On the Edge

Refugees, Europe and the Turkey deal

Gerald Knaus – Oslo 22 April 2016
Why 2015 was extraordinary
Why the Aegean is special
Why it matters to global geopolitics
„Normal years“: detections at all EU external borders (Frontex)

2009: 104,600
2010: 104,000
2011: 141,100
2012: 72,400
2013: 107,400
2014: 283,532
2015: 1 million
2015: Greece 800,000 – in Lesbos alone 500,000
## EU giving protection in 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Asylum Applications</th>
<th>Positive decisions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>1,322,000</td>
<td>308,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td></td>
<td>132,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td></td>
<td>21,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td></td>
<td>7,817</td>
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<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td></td>
<td>5,035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td></td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(without resettlements)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Outlier Sweden

2013
Asylum granted: 26,000
Resettlement: 1,832

Arriving in 2015: 190,000
The politics of this crisis
The refugee crisis as „opportunity“
„End of a liberal era“ (5 Sep 2015)

Viktor Orban speech to his party:

"If we … conceptually reflect on what is happening, then we see that we have a huge opportunity, if we fight well in this debate, to restore the prestige and appeal of national identity and Christian identity, in opposition to the liberal identity.“
Viktor Orban:

“Of course it’s not accepted, but the factual point is that all the terrorists are basically migrants.” (in Politico)

"... we are faced with a question. Which approach is more humane: to close the borders in order to stop illegal immigration, or to put at risk the lives of innocent European citizens? The right to life takes precedence over all other rights, as does the right to self-defence ...” (in Parliament)
Orban: fence off Greece (Jan 2016)

Viktor Orban to newspaper:

“… using our own resources we must build a new European line of defence one country further in: on the northern border of Greece. And that is where we must stop – not just slow down, but stop – immigration.”
Orban: Brussels treason (15 March)

Viktor Orban:

“It is forbidden to say that in Brussels they are constructing schemes to transport foreigners here as quickly as possible and to settle them here among us … Mass migration is like a slow and steady current of water which washes away the shore. It appears in the guise of humanitarian action, but its true nature is the occupation of territory; and their gain in territory is our loss of territory.”

Glory to the heroes, honour to the brave’: PM Viktor Orban’s March 15 speech in full”,
Anti-refugee, anti-Brussels, anti-Muslim (pro-Putin) bloc
“The message is simple: if you come to Australia illegally by boat, there is no way you will ever make Australia home.”

“Let the European marine patrol in front of the North African coast and return all immigrants without exceptions.”
„18 month detention“

Donald Tusk in December 2015: „Detention in Greece for 18 months“

March 2016: „The Western Balkans route is closed.“
Greece as European Nauru?

Nauru

Lesbos
Why this policy is doomed in the Balkans

*De facto* still open borders

Macedonia: one of Europe’s least stable states

This cannot work without Greek support
What is at stake today? A huge amount

Refugee convention – principle of *non-refoulement*
Stability in South East Europe
„Liberalism“ in the EU

Can the EU combine control *and* compassion?
The 18 March EU-Turkey deal: a solution that can work
„Why people do not need to drown in the Aegean“
ESI report - September 2015 (www.esiweb.org)
Triangle of commitments

German-led coalition: **Resettle** refugees directly from Turkey

**GREECE**: Readmission of those who are **safe** in Turkey

**TURKEY**: **Readmit** all after a day X
Triangle of commitments

German-led coalition: **Resettle** refugees directly from Turkey

**EU:** visa free summer 2016
6 billions for refugees

**GREECE:** Readmission of those **who are safe** in Turkey

**TURKEY:** **Readmit** all after a day X
"We must better protect our external borders, but this is only possible if we reach agreements with our neighbours, for example with Turkey, on how to better share the task of dealing with the refugees. And this will mean more money for Turkey, which has many expenses because of the refugees. This will mean that we will accept a set number of refugees, in a way so that the human traffickers and smugglers in the Aegean will not earn money, but in an orderly way, this will also mean that we fulfil certain wishes of Turkey concerning the visa issue."
Readmission from Greece to Turkey. And:

