

CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF THE MIDDLE EAST WAR ON EUROPEAN POPULATION. REFUGEES CRISIS – RISK OR OPPORTUNITY?

Andreea Florentina NICOLESCU¹

ABSTRACT

IN THE CONTEXT IN WHICH EUROPEAN UNION IS CONFRONTING WITH A BIG ISSUE OF HANDLING THE SO-CALLED REFUGEES CRISIS, THIS ARTICLE IS MEANT TO UNRAVEL THE REASONS BEHIND THE RELEASE OF THIS SITUATION WITH WHICH EU DIDN'T CONFRONT UNTIL THE BEGINNING OF HUMANITARIAN CRISIS FROM 2015. THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDYING THIS SUBJECT IS GIVEN BY THE NECESSITY OF KNOWING THE CAUSES WHICH LED TO GENERATING A HUMANITARIAN CRISIS OF AMPLENESS, THE EFFECTS GENERATED BY REFUGEES FOR THE HOST STATES TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE ACTUAL SITUATION OF THE EUROPEAN POPULATION.

THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THIS ARTICLE IS TO IDENTIFY THE MAIN CAUSES OF TRIGGERING THE REFUGEES CRISIS AND THE EFFECTS OVER THE STATES OF PROVENANCE FOR THE REQUESTORS OF HUMANITARIAN PROTECTION.

THIS THING IS REALIZED BY MENTIONING THE GEOPOLITICAL SITUATION OF THE MAIN STATES WHERE THE ASYLUM SEEKERS COME FROM THAT ARRIVE IN THE MEMBER STATES OF EU AND BY MAKING AN ANALYSIS THAT WOULD SPECIFY THE DISASTROUS EFFECTS OF THE MIDDLE EAST WAR. TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THAT EUROPE IS CONFRONTING WITH THE PROBLEM OF AGING POPULATION, IT IS NORMAL TO ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTION IN THE RESEARCH: "DOES THE REFUGEES CRISIS INTENSELY MANIFESTED IN EUROPE REPRESENT AN EFFICIENT SOLUTION IN COMBATTING THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF EUROPEAN POPULATION AGING?". SO, IN THE SECOND PART OF THIS ARTICLE IT IS EMPHASIZED THE SITUATION OF EUROPE FROM DEMOGRAPHIC AGING POINT OF VIEW AS WELL AS THE AGE OF THE REFUGEES THAT RECEIVED POLITICAL ASYLUM IN THE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES.

KEY WORDS: REFUGEES, GEOPOLITICAL THREATS, DEMOGRAPHIC AGING

INTRODUCTION

The importance of this subject is explained through the identification of the reasons which triggered the crisis of refugees, of the conflict situation from Middle East and of the effects that result from this. We must keep in mind that host states of the refugees, countries that are part of EU, are confronting with the aging population phenomenon, this is why it is necessary to check the assumption which refers to the possibility that the presence of refugees in Europe will stop the aging of population.

¹ Andreea Florentina NICOLESCU is Ph.D Student at The Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania, e-mail: andreea_nicolescu93@yahoo.com

The article is structured in two parts, so, in the first part of the article it is presented the situation of the origin states, more precise, there is realized a qualitative analysis over the reasons that led to population flee from Middle East in Europe, a continent that is more secure compared with the situation in Syria, Iraq or Afghanistan. In the analysis, there is a focus on the situation in Syria, taking into consideration that the most of the asylum seekers in EU are from there, so there are analyzed the reasons that led to the Syrian war.

In the second part of the research, it begins from the idea that Europe has an issue regarding the sharpening of the phenomenon of population aging, this is why it is analyzed the percent of population over 60 years in order to understand the situation in which Europe currently is from this perspective. On the other side, it is analyzed the situation of the refugees on age intervals to identify the ones that could help stopping this phenomenon.

1. GEOPOLITICAL THREATS FROM THE ORIGIN STATES OF THE REFUGEES IN THE CONTEXT OF HUMANITARIAN CRISIS BURST FROM MENA AREA

This analysis is meant to identify the threats present in the states where refugees come from, in the context in which these states show an unstable geopolitical frame which is going to be brought in the followings.

