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Global refugee trends and the Syrian crisis

Nemzetközi menekültügyi trendek és a szír válság

Abstract

Nowadays migration is one of the main security challenges. The author examines forcibly displacement trends in Syria and neighbohouring countries. She processes the statistitcs and handbooks of the international organizations which are available on the subject. Taking into consideration the international experience she investigates the tasks and possibilities of the durable solution too.

Keywords: refugee, Syria, UNHCR, armed forces

Absztrakt

Napjaink egyik legnagyobb biztonsági kihívását a migráció jelenti. Jelen tanulmányban a szerző a kényszerű migrációs folyamatokat vizsgálja Szíriában, illetve szomszédos országokban a nemzetközi szervezetek témában hozzáférhető statisztikáinak és kézikönyveinek felhasználásával. Valamint a nemzetközi tapasztalatok figyelembe vételével górcső alá veszi a tartós megoldás lehetőségeit és feladatait is.

Kulcsszavak: menekültek, Szíria, UNHCR, fegyveres erők

INTRODUCTION

As a result of globalization there are not any places in our world not to be affected by the problem of mass migration. Because of the increasing number of wars, armed conflicts and natural disasters, religious and political persecutions millions of people are forced to leave their homes and homelands. Therefore the crisis management becomes also a problem of states which are not directly effected. Because the flow of refugees could upset the balance between the communities and it causes intractable economic and security burdens for governments. Although, based on the concept of mixed migration, this mass movement flow includes refugees, asylum-seekers, economic migrants and other migrants, this study focuses on refugees.

GLOBAL REFUGEE TRENDS

The problem of refugees is not a modern phenomenon, this is not a new-type security challenge. This is the same age as mankind. However nowadays this kind of movements become incomparable size. According to the statistics of UNHCR Global Trends 2014 report by end of 2014, 59,5 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict, generalized violence, or human rights violations. This number has not been so high since the World War II. It means huge security risk for the host countries. As a result of it, trying to abolish the roots of the crises, where these evolved, becomes the primary interest of the potential destination states. In order to achieve prohibiting out-migration they would use polictical, diplomatic, economic means and the help of civilian organizations, moreover the armed forces. However, this does not always lead to success.[1]

On the maps of Fund for Peace's Fagiled States Index and UNHCR the potential asylum countries and the rate of potential asylum seekers are clearly visible.
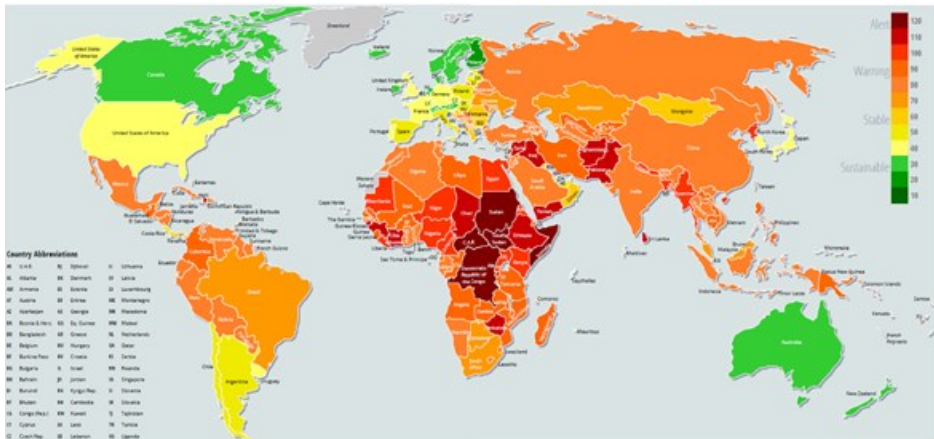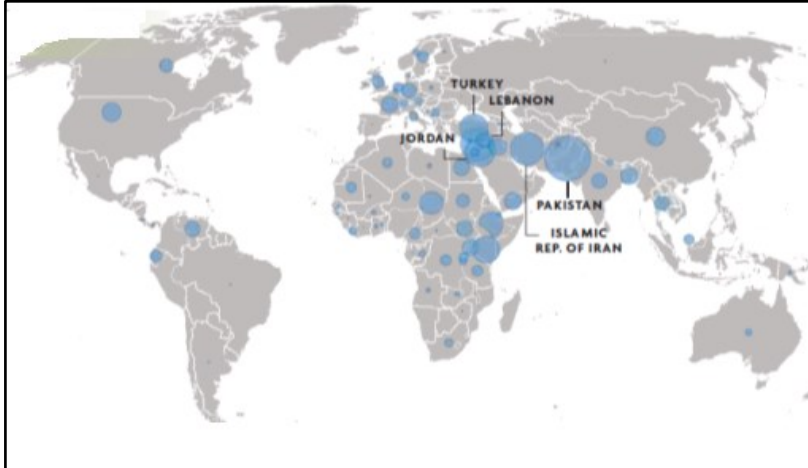

