

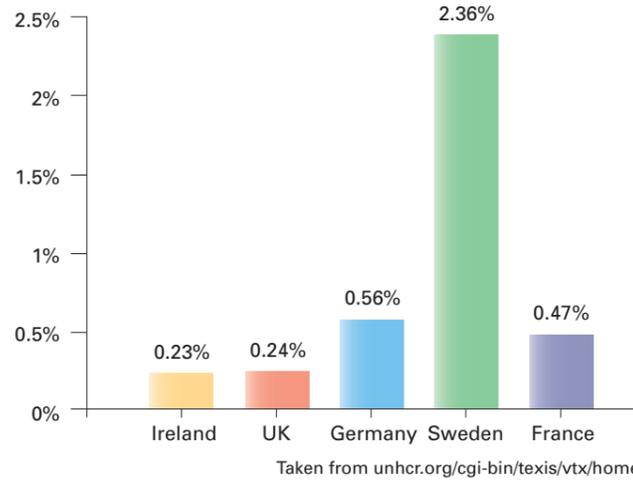
FORCED TO FLEE: EXPLORING THE REFUGEE CRISIS

Irish defence forces on board the *LÉ Niamh* and the *LÉ Eithne* rescued more than 5,000 people in the Mediterranean sea so far in 2015.

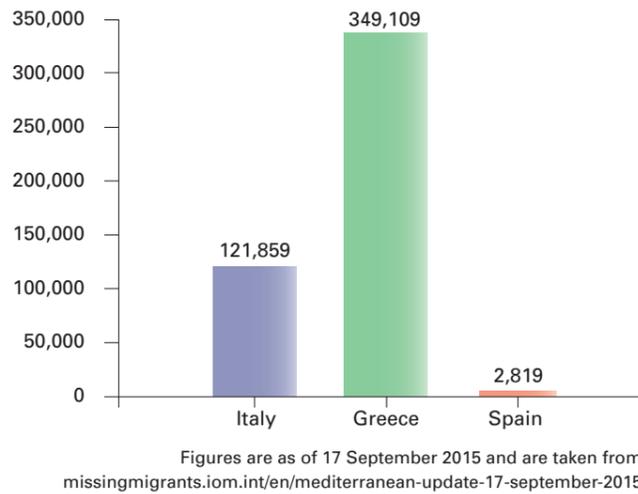


- EU Countries
- Non-EU Countries
- North Africa
- Western Asia

Percentage of population made up of refugees and asylum seekers



Arrivals by sea in 2015



The Schengen Agreement

This agreement permits people to travel freely throughout twenty-six European countries. The citizens of the Schengen countries value the right to migrate internationally without any limitations – it is one of our basic human rights. Some countries are abandoning their agreement and tightening their borders in response to the current refugee crisis.

Did you know?

Many refugees live in camps just across the border in neighbouring countries. For example, over 1.2 million Syrian refugees are currently being accommodated by Lebanon.

What does it all mean?

