

## Language and Political Conflict Management A Case Study on the European Refugee Crisis<sup>1</sup>

Elena-Rodica-Silvana BRĂSLAȘU  
Viorela-Valentina DIMA

### **Abstract**

*The current paper explores the role language plays in political conflict management by analyzing a series of political discourses on a specific source of conflict – namely, the European refugee crisis of 2011-2015. After briefly reviewing key theoretical studies on conflict management in general and the role of language in conflict management, we provide extensive details of the case study entitled “The European refugee crisis - A view from several EU Member States”, which we conducted with the aim of analyzing the opinions of various EU Member States’ representatives (German, French, Romanian and Hungarian officials) about the refugee crisis of 2011-2015. Naturally, we conclude by highlighting the main similarities and differences between the attitudes expressed in the selected discourses and the way language is used to convey the respective attitudes*

**Keywords:** conflict management, political discourse analysis, European Union refugee crisis of 2011-2015, applied linguistics

### **Introduction**

Language can be seen as a foundation for our social identity and our relationships with individuals; it thus plays a major role in various fields: communication, preservation of cultural identity, conflict resolution, to name but a few. This paper aims to explain the role of language in conflict management by analyzing political discourses on a specific source of conflict. More specifically, we will examine the political declarations of four representatives of European Union Member States regarding the refugee crisis of 2011-2015, to answer the following research

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questions: *What is the role of language in conflict management?; What language strategies are used by political representatives in order to manage conflict?*.

In doing so, we first review key theoretical studies on conflict management, discourse analysis and the role of language in conflict management. Next, we perform a comparative analysis of the political declarations made by official representatives of Germany, France, Romania and Hungary, in order to see what linguistic strategies the high officials employ to refer to the same conflict and to express their own and their countrymen's attitude to this ardent issue. Last but not least, we present the conclusions that we reached during the analysis, focusing on the language strategies used in the respective selected discourses, and identify potential lines for further research.

### **Brief theoretical considerations**

In what follows, we focus on the main concepts that underpin our analysis of the selected political declarations referring to the EU refugee crisis of 2011-2015. More specifically, we define and briefly explain the notions of conflict, conflict management and discourse analysis, also referring to previous studies on the role language plays in the former.

### **Conflict management**

Conflict is defined as "disagreement, clash of interests, antagonism, fight, violent discussion" (DEX, 2012), or as a "competitive or opposing action of incompatibles: antagonistic state or action (divergent ideas, interests, or persons)". (Webster, 1997) Researchers further refine these dictionary definitions of conflict, also referring to the goals of those involved in conflict – such as Coser (1967), who sees conflict "as a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are *to neutralize, injure, or eliminate their rivals*" – or to the positive or negative outcomes of conflicts, such as Van de Vliert (1997), who considers that "individuals are in conflict when they are obstructed or irritated by another individual or a group; they subsequently react *in a beneficial or costly way*" [emphasis added in both quotes].

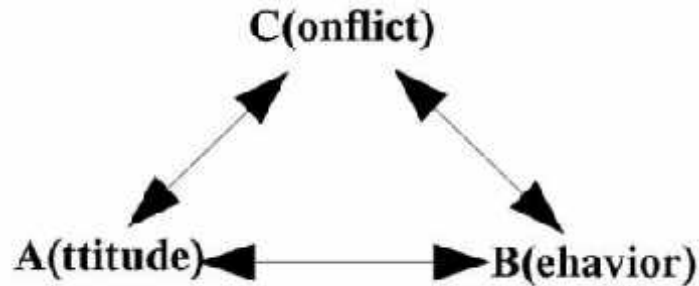
Moreover, according to Norwegian sociologist J.V. Galtung (2009: 105), founder of the discipline of *Peace and conflict studies*<sup>2</sup>, "Conflict has been defined in terms of incompatibilities, of contradictions, and that

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<sup>2</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johan\\_Galtung](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johan_Galtung)

should not be confused with the attitudinal and behavioral consequences of conflict, often destructive (hatred and violence against objects and people)". Galtung suggested that *attitude* to and *behavior* in conflict situations are intrinsically distinct from the *conflict* itself, yet they are involved in "two-way causation" relations, as epitomized in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1. The conflict triangle, Galtung (2009: 105)



Galtung believes that attitude and behavior can lead to either conflict "escalation" or "de-escalation". On the one hand, conflict escalates when "acts of physical and verbal violence" are resorted to; on the other hand, de-escalation may occur when trying to solve such acts taken in isolation, which may eventually "prepare the ground for solving the basic conflict".

In a similar fashion, Budjac-Corvette (2007: 33), considers that a preliminary step to conflict resolution would be to "correctly diagnose the conflict" and "our predispositions for dealing with conflict", since the choice of conflict resolution strategies may vary function of the nature of the conflict, the circumstances and the individuals involved, as well as of one's attitude or approach towards the respective conflict. As regards the latter, there are two approaches that can be associated with conflict: the positive approach and the negative approach. The positive approach refers to thinking in terms of interdependence and mutuality. If conflict comes with a negative attitude or view, it brings out rigid thinking, a one way approach which is believed to be the best, and the impossibility to recognize other options. A negative approach thus hinders clear thinking and creativity, which are necessary for a successful resolution of the conflict.

As regards conflict resolution strategies, Budjac-Corvette (2007) considers that the most common of all are: managing, resolving and avoiding. Managing refers to the use of conflict for effective direction and can be approached by compromise or collaboration with a positive attitude (constructive approach). Resolving is eliminating the conflict. There are three ways of resolution: competing, collaborating or compromising (destructive approach). As regarding avoiding the conflict, it simply refers to doing nothing about it. It is useful on a short period of time when emotions, tempers do not reach extreme levels and any other action are likely to harm greater than current situation.

### **Language and conflict management**

As hinted above, research has shown that confrontational situations and their management rely heavily on one's attitude and behavior and that both of them have a verbal and a non-verbal dimension. From among the large series of analysts that have examined the role of the verbal dimension, i.e. the role language plays in conflicts, we refer to only two in what follows.