1. figure: The Fragile States Index in 2014[2]

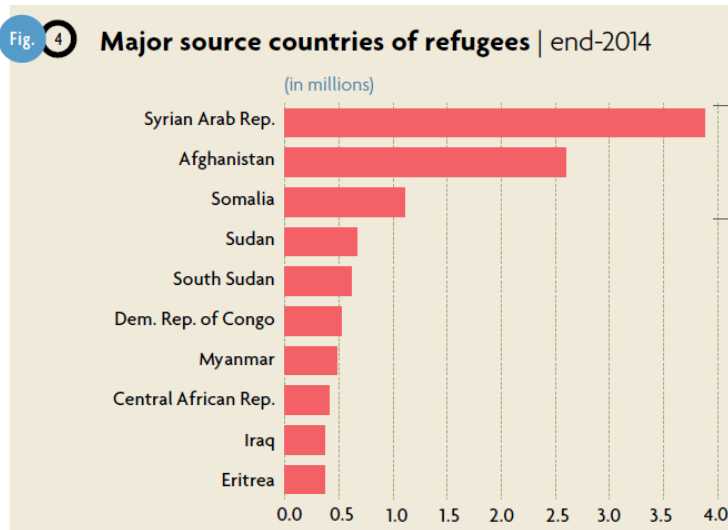[1]World at War, UNHCR Global Trends Forced Displacement in 2014
[2] FFP Fragile States Index 2014

2. figure: Total population of concern to UNHCR by country of asylum [3]

3. figure: Major refugee-hosting countries 2014 [4]

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[3] War's human cost, UNHCR Global Trends 2013, http://www.unhcr.org/5399a14f9.html
[4] World at War, UNHCR Global Trends Forced Displacement in 2014

The figures show, most of refugees come from states where a permanent armed conflict or large-scale economic problems are threatening to everyday existence. The figures also show that residents of areas which affected by armed conflicts mainly fleeing to neighboring countries in order to protect their lives, and after the end of the conflict they intend to return home which means another challenge for both the host and the asylum states.[5]

These conflicts cause problems not only on a local level. Thanks to globalization and spill-over effect they often destabilize entire region, moreover, they act as a global threaten. They could become the base of terrorist actions and huge refugee-flow. This flow may upset the balance between the various communities and it causes impracticable economic and security burden to host countries' economies and the government. The management of such crises is also a problem of the states which are not directly involved, it required the development of the new conflict-management tools which eliminate not only the armed conflict, but also help in the restoration of peace, security, living conditions and stabilization. Most of these operations take place within federal, multi-national frameworks in a combination of civilian and military forces authorized by the international community (UN).[6]

As the below UNHCR Global Trends Report datas and titles figure recently there is the extraordinary importance of international cooperation in this crisis management. From 2010 to 2015 the number of forcibly displaced person has increased with 16,3 million people, so that global migration pressure has been growing up.