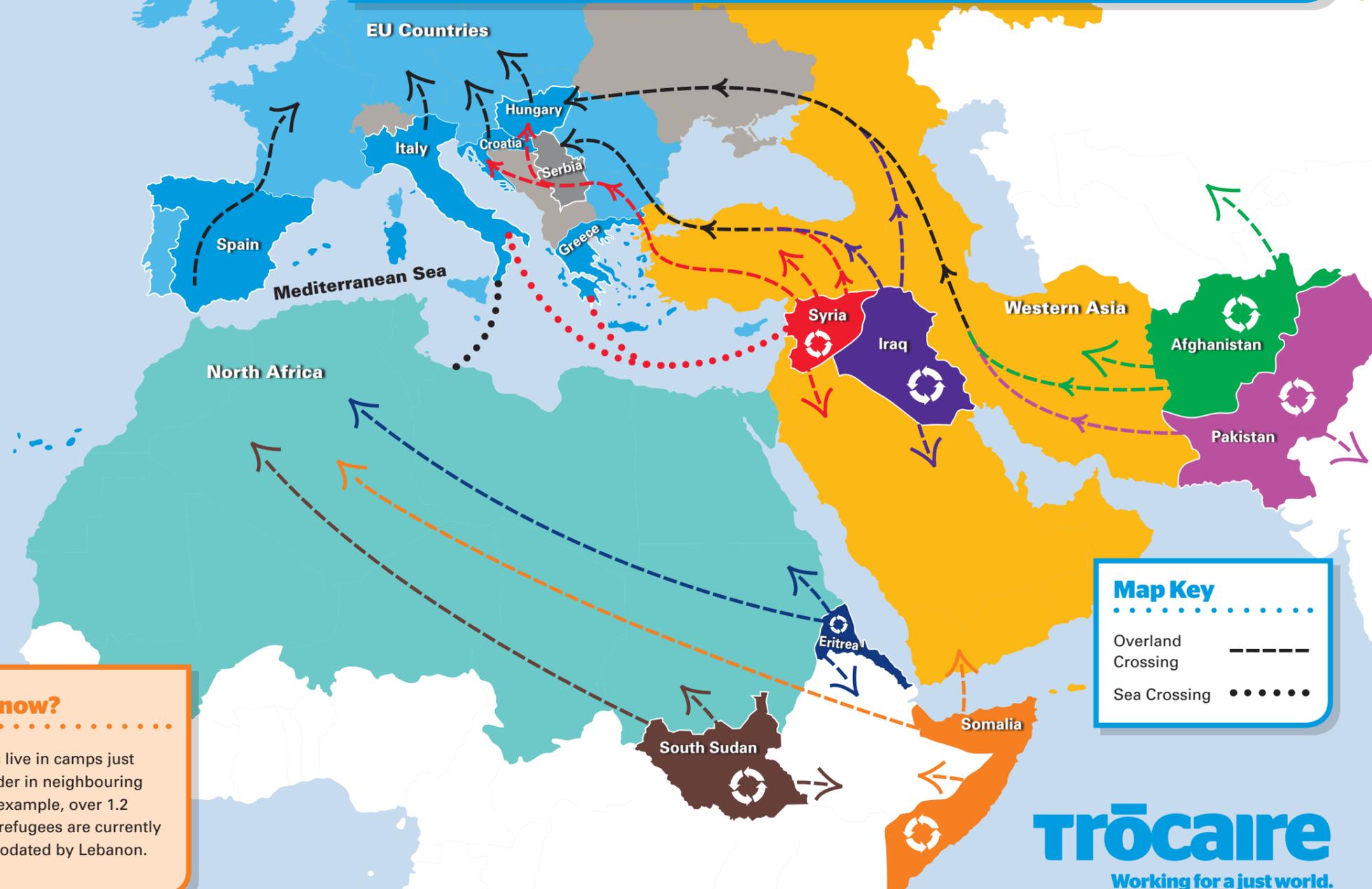
A **refugee** is a person who is forced to leave their own country because their life is in danger, and seek safety in another country. This might be because of violence, conflict, discrimination (religious, racial, social or political) or natural disasters.

A **migrant** is a person who makes a decision to leave their country to seek a better life elsewhere, often to find better work opportunities than in their home country.

The difference between a **refugee** and a **migrant** is that **migrants** choose to move in order to improve their future prospects, while **refugees** have to move to seek safety and protection.

An **asylum seeker** is a person who is asking the government of another country to officially recognise them as a refugee and allow them to stay in that country. In Ireland, **asylum seekers** live in group accommodation called **direct provision** centres and are not allowed to work while they are waiting for a decision on **refugee** status.

An internally displaced person (IDP) is someone who is forced to leave their home because their life is in danger, seeking safety and protection in another part of their own country. An **IDP** has not crossed an international border. There are eight million IDPs in Syria. The circular arrows (on the right) represent **internal displacement** in a country.



Map Key

- Overland Crossing ———
- Sea Crossing ·····

Classroom tips to help you create a welcoming and safe space for all children

- Take a look at your space! Make sure your school represents a range of languages and ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Look at the languages on the walls, the posters, the photographs, the books and the resources you use. Get your students on board to help with this!
- When questioning the images you use in your school, make sure they always respect the dignity of the people represented. Have a look at these guidelines for some tips: comhlamh.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Images-of-the-Global-South.pdf
- Let children know that there is no pressure to talk about their experiences or opinions until they are ready. Set aside a quiet space for students who may feel overwhelmed. All students should have space to reflect and feel safe if they are sad or scared or unsure.
- Always use facts when you are talking about other countries and about the refugee crisis. For up-to-date information visit trocaire.org/whatwedo/countries and caritas.org/what-we-do/conflicts-and-disasters/emergency-appeals/refugee-crisis-in-europe/

Exploring the maps

Curriculum links:

ROI: Senior Primary: Geography: Human Environments

Post Primary, Junior Cycle: Geography: Population, Settlement Patterns and Urbanisation

NI: Key Stage 2: The World Around Us – Place, Change over Time

Key Stage 3: Environment and Society – Cultural Understanding, Mutual Understanding

Warm-up activity: Give the students a blank map of the world and an atlas. With a timer on for four minutes, ask the students to work in pairs to fill in the names of as many countries as they can. Afterwards count how many they knew in each continent.