Guerin (2009:226) argues that "language can be used to get people to do things, to get people to say or believe things, or to stay in relationships with people" and provides extensive examples of linguistic means (words, sentence types etc.) that can be used to influence others' decisions in a wide variety of contexts, including conflictual situations. The author refers to aspects such as: persuasion or politeness strategies, narratives, legitimization techniques, construction of identity and social relationships etc.

Barsky (2014: 2) clearly states that "deliberate choice of language is crucial to effective conflict resolution", as "many conflicts arise because of miscommunication". (idem) Among the pieces of advice offered by Barsky to those wishing to appease conflictual situations, we have selected those that refer to the use of appropriate language:

**Table 1. Excerpt from Barsky's (2014: 231-232) Inventory of Advocacy skills**

<p><b>Oral Advocacy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identifies own and mutual purposes of the meeting</li> <li>▪ Seeks consensus on process and issues to be decided</li> <li>▪ Provides relevant and persuasive information</li> <li>▪ Identifies common values and entitlements</li> <li>▪ Articulates specific needs and interests (firm on interests, flexible on positions and means of addressing interests)</li> <li>▪ Separates people from the problem (including use of nonjudgmental language)</li> <li>▪ Uses clear and concise language</li> <li>▪ Uses active listening to demonstrate empathic understanding and build trust: paraphrase, summary, reflection, of emotions, appropriate body language</li> <li>▪ Identifies specific commitments for self and others</li> <li>▪ Uses emotional appeals appropriately</li> <li>▪ Demonstrates respect for diversity and divergence of opinions</li> <li>▪ Presents in an assertive manner (rather than passive or aggressive)</li> <li>▪ Narrows issues in dispute (if full agreement has not been reached yet)</li> <li>▪ Uses devices to check other parties' expectations (e.g., through reality-checking questions, role reversals, metaphoric story-telling, looking at hypothetical situations ...)</li> </ul> <p><b>Written Advocacy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Presents arguments in logical manner</li> <li>▪ States goals and objectives</li> <li>▪ Appeals to concerns of decision-makers</li> <li>▪ Suggests preferred options for solutions</li> <li>▪ Highlights areas of mutual interests</li> <li>▪ Offers concrete plans for implementation, follow-up and evaluation...</li> </ul>
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As evident from the cited studies, the verbal dimension of dealing with conflictual contexts is complex and requires in-depth training to achieve the desired outcomes. What better means of becoming more knowledgeable about the intricacies of language than by analyzing the

verbal behavior of others who have found themselves involved in antagonistic situations?

### **Discourse Analysis**

Nowadays, the term "discourse" is widely used in various domains like: sociology, linguistics, psychology and so on, and for every discipline the term may carry distinct meanings. Dictionary definitions show that "discourse" is a type of verbal communication, be it conversation, "a proper approach of a topic in speech or writing", or "a unit of text used by linguists for the analysis of linguistic phenomena that range over more than one sentence". (Collins, 1988) Moreover, a "discourse" is considered to expose concepts or thoughts. (Webster, 1997)

In Fairclough's view, "discourses" are "ways of representing aspects of the world - the processes, relations and structures of the material world, the `mental world` of thoughts, feelings, beliefs and so forth, and the social world". (Fairclough, 2003: 124) More specifically, different discourses refer to different angles that individuals have on the world and people's diverse relations, their positions in the world, their social and personal identities, and the relationships between individuals. The connection between contrasting discourses is a part of the connection of different individuals (complementation, competition, domination with each other). Discourses are also a component of the resources that people initiate when they are interacting with each other (separation, cooperation, competition, domination) or they are trying to adjust the way they connect. (idem)

By analyzing discourses, one can better understand the respective processes, relations and structures, which may lead to adjusting one's attitude and behavior towards individuals and the world. Hence, researchers have also emphasized the fact that "discourse analysis" combines a series of interdisciplinary approaches for exploring diverse social subjects, carrying out critical research to see and interpret power relations in society and to create normative aspects. (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002:2)

Evidently, discourse analysts have long been interested in examining the power relations alluded to in political types of discourse. Van Dijk (1997: 12ff) argues that political discourse analysis looks at both the actors/authors and the recipients of political discourse to examine the (power) relations between them. On the one hand, "the vast bulk of studies

of political discourse is about the text and talk of professional politicians or political institutions, such as president and prime ministers and other members of government, parliament or political parties, both at the local, national and international levels". (idem) On the other hand, "politicians are not the only participants in the domain of politics. From the interactional point of view of discourse analysis, we therefore should also include the various recipients in political communicative events, such as the public, the people, citizens, the 'masses', and other groups or categories". (ibidem) The ultimate purpose of political discourse appears to be that of "accomplishing specific political aims and goals, such as making or influencing political decisions, that is, decisions that pertain to joint action, the distribution of social resources, the establishment or change of official norms, regulations and laws, and so on". Van Dijk (1997: 14)

In short, this section has emphasized the fact that language does have a role to play in conflict management and that the analysis of (political) discourses can prove to be an enlightening tool in determining how decisive the role of language is in such contexts. Next, we turn to our own analysis of four political discourses on the EU refugee crisis of 2011-2015.

#### **Case study – "The European Refugee crisis – A view from several EU Member States"**

This section describes a case study on the European Union Member States' diverging views on the European refugee crisis, which we conducted during the 2015-2016 academic year. We start by outlining the research objectives and methodology, and after that we analyze the way in which four EU Member States – Germany, France, Romania and Hungary - view the ardent issue of Syrian refugees coming to Europe.

#### **Case study objectives and methodology**

The aim of this case study is to examine the role language plays in conflict management and to find out specific language strategies that are used in order to approach a real-life conflict. To reach this objective, we have built a corpus of four political discourses (delivered by prime ministers and presidents) from four different European Union countries

(Germany, Hungary, Romania and France) related to the conflict caused by the waves of refugees coming to Europe in the wake of the Syrian war<sup>3</sup>.