In order to be able to make this study, I used as main method of research the documents analysis, among these being found researches done by the experts as well as official documents made available by EU institutions, which have an active role in handling the refugees crisis on European continent. Another aspect regarding the used methodology was making a comparison to highlight the existing differences regarding the reasons that caused the conflicts which formed a crisis with humanitarian impact among states in MENA area, this being the acronym used for Middle East and North Africa.

Considering the position of MENA region, which is between the three continents, Europe, Asia and Africa and the valuable resources in the area, remarking in this way the big gas and oil resources, that pointed to strong conflicts between the great powers that have as goal obtaining this territories, no matter what.

The creation of Israel, which is a jewish state, in the middle of the arab and muslim states from MENA region contributed to numerous conflicts in the area, this being a cause of the area instability. Other causes of generating refugees crisis are: increasing terrorism in the area, especially by increasing the power of ISIS terrorist group, the US intervention in Iraq in 2003, the Israel-Palestine conflict as well as “The Arabic Spring” caused the propagation of war in the entire region, producing numerous wars , among these having the Civil War from Libya as well as Iraq. All these conflicts activated the refugee flee of numerous groups, especially in Europe, but the heavy war from Syria represents, by now, the one with the biggest impact over peace and stability from MENA area, this situation being the main cause of refugees flee.

Having the previously mentioned facts referring to the main reasons of the conflicts that produced the refugees crisis, the purpose of the study is to bring more details to the causes that led the creation of a region with high instability that had negative effects over the safety of the citizens in these states.

1.1. SYRIA WAR AS MAIN FACTOR FOR TRIGGERING THE REFUGEES CRISIS IN EUROPE. CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF THE SYRIAN WAR BREAK OUT OVER THE ORIGIN STATES OF REFUGEES

Syrian Arabian Republic, officially known in the short form of Syria, it is a state that makes part of the antiquity civilization center of Middle East. Its main cities are: Alep, which

suffered multiple effects of the war in this state, Homs, Hama and Damasc, the last one being the capital of Syria. The president of the state is Bashar Al-Assad, which was elected in 2000, being the successor of his father, Hafez Al-Assad, which was president of the Syrian state since 1970.²

In what follows, I will present the main causes of war bursting in Syria in order to better understand what produced the refugees crisis. Among the reasons that contributed to the war in Syria, we can enumerate the following:

- *Dissatisfaction regarding the long period of government of Al-Assad family and the discontent among the authoritarianism of the Syrians*

The differences between the ways of governing Syria were very big, comparing father with son, since Hafez Al-Assad was the one which, while he led for 30 years, assured the stability in his country, making a strong bond with Iran and Russian Social Soviet Union. The policy on which Hafez Al-Assad bet was pro Palestine, on the other side, it had anti-occidental and anti-Israel influences. The president of Syria from that period was very quiet, not being closed to the citizens of his state or, comparing with Bashar Al-Assad, the son who governed after the death of his father and his brother, who died in 1994 due to a car accident. After becoming president, the relations of Syria with the Occident improved, especially considering that the new Syrian president had an education partially founded in London, where he continued his studies in ophthalmology, initiated in Damascus.³

- *The actions of Syrians authorities against the protesters and their effects on worsening the conflict*

The conflictual situation in Syria started in 2011, in Daraa city, after an incident that ended with the torture of some young people, because they were writing revolutionary messages on the walls of a school, in contrariety with the government actions. After this incident, there were manifestations of the population for the way in which the security forces acted and hurt those young men, the protesters asking for the resignation of the Syrian president. This situation got worse when the allies of the opposition of Bashar Al-Assad used weapons to defend themselves and, after, to eliminate the security forces in those areas.⁴

Unfortunately, the situation become even worse after the protest, becoming a civil war between the sustainers of Bashar Al-Assad and his opponents, even more that the power of Islamic State grew up and developed an extra dimension over the war in Syria.