Year	Title of annually UNHCR Global Trends Report	Number of forcibly displaced people
2010	60 years and still counting	43,7 million
2011	A Year of Crisis	42,5 milion
2012	Displacement The New 21st Century Challenge	45,2 million
2013	War's Human Cost	51,2 million
2014	World at War	59,5 million

4. figure: Trends of forcibly displacement 2010-2014[7]

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[5] World at War, UNHCR Global Trends Forced Displacement in 2014
A menekültek védelme és az UNHCR szerepe 2007-2008, http://www.unhcr-budapest.org/hungary/files/ProtRefbrochureHUN.pdf
[6] Friedmann Viktor: A konfliktuskezelés új terepei – Az államon belüli konfliktusok regionális, inter- és transznacionális dimenziói, Kül-Világ – A nemzetközi kapcsolatok folyóirata, IV. évf., 2007/3-4. szám, pp. 75-99.
[7] World at War, UNHCR Global Trends Forced Displacement in 2014
War's human cost, UNHCR Global Trends 2013
60 years and still counting, Global Trends Forced Displacement in 2010
A Year of Crisis, Global Trends Forced Displacement in 2011
Displacement The New 21st Century Challenge, 2013

According to the Global Trends 2014 with close to 3.9 million refugees the Syrian Arab Republic became the leading country of origin of refugees in 2014 from the 3rd major refugee hosting country. It means, on average, almost one out of every four refugees is Syrian. However 95 per cent of them located in surrounding countries. [8]

Year	Syria
2010	3rd major refugee hosting country (1,005,500)
2011	3rd major refugee hosting country (755,400)
2012	5th major refugee hosting country (476,500)
2013	2nd major source country (2,468,400)
2014	1st major source country (3,880,000)

5. figure: UNHCR Global Trends Reports[9]

THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS

The current Syrian refugee crisis is not an entirely new phenomenon, because the trade routes have intersected with each other since thousands of years and various powers developed the history oh the country. The state is situated in the meeting point of three continents and three cultures. Foreign powers have tried often to get their hands on this strategically important country, so that it was often the scene of bloody battles. Nevertheless the recent conflict became unprecedented size.

The transformation, which unfolded as a result of „Arab Spring", also reached Syria in March 2011. The country has become the epicenter of the struggle for conversioning of the regional status quo. Anti-regime protests turned into aggressive government action in a short time and then into bloody battles, and they extended to the whole country. Pro-democracy protests erupted in March 2011 in the southern city of Deraa after several people were killed on March 18 when security forces opened fire on protesters who were angered by the arrest of several children for writing antigovernment graffiti. Pesident Bashar al-Assad faced an unprecedented challenge which threatened its authority. Pro-democracy protests erupted throughout the country. Protesters demanded an end to the

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[8] http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home/opendocPDFViewer.html?docid=556725e69&query=global%20trends
[9] World at War, UNHCR Global Trends Forced Displacement in 2014
War's human cost, UNHCR Global Trends 2013
60 years and still counting, Global Trends Forced Displacement in 2010
A Year of Crisis, Global Trends Forced Displacement in 2011
Displacement The New 21st Century Challenge, 2013

authoritarian practices of the Assad regime. The Syrian government used violence to suppress demonstrations, making extensive use of police, military, and paramilitary forces. Opposition militias began to form in to battle government forces for control of cities, towns and the countryside2011, violence escalated and by 2012 the conflict had expanded into a full-fledged civil war. The worsening humanitarian situation initiated one of the biggest refugee wave of the recent decade. According to the statistics of UNHCR 3,88 million people have fled Syria since the start of the conflict.[10]

The migration aspect of the Syrian conflict has to be examined in two stages, on the one hand seeking refugee within the borders of the country, and on the other hand seeking the movements into the neighboring countries.