The political discourses that we have included in our corpus were retrieved from official news channels and websites or official You Tube news channels, such as: Euronews and France 24 (France), Ruptly TV (Germany), Digi 24 (Romania). After collecting the data, we operated a selection and made a transcript for the selected discourses and, when necessary, we translated the speeches into English.

When we selected the speeches, we took into account the context of delivery so we only chose discourses made by officials from EU Member States more or less in the same period of the year, to reflect various attitudes towards similar events contributing to the conflictual situation under consideration. As will be shown below, we have tried to illustrate the whole spectrum of attitudes towards the conflict: from extreme views (such as Hungary's) to more moderate views (such as Romania's) to tolerant views (such as France's and Germany's). Another concern was representativeness. Thus, to reflect each country's official stand on the subject matter, we have chosen speeches delivered by presidents, prime ministers or ministers.

The speeches that we selected are:

- The speech of the French President Francois Hollande at a Press Conference; Source – Official website of the news channel France 24; Date and Place: France 08/09/2015;
- The speech of the Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban at a Press Conference of the European Council; Source: YouTube; Date and Place: Brussels, 03/09/2015;
- The speech of the German Counselor Angela Merkel at a Press Conference; Source: YouTube; Date and Place: Berlin 15/09/2015;
- The speech of the Romanian President Klaus Iohannis at a Press Conference; Source YouTube; Date and Place: Bucharest, 07/09/2015;

The (English) transcript of the speeches is included in the Appendices 2-5.

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<sup>3</sup> For an overview of the EU Refugee crisis-related events of 2011-2015, see Appendix 1.



### Findings

The aim of this section is to provide details on the attitudes that the leaders of four European Union Member States exhibit as regards the issues of the Syrian refugee crisis under consideration. We focus on the words that most frequently appear in each of the selected speeches, as we have seen that this quantitative approach may be useful in delineating the opinions held by the authors.

#### *Germany's view*

At a Press Conference in Berlin on 15/09/2015, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Austrian Chancellor Werner Faymann comment on the refugee crisis and the measures that are going to be adopted by the EU. The main issues covered during the discussion are: the rapid spread of the refugee crisis; the reintroduction of control at the borders of Germany, the request for a special summit for better support and distribution of refugees in Europe. Table 2 below epitomizes the keywords used by the German Chancellor during the press release:

**Table 2. Keywords in Angela Merkel's Discourse of 15/09/2015**

Word	Number of occurrences	Grammatical category
we	17	personal pronoun
have	8	verb
refugee/refugees	6	common noun
would	4	modal verb
decision	3	common noun
Germany	3	proper noun
I	3	personal pronoun
problem	3	common noun
quotas	2	common noun

As evident from Table 2 above, the personal pronoun "we" is the most frequently used word, which may be thought to express institutional identity, inclusion, and a sense of shared responsibility: "we have all been able to meet..."; "we took a decision"; "we can better support"; "we will reach..." etc. The word "refugee(s)" is used rather infrequently, in a context which makes direct reference to the conflict and the purpose of the discourse – managing conflict, "refugees gathering"; "register the refugees more efficiently", "refugees are coming". On the other hand, we can

observe the low usage of the word “problem” and, even when it is used, it is softened with other words in order to minimize the effect on the listeners: “to solve the problem”; “a common EU problem”; “we cannot process this problem alone”. Moreover, the word “quota” is the least frequently used term, which points to the speaker’s awareness of its potential negative impact on the listeners. In terms of grammatical categories, we notice that Angela Merkel prefers nouns/pronouns to verbs.

#### *France’s view*

The speech that the French President François Hollande delivered at a Press Conference on 08/09/2015 in the presence of the prime minister and some members of the government, focused on the refugee crisis and the mechanism of mandatory quotas. The main issues tackled are: the management of the influx of refugees; the moral responsibility towards the asylum seekers. The most frequent words used by the French President are rendered in Table 3 below:

**Table 3. Keywords in François Hollande’s Discourse of 08/09/2015**

Word	Number of occurrences	Grammatical category
we	21	personal pronoun
have	13	verb
refugee(s)	10	common noun
will	10	modal verb
countries	9	common noun
France	8	proper noun
asylum	6	common noun
Europe	5	proper noun

Table 3 above points to Hollande’s frequent use of the pronoun “we” in context such as: “we have images, we have events and situations that are striking at our very consciousness”; “we have to take into account”; “we welcome the refugees” etc. On a par with Angela Merkel, by using this inclusive pronoun the French President suggests the shared responsibilities EU Member States regarding the Syrian refugees. President Hollande uses the pronoun “we” with modal verbs like “will, shall, must, have to” in order to emphasize France’s responsibility for the refugees, also to draw attention to the conflict, its management, and the solutions that are going to be implemented. In several parts of the discourse, he refers to France’s duty

to receive the refugees and insists on the idea of France's commitment to support the EU: "And France is ready to assume its share.", "I believe France is committed", but he also uses the words "countries" and "Europe" to draw attention to the other EU countries' duty to the refugees, claiming that: "France therefore has a duty, but the response is the European response, it's an overall response", "I believe France is committed, we will do it because this is a proposal that we, ourselves, put forward and that we want to see adopted by all Europeans."

The President uses emotional appeal by giving an example and using words with emotional impact ("lifeless child", "martyr"), in order to highlight the need of resolving the conflict. He raises concerns in the audience ("that are striking at our very consciousness") and tries to make them respond to these concerns: "So faced with what? Obviously, gives rise to emotions and to compassion and to concern. Is it up to us, is it up to me to respond to this emergency and to make choices." To obtain a tensions buildup effect, he uses the repetition "is it up to us, is it up to me" in addition to the verb "to respond". To stress the amplitude of the conflict, the discourse makes use of synonyms such as: "this tragedy, with this critical situation"; "The exodus of these populations"; "massive humanitarian assistance"; "the heritage of humanity destroyed". Most of the discourse is focused on the resolution of the conflict through humanitarian help and responsibility for the refugees: "with humanity and responsibility"; "we have to raise even higher the level of responsibility", culminating with the declaration "we welcome the refugees".