- *The sectarian war between Shiites and Sunni, an old religious division contributes to augmentation of the civil war in Syria*

The fight between the two forces led to simulating violence which affected Iraq and amplified the existing tensions in Gulf countries. During centuries, the two sects lived together, marriages between those two being happening very often or the fact that these were praying at the same mosques, having similar prayers but what differentiates them are the rituals and the way of interpreting the Islamic law. The majority are Sunni, around 85%, the rest of 15% are Shiites. The separation of the 2 sects has old roots, appeared after the death of Muhammad and what led to a conflict between the sects was the debate of succession. Sunni oppose that political succession realizes on blood line of Muhammad, considering that is more important naming a leader based on reasons of qualifications while Shiites insist to accept a single leader that must be a person on the blood line of Muhammad. Currently, the Shiites can be found mostly in Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, Azerbaijan and Bahrain while Sunni are majority in over 40 states, among which are Morocco and Indonesia. The regime of president Bashar Al-Assad has at its base Alawis, which is a heterodox sect from Shia and which

² Relații bilaterale, Republica Arabă Siriană, accessed May 5, 2017, <https://www.mae.ro/bilateral-relations/5054>

³ VP Haran, "Roots Of The Syrian Crisis", Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, March 2016

⁴ Elizabeth O'Bagy, "Syrian's Political Opposition", Institute for the Study of War, April 2012

represents 13% of population from Syria. This is the sect that dominates the military and security services of the country run by Al-Assad, being the one which help the forces that fight to support the regime of Bashar Al-Assad from the civil war in Syria.⁵

1.2. CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF CREATING “THE ARABIC SPRING” AND ITS INFLUENCE IN THE WAR IN SYRIA

The set of protests made in North Africa and Middle East which started in December 2010 and lasted until the first months of 2011 were called “The Arabic Spring”. These manifestations took place in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Syria and other states.

The causes that generated this set of protests are multiple:⁶

- The economic factors that are related to poorness and high level of unemployment, aspects that led to amplification of frustration level for citizens from Middle East and North Africa, these people claiming that there aren't taken any measures to reduce the unemployment, especially the one among the young people. So, poorness was one of the reasons that contributed to protests in different states.
- Repressive authoritative regimes had an impact over the Middle East and caused numerous protests. Thus, the fact that the leaders Ben Ali from Tunisia, Mubarak from Egypt, Gadhafi from Libya, Al-Assad from Syria and Abdullah Saleh from Yemen tried to limit the power of any opposition contributed to human rights violation in many occasions, fact that dissatisfied the population of these states which wanted to cease the political power of their leaders.
- The relationship between the army and the civil society had also an effect over the protests so called “The Arabic Spring”, so, in the states in which the interests of the military leaders were compatible with the encouragement of the military regime drove to the fight for government take down; a such case if the one of Libya and, currently, Syria.
- The corruption from the states where the protests took place represented one of their causes. In this way, political regimes from these states were seen by the citizens as being tainted by corruption by obtaining some very big family fortunes by their leaders.
- A big role in “The Arabic Spring” was held also by traditional media but also social, who helped by broadcasting and promoting political messages or some details regarding the protests establishment which allowed their spread among population which became more and more attracted to participate at these demonstrations.

2. REFUGEES USED AS INSTRUMENT TO COPE WITH THE EUROPE POPULATION AGING PHENOMENON

This chapter has the role to establish if refugees that arrive on European territory can help to combat the population aging phenomenon. EU member states are concerned about the population aging aspect which will increase in the future based on life expectancy growth level.

This fact, together with global natality rate decreasing to 1.5 children born by each woman contributes to reduction of the active population proportion in Europe, which brings the necessity to attract immigrants with a high qualification level and which has the corresponding age to work. Considering the fact that the population aging aspect, also called “the demographic winter” varies as intensity in European countries, it is necessary to have a different approach of migration politics which are able to fit with the specific dynamics of that population. Even though migration can't be a decisive solution at the demographic

⁵ Council on Foreign Relations, “The Sunni-Shia Divide a CFR InfoGuide Presentation”

⁶ International Relations, “The Arab Spring”, accessed May 10, 2017, <http://internationalrelations.org/the-arab-spring/>

problems with which Europe confronts, the anticipative policies could improve the situation. In this way, to benefit from the present migration influx, the European countries which benefit from the refugees presence on their territory should create long-term strategies that include refugees integration on market labor.⁷

Europe has an aged population, this things is revealed also by the fact that, globally, 27 out 30 states with the highest percentage of people of 65 years old and over are from here. Among these we can enumerate Italy, Greece, Germany, Portugal, Finland and Bulgaria, where around 20% of the population is 65 and over. On long term, the refugees influx could be a benefit because the number of younger workers necessary on European market labor could improve, refugees having the potential to stimulate innovation and to bring ideas and new perspectives.⁸

