

# Refugee policy EU's 'biggest inadequacy,' says Germany's Heiko Maas

Germany's foreign minister took aim at the EU's approach to refugees, saying nothing has been solved since the 2015 migrant crisis. He also called again for a scheme to distribute asylum-seekers across the EU.



German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas has accused European Union member states of not doing enough to solve the continent's migrant dilemma.

Speaking at an online conference hosted by re:publica and the Media Convention Berlin, Maas said the manner with which European states approach refugees and migrants is "the greatest sign of inadequacy for the EU."

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He added that the bloc still had not solved Europe's migrant issue since 2015 when millions of asylum-seekers poured into the continent fleeing poverty and conflict in northern Africa and the Middle East.

Maas said Europe needed a distribution mechanism for asylum-seekers among states willing to take people in. Countries that do not accept migrants for political reasons, like Hungary, must take responsibility in other areas — for instance, helping with the conflicts in Africa that leads to mass migration towards Europe.

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Migration policy in Europe has been a divisive issue in recent months after Turkey decided in February to stop preventing migrants from entering the European Union, going against a refugee pact it made with the bloc in 2016. The decision prompted thousands of migrants in Turkey to head towards the border with Greece, which has struggled to deal with a large influx of migrants in recent years.

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German Chancellor Angela Merkel insisted in March that the EU is committed to its refugee deal with Turkey, one in which the bloc provided funds to Turkey in exchange for it taking back refugees who cross into the EU illegally.

Germany was also one of seven EU states who recently committed to taking in 1,600 migrant children from Greek refugee camps, which are over capacity and short on food, clothing, and medical supplies.



# Yemen

Yemen is home to roughly 3.6 million internally displaced people. With much of their health and sanitation system destroyed by war, these IDPs are highly vulnerable to coronavirus while living in cramped conditions. Volunteers trained by UNICEF are raising awareness on how to keep the disease from spreading.

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