balkans opened up. Turkey is next door to Syria, and it is also more easily accessible for people coming from countries farther to the east, including refugees from Iraq and Afghanistan and economic migrants from Pakistan and Bangladesh.

3. The price dropped.

This is linked to reason No. 2. The crossing to Greece from Turkey takes less than an hour and as little as 20 minutes, depending on which beach the boat sets out from. Not only does this make the sea crossing cheaper, but refugees no longer needed to pay smugglers to sneak them through the borders of the Balkan countries. People planning to make the journey say they now need to pay smugglers no more than \$2,000 to \$3,000 to complete the journey instead of the \$5,000 to \$6,000 required to reach Libya and take the boat to Italy.

That means more people – many of whom were saving for the trip anyway – can afford to take the journey now.

4. The weather.

It is normal for illegal migration into Europe to peak during the summer months, when the sea crossings are safer. One reason there is a big scramble now is that a lot of people are trying to make the journey before bad weather sets in.

Given all the other reasons people are trying reach Europe now, it is hard to predict whether the onset of winter will slow down the pace of arrivals. One thing is clear: there will be more

fatalities. In the past week there have been more drownings due to capsized boats on the Greece-Turkey route than in the whole of the rest of the year – 56 this week compared to 55 through the end of last week.

5. Germany's extension of welcome to refugees.

Huge numbers were already on the march when German Chancellor Angela Merkel announced that Germany would offer temporary residency to all the refugees arriving there. But there seems little doubt that the offer encouraged more people to set out. Iraqis have begun to join the exodus in bigger numbers, and many of those arriving recently in Turkey to make the trip say they were encouraged by the TV footage of Germans welcoming refugees. Whether the new border controls introduced by Germany, Hungary, Austria and Slovakia will deter people who have not yet set out remains to be seen.

6. The Syrian government's conscription drive.

Short of manpower to fight the rebellion against his rule, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's government has embarked since late last year on a drive to enlist reservists to serve in the army. Many of the s fleeing to Europe come from government-held areas and say they were escaping forced conscription, which affects all men who completed their compulsory military service in the past 10 years – or basically, all men under the age of about 30.

7. The Syrian government has made it easier for Syrians to travel.

This might seem to contradict No. 6. But there appears to be no attempt to prevent young men who want to avoid military service from leaving the country. On the contrary, the government has made it easier to acquire passports in recent months – both in Syria and at embassies abroad – and it is possible to defer the military service with a payment of \$300.

This has confirmed the suspicions of many Syria watchers that Assad has deliberately encouraged the refugee flow, both to neighboring countries and to Europe, as part of a strategy to empty the country of potential opponents. “The humanitarian catastrophe we are witnessing is an outcome of Assad's survival strategy,” said Emile Hokayem of the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies. “Assad has sought to shift the burden of dealing with those in Syria who are opposed to him onto other actors.”

Assad, however, blames Europe and the United States for the exodus, saying most of the refugees are fleeing the “terrorism” that he accuses the West of fomenting by supporting elements of the opposition.

8. The shortcomings of the underfunded international aid effort.

Before this massive influx of people to Europe, 4 million s had already fled their country's war to neighboring countries, mostly to Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon. There they are living miserable lives, denied the right to work, and most of the children are not in school. Many of the refugees headed for Europe who were already living as refugees cite their children's education as the main reason they are seeking to build new lives.

Source: Washington Post website

[\(https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/09/18/8-reasons-why-europes-refugee-crisis-is-happening-now/\)](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/09/18/8-reasons-why-europes-refugee-crisis-is-happening-now/)

Refugee crisis: What life is really like inside the 'Jungle' in Calais

The Independent's correspondent Joseph Charlton spent three days in the notorious refugee camp

Joseph Charlton

Wednesday 30 September 2015

The first thing we see is a heap of high heels and baby shoes. Then, next to that, a pile of rain-soaked duvets and a few abandoned teddy bears. It's reminiscent of the sepia photos of clothes and glasses from the concentration camps, but the piles here are kept in even less order. Amelia Iraheta, an American volunteer picks up an ankle-high red leather boot. "I mean, who the hell thought this would be a good idea?" she says, before chucking it back on the heap.