To realize this first part of the research, I used data published by Eurostat concerning the percentage of population from EU which is enclosed in the age interval 60-79 years and 80-80+ between 2007-2016. I chose these dates to perform the analysis in order to show the high level of aged people from EU28 that brings to necessity of creating some policies meant to reduce the negative effects of European population aging process

I start from doing the analysis regarding the population of Europe, where we can notice in figure 2.1 the fact that aging population aspect at EU has recorded an increasing trend starting with 2007 until 2016, event that can be identified at both age levels. In this way we can observe that in the first year that has been analyzed, 18% of the total population of EU had the age between 60 and 79 years.

Aging population process in Europe sharpened in the evaluated cycle, people in this age interval reaching 19.9% of the total number in EU. A worrying aspect is the one that the proportion of the ones who fit 60-79 age group interval continually increased during all studied period, no year from the interval being an exception of this trend. This thing shows us very clear the fact that community from EU indicates an sharpen aging process.

Another aspect which confirms those mentioned above can be noticed in the case of 80 and 80+ people. The rate of those in this category continuously increased in the studied time period, with the exception of 2014, when the value remained the same with the one from the previous year.

Although we can see an evident difference between the percentage of the population between 60 and 79 years and those of 80 and over, we can notice a common aspect, the one that in the referenced time interval there was no decreasing moment of the aged community, the trend being only ascendant.

If we analyze the rate of population of 80 and 80+, we can observe the fact that in 2007, the people percent of EU that was included in this interval was 4.3%, in comparison with year 2017 when it reached 5.4%.

Previously quoted aspects in the analysis show us the fact that higher and higher rates of EU community is in the category of aged persons, element that gets to an intense aging European population. On this line, I consider that there should be made sustainment and encouragement policies for natality increase to have as result reducing the aging population phenomenon.

No variable can reverse the Europeans aging process, and without the international migration, the demographic situation would be even worse. A scenario of European Commission regarding the population of the 28 members of EU claims the fact that without net international migration contribution, European population could reduce with more than

⁷ Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly, "The impact of European population dynamics on migration policies", May 22, 2015

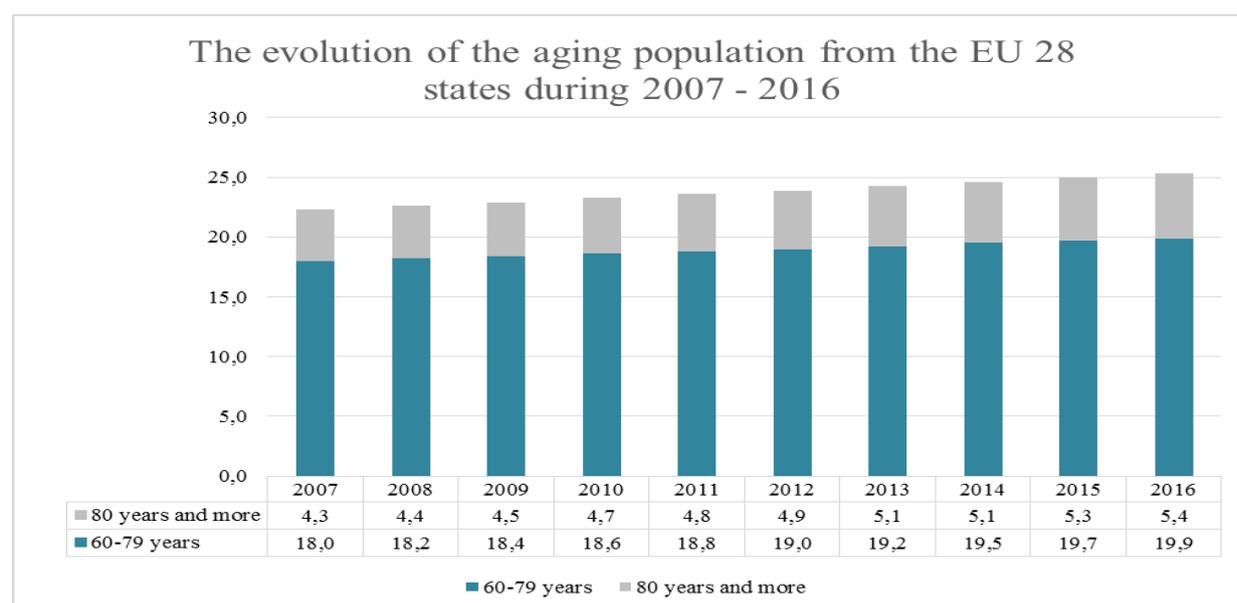
⁸ Drew DeSilver, "Refugee surge brings youth to an aging Europe", Pew Research Center, October 8, 2015