In terms of grammatical categories, we notice that the French President also prefers nouns/pronouns to verbs. Moreover, use the words "refugee(s)" more frequently than Angela Merkel and completely avoids the use of words such as "problem" or "quota", which are contextually replaced with "asylum" or "distributed effort among all of the European countries".

#### *Romania's view*

Romanian President Klaus Iohannis held a Press Conference in Bucharest on 07/09/2015, after a meeting of the European Council, where the Romanian President made clear the official position assumed by Romania regarding the refugee crisis: the adoption of voluntary quotas. The main aspects that the Romanian President refers to are: the number of refugees that Romania can receive; the issue of voluntary or mandatory

quotas. Table 4 below shows the words most frequently used in Iohannis's discourse:

**Table 4. Keywords in Klaus Iohannis' Discourse of 07/09/2015**

Word	Number of occurrences	Grammatical category
I	20	personal pronoun
we	16	personal pronoun
refugee(s)	14	common noun
will	12	modal verb
quota(s)	8	common noun
Romania	7	proper noun
European Union	5	proper noun
voluntary	5	adjective

As evident from Table 4 above, the personal pronoun "I" has the highest frequency in the Romanian President's discourse, emphasizing the actions undertaken by the president: "I want to make"; "I presented for"; "I opted the same"; "I was very clear"; "I demanded". The President uses the personal pronoun "we" as a reference to the Romanian citizens, in order to make them aware of the situation and the mutual interest to its resolution: "we need to be solidary"; "we need to participate"; "we are in EU"; "we are right to ask". He accentuates the idea of conflict resolution by often using the nouns "refugee" and "quota", also the noun "quota" is often associated with the adjectives "voluntary" and "mandatory" to show the two options that are proposed for resolution, but he insists on "voluntary quotas".

The president motivates his choices as being in favor of Romania, but he also motivates the need for solidarity, so he proposes a way for a win-win solution for the conflict: the "voluntary quotas". He strongly sustains his point of view by mentioning an upper limit for this quota in Romania's case: "Romania communicated at the beginning of July that it can receive 1785 refugees" ... "Therefore 1700 and something, this many refugees will maximum come in Romania because that is the number of available places" and he strengthens his idea by using the exclamatory sentence "No more!"

Still, President Iohannis recognizes the need to stick to the EU norms and regulations and promotes the idea of solidarity and calm by

stating: "It is not the case to react hysterically, and surely it is not the case to show our xenophobic side."

As above, the Romanian President opts for more nouns/ pronouns than verbs. Still, his speech seems comparatively more pro-active than the speeches of the German and French high officials, due to the overwhelming use of the first person pronoun "I" and limit-setting terms and expressions such as "maximum", "no more".

#### *Hungary's view*

The speech delivered by the Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban at a Press Conference of the European Council in Brussels on 03/09/2015 is held after a meeting with the President of the Council, the President of the European Commission and the President of European People's Party. The discourse focuses on the refugee crisis and measures for its resolution: the creation of a new border management system, new rules and procedures regarding migration; the protection of the external borders. Table 5 below reunites to the words most frequently occurring in the discourse of Prime Minister Viktor Orban:

**Table 5. Keywords in Viktor Orban's Discourse of 03/09/2015**

Word	Number of occurrences	Grammatical category
not	29	adverb
we	26	personal pronoun
will	24	modal verb
be	19	verb
I	19	personal pronoun
border(s)	18	common noun
they	15	personal pronoun
people	14	common noun
our	13	possessive adjective
Hungary	12	proper noun
you	12	personal pronoun
Europe	9	proper noun
Schengen	7	proper noun

As highlighted in Table 5 above, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban uses the negation "not" more frequently than any other word, which points to his and Hungary's determination not to accept refugees. The

pronoun “we” is also extensively used, to refer to the Hungarian people who has its own solution to the problem and will not give it up; (“we need to adhere”; “we need to put an end”; “we need to make it clear”; “we cannot create hopes”; “we cannot receive them” etc.). In addition, the extensive use of the personal pronoun “I” shows the Prime Minister’s own perspective and highlights his achievements regarding the resolution of the conflict (“I had”; “I raised the question”; “I requested”; “I indicate to you”; “I want also to make it clear”; “I am convinced”).

Prime Minister Orban insists on the idea of the protection of the border, not only Hungary’s borders, but also EU’s border line (a noun which is used 18 times in his discourse) in contexts such as: “a new border policing system”; “border management”. Moreover, Orban creates an antinomy between the refugees - often referred to by means of the pronoun “they”: “they crossed the border illegally”; “they do not have a better idea”; “they dislike this arrangement”; “they do not help us”; “they will not be able to” – and the Hungarian and other EU citizens – referred to by means of the first person possessive adjective “our”: “our caprice”; “our duties”; “our obligations”; “our interests”; “our European values” etc. Viktor Orban’s discourse exhibits a bigger interest in the protection of Europe against refugees, than in the resolution of conflict, as he sees the refugees as a problem for anyone else, not just for Hungary: “If we allow everybody in, it would mean the end of Europe”; “We are not going to make any statement that would encourage these people to come here”.

In short, the speech of Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban shows him to hold the firmest ground against accepting any of the Syrian refugees seeking asylum in the EU. This is achieved by means of extensive use of negation and antinomy.

### **Conclusions**

By analyzing the political discourses made by four EU Member States high officials regarding the EU refugee crisis of 2011-2015, we pointed to each country’s approach of this conflict, as evident from the keywords employed by each speaker. We would now like to make some concluding remarks.