Mismanaged efforts at altruism are piling up around the porous border of the "Jungle", the name given to the camp outside Calais which has become a temporary home to around 3,000-4,000 men, and about 350 women and children. The piles are good to no one: the result of spontaneous drop-offs from British and French nationals who drive to the camp at weekends with cars and vans full of donations.

"It's a disaster," says Amelia. "They come with a car full of unsorted stuff, they don't tell any of the volunteer organisations here, they open the boot and then the stuff just gets raided and chucked around in the chaos – it's not the way to donate."

The breadth of waste is astounding. A few hundred metres from the Jungle's entrance, in the district of camp named "Sudan" (it contains mainly Sudanese refugees), there is a swamp of

T-shirts, jeans, socks and underwear. There was a torrential downpour the night before and the contents of an unplanned truck drop-off float sadly on the water's surface. "If they'd checked in with one of the organisations before they arrived, we could have sorted this in the warehouse and then distributed it," says Olivia Long, a UK volunteer who's been here for two weeks. A refugee pokes around in the debris looking for anything salvageable. Tarpaulin and shoes are the most useful finds: tarpaulin because it reinforces the homemade shelters being erected, shoes because many travelled here in flip-flops.

I'm camping in the part of the camp known as "No Borders". No map exists for the Jungle, but this area is known as "mixed", and our tent is pitched between some Iranians, Kurds and Sudanese, and a UK group documenting incidents of police brutality at the ferry and train terminal at night. I've come down with a friend who has raised £1,500 to donate to CalAid, one of the small volunteer operations here. He's also filled up a van with guitars, footballs and cricket sets – the last of which is enthusiastically accepted by a group of Afghan children living in the camp.

"Afghanistan", the second largest area of the camp after Sudan, regularly holds cricket matches in the camp – sometimes involving the neighbours in "Pakistan". The layout of the camp imitates, to a degree, the geography of the world map: Afghanistan neighbours Pakistan, while elsewhere Eritrea borders Ethiopia.

Several misconceptions surround the camp. Syria is not currently the most represented nation here, though volunteers say greater numbers are arriving from the Levant every day. (There is a lag between world conflicts and the time it takes for refugees to arrive in the camp, meaning yesteryear's fleeing Afghans and Sudanese are today's recent arrivals.) Given the number of now displaced, however, grim forecasters might well predict the Syria of the Jungle will soon rival the size of Sudan and Afghanistan.

Neither, as is often supposed, is the Jungle new. The original camp came into being about eight years ago (its first inhabitants apparently Afghans) but the site moved last year due to flooding. Since then, say volunteers, the population has doubled.

I ask Olivia, our guide, why this place is called the Jungle – naively expecting the name to have been imposed on the camp by outsiders in an act of approximate racism. "The refugees use it themselves because they hate it," she says. "They use it to get across that they are treated like animals here. As volunteers here, we are careful to always try and say 'the camp', but they correct us. They want people to know the conditions here."

An Ethiopian woman who wishes to remain anonymous confirms this to me later. “No jungle!” she shouts. “A jungle is for animals – we are people. Can’t people see that we are people?”

The local authorities, apparently, can not. The day we leave, a row of tents that has spilt out of the packed camp on to the side of the road is bulldozed without warning, under the watchful eye of police in riot gear. Belongings, identification papers and dozens of passports are destroyed. And scores of people – mostly Syrian and Sudanese – are forced to sleep outside in the rain that night, their tents and few possessions having been demolished in the process. The next day, some youths protest against the action, and an imam trying to keep the peace between them and the riot police is hit in the stomach by a rubber bullet. Others fall back after being hit by tear gas.

Everyday conditions in the camp are similarly dehumanising. Sanitation ranges from appalling to non-existent; and all of the 20 or so mobile lavatories (provided by French government aid) that we visit are overflowing with faeces. Olivia complains that waste disposal has slowed in the past month, even as the size of the camp exponentially grows day by day.

Outside of the lavatories, human shit litters every “path” of the camp. Gangrene and dysentery are common and there is a pressing fear that healthcare in the camp will disappear entirely before Christmas. Doctors of the World, the group providing onsite care, are currently funded only until December. Food is similarly scarce. Olivia says that government aid provides a single service of 2,000 hot meals per day, but there is currently double that number of people in the camp.

Put simply, this is an exclave of a sub-third-world country. It shames the UK and French government in equal measure. Say what you will on the immigration debate, but to knowingly overlook the conditions of a place like this is to condemn its people to a living hell. It contradicts our idea of how basic human rights work within the European Union.