From the beginning of the armed resistance to March 2012 as a result of the targeted and localized violence larger groups escaped from the outbreaks, but tipically they sheltered in larger towns of the surrounding areas, and they returned to their homes after the fighting was finished. This trend was not observed only in the internal refugees, but also in the case of asylum seekers in Lebanon and Turkey. However in early 2012. it began to change. At the beginning of February fighting began in Homs, the third largest city of the country. Then fighting reached the capital Damascus and second city of Aleppo. The refugee flow accelerated dramatically in 2013, as conditions in Syria deteriorated. It forced to increase the number of persons to flee abroad, mainly, as the below BBC figure shows, to neighbouring Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt.

Country	Number
Turkey	1.56 million
Lebanon	1.15 million
Jordan	623,100
Iraq	234,200
Egypt	138,400

6. figure: The largest burden in hosting Syrian refugees by the end of 2014[11]

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[10] http://www.britannica.com/event/Syrian-Civil-War
http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-26116868
[11] http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-
bin/texis/vtx/home/opendocPDFViewer.html?docid=556725e69&query=global%20trends
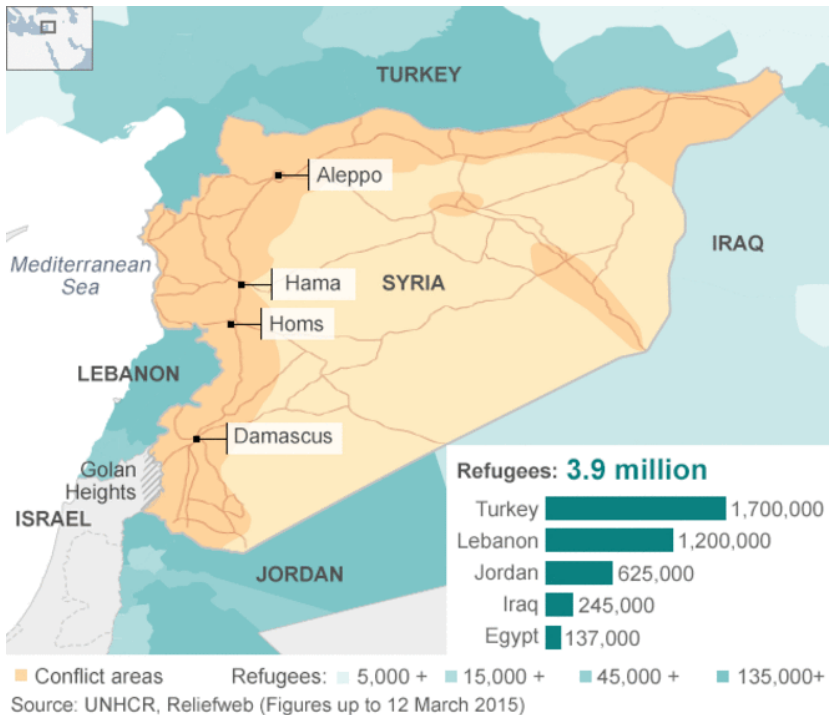
7. figure: Syrian refugees in the region[12]

SYRIAN REFUGEE POPULATION PLANNING FIGURES						
2015 Planning Figures						
As of:	Egypt	Iraq	Jordan	Lebanon	Turkey	Total
Dec 2012	13,000	74,000	168,000	180,000	148,000	583,000
Dec 2013	145,000	216,000	575,000	905,000	562,000	2,403,000
Nov 2014	137,504	228,484	619,777	1,146,405	1,165,279	3,297,449
Dec 2015	120,000	250,000	700,000	1,500,000	1,700,000	4,270,000

8. figure: Trends of Syrian refugee flow in neighbohouring countries[13]

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[12] http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-26116868

Outside the immediate region, Germany hosted the largest number of Syrians in 2014, an estimated 41,000 persons. In addition, Syrians lodged some 175,000 individual asylum applications worldwide during the year, most of them in Europe. As 8th figure shows at the and of this year total number of these forcibly displaced persons will exceed the 4 million limit..14