Our analysis has shown that language plays an essential role in managing conflict, as it is a means of expressing views and opinions. We observed that different language strategies are used by those who position themselves with respect to a certain conflict, according to their view about

the conflict. In the specific case of the EU refugee crisis of 2011-2015, language is used with the following key roles: to induce a sense of common responsibility (Angela Merkel and François Hollande), to appeal to the listeners' humanitarian side (François Hollande), to summarize and interpret facts to convince the audience of one's commitment to a set of values (Klaus Iohannis and Viktor Orban), to legitimize one's refusal to accept any or too many refugees (Viktor Orban and Klaus Iohannis, respectively).

The study can be continued by investigating the discourses of at least two categories of political representatives: of other EU Member States, or of countries outside the EU border. Moreover, it would be interesting to analyze the evolution of each country's attitude towards this particular conflict as the events unfold, and the way in which they respond to each other's solutions.

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**Appendices****Appendix 1 - Overview of the EU Refugee crisis of 2011-2015***The onset of the refugee crisis*

In March 2011 anti-government protests arose in the city of Deraa after the arrest and torture of some revolutionary teenagers. Security forces opened fire, causing the death of several people among protesters. Nationwide protests began to take place, demanding the resignation of the president. Rebel brigades were formed to fight the government forces for taking control of cities through the medium of force and violence. In 2012, the conflict and the fighting reached the capital city of Damascus and the city of Aleppo. From the onset of the conflict, four million people, mostly women and children, had to leave Syria. As the conditions in Syria became worse in 2013, migration dramatically accelerated. (Rodgers L., Gritten D., Offer J, 2015)

*Massive migration to the EU*

In 2015, more than a million migrants and refugees had reached Europe, causing a crisis as countries tried to respond to the large influx of people. The majority of migrants arrived by Mediterranean Sea in Italy, Greece, Spain, Malta and Cyprus, and about 34, 000 people made their way via Turkey. The territories of Slovenia, Serbia, Macedonia, Austria and Denmark had been transited by refugees on their way to France, Germany, or Sweden. This brought about logistical and fiscal challenges to the governments of transition and targeted countries, which had provided food, water, medical care to the refugees. (Williams A., 2015)

According to Eurostat, in 2015 the number of Syrians applying for international protection in EU doubled compared to the previous years, due to the aggravation of the conflict in their home country. The highest number of requests was registered in Germany.

*First phase of EU massive migration (May 2015 – July 2015)*

A better management of migration as a shared responsibility was underlined by the European Commission in the European agenda of 2015. Four aspects were identified as actions and measures that had to be implemented: diminishing irregular migration; saving lives and implementing a security process for the external borders; improving the

asylum policy; developing a new policy on legal migration. But, as it could be predicted, not every EU country would agree to the European Commission's decisions; for example, in July 2015, Hungary introduced a fence along its border with Serbia, to stop the inflow of refugees seeking to entry to the EU. (Fry L., 2015)

*Second phase of EU massive migration (September 2015–November 2015)*

"Refugees welcome" is the prevailing message, but opposing voices could still be heard, as Hungary's Prime Minister states that the crisis was a "German problem". EU Member States are urged to receive 120,000 refugees distributed in quotas. The Summit of EU Home Affairs Ministers failed to come to an agreement regarding the quotas. The large number of refugees who had reached the borders of EU made Germany, Austria and Slovakia introduce controls at their borders and led to the suspension of Schengen obligations; Hungary declared "state of emergency" and threatened to jail those who cross its border illegally. (Fry, 2015)

In the European Council Meeting of 15 October 2015, EU leaders made a series of agreements such as: "cooperation with countries of origin and transit" ("The agreement on an EU-Turkey joint action plan"); "Strengthening the EU's external borders" (improving the security of hotspots in Greece and Italy, improving the Frontex<sup>4</sup>); "return and readmission" (enhance the role of Frontex).<sup>5</sup>

On 12 November 2015 the Valletta Summit on migration takes place, where EU heads of state or government had a meeting with the leaders of African countries to review migration issues. They came up with an action plan which main focus is: "addressing the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement; organizing legal migration channels; enhancing protection of migrants and asylum seekers; improving cooperation on return, readmission and reintegration."<sup>6</sup>

*Third phase of EU massive migration (December 2015 – February 2016)*

During the meeting of the European Council on 19 February 2016, EU leaders focus on building European consensus and the full implementations of past decisions. They focus on the progression of:

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<sup>4</sup> Frontex - the European Border and Coast Guard Agency.

<sup>5</sup> European Council; Council of European Union, *Timeline – Response to migratory crisis*, 2015

<sup>6</sup> Ibidem

“implementation of EU-Turkey joint plan of action; provision of humanitarian assistance to refugees; ensuring that hotspots are fully functional; relocation, return and readmission; improving management of external borders; restoring the normal functioning of the Schengen area”.<sup>7</sup>

#### *Refugee crisis in Romania*

According to a decision made by EU Home Affairs Ministers in September 2015, Romania is supposed to receive a total of 4,200 refugees, but this gives rise to a series of controversial declarations: among others, the then Romanian Prime Minister Victor Ponta requested admission to the EU's Schengen borderless area to accept refugees. (Gotev G, 2015). Moreover, this big number of refugees that Romania is expected to receive causes mixed reactions among Romanian citizens - according to a survey by INSCOP Romanian polling agency, 56.2% of citizens believed that Romania should not accept any refugees, while 35% agreed that Romania can receive some immigrants, but only by establishing its own quota. In January 2016, even though citizens are against mandatory quotas, the officials say that the country could manage the number of refugees that are going to be relocated to Romania, and the first 300 refugees would probably arrive in Romania in February 2016. (Chiriac M, 2016)

#### *Refugee crisis in Hungary*

Hungary is a country that has a very harsh reaction to the Syrian refugees, with actions like building a razor-wire fence along its border with Serbia to stop the influx of refugees trying to reach EU, with statements like “the crisis is a German problem” made by Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, by declaring state of emergency and threatening those who are trying to enter the country illegally. (Fry L, 2015)

#### *Refugee crisis in France*

According to an article from “The Guardian” (Sept. 2015), which describes the refugee crisis, France is one of the supporters of the cause, and pledges the EU for obligatory quotas of refugees and asylum seekers. The French President Francois Hollande declares that the large influx of refugees must be taken care of, thus fulfilling one's moral obligations.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibidem

Therefore, in September 2015 France agrees to take 24,000 refugees in the following two years.