I meet an 11-year-old Egyptian boy called Hossam. He has no family in the camp, and no one is looking after him. He has his own small tent, of which he is apparently “very house-proud”. Some of the volunteers take him to dinner at a makeshift Afghan café. The daily meal served by the government aid organisation is served between 5 and 8pm, but queuing begins at one in the afternoon. Taking Hossam for a €3 paper plate of deep fried chicken and chips will ensure that today he gets fed.

More women and children arrive at the Jungle everyday. The government used to provide an indoor shelter – a building – for them on site, but this week it reached capacity and volunteers say they see more and more forced into sleeping in tents.

At night we visit the Jungle's "Eritrean nightclub" – a kind of farmyard shed-like building made out of wood and tarpaulin. Inside there is low lighting, a multicoloured disco ball, and east African pop music playing. On the tables are shabby shisha pipes, and you can buy cans of 7.9 per cent Perlembourg – mainland Europe's equivalent of Special Brew – for €1 a pop. It's like a direly conceived east London joke, except immeasurably more earnest and sad. Many of the men here come didn't used to drink, but took it up after months of life going nowhere.

I ask Tom Radcliffe, a volunteer who has been fund-raising and coming here since July, for his estimation of the Jungle. "It's like a rock concert," he says. "It's like a rock concert that's been going on for 10 years where nobody likes the music, and the only way to leave might kill you."

Is the fear of death credible? The answer, in my three-day experience of the camp, is yes. Most of the migrants and refugees I speak to have spent their savings getting to this point, and a return journey home is as undesirable as it is financially impossible. Saddiq, a former landowner and farmer from Sudan tells me: "I do not have a cent. I can't go back to my farm on the Sudanese border. It's in the heart of the civil war."

The other option is making "the jump" – what some of the camp's inhabitants refer to as the perilous mission to break into either the Calais ferry terminal or the Eurotunnel at night, in a bid to board boats or freight trains headed to England. Of the two, the Eurotunnel option is both more popular and more dangerous. On the night we arrive two s are electrocuted by the overhead power lines on the tracks. The following day one death is reported by the BBC, the other is not. In an Afghan "café" serving chai and food, a group of Syrians and Kurds pass around a picture of the man whose death has not been reported, singing a song for him in Kurdish.

The BBC says 10 people have been killed on the tracks since June, but reports from volunteers and refugees suggest the number is considerably higher. Gani, the camp's only known Kosovan, has tried making the crossing "about nine times" since reaching Calais. His leg is currently broken in four places from falling from one of the five fences that have been erected to deter break-ins to the Eurotunnel, and he recounts witnessing two deaths there in the previous month. "The last time I was with a Pakistani. He climbed up and the sound went

crack” – he claps his hands together hard in imitation of the sound. “He was electrocuted. Gone. Dead.”

Later that day I speak to Hamza, a Syrian who used to teach English literature in Daraa. He, too, has seen death on the tracks. A Syrian friend of his was electrocuted earlier that week, and Hamza similarly uses his hands to imitate the sound of electrocution. It seems the body count is regular, not occasional.

I ask Hamza to describe the situation in his hometown of Daraa – the city where protests against Assad began and which is now fought over between the regime and Isis. “The UK does not understand the situation in Syria,” he says. “Isis are not all bad people like you see on television. They helped oppose the brutality of the Assad regime in our city. Isis is a preferable to live under than the Assad regime. Most of my friends have been kidnapped and tortured by the Assad regime. You would rather die than face that. They flay your skin and take your nails. I will never see them again.”

Every discussion with a Syrian here complicates the UK narrative of events in the Middle East. More straightforward conversations between aid workers and refugees tend in a simpler direction.

“Do you have evening plans?” I hear a volunteer-friend blithely ask one of the Kurds we are camping next to. “Yes, we have the same plan every evening,” replies Ramyar, a Kurdish English teacher. He has a wry and sad smile on his face, and gestures at the Eurotunnel terminal eight miles away. Walking there takes two hours each way, and as a result many of the camp's inhabitants spend much of the day sleeping in preparation for the task. Monster and Red Bull cans litter the camp; the majority here don't drink and caffeine is prized above alcohol.