20% by 2080. Thus, refugees could help EU to decrease the challenges linked to demographic aging process, and to lead to economical growth according to present demographical tendencies, Europe should accept a big number of refugees. However, the demographical disproportion is high and in this case, migration won't be enough to solve this situation. In this way, Europe should improve competitiveness and human resource productivity taking into consideration the changes and labor market necessities in the future.⁹

The proportion of people of 65 years and more from Central Europe and Baltic countries grew with more than a third between 1990 and 2010 and population aging in this case is caused also by young people immigration and fertility decrease rate. Some examples where population dramatically decreased are: Croatia, where population reduced with 10% from 1990, Romania and Hungary, where population diminished with more than 5%. The problem of migration politics won't be the one of accepting or not refugees but more how the way the refugees crisis should be transformed into an opportunity.¹⁰

Whereas I identified the situation of European Union at the level of average of population percentage which matches in the 2 age intervals, 60-79 and 80-80+, I consider that is necessary to analyze the number of persons which obtained humanitarian protection in 2015 on age categories to be able to motivate the way in which refugees who arrived to humanitarian crisis initiation in European countries will be able to reduce the aging process in Europe.

Figure 2.1 Evolution of aging population from the EU28 member states from 2007 to 2016 as a percentage of the total population



Source: own representation using Eurostat database

In order to perform this analysis, I used the data provided by Eurostat, selecting 7 states that granted the refugee status for a big number of persons. Thus, from figure 2.2 we can see that in all evaluated countries, in 2015, most of the requests that have been accepted were the ones for the persons with the age between 18 and 34 years. The biggest number of

⁹ European Investment Bank, "Migration and the EU, Challenges, opportunities, the role of EIB", March 2016

¹⁰ Christian Bodewig, "Is the refugee crisis an opportunity for an aging Europe?", Brookings, September 21, 2015

these persons was of 3.705 refugees, accepted in Germany, which belong in the age interval mentioned above. The next country in these standings is France, who accepted on its territory 1.385 persons with the age in 18-34 interval.

The fact that in all investigated states the most accepted refugees are young people with the age between 18 and 34 which are able to work from the age point of view, suggests the evidence that these can bring numerous benefits to European population. An example in this case it is represented by the fact that they can get hired, generating money for the states that received them and they can spare them of the load of sustaining them as socially assisted persons, as well as stopping the phenomenon of European population aging.

Another argument to confirm the ones mentioned above is the fact the persons who received asylum in EU countries studied in 2015, with the age over 65 years are very few, the most cases are recorded in Germany (95 cases) and United Kingdom (90 cases).

According to table 2.1, Greece, which accepted 1.385 persons within 18 and 34 years was the one who didn't record any case of persons of 65 years or over.

Table 2.1 People who received asylum in 2015 according to the age group in selected EU member states

Selected EU member states	People who received asylum in 2015 according to the age group				
	less than 14 years	14-17 years	18-34 years	35-64 years	65 years or over
Germany	1405	375	3705	1725	95
Greece	105	65	1385	285	0
France	110	30	3530	1660	55
Netherlands	115	40	280	155	5
Austria	425	130	1660	460	30
Sweden	580	335	895	555	45
United Kingdom	915	5	2245	1110	90