“Turkey will accept them only if large numbers of recognized refugees can go to Europe from Turkey in a legal manner. A legal asylum route for a couple of hundred thousand refugees per year. Of this I [Samsom] convinced Mark [Rutte].”
Creation of Ankara group – early 2016
Breakthrough: Davutoglu‘s offer - 6 March
The core of the deal – 18 March

“In order to break the business model of the smugglers and to offer migrants an alternative to putting their lives at risk …“

“Migrants arriving in the Greek islands … any application for asylum will be processed individually by the Greek authorities in accordance with the Asylum Procedures Directive … Migrants not applying for asylum or whose application has been found unfounded or inadmissible in accordance with the said directive will be returned to Turkey.” (Point 1)

“Once irregular crossings between Turkey and the EU are ending or at least have been substantially and sustainably reduced, a Voluntary Humanitarian Admission Scheme will be activated.” (Point 4)
The Aegean after 20 March

Daily Arrivals from Turkey in 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Daily Greek islands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily average January</td>
<td>1,932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily average February</td>
<td>1,904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily average 1-20 March</td>
<td>1,148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily average 21-31 March</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily average 1-14 April</td>
<td>144</td>
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What can go wrong now? Still a lot

1. **In Greece**: asylum and readmission

2. **In Turkey**: safety of those returned from Greece

3. **In Brussels**: EU visa decision in June 2016

4. **In Berlin**: voluntary resettlement from Turkey
Greek islands since March 20

Presently on the islands: 7,843 asylum seekers

Lesbos 4,375 (capacity: 3,500)
Chios 2,035 (capacity: 1,100)

Asylum on the islands: 22 April: 13 Greek case workers
21 EASO case workers

On 19 March the Commission had called for 600 case workers in total
**Failure is an option: EU relocation story**

Juncker on 9 September 2015: “The first priority today is addressing the refugee crisis …”

He proposed relocation 160,000 refugees in total

66,400 from Greece

11 April: 35,000 candidates for relocation in Greece

2,943 “formal pledges”

615 people relocated

66,400 vs. 615 (1 percent) in seven months!
What is needed for success
Rescue the Greek Asylum Service

“Case workers can reasonably be expected to issue a few dozen decisions a month …“ (Head of Service)

In March 2016: 271 staff – of this 130 case workers
NEEDED: an EU Asylum Support Mission

Pilot - flagship project; Athens to invite

Double headed: Greek head - EASO co-head
  case workers from both, interpreters, EU pays costs

300 case workers: 300 cases a day
Work 20 days a month: 6,000 cases a month

Resolve all island cases by June. Help Greece with 46,000 people on the Greek mainland by end 2016. Those who get asylum to be relocated.
NEEDED: remove all doubt about Turkey as a safe third country for those returned

Syrians: Regain temporary protection they had
Non-Syrians: Guarantee option to apply for refugee status

(2015: 64,000 people did - 3,400 granted, 700 rejected).

Solution: Turkish guarantees plus:
Full transparency for all those who are returned
Turkey invites EU / UNHCR to monitor this list
Make openness key condition for visa liberalisation
NEEDED: lift visa requirement in June

Commission will publish (positive) report in early May

Qualified majority voting end of June

Debate on safeguard clauses
NEEDED: resettlement in 2016

Political challenge: Who is - with Berlin - in Coalition of the Willing?

Technical challenge: How to resettle 150,000 people in a year?

All resettlement facilitated by UNHCR in the world:

- 2010 72,914
- 2011 61,649
- 2012 69,252
- 2013 71,411
- 2014 73,331
In conclusion, four concrete actions are needed:

Create a serious EU Asylum Support Mission to Greece (300)

Persuade Turkey to be fully transparent on those returned

Mobilise EU votes to lift visa requirement by June

Prepare – technically, politically – for serious voluntary resettlement
THIS IS _NO DIRTY DEAL_

“In EU and Turkish leaders deal death blow to the right to seek asylum.”
Amnesty International, 8 March 2016

In fact: 2013 protection in EU: 132,000
2013 resettlement (global): less than 100,000

If fully implemented: 2016 more protection than ever
2016 more resettlement than ever
Non-refoulement preserved
The big question
Can CONTROL be restored, NOT at expense of another EU member, WITHOUT a fortress Europe?