After a meagre three days of helping to organise stock in the volunteers' warehouse, and speaking to refugees in the camp, we get ready to depart. The car has been broken into during the night – one of its windows smashed – and we need to try and claim the insurance in the UK, not the Jungle.

We say goodbye to our Kurdish and Iranian friends in the camp, explaining shamefacedly that we are going back to London for work. Like others we've met, they are keen to swap Facebook details. Everyone here prefers their online avatar to the crabbed existence they live in the camp. A man on crutches, who has hurt himself falling from the Eurotunnel fence says simply: “Don't look at me here in the Jungle. Look at my Facebook, see my girlfriend. I am not what you see here.”

The group of Kurds shake their heads ruefully at the break-in and help us pack up our tent. The goodbye is long and difficult. Not once since we arrived here have any of the dozens we met asked for a stowaway lift in our boot, but now our neighbours look on a little enviously as we pull on to the road. Ramyar, the Kurdish schoolteacher with perfect English, senses our shame and tries to placate it.

“We don't say, 'See you later',” he says, smiling. “We say instead: 'See you there'.”

Some names have been changed

To donate to Doctors Of The World go to: doctorsoftheworld.org.uk/pages/calais-appeal

Source: The Independent website

(<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/refugee-crisis-what-life-is-really-like-inside-the-jungle-in-calais-a6674256.html>)

Calais port delays after migrants board P&O ferry

BBC

23 January 2016

The port of Calais was temporarily closed on Saturday and services were disrupted after a group of migrants briefly boarded a ship.

It is understood that about 50 migrants in Calais boarded a P&O ferry named the Spirit of Britain, while it was unloading.

The incident happened during a protest at the port, in favour of migrants.

The port has since reopened and sailing services have returned to normal.

P&O Ferries **said** the "security incident" had been resolved and "all services were operating to schedule" - following delays of up to 120 minutes.

'Attacks and intimidation'

Meanwhile, the head of the Road Haulage Association renewed demands for the French military to intervene.

Richard Burnett said: "This shocking breach of security clearly shows that the migrant mayhem in and around Calais is not being tackled.

"This latest episode has made the headlines, but the many incidents of attacks and intimidation faced by our British drivers on a daily basis are going unreported as, depressingly, they are now being regarded as routine."

He also warned it was "only a matter of time before our worst fears become a reality and a UK-bound truck driver is killed".

The demonstration was held in support of migrants and, according to AP news agency, attracted a crowd of 2,000 people.

Some of the protesters at the demonstration carried banners saying "refugees welcome here". People from Britain were among the demonstrators.

On Saturday, a statement from the Port of Dover said: "The Port of Calais is currently experiencing migrant activity which has caused disruption to ferry services.

"Therefore services to and from Calais via the Port of Dover are affected, but DFDS Seaways [ferry] services are still running to Dunkirk as normal."

DFDS Seaways also **tweeted** that Calais had been closed due to a "migrant invasion".

Thousands of migrants are currently living in camps known as "the Jungle" on the edge of Calais.

The population of the camp has risen steadily in recent weeks to about 2,500, including about 250 children, according to medical volunteer group, Medecins Sans Frontieres.

In August last year, the UK and France signed an agreement on new measures to try and alleviate the crisis, including a new command centre to help tackle trafficking gangs.

Elsewhere on Saturday, Jeremy Corbyn **visited a migrant camp** in northern France and spoken of the "dreadful conditions" there.

The Labour leader said conditions in the Grande-Synthe camp near Dunkirk would be a "disgrace anywhere", and Britain should be "part of bringing European support to people".

He said the long-term solution was to deal with the conflicts causing the crisis.

The situation in Calais comes amid an influx of migrants to Europe - caused largely by people fleeing war and oppression in countries such as Syria, Afghanistan and Eritrea.

On Friday French Prime Minister Manuel Valls warned that Europe's migration crisis was putting the EU at grave risk.

Source: BBC website

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-35393423>

Calais Jungle: 'Dangerous' UK activists don't care about refugees, says official responsible for clearing camp

In her first UK interview, the official behind the plan to clear the Jungle tells John Lichfield why it was justified

John Lichfield

1 March 2016

Riot police firing tear gas, migrants catapulting missiles at lorries and shelters set on fire. The dismantling of the “Jungle” migrant camp near Calais has had a lurid start. Those incidents lead to the question: is the never-ending crisis in Calais about to explode into uncontrollable violence?