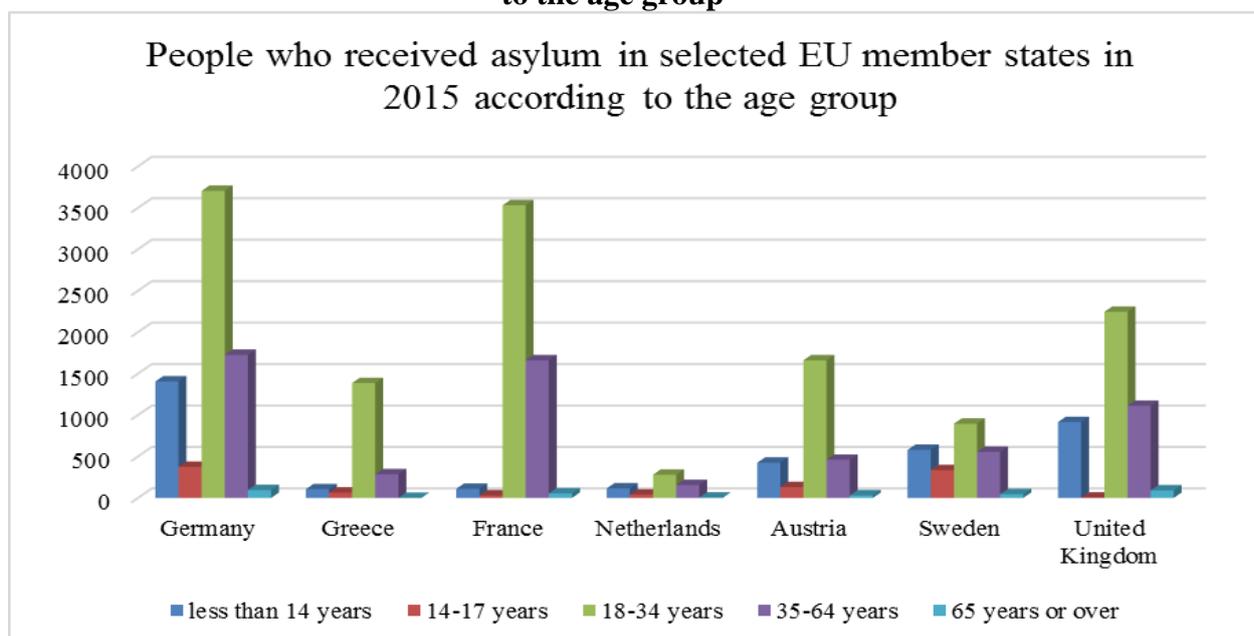
Source: own representation using Eurostat database

Those who will contribute for sure at Europe's countries GDP and will reduce the aging population aspect are the ones who fit in the group with the ages in the 35-64 interval, which are good for work and have an age that allows them to do it. The biggest part of these are in Germany (1.725 refugees), France (1.660 refugees) and Great Britain (1.110 refugees).

The investigated countries indicate a minor number of minor persons, which could improve the natality in the host countries in the future. The majority of these can be found in Germany (1.495 persons), Great Britain (915 persons) and Sweden (580 persons).

Also, there is similar situation for those with the age between 14 and 17 years, which can support at reducing the event of aging population from European states. The most advantaged country from this point of view is Germany, which, in this case too, accepted the biggest number of refugees aged between 14-17, more precisely 375 persons. The state that follows Germany in this rank is Sweden, who offered the refugee status for 335 people between 14 and 17 years.

Figure 2.2 People who received asylum in selected EU member states in 2015 according to the age group



Source: own representation using Eurostat database

We can notice from figure 2.3 that most of the refugees accepted in European countries that have been selected for this inquiry are included in the age interval of 18-34 years.

In 2016, Germany is again the state with the biggest number of accepted refugees which are included in aisle of 18-34 years, this one having 5.890 people from this category and 2.430 from 35-64 years category.

Table 2.2 People who received asylum in 2016 according to the age group in selected EU member states

Selected EU member states	People who received asylum in 2016 according to the age group				
	less than 14 years	14-17 years	18-34 years	35-64 years	65 years or over
Germany	2310	580	5890	2430	95
Greece	280	120	4210	1210	10
France	205	30	4135	2000	50
Netherlands	180	60	455	305	15
Austria	285	80	740	270	10
Sweden	645	685	1345	730	55
United Kingdom	1160	10	3815	1390	95

Source: own representation using Eurostat database

An aspect that can be identified in 2016 and it different from the previous year is the one of Greece, which recorded in 2016 with 2.825 more refugees than in 2015 regarding the 18-34 age interval, being on the third place regarding this rank.