*Refugee crisis in Germany*

Germany is one of the countries that adopts an “open door” policy, in order to take in as many refugees. The German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, states that Germany can manage the large influx of migrants. Migrants seem to be attracted by the country because of their asylum laws and benefits, so that thousands of people are trying to reach Germany every day. In contrast with the opinion of the German leader, several thousand Germans oppose mass immigration and the actions of the Chancellor by several protests and movements. (Kaplan M., 2015)

*Summary of the EU Refugee crisis of 2011-2015*

Up until now, we have presented the main events related to the EU refugee crisis in 2011- 2015, with a view to understanding the background of the conflict. We described the beginning of the Syrian conflict and how it became a European problem, the reactions of the specific countries whose discourses on the matter we have selected for our linguistic analysis, as well as the reaction of the European Union, and the actions it wanted its Member States to implement in resolving this issue.

**Appendix 2. The speech of German Counselor Angela Merkel,  
Berlin 15/09/2015**

(Original in German; Voiceover in English)

(Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aZFqj3RkFw>)

We met for a very short time and I am very happy that we have all been able to meet in Berlin. We took a decision a week past Friday on the German side, which was an emergency decision for humanitarian reasons, as good as neighbors, it was a correct decision to take. There are a large number of refugees gathering in the central Balkans, this are things that we talked about during the meeting. We talked about situation today Germany has relaxed, has reintroduced border control in order to register the refugees more efficiently, also for security reasons we had to return to an orderly situation. None the less, I would like to use this opportunity to thank all those who have helped us over the last few weeks, this is also the

case in Austria that I would like to thank the Austrian people in towns like Nickelsdorf, who have accepted refugees, Austria has 1/10 of the population of Germany and received 20000 refugees in one day, yesterday.

In the spirit of friendship and within the existing legal framework, we would like to solve the problem and that is why we made a joint telephone-call with Donald Tusk, the president of European Council. This is a common EU problem and we have both asked for a special summit next week to be held, Donald Tusk will look into that. The reason for the summit is not the reapportionment of quotas as discussed yesterday; that is in the hands of Home Affairs Ministers.

We would like to focus on how we can better support countries from which the refugees are coming from, we need better talks and dialog with Turkey. Donald Tusk was with the Turkish president and prime minister; when we spoke to him if we have quotas upon which we will reach some progress. During the Home Affairs Ministers meeting we must discuss that and talk about hotspots and a way of dealing with real portioning the refugees-migrants as they arrive. This is all under investigation and being looked at by the presidency and Germany is also cooperating closely with Austria and Sweden, but we cannot process all this problem alone.

**Appendix 3. The speech of French President François Hollande,  
France 08/09/2015**

(Original in French; voiceover in English)

(Source: <http://www.france24.com/en/20150907-france-air-strikes-reconnaissance-flights-syria-hollande-press-conference-military>)

Ladies and gentlemen, I should probably thank you for coming to the sixth press conference held since the beginning of my term, in the presence of prime minister and the members of the members of the government.

This time we have images, we have events and situations that are striking at our very consciousness. First of all, the heroism shown by the passengers on the train from Amsterdam to Paris who pinned down a terrorist who was ready to commit the worst and the heritage of humanity destroyed. Thousands of refugees are on the way to Europe and on European roads. A lifeless child washed on the Turkish shore, a martyr, the symbol of 3000 who have perished in Mediterranean waters since the beginning of the year. So faced with what? Obviously, gives rise to

emotions and to compassion and to concern. Is it up to us, is it up to me to respond to this emergency and to make choices.

Those who understand that this is a time where, we have to take into account what is happening and, also where we wish to go in the future. And so the very first choice is coping with the influx of refugees, displaced persons with humanity and responsibility. Since the beginning of the year 350000 people have crossed the Mediterranean in order to come to Europe. That is very many, that is three times more than last year. So this is a crisis, in is a dramatic crisis, it is serious, it can be brought under control and it will be.

It is France's duty to offer asylum. The right to asylum is part of the French soul, of the French flesh, it is a matter of a history, this is a reason why we have this responsibility, a history that has been marked by generations of refugees who have come to France over the past decades, in order to build the country together. It is also a basic principle in our Constitution, is actually enshrined in the preamble to the French Constitution, any person who is persecuted because of his action in favor of liberty has the right to seek asylum on the territory of the Republic. This principle was even included in the Constitution when it came to knowing whether Schengen was compatible with our laws and this principle is also, recalled in the rules of the UE and this is why faced with this tragedy, with this critical situation, I have proposed together with Angela Merkel a mechanism to let refugees into our countries and this distributed effort among all of the European countries.

The operative work here is binding, compulsory, this is what sets us apart from what was done or not done over the past few months. And France is ready to assume its share. The European Commission is proposing or shall soon propose that 120000 refugees to be distributed resettled over the next two years. For France this will mean 24000 persons, and we shall do so! We will? Because this is the very principle to which, I believe France is committed, we will do it because this is a proposal that we, ourselves, put forward and that we want to see adopted by all Europeans. Many mayors, many communities, many associations, many churches and private individuals are already providing such shelter to asylum seekers. I welcome this, it's got to be organized in the serious and dignified manner.

In order to do that ministers of interior will be meeting, all mayors' consent next Saturday and the prime ministers will have to implement all

of the policies in order to make sure that this choice materializes. France, therefore has a duty, but the response is the European response, it's an overall response and a border control in Italy, in Greece, in Hungary with identification and registration sent to us in order to welcome, but also to make a distinction between those who are actually seeking asylum and haven't claimed to asylum and those who have to be returned to the border. This is one condition that must be met before the external borders of Europe to be protected and is also, to be sure that we welcome the refugees.