No, says Fabienne Buccio, the calm and friendly woman who has one of the hardest jobs in France – managing police, security and government policy in the Pas de Calais area. There is a largely unseen, or little reported, “battle of Calais”, which the French government is beginning to win, she says.

“We must remain humble. The problems are very great. But, yes, I think we are starting to make real progress,” Ms Buccio told *The Independent* in her first interview with the British media. “The Calais crisis cannot be solved in Calais. It can only end completely when the problems which create these great flows of mass migration are resolved. But since the autumn, we have had a clear plan, balancing the need for greater security and the need for humanity. And it is beginning to succeed.”

The figures support her claims. Nearly 3,000 migrants have agreed to move to reception centres elsewhere in France since 27 October. Eighty per cent of them have applied for French asylum.

The number of Calais migrants accepting financial help to go home has increased six-fold since the start of this year. The population of the “Jungle” – the patchwork of official and unofficial migrant camps north of Calais – has fallen from 6,000 in September to about 3,700 and is still falling. New razor wire fences and police reinforcements mean that very few migrants are now reaching Britain illegally.

Ms Buccio believes that she is on course to reduce the migrant numbers to a “manageable” population of 2,000. She blames this week’s violence on mostly British “extremist” activists in the No Borders movement and a “hard core” of about 150 migrants “whom they manipulate”.

“The great majority of the migrants are co-operative and are beginning to accept that we – not the extremists – have their best interests at heart,” she said.

Ms Buccio, 56, a great admirer of Jane Austen, is the prefect, or senior national government representative, in the Calais area. There is no equivalent in Britain; think of it as an unelected, provincial governor.

It was Ms Buccio who devised the plan to clear the southern part of the Jungle, which began this week. It was she who launched the first intensive effort by the French authorities to offer asylum to the migrants and “test their determination to reach the imagined El Dorado of Britain”.

Past generations of Calais migrants were obsessed with Britain. Those who have arrived more recently have been “misled by people smuggling gangs” to make for Calais, she said. When they realise that they cannot cross the Channel, they are ready to try their luck in France.

Of those who agree to be bussed to the 102 reception centres elsewhere in France, 100 per cent of Eritreans, 87 per cent of Syrians, 80 per cent of Afghans but only 40 per cent of Sudanese agree to give up all chance of seeking British asylum and apply to remain in France.

Ms Buccio was scathing about the No Borders activists, four-fifths of whom are British. “They are young people who are driven by an anarchist ideology of hatred of all laws and frontiers,” she said. “They have no real concern for the suffering of the migrants. They manipulate them and they mislead them. They harass the social workers we send to canvass them about staying in France.”

“And they are dangerous. One of my police officers had his hand broken in five places on Monday. They are not throwing pebbles.”

Ms Buccio is herself the grand-daughter of an Italian migrant who faced racist violence from local people when he fled from fascist Italy to Marseille in the 1930s. She has worked her way up from the bottom of the administrative pyramid to one of the most high-profile government jobs in France.

She has made a reputation since she arrived last year as a humane and hands-on official. Unlike many French prefects, she seldom appears in braided hat and white gloves.

While we speak, she takes a stream of calls from officials in the Jungle. “Be careful when you are dismantling shelters in that area,” she tells one caller. “That’s where the mosque is. And watch out that the No Borders people don’t burn it down and blame us.”

For 20 years, Calais seems to have been a never-ending crisis, but that is changing, Ms Buccio insists.

“First, the Calais port and the Eurotunnel freight terminal are now almost water-tight,” she said. “The new security arrangements are working. I’m not saying that no one ever gets through. A few people managed to cross the Berlin Wall after all. But it is now very, very hard to reach the UK illegally.

“Secondly, we have been reaching out actively to the migrants in the Jungle to persuade them to go to reception centres elsewhere in France, Thirdly, we have basic but decent living conditions to offer – converted shipping containers, a shelter for women and children – for up to 2,000 migrants who wish to remain here.”

Calais threatens to become an issue in the Brexit debate. Some French politicians say that, if Britain leaves the EU, France should stop defending the British border.

“I am not a politician. That is not a question that concerns me,” Ms Buccio said. “The frontier must be protected and properly policed. We get on well with our British counterparts. There is often criticism of France in the British press but the people we deal with every day appreciate the efforts that we are making.”