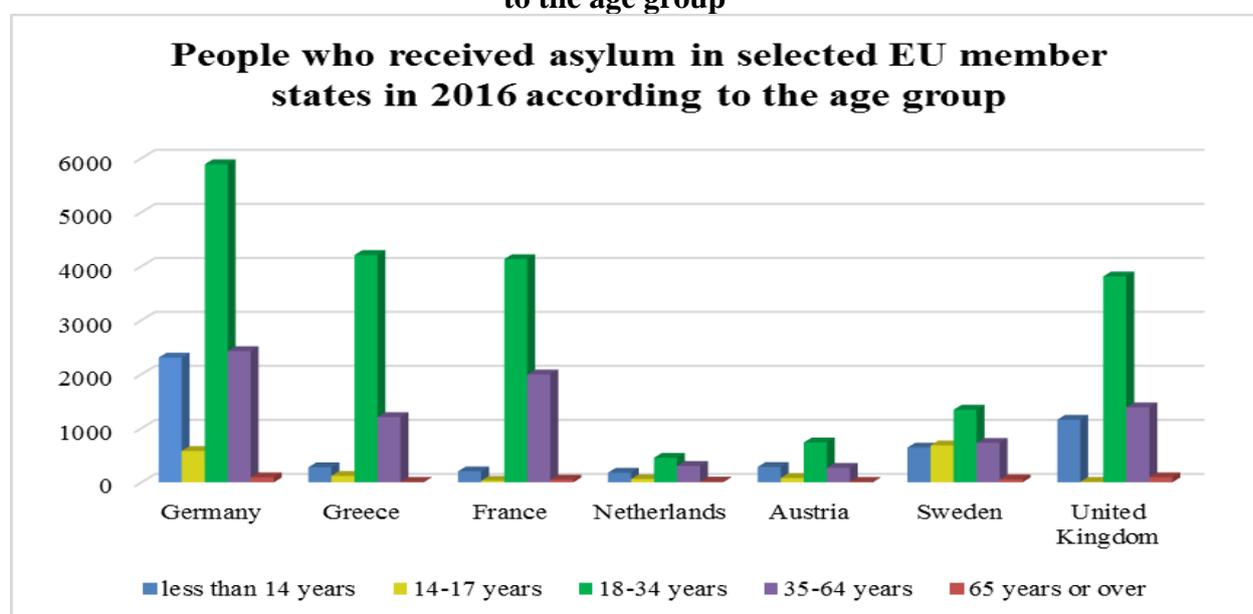
Again, for Greece, we notice that fact that the number of refugees accepted on its islands grew in 2016 compared to 2015 regarding the people with the age between 35-64, reaching to 1.210 refugees in 2016 that could help the aging process there.

In the case of minors, we can identify in table 2.2 that most of this class refugees that were accepted or received the refugee status, from category 14-17 years were recorded in Sweden (685 refugees). A very smaller difference occurs in the situation of those who are below 14 and received humanitarian protection from Sweden, this country receiving on its territory 645 minors with the age below 14.

If we confront the states that received refugees with the age under 14, we can notice that the state with most of these belonging to this category is Germany (2310 people), being followed by Great Britain (1.160 people).

In 2016 too, the number of refugees accepted in the selected European states, which are over 65 years old is smaller compared to the other age class, which represents the fact that this will not impact negatively the European population aging process.

Figure 2.3 People who received asylum in selected EU member states in 2016 according to the age group



Source: own representation using Eurostat database

A conclusion of the realized analyze for years 2015 and 2016 regarding the refugees age category which received the refugee status in the EU states is that Germany will benefit the most from the advantages of receiving this category of young refugees that can contribute to natality increase process but also to reducing the aging phenomenon. Germany received in the 2 studied years a total number of 18.420 refugees from the 1-64 age interval and only 190 refugees with the age of 65 years and more. This state is followed by France, who accepted 11.700 refugees from the 1-64 years class and only 105 refugees of 65 years and over.

Regarding the above mentioned, I consider that the accepted refugees by the investigated countries can help stopping the aging process, taking into consideration that most of those who came in Europe are young and the number of the ones over 65 is very small compared to the others.

CONCLUSIONS

The approached subject has a high importance because Europe confronts on one side with receiving a big number of refugees and on the other side with the intensification of the phenomenon of population aging.