The Syrian humanitarian situation is further complicated by the fact that in parallel to struggle an economic crisis is affecting the population too. The Syrian pound has been substantial weakening, prices skyrocketed, and armed conflict left their mark on agricultural production and food supply. Morover the massive influx of internally displaced persons placed under increased pressure to basic services and benefits system. The resulting stress leads to the emergence of violent demonstrations easily. In March 2015 estimated the total economic loss since the start of the conflict was $202bn and that four in every five Syrians were now living in poverty - 30% of them in abject poverty. Syria's education, health and social welfare systems are also in a state of collapse.[15]

RESOLUTION STRATEGIES

The prolonged nature of the Syrian crisis, which entered its fifth year in March 2015, has required a shift in approach. However the resolution of the conflict seems far it requires the development of the new conflict-management tools and strategies which eliminate not only the armed conflict, but also help in the restoration of peace, security, living conditions and stabilization. The security challenges of the region have increased as a result of the ongoing transformation in southern and eastern part of Mediterranean. These events affect sensitively the pervious integration mechanisms like Mediterranean Dialogue, Istambul Cooperation Initative. The race against regional power also speeded up. Syria has become the epicenter of a struggle for regional dominance. Morover this instability, the increasing number of refugees and asylum seekers, the lack of effective strategies and national refugeesystems make the situation more complex.[16]

Therefore the mentioned strategies must also show the direction to the durable solution of refugee crisis. As part of its mandate, UNHCR is engaged in the various protection issues that emerge from the intersection between international migration and refugee protection. UNHCR's key tool is the 10-Point Plan of Action on Refugee Protection. The 10-Point Plan was issued in 2006 to assist States in developing comprehensive and "protection-sensitive" This framework and methodology have since formed the basis for the

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[13] http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home/opendocPDFViewer.html?docid=54918efa9&query=syria%202015
[14] http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home/opendocPDFViewer.html?docid=556725e69&query=global%20trends
[15] http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-26116868
[16] Gazdik Gyula: A szíriai válság kialakulása és elmélyülése, http://epa.oszk.hu/00000/00039/00027/pdf/gazdik.pdf

development of integrated regional strategies which address irregular "mixed movements" in all of their complexity.asylum and migration strategies. These points are the follows:

1. Among Key Partners
2. Data Collection and Analysis
3. Protection-Sensitive Entry Systems
4. Reception Arrangements
5. Mechanisms for Profiling and Referral
6. Differentiated Processes and Procedures
7. Solutions for Refugees
8. Addressing Secondary Movements
9. Return Arrangements for Non-refugees and Alternative Migration Options
10. Information strategy[17]

In 2014 inside Syria, including 7.6 million internally displaced people (IDPs) 12.2 million people needed humanitarian assistance. Pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 2165 (2014), UNHCR strengthened its coordination and operational response capacity in Jordan and Turkey to assist those most in need in Syria. The Office also continued its coordination and leadership responsibilities for three inter-agency clusters and sector working groups under the the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan 2015-2016 (3RP), issued at the end of 2014, is a regional strategy that brings together host Governments and around 200 humanitarian and development partners to support nationally-led response plans for the five main Syrian refugee host countries. This unique coordination initiative aims to scale up resilience and stabilization-based development components to complement humanitarian assistance. UNHCR and UNDP led the development of the 3RP in 2014. [18]

Ideally local authorities and civil agencies will coordinate civilian mass movements, and cooperate with military formations to deconflict civilian and military movements. In the past, governments may have turned to civilian border police or similar agencies to manage mass migration or refugee movements. However, based on the international experiences, the complex and ambiguous nature of today's contemporary operational environment requires the increased reliance on military force to manage migration or refugee emergencies. In cases where local authorities and/or civil agencies cannot or will not coordinate civilian mass movements the military will have to play a more active role in the coordination and control of civil movements. On the one hand, it seems logical for countries to turn to military forces to manage international migration flows. Because managing refugee movements require a massive logistical response to prevent deepening of the cirsis. Military forces have organizational and logistical capabilities. Units are capable of establishing a controlled and organized response to an emergency. Moreover, professional military forces often