Ms Buccio’s great test will come this spring and summer as more Syrian and other migrants pour into Europe. Will thousands of them make for Calais?

“Some will, inevitably,” she said. “But the intelligence we are getting, from as far away as Afghanistan, is that people now know that the Channel is an unbreachable barrier. The word is going around: it is time to forget Calais.”

Source: The Independent

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/calais-jungle-uk-activists-dangerous-and-dont-care-about-refugees-says-official-responsible-for-a6905871.html>

Far-right and anti-fascist protesters clash in Dover

Witnesses report fighting and bricks thrown after hundreds of anti-fascists travel to city to oppose right-wing demonstration against refugees

Damien Gayle

30 January 2016

Several people have been hurt and three people arrested after far-right and anti-fascist protesters clashed during opposing demonstrations in Dover.

Witnesses said bricks were thrown and fights broke out close to Dover Priory station after hundreds of anti-fascists travelled to the city to oppose a demonstration against refugees. Police said one person sustained a broken arm and five others had minor injuries.

Vyara, who joined the demonstration on the anti-fascist side, said fighting broke out when a band of far-right protesters found a way around the police lines separating the two groups. Far-right protesters attacked using metal poles, sticks and bottles, she said, while anti-fascists fought back with bricks and flares until police were able to separate the groups.

“For a long time there was just a standoff because the police were preventing the two sides from having contact,” Vyara said. “But then the fascists found a way to get around so the two sides ended up clashing. There was fighting, there were flares, a lot of bricks got thrown.”

About 20 people from each side appeared to have been injured in the fighting, many of them sustaining head wounds, Vyara said. “It was probably the most violent protest I’ve attended, there was a lot of physical contact,” she added.

After police separated the groups they protected the far-right demonstrators as they marched through Dover to a rallying point close to the docks where a crowd of about five dozen listened to speeches.

Violence linked to the protests began before demonstrators reached Dover, when far-right and anti-fascist protesters inadvertently stopped at the same services on the M20 near Maidstone en route to the port.

At least one windscreen was smashed and a swastika was daubed on the side of a coach, allegedly in blood, after right-wingers attacked using sticks and debris found around the car park of the service station. Police arrested six people on suspicion of violent disorder.

Anindya Bhattacharyya, 44, from Whitechapel in east London, who was travelling with the anti-fascist group, said he was away from the coaches and inside the service station when violence erupted.

“The service station staff bolted the doors and through the windows we could see a large group of fascists,” he said. “They were wearing Combat 18 T-shirts and one had an Enoch Powell T-shirt.

“They were running at the anti-fascist demonstrators and there was some argy-bargy, things were chucked back and forth. And then the anti-fascists went back to their coaches and the group of fascists basically tooled up with bits of wood and bins.

“They attacked one of our coaches and smashed up the windows and one of them came and daubed a swastika in blood on the side of one of the coaches.”

After the police arrived the right-wing demonstrators were taken away from the area, Bhattacharyya said. He and the rest of the anti-fascist demonstrators, who had all travelled from London, were kept on their coaches, surrounded by a police cordon.

Police later said they had seized more than 20 weapons in Dover and at the M20 services, including a lock-knife, knuckle duster, poles adapted to cause harm, pieces of wood, glass, hammers and bricks.

A statement said: “Kent police would like to thank the local community for its cooperation and patience throughout the demonstrations.”

Duncan Cahill of Hope Not Hate, an anti-racist organisation, said Dover had been the scene of an ongoing standoff between anti-fascists and right-wing groups led by a resurgent National Front.

“There have been a few demos down in Dover where the far-right and anti-fascists have had clashes,” he said. “What we have today and for the past few months is massive callouts by

just about every Nazi group in the country and everyone involved in anti-fascism has gone down there today for what looks like a massive punch-up.”

Kent police had earlier warned Dover residents to expect disruption and delays on local and main roads throughout the day.

The force said: “It is anticipated that these demonstrations will attract larger numbers than recent protests and there will be extra police officers in the town whose main role will be to facilitate a peaceful protest, to maintain public safety and to minimise the impact on local people going about their daily business.”

Source: The Guardian

<http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/jan/30/far-right-anti-fascist-protesters-clash-dover>