As used methodology, I operated with documents analysis, among these finding researches made by the domain experts but also the official documents provided by the institutions of European Union, as well as the comparison method to emphasize the existing differences regarding the situation that caused the conflicts which led to the development of a crisis with humanitarian impact through the MENA states. In the same time, to perform the statistical analysis, I used data supplied by Eurostat, the institution that deals with European Commission statistic.

In the first phase, for the analysis regarding the evolution of the aging population process as average for EU28 level, I analyzed this phenomenon for period 2007 – 2016 to surprise the evolution of this process. Afterwards, I used the method of comparison to identify the differences between the persons who received asylum in some states selected from European Union (the selection criteria of these being the number refugees accepted on their territory) in 2015, respectively 2016, the reason of choosing these 2 years being that they reflect precisely the moment of triggering the refugees crisis, 2015, continuing with the crisis evolution in the next year. A subsequent inquiry can be established by introducing the data for the next years but, at the moment of the study only the analyzed data were available.

I was able to identify the war from Syria as being the main cause of the refugees crisis in Europe and between the reasons that led to the war in Syria we can enumerate: the objections regarding the long-term government of Al-Assad family and the dissatisfaction for authoritarianism of the Syrian citizens, the actions of Syrian authorities against the protesters as well as “The Arabic Spring”. Among the causes of the so-called “The Arabic Spring” protests we can reveal: economic factors regarding poorness and the high level of unemployment of population, repressive authoritarian regimes that influenced the Middle East and led to numerous protests, the relationship between the army and civil society as well as corruption.

In the second part of the study it is presented the evolution of the population aging process in EU countries in 2007-2016; after doing this analysis, we can say that bigger and bigger rate of the population in EU is in the category of persons with ages between 60 and 79 years and 80 and over, fact that sharpens the phenomenon of aging in Europe. In this way, I consider that there should be created policies of support and encouragement of natality increase in order to reduce the aging process.

The research presents an analysis of group ages intervals that received asylum in European states in 2015 and what results from this inquiry is the fact that all the studied countries the most accepted refugees are the young ones with the age between 18 and 34 that are good to work from the point of view of age, which suggests the fact that these can bring numerous benefits to European population. Those that will definitely contribute to European states GDP and will reduce the aging process are the ones that fit the age interval of 35-64 years, good to work and have an age that allows them to work. Most of these in the mentioned category in 2015 are in Germany, France and Great Britain.

In 2016 Germany remains the state with the most accepted refugees with the age between 18 and 34 and an aspect identified in 2016 which is different compared with the previous year is the one represented by Greece, ranked 3 in this top.

From the accomplished analysis we can state that the accepted refugees by the inquired states could contribute to stopping the aging phenomenon, taking into consideration

September 2017

that most those who chose to come in Europe as refugees are young and the number of those over 65 years is very small compared to the first ones.

Although Europe is confronting with a process of aging population, it is possible that the acceptance of the refugees contributes to ceasing this event, keeping in mind that most of the people who require asylum in Europe are young people who could improve demographic tendencies in EU.

REFERENCES

1. **Bodewig, Christian.** “Is the refugee crisis an opportunity for an aging Europe?”, Brookings, September 21, 2015.
2. Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly, “The impact of European population dynamics on migration policies”, 22 May, 2015.
3. Council on Foreign Relations, “The Sunni-Shia Divide a CFR InfoGuide Presentation”, accessed May 12, 2017, http://www.cfr.org/peace-conflict-and-human-rights/sunni-shia-divide/p33176#!/?cid=otr-marketing_url-sunni_shia_infoguide
4. **DeSilver, Drew.** “Refugee surge brings youth to an aging Europe.”, Pew Research Center, October 8, 2015.
5. European Investment Bank, “Migration and the EU, Challenges, opportunities, the role of EIB”, March 2016
6. International Relations, “The Arab Spring”, accessed May 10, 2017, <http://internationalrelations.org/the-arab-spring/>
7. **Haran, VP.** “Roots Of The Syrian Crisis.” Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, March 2016.
8. **O’Bagy Elizabeth.** “Syrian’s Political Opposition.” Institute for the Study of War, April 2012.
9. Relații bilaterale, Republica Arabă Siriană, accessed May 5, 2017, <https://www.mae.ro/bilateral-relations/5054>
10. Eurostat - <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>