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[17] Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration: the 10-Point Plan in Action,
http://www.unhcr.org/50ab86d09.html
[18] http://www.unhcr.org/5575a7910.pdf
http://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/3RP-Report-Overview.pdf

have their own medical, legal and social services personnel who are accustomed to handling confused situations (e.g. linguists, jurists). In addition, armed forces are proficient in the use of advanced detection equipment.[19]

Based on the experience of recent decades during managing reugee crisis including repatriation the most important tasks of armed forces are the follows:

— maintain a secure environment,
— support repatriation,
— support for spontaneous/voluntary rapartiation,
— involvement of local armies,
— support collaborative communities,
— assessment of areas of origin.[20]

Handbooks of UNHCR are detailed these taks. According to these documents role of armed forces in supporting of refugee related operations are displayed in the areas below:

1. ensuring the security of civil organizations' (e.g. UNHCR) staff members and develop evacuation plans;
2. ensuring the escort of humanitarian aid convoys;
3. supporting to local authorities;
4. holding liaison with military authorities;
5. handling public and military information;
6. providing protection activities
   — maintaining presence in proximity to buildings and installations essential to the life of a community, such as hospitals, water and power generating stations, places of worship, schools and nurseries;
   — maintaining presence in areas of dispute to ensure maximum freedom of movement of civilian populations, including freedom to flee to a place of safety;
   — maintaining presence in rural communities to facilitate the safe conduct of agricultural activity and food production;
   — maintaining presence in proximity to the location of valuable cultural properties;
   — ensuring access by local population to medical care, including escorting medical practitioners in areas of confrontation;
   — liaison between opposing parties to a conflict to ensure continuity of commercial activity;
   — liaison between opposing parties to a conflict to ensure continuity and repair of essential infrastructure.

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[19] Paul J. Smith: Military responses to the global migration crisis: a glimpse of things to come
Civil - Military Co-operation Centre of Excellence CIMIC Field Handbook
[20] Padányi József: A menekültek és a hontalanok visszatelepítése Bosznia-Hercegovinába. Hadtudomány, 2000, X. évf., 2. szám, pp. 116–121.

7. providing health and medical support;
8. transporting humanitarian aid;
9. supporting the repair and maintenance of infrastructure;
10. conducting of peacekeepers, undertaking humanitarian tasks;
11. supporting specialized actors United Nations Civilian Police (UNCIVPOL) and Military Observers (UNMOs);
12. supporting evolution from emergency relief to reconstruction, rehabilitation and development.[21]

After the end of Syrian armed conflict a combination of the above intrenational experiences, civil and military tasks would contribute to restore the stability and secirity.

SUMMARY

Global forced displacement has seen accelerated growth in 2014, once again reaching unprecedented levels as a result of persecution, conflict, generalized violence, or human rights violations. In addition to the ongoing crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic have caused suffering and massive displacement. This war entering into its fourth year in 2014, was a major cause for the global increase. The country also became the world's largest source country of refugees. The Syrian crisis continued to have a major impact on refugee figures in the Middle East and North Africa region.

Although resolving the Syrian crisis is still far away, thereto the refugee crisis is settled satisfactorily after the end of armed conflict, establishing of appropriate processes and strategies is necessary now. The previous international experience will contribute greatly to this. The emerging strategies and the other actions of Internatinal Communitiy from Security Council resolutions 2042 and 2043 through 2012 Geneva communiqué and UNHCR action plans to Triton and EU-Navfor-Med operations, despite of the current situation contribute to create the fund of the duarble solution of refugee crisis.

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