Let us look at the reality the way it is; that 4 million accounts in Turkey, in Jordan, in Lebanon and hundreds of thousands in the Horn of Africa. And if we wish to avoid the exodus of this populations we must give massive humanitarian assistance to countries, to associations, to the high commissioner for refugees to make sure that this people remain as close as possible to the countries that they are fleeing from.

We must also work with countries of origin, countries of transit in order to set up centers that may welcome those who are fleeing for other reasons, for instance economic reasons and to work out a true development policy. And this is going to be the subject of Valletta Summit on the 11<sup>th</sup> of December. Next France will be putting forward proposals of Ministers, but that it is not enough, we have to raise even higher the level of responsibility, we must know that question refugees and displaced persons is a question that affects all of the countries in the south and not, like some people believe, the countries of North. This question of the displaced persons and refugees affect Africa, Middle East because of wars and crisis, and also, affects countries including Asia.

So will be putting forward the proposal for the holding of international conference on the subject of refugees and we are ready to host that conference in Paris. But let me go back to what Europe needs to do. France and Germany, for a few weeks already with the ministers of the interior, of foreign affairs have been preparing this overall plan, which will be submitted to council of interior on 14<sup>th</sup> September. We are talking here about simple but effective rules, if this does not happen then the Council of Europe will have to look into this. On these proposals, this subject, the government we're organizing a Parliament debate in the days to come. But the one at the same time, we know, the reasons for this misfortunes, for the tragedy to which we wish to respond through honor and action.



**Appendix 4. The speech of Romanian President Klaus Iohannis,  
Bucharest, 07/09/2015**

(Translated in English by S. Brăslășu)

(Source: [http://adevarul.ro/news/politica/conferinta-presa-presedintelui-klaus-iohannis-direct-palatul-cotroceni-7-septembrie-2015-8\\_55edb143f5eaafab2c5b51fc/index.html](http://adevarul.ro/news/politica/conferinta-presa-presedintelui-klaus-iohannis-direct-palatul-cotroceni-7-septembrie-2015-8_55edb143f5eaafab2c5b51fc/index.html))

The second issue that I want to make some remarks on today is migration. A highly topical issue, and I have seen that there is a desire for information, a need for a debate in our country too. For that reason I will make a few remarks related to this phenomenon, a few remarks related to the official stand assumed by Romania, and a few remarks related to the number of refugees.

I believe that it is good to give a short account of the evolution of discussions about the migration phenomenon, which took place in the European Council. Considering the fact that an increasing number of refugees have come to Europe, especially to the European Union, several subsequent discussions took place in the Council. The first one - in March - was a kind of an exploratory discussion, the European Commission trying to see the point of view of every Member State. At that time, I presented for the first time - and I believe that I was very clear then - Romania's opinion, the opinion that I appropriated, namely [that] there is a need for solidarity, but it is better for every Member State to establish by its own how many refugees it can receive, it is the so-called voluntary quotas. I opted for voluntary quotas.

The discussion was resumed in April in an Extraordinary Council [meeting] convoked on the request of Italy; the discussion was more heated this time, but I opted for exactly the same: Romania is in favor of voluntary quotas, we perfectly agree that we need to be solidary with the countries where a big number of refugees have arrived, we agree to participate in EU missions, in international missions, to combat illegal migration phenomena.

Finally, in June, during the Council meeting from the end of June, the Commission presented a concept that, among other things, contained [reference to] the compulsory quotas. I did not agree with those; this time, other Member States were also clearly against compulsory quotas and, in the end, the conclusion was reached that they cannot be imposed at that moment. However, by accepting the idea of voluntary quotas, the

discussion reached the following stage: every Member State should analyze how many refugees it can receive, communicate this fact, and the Commission is going to centralize and make new proposals under the Luxembourg presidency.

Romania communicated at the beginning of July that it can receive 1785 refugees, 1705 refugees who are already on the perimeter of EU, and 80 refugees who will be relocated, namely they will be brought from transitory camps from outside EU.

These are the data.

Meanwhile, we have all seen that public pressure has become very big, tens of thousands of refugee people have entered the EU, logistics issues have appeared, issues of principle - because the Schengen space has been violated, the so-called Dublin norms have been violated, and, practically, these refugees have disrupted the entire European architecture.

For this reason, surely, the discussion has become very heated, justly, we have witnessed human tragedies, we have witnessed situations that are hard to imagine. But, against this background, speculations have appeared. And here I want to say some things very clearly: in Romania there is no kind of pressure of a migration wave, we do not have a significant influx of refugees. I have requested from the Ministry of Internal Affairs [this year's] data in comparison with last year and the figures are about the same; there is no growth, in Romania, in the number of refugees; there are very, very, small fluctuations. In conclusion, the phenomenon is important for us because we are in the European Union, but in Romania there is no pressure from this area. We can treat the issue with calm, with responsibility, with solidarity towards the countries where there is a large number of refugees. It is not the case for us to react hysterically; and, surely, it is not the case for us to show our xenophobe side. We must be solidary with the other countries from the European Union; however, we should still maintain voluntary quotas. I do not believe that the introduction of mandatory quotas is a solution. This point of view [is the one that] I will also present in the CSAT<sup>8</sup> meeting from next week - I have summoned the CSAT for 17 September - and this point of view [is the one that] I will - almost surely - present in the Council in the middle of October. Evidently, I will take into account the data that the government will bring in the CSAT meeting.

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<sup>8</sup> CSAT – Consiliul National de Aparare a Tarii – Romania's Supreme Council of National Defence

However, the preliminary data show me that we are right to ask for voluntary quotas.

Now everyone is wondering: How many refugees do we receive? I read in the last days the most contradictory data, a gazette from UK says 6000, a gazette from Spain says 4600, a European news agency says 6000. So far, there is no project, that could have been presented to us by European Commission, all these data are journalistic speculations, It is clear that this is the reason why everyday other things are heard.