Main activity: Divide the children into seven groups and assign one of the origin countries per group (Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, South Sudan, Eritrea and Somalia). Ask each group to use atlases, geography books and trocaire.org/whatwedo/countries and caritas.org to make a profile of their country, including the official language, currency, climate type and some reasons people are leaving. Using the map on the front of this resource, each group should map the journey that refugees from their country would take to get to Ireland, including the modes of travel that might be used.

Wrap up: Each group should present their findings to the whole class, followed by a class discussion allowing students to give their impressions of the countries they have learned about.

Taking a look at world religions

Curriculum links:

ROI: Senior Primary: World Religions

Post Primary, Junior Cycle: Religion: Section C – Foundations of Religion, Major World Religions; Section F – The Moral Challenge

NI: Key Stage 2 & 3: Religious Education – Morality, World Religions

Warm-up activity: Create a reflection tree. Students can choose to contribute a prayer, a drawing or a piece of writing as a message of solidarity for refugees around the world. Attach reflections to a branch and display in the classroom.

Main activity: Using your religion text books and bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/ explore the similarities and differences between Islam, Christianity and Judaism. Using the map on religioustolerance.org/mapwrldrel.htm ask the children to find out what are the main religions in each of the highlighted countries and to note which countries have multiple main religions. Explain that many Syrian refugees are fleeing their country due to conflict between two branches of Islam – Sunni and Shiite.

Wrap up: Lead a classroom discussion on the responsibilities that arise from the foundation of Catholic Social Teaching, which is the belief that 'each member of the human family is equal in dignity and has equal rights because we are all the children of the one God'. For more ideas on teaching about the refugee crisis through religion visit trocaire.org/parishes

Taking Action

Trócaire is the overseas development agency of the Catholic Church. They work with refugees and displaced people in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Greece and Serbia. Trócaire carries out its work with Caritas partners as well as the Jesuit Refugee Services, religious congregations and other local organisations. To find out what you can do to help visit trocaire.org/refugee-crisis

Imagining a new world

Curriculum links:

ROI: Senior Primary: SPHE: Myself and the Wider World

Post Primary, Junior Cycle: SPHE: Who Am I? My Rights and the Rights of Others

NI: Key Stage 2: The World Around Us – Interdependence; Personal Development and Mutual Understanding – Rules, Rights and Responsibilities

Key Stage 3: Environment and Society – Citizenship, Ethical Awareness

Warm-up activity: Ask the children to tell you the first word that comes to mind when they hear the word 'refugee'. Record their answers on the board. After you have done some work exploring the refugee crisis, do this activity again and ask the students if they would change their answers.

Main activity: Explain to the students that they are all members of a brand new country and they must work together to create a charter of rights for their country. Encourage the students to think about the responsibilities that would go along with those rights. While the students are working, write the names of different minority groups on the board to help the students think of a range of rights. Groups could include: refugees, asylum seekers, people with disabilities, elderly people, etc.

Wrap up: Compare the students' charter to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Focus on Article 13 of the UDHR and Article 10 of the CRC to highlight freedom of movement that all humans are entitled to.

Web Quest

Can you find out why climate change might be a cause of conflict in the origin countries?

Let's work it out!

Curriculum links:

ROI: Senior Primary: Drama: Exploring and Making Drama, English: Oral Language

Post Primary, Junior Cycle: English: Oral Communication

NI: Key Stage 2: The World Around Us – Interdependence; Language and Literacy – Talking and Listening

Key Stage 3: English with Media – Citizenship, Cultural Understanding

Warm-up activity: Set up the classroom so that one half of the class stays at their tables and the other half moves tables every sixty seconds and talks to a new person. Topic for discussion: 'I think Ireland should accept more refugees.'

Main text: Divide the children into six even groups. Each group will need to prepare one of their members to act in role for an impromptu drama. The drama will take the form of a talk show about the refugee crisis and the roles to be prepared are: talk show host; Northern Ireland First Minister; Taoiseach of Ireland; Adnan, a Syrian teenager who wants to come to Ireland; Darya, an Afghan woman who has lived in Ireland for fifteen years; and Sophia, an Irish doctor. Tell the students to use the statistics on the front of this resource to help them prepare, and remind them to think about their character's stance on the crisis and their values when they are preparing.

Wrap up: When the drama is over, lead a class discussion on what happened.