At the end of last week, an informal meeting of Foreign Ministers was held, at the initiative of Luxembourg presidency; the Commission did not present any concept. The discussions were pretty informative; however, we are waiting every day now for this concept to be made public. When we become acquainted with the concept presented by the Commission, we can react concretely; for this reason, I timed the CSAT meeting, in order to discuss the issue after we know the point of view that the European Commission wants to convey to us. SO, roughly 1700 – this many refugees will come to Romania, maximum, because that is the number of available accommodation places. No more!

**Appendix 5. The speech of the Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban,  
Brussels, 03/09/2015**

(Original in Hungarian; Voiceover: English)

(Source: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GkN4hRB\\_mRU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GkN4hRB_mRU))

First of all, welcome to you, good afternoon.

First I had a meeting with the president of EU Parliament, the president of the Council, the president of the Commission and the President of European People Party. I came to Brussels because since 15 of September and starting with 15 of September a new border policing system will arise in Hungary. Tomorrow Hungarian Parliament is expected to pass pieces of legislation and that will create a foundation for a new border management system, will modify penal code, will create rules of procedure and as of 15 of September border management will be carried out though full presence of police and the military.

I came here to tell you that it is not put of our caprice that we do so, that are three regulations that we need to adhere to and to implement: one is the Dublin regulation, the other are the rules of FRONTEX and the third

is the Schengen Code. These provide for the fact that countries, like Hungary, that have an external border of the EU, a Schengen border for the protection of their border and their own competency the Schengen Code says that in countries, like Hungary, can be crossed at places, designated places at designated times and the member state has the duty to enforce it. Hungary has tried to comply with it, but it has not always been successful.

Thousands of migrants arrive at the border and they crossed the border illegally in Europe and it cannot go any more like that, we need to put an end to it, therefore new rules have to be introduced. There might be questions whether this will be successful or not, but one thing is sure we need to grasp all opportunities that are available and this measures give a chance for the situation to improve. All might come to breath with whom I had the discussions, I raised the question whether they have a better idea, then the fence, so the physical protection of the borders, all three answered to me that they don't have a better idea, but they dislike this arrangement. I answered to them that it is also my opinion. I asked, I requested the leaders of these institutions not to attack Hungary, because of the fact that it carries out its duties related to its obligations. Even if they don't help us, I asked them not to attack us and not to do so that we cannot carry put our duties.

The way I see this situation is that not only Hungary, but in other European countries people have fears and concerns and the European politics fears and concerns that do not have a voice, not only in Hungary, but in many European countries people are on the opinion that we European leaders, prime-ministers and heads of institutions do not manage the situation, they see that we are not able to handle the situation and this results in fear, concerns and uncertainties. These concerns must be avoid and we have to make it clear that we understand people's concerns and we are doing our best to comply with our obligations and this entire.

May I indicate to you, that if you look at the facts you will see that: we Hungarians and EU is not phased with a refugee problem, of course, there are many refugees, but even more people are not refugees, there are more people who started on this journey in the hope for a better life, and not because they were forced to do so, if you look at the statistics you will be able to see that there is an increase in number of migrants who have started from an area other than war-stricken area and this is a migration and mass migration of peoples that has an unlimited reserve.

If European leaders continue this politics then tens of millions of people will arrive at the borders of Europe, therefore Hungary supports all

measures that send clear messages to migrants who are not refugees, it is not a worth starting on this journey from their country in their hope for a better life because they will not be able to pass the control system and since they are not refugees, they will not be given the possibility to make Europe their homes. This has to be made clear, this is an immortal issue, all actions that create the illusion for people who are thinking of starting on this journey that they will be received here is disrespectful. They are thinking whether it's worse taking the risk of starting this on this journey or they are not from affected area. Our Christian obligation is not to create illusions, we cannot create hopes in peoples who will risk their lives in their hope of something which we here know is not real. It has to be made clear that if there is no reason to request for political asylum or whether there is no war and we cannot receive them, and I repeat that here the overwhelming majority of people are not refugees because they are not coming from a war-stricken area, they come in the hope for better life.

There is an increase in number of people from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nigeria and the proportions are changing and nobody in Europe is able to tell whether there is an end to it. First couple of thousands and couple of tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, but now we are talking about millions and times will come when tens of millions of people will start this journey, unless we carry out politics which will make it clear that it has no point in doing it.

So there is one single solution that we have to restore the protection of Europe's external border. This is at the basis of everything, you can talk about quotas, distribution of people, but the first thing is to carry out, to enforce our duty namely to protect our border and to guarantee regular legal procedures, this is at the basis of everything, this is our conviction and that is why I think that Hungary, although not happy but does it will when we create a sense of physical protection of the border.

Ladies and gentlemen, I want also to make it clear that I hear a lot of statements by European leaders which make in the illusion that Europe will be ready to receive and accept anybody. To my mind we need to make it clear that there is no such situation as to allow everybody in Europe, if we allow everybody in would mean the end of Europe. Therefore we are not going to make any statement that would encourage this people to come here, just the opposite as soon as the parliament passes this new pieces of legislation, which is expected tomorrow, then until the entry into force on day of 15<sup>th</sup> of September, Hungary will start a very intensive information

campaign both in transit countries and home countries to give information and to make the point that is no use taking risks starting on this journey and it does not pay off to traffickers because it will not be possible to get illegally into the EU through Hungary. There will be points where the borders can be crossed, this will be indicated by signs and where people can enter the territory of Hungary as part of regular legal procedure. I am also convinced that is an issue now is Schengen itself, the free movement within EU, because if we fail to protect Europe's external borders, we won't be able to maintain free movement anymore within European countries. Schengen is very important for central Europe, Schengen is freedom. So we are fully aware of the fact that if we are not able to protect our borders the whole Schengen system will fall apart. This is contrary to our interests, to our freedom, to our European values.

Ladies and gentlemen, of course you will ask my opinion about the quotas and I'm ready to answer that but now just let me tell you that Americans call "first things first", they are able and we should talk about mechanisms only if you are able to protect your external border. So I am convinced that all our efforts need to be concentrated on protecting external borders.

Thank you for your attention and I am ready to take questions.